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President: Mr GHISI (Italy)

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¹ GC(52)/21.

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Abbreviations used in this record:

AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
Assistance Convention	Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Early Notification Convention	Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
G-77	Group of Seventy-Seven
GIF	Generation IV International Forum
GNEP	Global Nuclear Energy Partnership
imPACT	integrated missions of PACT
INIS	International Nuclear Information System
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
INSServ	International Nuclear Security Advisory Service
ITER	International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
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
NSF	Nuclear Security Fund
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
RCA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
WASP	Wien Automatic System Planning Package
WMD	weapons of mass destruction

5. Arrangements for the Conference

(a) Adoption of the agenda and allocation of items for initial discussion

1. The PRESIDENT said that, following a discussion in which some delegations had expressed reservations, the General Committee had recommended that the agenda for the current session consist of all the items on the provisional agenda set forth in documents GC(52)/1 and Add.1. With regard to the allocation of items for initial discussion, it had recommended that the items be taken up for discussion as indicated in those documents. It had also recommended that the order of items be as set out in those documents.

2. Mr ZARKA (Israel) said that, regrettably, some States had again submitted an agenda item on the so-called Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat. Israel had once again chosen not to challenge the adoption of the agenda in order not to politicize further the meeting.

3. There had been many alarming proliferation developments in recent years in the Middle East; none of them had involved Israel, but all of them had challenged its security. The developments demonstrated the alarming attitude of States in the region to their international commitments in the nuclear domain. There was no basis for the agenda item, and Israel's policy concerning the implications of the item remained unchanged.

4. The General Committee's recommendations were accepted.

(b) Closing date of the session and opening date of the next session

5. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee had recommended that, owing to the adjournment of the Conference on Thursday, 2 October 2008, for the official Agency holiday of Eid al-Fitr, the Conference set Saturday, 4 October 2008, as the closing date of the fifty-second regular session and Monday, 14 September 2009, as the opening date of the fifty-third regular session.

6. The General Committee's recommendation was accepted.

7. General debate and Annual Report for 2007 (resumed) (GC(52)/9)

7. Archbishop MAMBERTI (Holy See) said that, in his message for the 2008 World Day of Peace, Pope Benedict XVI had invited every man and woman "to have a more lively sense of belonging to the one human family and to strive to make human coexistence increasingly reflect this conviction, which is essential for the establishment of true and lasting peace". That recognition of the unity of the human family was reflected in the principle of the responsibility to protect, which was characteristic of the activity of the Agency and of the United Nations as a whole. At the previous session of the General Conference, his delegation had stressed that the use of force was no longer a sustainable solution. The world must redefine its priorities and hierarchy of values and launch a common effort to mobilize resources for moral, cultural and economic development. That would require a multilateralist approach based on a renewed collective sense of security and recognition that development, solidarity and justice were essential for lasting peace.

8. The Agency worked to protect and promote life in a crucial area of human endeavour — the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The world must work together to deal constructively with that complex area, which offered possibilities for both good and bad in ways that previous generations had never had to face. It had an obligation to share expertise and build a consensus through common effort and commitment. The Agency must always aim to unite and associate, not to divide and oppose.

9. The Holy See supported efforts to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the Agency's safeguards system, and the Agency's work to develop a worldwide security regime based on conventions, standards and assistance. Those instruments would contribute both to the fight against nuclear terrorism and to the creation of a culture of life and peace capable of promoting the integral development of peoples.

10. The world must also work together for the use of peaceful and safe nuclear technology that respected the environment and the needs of the most disadvantaged. In an age of globalization and in view of the need to work for the common good, the Agency must measure the value of its projects by their impact not only on the economic or social well-being of a people or nation, but also by their impact on cultural and other human values. Promotion of the common good demanded respect for the cultures of nations and peoples, coupled with a sense of solidarity for all.

11. The Agency's technical cooperation programme was an example of what could be achieved by working together. The Holy See greatly appreciated the achievements of that programme, in particular in agriculture, hydrology, food security and medicine, and encouraged the Agency to strengthen its work in those areas. The Agency could also contribute in its own unique way to the solution of the urgent problem of access to safe drinking water, which was a precondition for sustainable development. All development policies required genuine international cooperation based on joint decisions and a universal vision, working for the good of the human family now and for generations to come.

