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SRNL Joins SUNRISE Consortium to Provide Nuclear-Related Education and Training Programs

For Immediate Release

AIKEN, S.C. (Oct. 30, 2009) – The U.S. Department of Energy’s Savannah River National Laboratory and Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC, today signed a Memorandum of Agreement to become an active partner in joint activities with the Southeastern Universities Nuclear Reactors Institute for Science and Education, Inc. (SUNRISE).



Dr. Farzad Rahnema (left) of Georgia Tech, chair of the SUNRISE board, and Dr. Samit Bhattacharyya, director of SRNL, sign the Memorandum of Agreement making SRNL an active partner in SUNRISE.

SUNRISE is a not-for-profit organization formed in 2007. It is focused on enhancing the growth and quality of nuclear education, research, and other services of its membership in support of the emerging nuclear renaissance in the United States, which is expected to be centered in the southeast. SUNRISE also supports academic programs in nuclear engineering, health physics, medical physics, radiochemistry, nuclear nonproliferation and safeguards.

“This agreement will serve as the basis for developing cooperative efforts between the partners in the development of the critical areas of next-generation nuclear workforce, nuclear technology, and advanced nuclear research,” said SRNL Director Dr. Samit Bhattacharyya.

“These efforts will benefit from strong alliances between SRNL and the academic and industrial members of SUNRISE, as well as other entities with a strong commitment to the nuclear enterprise,” Dr. Bhattacharyya said. “The agreement will help to promote the regional interests of the southeastern United States, to more broadly support important national initiatives, and to develop new programs and initiatives that support DOE’s critical needs and national imperatives. This collaboration has great potential.”

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“SUNRISE is proud to have SRNL as a new partner in promoting growth of the region’s nuclear technologies and nuclear science and education programs,” said Dr. Farzad Rahnema, who chairs the SUNRISE Board of Directors.

“The combined effort is expected to lead to new capabilities and initiatives for educating and training the next generation nuclear workforce in support of regional and national interests such as energy independence, nuclear medicine, nuclear deterrence and safeguards and global warming,” Dr. Rahnema said.

The SUNRISE consortium represents nine programs in nuclear engineering, four in health physics, two in radiochemistry and two in medical physics; three university research reactors; and some of the nation's leading nuclear industry companies. Oak Ridge National Laboratory also joined the consortium.

SUNRISE university members are Clemson University; Georgia Institute of Technology; Mississippi State University; North Carolina State University; South Carolina State University; University of Florida; University of South Carolina; University of South Carolina, Aiken; University of Tennessee; Virginia Tech; and University of Missouri, Rolla. The industrial members are AREVA, Fluor Corp., General Atomics and Westinghouse Electric Corporation.

SRNL is DOE’s applied research and development national laboratory at the Savannah River Site (SRS). SRNL puts science to work to support DOE and the nation in the areas of environmental management, national and homeland security, and energy security. The management and operating contractor for SRS and SRNL is Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC.