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**FORTY-FIFTH (2001) REGULAR SESSION**

RECORD OF THE SIXTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Austria Center Vienna  
on Wednesday, 19 September 2001, at 3.05 p.m.

President: Mr. GRÖNBERG (Finland)

Later: Mr. PALACIOS (Ecuador)

Mr. KANGAI (Zimbabwe)

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The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(45)/INF/17/Rev.2.

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Abbreviations used in this record

ARCAL	Co-operation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
AFRA	African Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
Assistance Convention	Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency
Bangkok Treaty	Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone
Basic Safety Standards	International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Early Notification Convention	Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FMCT	fissile material cut-off treaty
INDAG	International Nuclear Desalination Advisory Group
INIS	International Nuclear Information System
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
KEDO	Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization
Kyoto Protocol	Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
NGO	non-governmental organization
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
R&D	Research and development
RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
SAGTAC	Standing Advisory Group on Technical Assistance and Co-operation
SIT	Sterile insect technique
TCDC	Technical co-operation among developing countries
TCF	Technical Co-operation Fund
TC-PRIDE	Technical Co-operation Project Information Dissemination Environment
UNMOVIC	United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission
WHO	World Health Organization



GENERAL DEBATE AND THE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2000 (continued)  
(GC(45)/4)

1. Mr. BORG (Malta) said that his country joined others in offering condolences to the Government and people of the United States of America in connection with the recent terrorist attacks.
2. Malta had been a Party to the NPT since 1970 and had signed its safeguards agreement with the Agency in 1990. It was in full agreement with the consensus reached at the 2000 NPT Review Conference that the only possible guarantee against the use of nuclear weapons was the total elimination of such weapons, and it looked forward to further progress in the non-proliferation field through the negotiation of a treaty for the control of fissile material, including material from weapons and other nuclear explosive devices. His country had deposited its instrument of ratification of the CTBT earlier in the current year and he appealed to others to do the same, especially those whose ratification of the Treaty was a prerequisite for its entry into force, so that the objective of a world free of nuclear weapons could be achieved. In spite of its size and the fact that it neither produced nor possessed nuclear weapons, Malta had always felt a moral and political obligation to support nuclear disarmament efforts. Since 1964, when it had become independent, it had not allowed vessels carrying nuclear weapons in its harbours.
3. Apart from the nuclear non-proliferation field, the Agency also played a crucial role in such areas as medicine, agriculture and management of water resources. Those activities were directed in particular at assisting developing countries and small States like Malta. Not having a research capability of their own, such countries depended entirely on technology transfer in their efforts to promote sustainable development for their people who often lived in difficult conditions.
4. He appealed to donor countries to make more funds available to the Agency to allow it to increase its very important activities in the human health field on such topics as the use of radiotherapy to combat cancer, control of the spreading of malaria and the creation of tissue banks. In the field of food and agriculture, the Agency had been working with the WHO and FAO on food irradiation, the SIT and biosaline agriculture. Many developing countries were looking forward to progress in those areas and were hoping that the Agency would make the new technologies that were being developed available to them in order to help them tackle malnutrition. The availability of adequate fresh water resources was central to sustainable development. The Agency was providing valuable assistance to developing countries both with water desalination and with the better management of underground water resources.
5. Malta had ongoing technical assistance programmes with the Agency in the above areas. It was grateful to the organization for the assistance it was providing and, in particular, the training which Maltese personnel had received. The Agency was currently providing training of longer duration than had been customary and was considering offering long-term training courses in its areas of specialization. Such courses were of great importance to developing and small countries and he encouraged the Agency to increase their availability.

6. Malta supported the Agency's activities, in particular in the area of non-power applications. Later in the year it would be hosting an international scientific conference on the management of radioactive waste from non-power applications, and a regional workshop on nuclear legislation.

7. Mr. REZA (Bangladesh) condemned the recent terrorist attacks, which had claimed thousands of innocent lives, and offered condolences to the Government and people of the United States of America and to the bereaved families.

8. Peaceful applications of nuclear energy and techniques could help promote sustainable development in countries like Bangladesh, which was applying nuclear techniques in such areas as agriculture, food production, water resource management and medicine, and where the private sector was showing a keen interest in the results of various R&D programmes.

9. His country attached great importance to nuclear safety and radiation protection, and its Nuclear Safety and Radiation Control Act was consistent with the Agency's Basic Safety Standards. It was a signatory of the Early Notification Convention, the Assistance Convention and the Convention on Nuclear Safety. With regard to waste and transport safety, the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission had started the preliminary work for the construction of a radioactive waste processing and storage facility. In addition, an inventory was being drawn up of radiation sources in the country. Programmes were also under way to increase awareness of various aspects of radiation protection. The Agency had been supporting the activities in question very generously, and he hoped that support would continue.

10. Bangladesh's nuclear power programme was being implemented within the framework of a comprehensive nuclear power action plan, under the supervision of a committee headed by the Prime Minister. A site for a nuclear power plant with a capacity of about 600 MW had been selected, several Agency missions had gone to the site, and a site safety report was nearing finalization. Bangladesh was deeply committed to ensuring safety at all phases of the project and hoped that the Agency would extend all possible assistance to it during the construction of its first nuclear power plant, which would help meet its growing energy needs and contribute to the development of its economy.

11. The Agency's technical assistance programmes were a success story, and countries like his own had benefited from them in a number of areas. In the light of its experience, his country felt that the scope of technical assistance programmes should be expanded. The 2000 NPT Review Conference had reconfirmed that the Agency was the principal international organization for nuclear technology transfer, and he hoped that it would support projects which met Bangladesh's nuclear technology needs. His country would like to see the Agency taking a more proactive role in helping developing countries improve their scientific, technological, regulatory and human resource capabilities. It had been an active member of the RCA since its inception and was pleased with the gradual expansion of RCA activities in support of sustainable development. During the current year, Bangladesh had hosted the twenty-third meeting of national RCA representatives and a consultative meeting on enhanced awareness and co-ordination among international and regional organizations in Asia and the

Pacific. Both meetings had been fruitful and timely from the point of view of consolidating RCA programmes, and his country hoped the RCA would be extended beyond 2002.

12. Bangladesh believed that universal adherence to the NPT could ultimately pave the way to nuclear disarmament. It was a party to the NPT and the CTBT, and it had signed an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement with the Agency, thus demonstrating its unflinching support for the use of nuclear technology for exclusively peaceful purposes.

13. Mr. RIMDAP (Nigeria) offered his deepest condolences to the people of the United States of America in connection with the recent terrorist attacks which had resulted in huge loss of lives and property. His country, which had lost some of its own citizens in the attacks, condemned all such terrorist acts and would support all efforts by the international community to fight such threats to international peace and security.

14. The Agency's activities in the field of peaceful nuclear techniques were aimed at solving socio-economic problems, in particular through the use of nuclear techniques and radioisotopes to increase food production, fight disease, manage water resources and protect the environment. He encouraged it to pursue its efforts to expand the vista of opportunities presented by nuclear technology.

15. Insect pests continued to be a major obstacle to the alleviation of poverty and to sustainable development in Africa and developing Member States. In that connection, he welcomed the focus of the current year's scientific forum on nuclear technology for sustainable development and urged the Agency to redouble its efforts to rid the affected countries of such pests. The SIT had been used remarkably successfully to combat tsetse flies, and the Agency had made a significant contribution to addressing that problem. Its support for the Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Eradication Campaign recently approved by African Heads of State and Government was also much appreciated. His country was submitting a draft resolution on the latter initiative which it hoped the Conference would support. Further R&D would be needed to develop the technology for field application of the SIT to control or eradicate mosquitoes, and he urged the Agency to strengthen its R&D activities in that area and appealed to donors to allocate sufficient financial and human resources. He also thanked the United States for the extrabudgetary support it was providing.

16. Nigeria was benefiting from several national and regional projects during the current technical co-operation programme cycle relating to various sub-sectors of its economy. For instance, the isotope-based investigation in the Chad basin aquifers addressed the problem of groundwater recharge systems by evaluating groundwater reserves and investigating surface water using both conventional and nuclear techniques. The information generated by the project should facilitate further evaluation and national and regional capacity building to ensure effective aquifer management. The Agency also continued to support his country's efforts to strengthen its nuclear technology infrastructure. In particular, a miniature neutron source reactor had been installed at the Centre for Energy Research and Training at the Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria. The staff who would be managing the facility had been trained with Agency assistance, and a national nuclear regulatory authority had been established to ensure that all required safeguards and safety regulations were applied. The

facility should enhance Nigeria's socio-economic development efforts in such areas as food production, health and nutrition, mineral exploration, industry, environmental protection, soil fertility mapping and education.

17. He appealed to donor and recipient countries to support Agency activities under the various regional co-operation agreements which fostered the sustainable application of nuclear techniques through capacity building and TCDC. His own country's participation in AFRA had declined recently, but contacts with experts from AFRA Member States had been re-established, affording opportunities to meet and exchange ideas, share experience and resources and compare notes, as well as to tackle common problems through joint action.

18. Nigeria had demonstrated its commitment to nuclear and radiation safety by establishing appropriate legal instruments for the regulation and control of nuclear applications in 1995. It also continued to participate in the Agency's Model Project on upgrading radiation protection infrastructure. The new democratic administration in Nigeria was also reviewing all the outstanding regional and international agreements which the country had yet to sign and ratify, including those related to Agency activities.

19. The Agency played a leading role in the promotion of an effective international legal and standardization regime in the nuclear, radiation and waste safety area. A strong global nuclear safety culture could only be developed when those measures were fully accepted and applied by Member States. His country therefore welcomed the entry into force of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. The forthcoming review process should further reinforce those international legal regimes, heighten public awareness, increase transparency worldwide and contribute to public acceptance. Nigeria also supported the various measures the Agency had undertaken on the safety of radiation sources, security of radioactive material and illicit trafficking.

20. The NPT was the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the Agency's safeguards system an essential instrument for ensuring compliance therewith. He urged all States which had made a non-proliferation commitment to fulfil their legal obligations by concluding all the required agreements. Universal adherence to the Model Additional Protocol should enhance international security. Nigeria had completed all the relevant legal and administrative procedures and would be signing its additional protocol during the current session.

21. Technical co-operation was a mandatory activity of the Agency under the Statute, and nuclear technology transfer was one of the fundamental components of the NPT. It was therefore cause for concern that, at the current rate of payment, the rate of attainment foreseen for the TCF for 2001 might not be reached. Equally worrying were the increased pressure on the staff of the Department of Technical Co-operation owing to the growth in the programme and the increasing number of recipients, as well as the growing tendency to favour safeguards activities over technical co-operation. It was essential that the delicate balance between the Agency's main activities be maintained. It was also important to ensure that the technical co-operation strategy was responsive to change and was subjected to periodic review, to which end intensive and transparent dialogue should be maintained between Member States

and the Secretariat. In conclusion, he noted that Nigeria had pledged its full share of the TCF target for 2002 and remained committed to the ideals of the organization.

22. Mr. LAANEMÄE (Estonia) extended condolences to the people of the United States of America in connection with the recent appalling terrorist attacks. Estonia condemned all forms of terrorism and was ready to co-operate in the fight against it.

23. For the Agency to be able to carry out its statutory tasks, Member States had to provide it with the necessary resources. Estonia paid its assessed contributions to the Agency's Regular Budget in full and on time and its assessed programme costs. It had also made its first voluntary contribution to the TCF in 2001, amounting to its full share of the target. Moreover, it intended to maintain its payment record.

24. Nuclear energy was only being used in non-power applications in Estonia. He welcomed the activities of the Agency and its Member States in the area of radiation and waste safety and emphasized the importance of a comprehensive approach in that field. He also encouraged the Secretariat to implement the revised action plan for the safety and security of radiation sources. In that connection, a useful conference of national regulatory authorities had been organized by the Agency and hosted by the Government of Argentina in Buenos Aires in December 2000 in which the Estonian Radiation Protection Centre had participated. His country welcomed the entry into force of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, which it had signed on 5 January 2001. The domestic preparations for its ratification were under way.

25. In the area of radioactive waste safety, Estonia had received a legacy from the former Soviet Union which it was still trying to deal with. The rehabilitation of the former Soviet nuclear submarine training centre in Paldiski was progressing steadily. The project on conditioning of solid operational radioactive waste had been completed, and one project on solidification of liquid operational waste and another on dismantling of the former liquid radioactive waste processing plant were under way. The Paldiski site was being used for intermediate storage of all radioactive waste from Estonia. The Government was elaborating a national policy and a strategy for radioactive waste management which would include an analysis of options for a final repository. The tailings pond rehabilitation project at the former Soviet uranium milling facility in Sillamäe had started up in November 2000. It was the biggest environmental rehabilitation project in Estonian history. The tailings pond in question was not the largest of the 29 radioactive tailings ponds requiring rehabilitation in Central and Eastern Europe, but it was the most dangerous. When the project was complete by 2006, the Sillamäe facility would be one of the first rehabilitated tailings ponds in the region.

26. Sharing of experience and knowledge was essential for the safe use of nuclear energy worldwide. Estonia therefore continued to participate in the valuable activities of INIS, and to contribute to its project to cover the backlog of core journals.

27. He commended the Secretariat's innovative and transparent approach to technical co-operation activities and, in particular, its presentation of the programme on the Agency's web site and through the TC-PRIDE system. Partnership was the hallmark of successful

co-operation. Thus, his country's involvement in technical co-operation activities went beyond its financial contributions. Currently, it was preparing for a regional training course on nuclear cardiology for nuclear medicine physicians which would take place in Tallinn from 1 to 5 October 2001, and a sub-regional course for the Baltic States on additional protocols to be held in Tallinn later in the year.

28. With regard to the amendment of Article VI of the Agency's Statute, he said that it was still his Government's understanding that the division of the Agency's Member States into areas did not have any impact on the composition of regional groups in other specialized agencies or organizations of the United Nations system, and other international organizations. It was also essential that the views of the Member States be taken into account regarding which area they considered it appropriate they should belong to. That being said, Estonia was pleased that a solution had been found to the issue and that the ratification of the amendment by Member States was progressing.

29. In conclusion, he pledged Estonia's continuing support for the Agency's activities.

30. Ms. MOHAMED (Kenya) conveyed her country's sympathy and condolences to the Government and the people of the United States of America following the recent horrendous acts of terrorism.

31. The peaceful uses of nuclear technology for sustainable development were of particular interest to developing countries, and the Agency had made reassuring progress in its efforts to strengthen international co-operation in nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety, improve the efficiency of the safeguard system, and strengthen its activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications and its technical co-operation activities. Indeed, the 2000 NPT Review Conference had commended the Agency's efforts to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of its technical co-operation programme.

32. Kenya supported the nuclear non-proliferation regime enshrined in the NPT. It had also ratified the CTBT and urged other States to do likewise, particularly those whose ratification was required for the Treaty to enter into force.

33. Her country was grateful for the technical assistance it received under the Agency's technical co-operation programme. In Kenya, 80% of the population lived in rural areas and depended on agriculture for their livelihood. As in many developing countries, growth in agriculture and food production was hampered by soil, land and biodiversity degradation, by drought, poor soil fertility, insect pests and plant and animal diseases. Agency technical co-operation activities in the country currently covered the use of nuclear techniques to improve sustainable food security through mutation technologies, maximization of plant productivity, preservation of the environment, use of isotope and other nuclear techniques to measure and monitor nutrients and water in the soil, improvement of the diagnosis and control of livestock diseases, and improvement of livestock productivity by promoting the use of livestock feed supplements. Kenya was also participating in a regional project on the use of biofertilizers by smallholders to increase crop production and soil fertility, and another on increasing and improving milk and meat production.

34. The Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Eradication Campaign aimed to address threats to food and agricultural production in sub-Saharan Africa caused by tsetse fly infestation and trypanosomiasis. An Agency project was already under way in Kenya to control tsetse flies and trypanosomiasis in the Lambwe Valley using the SIT. In view of the demonstrated success of the SIT, the Agency should intensify its efforts to ascertain the feasibility of using that technique to suppress malaria-transmitting mosquitoes. She called upon donors to make funds available for that purpose and thanked the United States for the support it already provided.

35. Her country's national health policy aimed at providing health care on a sustainable basis which was acceptable, affordable and accessible to the entire population. The Government was keen to strengthen preventive health care services, and to control and prevent environment- and nutrition-related diseases. The Agency was providing valuable support, including in the crucial area of maintenance of medical and scientific instruments, through the Institute of Nuclear Science at the University of Nairobi. In the preceding year, Kenya had hosted a project planning workshop organized by the Agency and WHO on the detection of drug-resistant malaria and tuberculosis. Several Kenyan staff had been trained through the Agency's fellowship programmes in diagnostic radiology and radiography and others were currently receiving training. The most common form of cancer in Kenya was cervical cancer. The radiotherapy department at the Kenyatta National Hospital in Nairobi was the only public institution in the country providing cancer treatment and it lacked trained personnel and equipment. A national project on early diagnosis and treatment of cancer had been undertaken with Agency support involving both the National Hospital and the Medical Research Institute. That project had also encompassed the upgrading and rehabilitation of the radiotherapy department at the New Nyanza General Hospital in Kisumu. Her Government would like the Agency to continue supporting that important project. It was also seeking assistance with the establishment of two other radiotherapy centres to benefit the underprivileged in rural areas, as part of its efforts to decentralize health care provision.

36. Nuclear techniques could play an effective and unique role in redressing water shortages. Kenya was involved in a regional project under AFRA on application of isotope hydrology in the water sector which aimed at developing the necessary expertise for water resources management, and at upgrading and strengthening human resources in the isotope hydrology field.

37. A stronger safety culture was an indispensable component of any successful nuclear programme. Kenya recognized the important role the Agency continued to play in the promotion of nuclear safety. Her Government had set up a Radiation Protection Board to deal with all matters relating to nuclear, radiation and radioactive waste safety, and was currently revising the country's radiation protection law, with the assistance of the Agency, to make it compliant with the Basic Safety Standards. The country was also participating in the highly successful Model Project on upgrading radiation protection infrastructure. The Government had recognized the need to establish a radiation protection laboratory at the Kenya Bureau of Standards in order to strengthen radiation protection in the country. It was committed to

providing the infrastructure, staff and 50% of the required equipment, and called upon the Agency to supplement the local expertise and provide the necessary laboratory equipment.

38. Like other developing countries, Kenya needed highly qualified and well-trained personnel if it was to integrate modern nuclear techniques into its technological development. It appreciated the Agency's efforts to provide training opportunities for scientists and encouraged it to intensify and widen co-operation in that area. Kenya also hoped to receive Agency assistance with the acquisition of a research reactor for the Institute of Nuclear Science at the University of Nairobi for training in nuclear energy and safety.

39. Inadequate energy supplies and the use of energy-inefficient technologies were a major problem in Kenya. Wood fuel was the most important source of energy, accounting for 70% of all energy consumed, while petroleum and electricity accounted for 21%. Hydroelectric power accounted for 70% of the country's installed electricity generation capacity, but inadequate rainfall was proving a problem. The Government wanted to shift towards modern forms of energy and environmentally clean technologies to ensure an adequate supply of energy in both the medium and long term, and to increase the proportion of the population with access to electricity. Nuclear power might prove a feasible option to supplement hydroelectric power.

40. She urged the Director General to increase the number of staff from developing countries and unrepresented or under-represented Member States, particularly at the senior and policy-making levels. She also welcomed the measures aimed at achieving gender equality and improving the status of women. The Director General should take every opportunity to increase the proportion of women in the Secretariat, especially in the professional category.

41. The Agency could only continue to perform its valuable role in the international community if Member States honoured their financial obligations to it. However, some, and particularly developing Member States, faced serious financial constraints. Kenya suffered from high foreign and domestic debt, and devastating weather conditions had hampered its economic performance. As a result it had been unable to honour some of its financial obligations. However, it was committed to paying its outstanding arrears soon.

Mr. Palacios (Ecuador) took the chair.

42. Ms. GARNETT (Australia) conveyed her country's deep condolences and sense of outrage over the catastrophic loss of life and the injuries and destruction caused by the recent terrorist attacks in the United States of America. Australia would work closely with the United States to combat the scourge of international terrorism, and the Agency had an important role to play in helping prevent terrorist acts.

43. The environment in which the Agency operated was very fluid, and it had to maintain the capacity to respond quickly and effectively to external developments, whether they were related to nuclear weapons proliferation, sustainable development or nuclear safety. The Agency could not fulfil its mandate operating in isolation. Wherever possible, it should foster

co-operative partnerships with other international organizations and with relevant organizations in Member States, focusing on areas where it was able to add the greatest value. The increasing level of interaction between the three pillars of the Agency's work was also welcome. The importance of the Director General's one-house approach could not be overstated.

44. The 2000 NPT Review Conference had recognized that Agency safeguards were an indispensable component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and had endorsed the strengthening of the Agency's safeguards system. Regrettably, progress with the signing and ratification of additional protocols to safeguards agreements had been slow, and she urged countries to conclude additional protocols and called upon those States party to the NPT which had not yet concluded safeguards agreements to do so without further delay. Australia was the first Member State in which integrated safeguards were being applied, and the Agency was gaining practical experience there of implementing new measures such as unannounced inspections, complementary access and managed access. That experience would be invaluable as integrated safeguards were extended to other countries. Her country hoped that its experience would demonstrate to other countries that integrated safeguards, far from being burdensome, yielded benefits in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. Safeguards were also essential to trade and co-operation in support of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Australia for example, as a major uranium supplier, placed the uranium exported by it under Agency safeguards in order to ensure that it was used only for peaceful purposes.

45. Nuclear disarmament could not be achieved without effective measures that ensured nuclear non-proliferation. The nuclear-weapon States had particular disarmament obligations under Article VI of the NPT. However, non-nuclear-weapon States also had a role to play, for example by concluding additional protocols, complying fully with their NPT safeguards obligations, and by helping to bring the CTBT into force and get FMCT negotiations started. Australia and many other CTBT supporters would continue working to bring about the early entry into force of the CTBT, as called for by the 2000 NPT Review Conference. With 161 signatories and 79 ratifications, the Treaty already represented a powerful body of international opinion opposed to nuclear weapons testing. The 2000 NPT Review Conference had also identified the negotiation of an FMCT as an urgent task for the international community, and the Agency was to be commended for its contribution to the dialogue on possible FMCT verification requirements.

46. The Agency had still not been able to verify the correctness and completeness of the initial declaration of nuclear material made by the DPRK, which was still not complying fully with its safeguards agreement with the Agency. The General Conference should again make it clear that the DPRK had international obligations under that agreement which it was expected to fulfil. Moreover, full compliance was in the DPRK's own interests, since it was a prerequisite for the supply of nuclear power reactors by KEDO and could help create the confidence needed for further development of relations between the DPRK and other countries. Six DPRK officials had participated in a safeguards training course conducted by Australia, in co-operation with the Agency, during August.

47. Her country was concerned that Iraq might be reactivating its nuclear weapons programme following the cessation of the Agency verification and monitoring activities mandated by the United Nations Security Council, and it welcomed the fact that the Agency had maintained its readiness to resume its activities in Iraq as soon as circumstances allowed. Iraq should allow the Agency to carry out its duties and fulfil the mandate entrusted to it by the Security Council.

48. The Agency had been recognized by successive NPT Review Conferences as the principal agent for the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Australia welcomed the organization's efforts to strengthen technical co-operation through thematic planning, the use of Country Programme Frameworks and the Model Project approach. It also welcomed the fact that SAGTAC had been reconstituted for a third term.

49. During the preceding year, Australia had contributed to the Agency's technical co-operation activities through 48 expert missions, substantial extrabudgetary contributions, and its strong support for the RCA for Asia and the Pacific. It was developing distance learning materials for use by other Member States and new degree programmes, and offering in-house training.

50. The Agency's new activities on the use of the SIT to eradicate mosquito populations were currently focused on malaria control. However, if successful, they could perhaps also be directed towards combating other mosquito-borne diseases. In that event, Australia stood ready to participate.

51. Australia's replacement research reactor project was on schedule, and the application for a construction licence was currently under consideration by the regulator. The Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation was grateful to the Agency for the peer review of the preliminary safety analysis report submitted by it in support of its licence application.

52. In the nuclear safety area, her country attached particular importance to improving the international safety regime for research reactors. It therefore welcomed the action taken by the Board of Governors a few days previously in relation to research reactor safety and hoped that the General Conference would endorse that action. The Agency could usefully focus on assisting Member States with the defuelling of their reactors which were no longer operational, the safe management of the spent fuel and, eventually, the decommissioning of such reactors. Australia hoped that the Agency's work in developing safety standards would soon be extended to cover all nuclear fuel cycle facilities. It was also continuing to promote constructive dialogue on the safe transport of radioactive material and welcomed the discussions which were currently under way between representatives of the major shipping States and members of the Pacific Islands Forum. It also looked forward to the conference on the safe transport of radioactive material planned for 2003.

53. The primary purpose of the United Nations, as reflected in Article 1 of its Charter, was to maintain international peace and security, and to that end to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace. Preventing threats to peace required the building of trust among nations and the development of an effective international

security system, and the Agency's safeguards system was vital in that connection. However, maintaining peace and security also had socio-economic dimensions and, in that context, Australia also valued the Agency as a technologically sophisticated body engaged in promoting sustainable development and the safe use of nuclear energy.

54. Mr. NIÑO DE GUZMÁN (Bolivia) offered condolences to the Government and people of the United States of America for the recent terrorist attacks. Bolivia condemned all terrorist attacks and hoped that an end would be put to such criminal actions in the near future.

55. His country was appreciative of the Agency's technical co-operation strategy and its efforts to strengthen the programme, as well as of the assistance it received. The projects for the current biennium were making good progress, and the project on the water and contamination balance of the Choqueyapu river basin in the La Paz department was 86% complete. A laboratory was being set up to provide reference and quality control data for the project, and monitoring services for other national programmes. Two other important national projects were the one on Chagas disease, for which Bolivia itself had contributed US \$80 000, and the one on animal health in eastern Bolivia. Although the Bolivian technical counterpart had been adversely affected by the serious economic crisis in the region, it continued to promote the various technical co-operation projects in progress enthusiastically. A law on science and technology had entered into force in the country that month which established institutional and operational mechanisms and enlarged the State budget for the national counterpart.

56. Bolivia, like other countries in the region, was concerned over the growth in the Regular Budget for 2002-2003, which had a negative impact on the capacity of Member States to pay, and the growing number of unfunded core activities, which was causing an imbalance in the programme.

57. A number of worthy draft resolutions were being considered by the General Conference. The draft resolution on safe transport of radioactive material was of vital interest not just to the Latin American and Caribbean region but to the whole international community. Document GC(45)INF/18 contained declarations of concern by members of the Rio Group, as well as other regional groups, regarding maritime transport of radioactive material near the region's coasts. The fact that a transporting country had recognized the need for compliance with Agency standards in that area was positive and gave room to hope that others would soon adopt those standards, allowing discussion of the issue to reach a new level. Bolivia fully supported the draft resolution in question.

58. In conclusion, he thanked those countries which had pledged contributions to the TCF during the current session.

59. Mr. SHANGULA (Namibia) said that the world had recently witnessed with horror and disbelief the barbaric killing of innocent people and the wanton destruction of property in the United States of America. The Namibian people stood by the people of the United States during their time of grief and mourning and joined in the unequivocal condemnation of all forms of terrorism.

60. In April, the Director General had paid an official visit to his country during which fruitful discussions had been held, culminating in the signing of a Country Programme Framework for Namibia which was designed to link Agency technical co-operation activities to Namibia's second national development plan and ensure projects had more impact on Namibia's national development strategy, particularly in the areas of poverty reduction and capacity building. Currently, five Agency technical co-operation projects were under way in the country: one on environmental control, auditing and safeguarding of the uranium industry; one on monitoring of veterinary drug residues in livestock; a project on recharge, groundwater quality and the flow mechanisms in the Oshivelo and Kalahari aquifers; one on improving nuclear medicine services in Namibia; and one on automatic tracer flow gauging stations in ephemeral rivers.

61. Namibia was participating in a regional Model Project aimed at enhancing diagnosis and control of malaria and tuberculosis. It also greatly appreciated the assistance the Agency was providing through the regional Model Project on development of technical capabilities for sustainable radiation and waste safety infrastructure. In connection with the latter project, an atomic energy bill providing for the creation of an atomic energy board and a radiation protection regulatory authority would soon be tabled in Parliament.

62. Namibia had assumed the chairmanship of AFRA in September 2000 over which period the Agency had provided more than seven million dollars' worth of assistance to the region. Participating Member States were now involving themselves more in the design of the programme, and more decision-makers were aware of the need to support AFRA and of the importance of TCDC in Africa. Strategies had been initiated for ensuring the sustainability of AFRA projects.

63. The Agency's relevance to developing countries had clearly increased, as was demonstrated by the growing number of developing Member States. However, it was still experiencing financial difficulties, primarily because some Member States failed to honour their financial obligations to it. Namibia was not one of those Member States nor did it intend to become one.

64. Developing countries were under-represented in the Secretariat, especially at the higher staff levels. Women were also under-represented, and especially African women. The Director General should adopt a more proactive approach in the field of recruitment to redress that problem.

65. In conclusion, he welcomed the steps being taken to strengthen the Agency's safeguards system through the conclusion of additional protocols. Namibia remained cautiously optimistic that Member States, in particular those that had concluded safeguards agreements, would comply fully with their NPT obligations.

66. Mr. HOANG VAN NHA (Viet Nam) expressed sympathy with the families of the victims of the horrific terrorist attacks in the United States of America and said that his country strongly condemned those attacks which had caused great suffering to innocent people.

67. Viet Nam greatly appreciated the Agency's achievements over the preceding year in the areas of nuclear verification, nuclear applications and nuclear safety, and its efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the safeguards system. His country had signed the NPT, concluded a safeguards agreement, and was committed to non-proliferation. As the country chairing the Executive Committee of the Bangkok Treaty, it had also been playing an active role in the efforts of the ASEAN countries to induce the nuclear-weapon States to accede to the Protocol to that Treaty.

68. National governments should bear the primary responsibility for the safe operation of their nuclear facilities. At the same time, the Agency had a vital role to play in promoting international co-operation in nuclear safety through the development of standards and the provision of education and training. Viet Nam highly valued the technical assistance provided by the Agency in the area of nuclear safety. It also shared the concerns which had been expressed regarding the safety of research reactors. It had completed a safety analysis report on its research reactor in accordance with Agency guidelines and was holding national seminars and workshops on research reactor safety with the Agency's assistance. It had adopted a national action plan on nuclear safety and radiation protection and, in addition to strengthening its technical capabilities, was developing a nuclear regulatory infrastructure and preparing to become a party to various nuclear safety-related conventions.

69. With regard to technical co-operation, his country hoped that the initiatives undertaken by the Agency together with regional and other international organizations would result in the Agency's finding new sources of funds and manpower for its technical co-operation activities. Viet Nam was doing its best to maximize the benefits it derived from technical co-operation with the Agency and, in line with the Agency's technical co-operation strategy, it was setting priorities in formulating project proposals relating to human health, agriculture, research reactor utilization and safety, water resources management, environmental protection, industry and manpower development.

70. His country welcomed the establishment of INPRO and would like to see a large number of Member States playing an active part in it. Viet Nam viewed nuclear power as a possible energy supply option and was grateful to the Agency for the assistance it had provided with a pre-feasibility study for the introduction of nuclear power.

71. Finally, with regard to the question of global climate change, Viet Nam was concerned over the difficulties faced by the Kyoto Protocol. It would like to see universal adherence to that instrument and stood ready to co-operate with other countries and with the relevant international organizations in trying to bring it into force.

72. Ms. AL-MULLA (Kuwait) offered condolences to the Government and people of the United States of America for the innocent victims of the recent terrorist attacks in that country. All countries should redouble their efforts to eradicate terrorism in all its forms.

73. The Agency's promotion of research into nuclear energy and its applications helped States prepare comprehensive development plans and meet their growing demand for energy.

However, all energy sources were important, including fossil fuels, and different standards and rules should not be applied to different forms of energy.

74. Kuwait fully supported the Agency's technical co-operation programme and the assistance it provided to developing countries in the fields of health care, agriculture and water resources, inter alia. In that connection, she stressed the importance of finding funding for technical training programmes for the West Asia region.

75. Her country had almost completed the ratification formalities for its safeguards agreement. It was essential that safeguards be applied in all States in the Middle East, including Israel, as the 2000 NPT Review Conference had confirmed. Equally, it was important that agreement was reached as soon as possible on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and a zone free of all other weapons of mass destruction, including chemical and biological weapons. Kuwait fully supported that objective and the application of comprehensive Agency safeguards to all nuclear facilities in the region, and was of the opinion that the issue should not be linked to the achievement of a comprehensive peace agreement. The responsibility for making the requisite arrangements should lie with the Agency rather than with a regional body, in order to avoid duplication of effort and waste of resources. Countries exporting nuclear technology should refrain from supplying countries in the region with technology that could be used to develop nuclear weapons. Moreover, all countries in the Middle East should undertake to disclose all information regarding their nuclear facilities and programmes in order to ensure that Agency verification measures were comprehensive and covered both declared and undeclared sites. In that connection, she stressed the importance of additional protocols.

76. Her country was deeply concerned that the Agency had been unable to carry out its mandate in Iraq under the relevant Security Council resolutions since December 1998, and she emphasized the urgency of ensuring the early return of the inspection team, as the Agency had been unable to investigate any illicit activities that Iraq might have been conducting since that point. Iraq still refused to comply with Security Council resolution 1284 (1999), which reaffirmed the Agency's right and duty to verify Iraq's compliance with resolution 687 (1991) and other relevant resolutions. It was essential for the Agency to obtain a technically coherent picture of Iraq's clandestine nuclear programme. As document GC(45)/18 made clear, the suspension of resolution-related inspections would make it more difficult for the Agency to regain a level of knowledge of the status of Iraq's nuclear-related assets comparable to that it had achieved in 1998, and the longer the suspension lasted the more difficult the resumption process would be and the more time the Agency would need to re-establish such a level of knowledge. Kuwait appreciated the work of the Agency's Action Team in Iraq, and it supported continued regular contacts with UNMOVIC and co-ordinated action to implement Security Council resolution 1284 (1999). In conclusion, she commended the Agency's work - in co-operation with Member States and UNMOVIC - on revising the list of items and technology to which the export/import mechanism applied.

77. Mr. HOFFMANN (Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization) expressed sympathy with the United States of America, and most

especially with the families of the victims, following the unspeakable acts of terrorism which had taken place there.

78. The CTBT, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 1996, currently had 161 signatories. Seventy-nine States, including 31 of the 44 States whose ratification was required for the entry into force of the Treaty, had deposited instruments of ratification with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The first Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty had been held in October 1999 in Vienna. The second was to be held later in 2001 in New York, and it was hoped that it would result in further signatures and ratifications.

79. The CTBT provided for the establishment of a unique global verification regime consisting of an international monitoring system, a consultation and clarification process, on-site inspections and confidence-building measures. Data from monitoring system stations around the globe were processed and analysed by the International Data Centre in Vienna. The monitoring system was to consist of a global network of 321 stations, using four technologies, and 16 radionuclide laboratories. The facilities would be capable of registering vibrations underground, in the sea and in the air, and detecting traces of radionuclides released into the atmosphere from a nuclear explosion. The stations would transmit data via a global communications system to the International Data Centre, where they would be processed, analysed and used in detecting, locating and characterizing events. Bulletins of events would then be produced based on the data received. Member States had the final responsibility for analysing the data, and ambiguous events could be subject to consultation and clarification. As a final verification measure, on-site inspections might be carried out.

80. Work on the establishment of monitoring system stations had started in the second half of 1997. More than 20 primary seismic stations, 75 auxiliary seismic stations, two hydroacoustic stations, nine infrasound stations and 14 radionuclide stations had been completed. With regard to on-site inspections, the Preparatory Commission was building up capabilities in accordance with the requirements of the CTBT. It was drafting an operational manual of inspection procedures, working out equipment specifications, acquiring inspection equipment for testing and training purposes, and developing a long-range training and exercise programme for the purpose of building up a staff of potential inspectors.

81. Training was an important activity of the Provisional Technical Secretariat. The focus of monitoring system training was on training station operations personnel in the use of the four technologies. The International Data Centre provided six-month training courses designed to increase the trainees' understanding of how the Centre functioned, and to enlarge the pool of possible candidates for analyst positions. The Provisional Technical Secretariat had conducted five introductory training courses on on-site inspections for over 170 trainees from about 40 States.

82. Currently, the Provisional Technical Secretariat had a staff of more than 250 people from nearly 70 countries. More than 27% of the Professional posts were held by women. The Preparatory Commission's approved budget for 2001 amounted to \$83.5 million. As of September 2001, over 84% of the assessed contributions had been received.

83. Regarding legal matters, various arrangements had been concluded with States for the regulation of the Preparatory Commission's activities at nearly 300 monitoring system facilities. An agreement regulating the relationship between the Preparatory Commission and the United Nations had entered into force in 2000. The Preparatory Commission had established a liaison office at United Nations Headquarters in November 2000.

84. In its outreach activities, the Provisional Technical Secretariat stressed the benefits which CTBT participation could yield both in terms of enhanced security and in civil and scientific applications of the verification technologies. It was endeavouring to increase understanding of the CTBT's significance and of the Preparatory Commission's work with a view to advancing the signature and ratification process and increasing the involvement of States in that work.

85. Mr. BEJAPUTRA (Thailand) offered condolences to the people and Government of the United States and to the bereaved families for the loss and suffering caused by the recent tragic incidents in that country.

86. Thailand supported the Agency's strengthened safeguard system. The current safeguards arrangement in his country needed to be revised to accommodate the requirements of the additional protocol. A national committee was being set up to formulate a new and more appropriate safeguards system for Thailand. Substantial progress had been made with regard to the establishment of the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone on matters relating to nuclear-weapon States. His country also welcomed the ratification of the Bangkok Treaty by the Government of the Philippines.

87. In the nuclear safety area, following the nuclear accident in the preceding year Government authorities had agreed that the Office of Atomic Energy for Peace should be reorganized to become the national regulatory authority, with separate management from operational and R&D activities. Thailand was also participating in the Model Project on upgrading radiation protection infrastructure and had been working closely with the Agency's regional manager to implement the Agency's Basic Safety Standards. The Agency should continue to work closely with Member States to establish guidelines to prevent possible radioactive metal contamination in consumer products. The recently approved Action Plan for the Safety of Radiation Sources and the Security of Radioactive Materials and its associated Code of Conduct had been greatly appreciated by developing Member States in Asia at the regional workshop on that issue held in Bangkok on 6-10 August 2001. However, further guidelines and measures were needed to make them more effective. His country was also grateful to the Agency for the support it had given to the subsequent Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone workshop held in Bangkok on 11 August 2001. In the waste safety area, the Agency had provided valuable assistance to Thailand with the successful conditioning of part of its disused radium-226 sources.

88. The Director General's one-house policy had a significant impact on effective delivery of technical co-operation since, in addition to the important role played by the Department of Technical Co-operation, the technical departments of the Agency also provided key support to the programme. Thailand had benefited substantially from Agency technical assistance in

recent years, including under the RCA. It had also contributed to the programme by receiving fellows and scientific visitors for on-the-job training in agricultural and medical applications.

89. The Agency had actively participated in the 17th International Conference of the International Union of Nutritional Sciences held in Vienna on 27-31 August 2001, and had organized an International Symposium on Isotopic Tools for Monitoring Nutritional Status in Nutrition and Development Programmes in conjunction with it. That event had been of great assistance to Member States. Nutrition was an essential factor in meeting basic human needs, and isotopic techniques were one of the tools that could be used to help solve malnutrition problems worldwide. The Agency should therefore consider expanding technical assistance to Member States in the nutrition research and development field, together with partners such as the WHO, FAO and UNICEF, interested Member States, and NGOs.

90. Mr. TOUQ (Jordan) conveyed his country's condolences to the Government and people of the United States of America following the recent terrorism attacks in that country. Jordan condemned those acts, which ran counter to the traditions of Arab and Muslim society, and was ready to support all actions aimed at combating terrorism.

91. Convinced as it was that the peaceful use of nuclear energy and nuclear techniques could enhance socio-economic development, his country had recently established a nuclear energy commission, with the assistance of the Agency, and passed legislation on nuclear energy and radiation protection. Serious efforts were being undertaken to acquire and develop the relevant knowledge and skills to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy and nuclear techniques in the fields of food, agriculture, medicine, health, industry, the environment, water resource management and radiation protection, inter alia.

92. He stressed the importance of enhancing the Agency's technical co-operation activities, and developing effective programmes geared to improving the scientific and technical capabilities of developing countries and providing long-term assistance to sustainable development. The latter entailed, inter alia, focusing on strengthening national capabilities in the areas of nuclear equipment maintenance, upgrading and quality control, and human resource development. The Agency should also consider providing assistance for the SESAME project (Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East).

93. The Agency was undertaking valuable activities aimed at strengthening international co-operation in the areas of nuclear safety and the development of safety standards for radioactive waste management. Projects should also be established on effective control and monitoring of illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive material and radiation sources. Member States needed to establish well equipped border control centres capable of detecting such material.

94. Nuclear energy could also make a valuable contribution to addressing the serious problem of water shortages. That issue was of special interest to Jordan which faced major water problems. His country therefore fully supported the Agency's activities relating to the

economic production of potable water, nuclear desalination of sea water, and the use of isotope hydrology for water resource management.

95. The Arab Atomic Energy Agency provided valuable assistance to its Member States in the peaceful applications of nuclear energy. However, it was suffering from a lack of resources and hoped that the Agency would provide support in order to help it assume a more active role, particularly in the fields of socio-economic development and environmental protection.

96. It was essential that all United Nations resolutions be duly respected and implemented if peace and security were to prevail in the world. Most countries in the Middle East supported the goal of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region, and all Arab countries in the region had signed the NPT. Israel alone refused to sign the Treaty or let the Agency monitor its nuclear facilities. That attitude obstructed efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East and posed a risk to the region. He urged the international community to exert pressure on Israel to sign the NPT and place its nuclear activities under Agency safeguards.

97. Mr. CHAMMA (Lebanon) said that his country joined others in condemning the recent terrorist acts committed in the United States of America and offered its profound sympathy to the people of that country.

98. Lebanon had been one of the first countries to join the Agency because of its firm belief in the peaceful objectives of the organization. It was committed to making the world a safer place, and the Middle East a stable region free of all weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons. All States in the region had acceded to the NPT except Israel, which was also the only State in the Middle East that possessed nuclear weapons and which refused to place its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards and allow international inspections. The resulting situation constituted a permanent threat to security in the Middle East and hence to global security. The failure of the peace process, the ongoing violence in the region, and the current climate of confrontation throughout the world had made matters worse. He urged the international community to use its influence to compel Israel to comply with international treaties so that the Agency could achieve its aim of protecting the Middle East against the nuclear threat.

99. It was a basic principle of Lebanese foreign policy to maintain the best possible relations with the United Nations and its specialized agencies. The fruits of its collaboration with the Agency consisted of both legal instruments and practical achievements. For example, Lebanon had ratified most of the Agency's legal instruments and in some cases had enacted national legislation to apply their provisions. The Lebanese Government had recently submitted a bill to Parliament on protection against ionizing radiation which provided for the establishment of a monitoring body in accordance with the provisions of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, which Lebanon had already signed. Information on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for development had been published.

100. He urged the Agency to redouble its efforts in the area of water resources management, which was of vital strategic importance in the Middle East and essential to the maintenance of

stability in the region. Assistance should also be provided with the problem of guarding against radioactive contamination of water.

101. Lebanon was appreciative of the Agency's technical co-operation activities and was particularly grateful for the training received by Lebanese environmental and medical experts. It paid its financial contributions to the Agency, including its voluntary contributions to the TCF, and would continue to do so. However, its key contribution to the work of the Agency lay in the human resources area in the form of a group of Lebanese experts who were devotedly serving the Agency and its lofty goals. His country was also working to promote co-operation between the Agency and the Arab Atomic Energy Agency, which operated on the same principles as its international counterpart.

102. The current session was taking place at a time of world crisis which could mark a historical turning point. In five weeks' time, Lebanon would be hosting a summit of francophone States to be attended by heads of State and Government representing many different religions, creeds, customs and continents. The one factor that united them - apart from the French language - was their commitment to human rights and freedoms, and to world peace. The conference slogan, "Dialogue among cultures", underscored the need to respect other people's right to be different as a prerequisite for world peace. Dialogue, rather than confrontation and the violation of international law and customs, was the key to cultural, social and economic peace and security.

103. Mr. SAN THEIN (Myanmar) said that it was essential that Agency safeguards and verification measures were applied in a non-discriminatory manner and in conformity with the relevant provisions of the NPT.

104. The Bangkok Treaty constituted significant contribution to peace and security in South-East Asia. Myanmar had signed that Treaty even before becoming a member of ASEAN at the fifth ASEAN formal summit held in December 1995. Myanmar had also been one of the earliest members of ASEAN to ratify the Treaty. Nuclear-weapons-free zones were effective in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and in contributing to nuclear disarmament.

105. The Agency played a highly effective and useful role in mediating regional co-operation through the RCA, AFRA and ARCAL, which were doing very well in their respective regions. It had provided his own country with valuable assistance in the fields of nuclear medicine, radiotherapy, nuclear diagnostic techniques, agriculture, industry, education and training, which had had a positive impact on national development. Myanmar had embarked on a programme aimed at promoting and developing nuclear applications and was aware of the need for an adequate radiation protection and waste safety infrastructure. The efforts within the country to prepare regulations on the safe use of radiation and atomic energy were almost complete. He thanked the Agency for the assistance it had provided in that regard through the interregional Model Project on upgrading radiation and waste safety infrastructure. In conclusion, he urged the Director General and the Secretariat to maintain and develop further its technical assistance activities, giving priority to projects for less developed Member States.

Mr. Kangai (Zimbabwe) took the Chair.

106. Mr. CARRERA DORAL (Cuba) expressed his country's deep sympathy with the people of the United States of America following the grievous loss of life caused by the recent terrorist attacks. The Cuban people, with over 40 years' exposure to terrorist attacks promoted from United States territory, were particularly sensitive to the sorrow caused by the unjustified loss of so many lives.

107. Cuba was making tremendous development efforts under very difficult economic conditions exacerbated by the unjust and criminal blockade imposed on it by the United States Government, a blockade which had been in force for more than 40 years despite almost unanimous condemnation by the international community.

108. The nuclear programme launched in Cuba in the 1980s consisted of two main parts: one relating to applications of nuclear techniques and another to nuclear power. The Juraguá nuclear power plant project had recently been discontinued for economic reasons. Options which were economically more viable, given Cuba's present circumstances, had emerged during the past few years. Cuba was currently meeting over 70% of its electricity demand using domestically produced fuel.

109. Nevertheless, his Government recognized the role which nuclear techniques could play in sustainable development, and the substantial impact which they had had on Cuba's main development programmes. It would therefore continue supporting Cuba's nuclear programme, which was now focused on applications of nuclear techniques in various areas of socio-economic importance.

110. His country remained of the opinion that an appropriate balance should be maintained between the promotional activities of the Agency and its verification activities. The Agency's technical co-operation programme should continue to be strengthened, as it was a vital instrument of technology transfer in response to the urgent needs of developing countries. Strengthening the programme should mean not only improving organizational structures and management procedures, but also ensuring the availability of sufficient financial resources to meet the growing demand for Agency technical assistance. Steps should be taken to prevent a further diversion of TCF resources to the financing of technical co-operation programme management, which should be financed completely from the Regular Budget.

111. Cuba had made optimum use of the resources assigned to it under the Agency's technical co-operation programme and excellent results had been achieved in areas such as human health, agriculture and industry. Consequently, despite the economic difficulties it was experiencing, it consistently met its financial obligations to the Agency.

112. His country had been a consistent advocate of nuclear disarmament and continued to believe that the present nuclear non-proliferation regime was discriminatory. What it would like to see was a strengthened, effective and efficient safeguards system as part of a universal, equitable non-proliferation regime leading to the immediate, total and unconditional elimination of nuclear weapons. Consequently, despite the difficult conditions in Cuba, it had taken practical steps pursuant to its safeguards commitments.

113. Mr. ABDULAATI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) offered sincere condolences to the people of the United States of America following the recent tragic events, and in particular to the families of the victims. His country stood ready to provide assistance in whatever form it was able, including blood donations.

114. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya attached great importance to technical co-operation to promote economic and social development through the use of nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes, and it greatly appreciated the assistance it had received from the Agency.

115. The problem of water shortages had become life-threatening in many parts of the world and could lead to war unless effective action was taken. The General Conference and the Agency should take practical steps to implement the nuclear seawater desalination programme, instructing INDAG to undertake the necessary technical and economic feasibility studies. Priority should be given to the use of small- and medium-sized reactors for seawater desalination and electricity generation, since such reactors were best suited to the low demand in small countries. His country had implemented a major project to bring water from the south to the north through a complex system of pipelines and had built numerous dams for the storage of rainwater. The Agency's isotope hydrology programme could be of great assistance to Member States in the water resources management field, and he trusted that his country's request for an Agency technical co-operation project in that area would be approved.

116. A larger proportion of the Agency's financial resources should be devoted to technical co-operation programmes in the area of nuclear science and technology and their applications with a view to enhancing the capabilities of developing countries. Co-operation should not focus on specific sectors but serve more holistic aims, in accordance with the Agency's Statute and relevant General Conference resolutions.

117. He commended the steps taken by the Agency to develop international co-operation in the fields of radiation safety, transport safety and the processing of radioactive waste and other radioactive material. Having acceded to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had established a bureau for radiation monitoring and nuclear safety which would start work as soon as local formalities had been completed.

118. It was important to ensure that Agency safeguards were applied without discrimination to all countries. The existing system was discriminatory since as it left the nuclear-weapon States free to choose the manner in which and sites at which safeguards were applied, while other countries were required to apply the system in the manner stipulated by the Agency. The nuclear-weapon States should commit themselves to eliminating all weapons of mass destruction in their possession, particularly nuclear weapons, and he urged those countries to launch a time-bound programme to that end, and to scrap all programmes aimed at the development of such weapons. Otherwise, efforts to end the nuclear arms race would lose all credibility and other countries would continue to live in fear.

119. There was still a major and dangerous security imbalance in the Middle East, since Israel was the only State in the region that possessed nuclear weapons and it refused to place

its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards and allow international inspections. At the same time, countries from outside the region were putting pressure on some States in the region to sign a treaty to make the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone. All States in the region except Israel were parties to the NPT, a number were also parties to the Pelindaba Treaty, and some had signed additional protocols. The application of double standards was counter-productive. Peace in the region would remain elusive as long as certain countries continued to support Israel and provide justification for its conduct, allowing it to ignore appeals for peace, and for it to accede to the NPT, sign a safeguards agreement with the Agency, and subject its nuclear facilities to international inspection and monitoring. He urged the General Conference to take urgent steps to compel Israel to submit to the will of the international community so that a nuclear-weapon-free zone could finally be established in the Middle East.

120. Mr. KAYSER (Luxembourg) expressed sympathy with the families of the victims of the terrible tragedy which had recently befallen the United States of America. That incident affected the entire world and would of necessity influence the Agency's future priorities.

121. Combating international terrorism was a multi-faceted affair, and one aspect of it was the prevention of diversion and theft of nuclear material, and of nuclear sabotage. In order to be able to prevent a terrorist attack involving nuclear material, physical protection of such material and of nuclear installations had to be assured. Currently, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material was restricted in scope since it was limited to obligatory active and passive protection measures within the framework of international transport of nuclear material. It did not cover preventive measures against theft or diversion of nuclear material during domestic use, storage and domestic transport, or preventive measures to protect nuclear installations against sabotage. In November 1999, the Director General had convened an open-ended expert group to review the Convention and determine whether it needed to be revised. That group had discovered the following: by March 2000, 168 confirmed instances of theft or diversion of nuclear material had been recorded, 19 of them involving highly enriched uranium and plutonium; the level of physical protection of nuclear material was far from being the same in all countries and there were obvious shortcomings; and the assistance provided by the Agency in the form of advice was limited to those countries which requested such advice, entire regions having received none.

122. During the meetings of the expert group, Luxembourg had consistently maintained that physical protection of nuclear material should be preventive in nature, and that something needed to be done before a terrorist attack occurred involving nuclear material. In the nuclear field, as in other areas, the facts showed that international conventions were often elaborated after the fact. Thus, the Assistance Convention, the Early Notification Convention and the Convention on Nuclear Safety had all been negotiated and adopted after the Chernobyl accident, i.e. too late. States should not wait for an actual instance of sabotage of a nuclear power plant, or criminal diversion of a significant quantity of military-grade plutonium, before agreeing to elaborate a new convention on physical protection to prevent such acts.

123. His country was pleased that the expert group had urged the Director General to convene a group of legal and technical experts to draft a proposed revision of the Convention,

and hoped that the recent tragic events in the United States would prompt States to reach agreement swiftly on that important legal instrument.

124. Mr. TABIBIAN (Armenia) offered condolences to the American people in the wake of the recent tragic events which were of particular consequence to the work of the Agency.

125. Sometimes events such as the Chernobyl accident were needed to ensure that mechanisms which should have been in place beforehand were finally put in place. The Agency was now faced with the problem of extending safely the operating life of nuclear power plants, an issue to which his country had a serious commitment. Armenia also welcomed the establishment of INPRO, which would be working on innovative nuclear reactors and fuel cycle technologies, including small- and medium-sized reactors that could meet the needs of developing countries.

126. The 2000 NPT Review Conference had reconfirmed that Agency safeguards were an indispensable component of the non-proliferation regime and had endorsed the efforts to strengthen the safeguards system. Armenia attached great importance to the Model Additional Protocol. It was also pleased at the quickening pace of the ratification process for the CTBT. However, some test explosions had taken place since the Treaty's opening for signature, and he urged all States that had not already done so to sign and ratify it as soon as possible and to refrain from acts which would defeat its objective and purpose. It was to be hoped that the next Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT would advance that process.

127. Nuclear safety would continue to be vital to the future of nuclear technology and was a high priority for the Armenian Government. The Armenian nuclear regulatory authority was currently finalizing the country's national report pursuant to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, in preparation for the next review meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2002. Experts from six countries had given the level of nuclear safety at the Armenian nuclear power plant a high rating, and had proposed a new programme for further upgrading of the plant's safety which had been approved by the President of Armenia. In 2000, the dry storage facility for the plant's spent nuclear fuel, which had been built by FRAMATOME and funded through a loan from the French Government, had become operational. His country also appreciated the Agency's efforts to strengthen international co-operation in nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety, and welcomed the entry into force of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management which it hoped to join soon.

128. Over the preceding two years, the discussions which had been held between the Armenian authorities and the Agency had helped focus technical co-operation programming on areas of high priority for the country.

129. Although his country had given its support to Azerbaijan's membership of the Agency, it had been disappointed by the latter's statement earlier in the week where it had used the General Conference as a forum for engaging in propaganda and false accusations against Armenia.

130. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that the challenges facing nuclear power would be addressed adequately, that a tangible social and economic impact in areas of priority to Member States would be achieved, and that nuclear power would be given a full and fair hearing in the sustainable energy development debate, thanks to the continued efforts of the Agency.

The meeting rose at 6.55 p.m.