12. The world must also work together for nuclear disarmament: the human race deserved no less than the full cooperation of all States in that endeavour. The NPT must not be weakened. Pope Benedict XVI had written in his message for the 2008 World Day of Peace of the division, conflict and increasing tension in the world, and of the growing number of States engaged in the arms race. He had concluded: "In difficult times such as these, it is truly necessary for all persons of goodwill to come together to reach concrete agreements aimed at an effective demilitarization, especially in the area of nuclear arms". The Holy See called upon those in authority to resume with greater determination the progressive and mutually agreed dismantling of existing nuclear weapons.

13. Global security must not rely on nuclear weapons. The signature, ratification and entry into force of the CTBT would be a great step forward, and its International Monitoring System had many potential civil and scientific applications. The Holy See had endorsed the Joint Ministerial Statement issued after the Fourth Ministerial Meeting in support of the entry into force of the CTBT, held in New York the previous week.

14. In his Encyclical Letter, *Spe Salvi*, Pope Benedict XVI had stated that every generation had the task of engaging anew in the arduous search for the right way to order human affairs. The Holy See would continue to follow the activities of the Agency with great interest, as an example of ways in which issues and conflicts could be subjected to common regulation if the world community worked together. He hoped that the Agency and its Member States would continue to work for the security, development and wellbeing of the human family.

15. Mr MATSUDA (Japan) said that under the leadership of its current Director General, the Agency had gained an increased level of confidence from and wider recognition by the international community. Expressing Japan's sincere appreciation to Dr ElBaradei for his tireless work, he

announced that his Government had taken the decision to nominate Mr Yukiya Amano, Permanent Representative of Japan to the International Organizations in Vienna, as a candidate to succeed him as Director General. Ambassador Amano was best suited to take on that role and those responsibilities; he was a man of remarkable achievements and had proved his competence in the areas of the peaceful use of nuclear energy and non-proliferation, including through his chairmanship of the 2005–2006 session of the Board of Governors and of the first session of the NPT Preparatory Committee in 2007. Expressing Japan's firm conviction that Ambassador Amano would further develop the Agency, he asked all Member States to support his candidature.

16. A growing number of countries had expressed interest in introducing or expanding nuclear power programmes. In order for them to do so in an appropriate manner, three elements had to be ensured, namely non-proliferation/safeguards, nuclear safety and nuclear security. The Agency's role in that regard was becoming increasingly important. At the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit in July 2008, Japan had launched an international initiative on a nuclear energy infrastructure based on those three elements, and had, together with the Agency, had held a regional seminar in Hanoi, Vietnam, in August 2008, as a follow-up activity. Japan continued to expand its assistance to countries planning to introduce nuclear power generation, for example, taking the decision to make an additional extrabudgetary contribution to the Agency in a bid to support infrastructure development, capacity building, and the establishment of a legal framework, through the dispatch of international experts to countries planning to introduce nuclear power generation.

17. In light of the need to strengthen efforts to combat global warming, Japan believed that nuclear power should be eligible for the Clean Development Mechanism, and had formulated concrete proposals in that regard in the United Nations Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol.

18. Japan would continue to participate in such international initiatives as the GIF, GNEP, INPRO and ITER. It would also promote international cooperation in the development of generation IV reactors and medium and small reactors that would contribute to the peaceful use of nuclear energy and to nuclear non-proliferation. Japan would also continue to develop the Monju fast breeder reactor as a basis for research and development.

19. Views had been expressed that initiatives concerning the assurance of nuclear fuel supply might infringe upon the right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and Japan believed that further discussions were needed. At the fiftieth session of the General Conference, it had announced its proposal on Agency Standby Arrangements System for the Assurance of Nuclear Fuel Supply, with the aim of establishing a system within the Agency that would help to dispel uncertainties on fuel supply and prevent market disturbance, by registering the supply capacities of Member States in all phases of the whole front end of the nuclear fuel cycle. Japan's proposal was useful for all Member States wishing to enjoy the benefits of nuclear energy as it contributed to enhancing the transparency of the nuclear fuel market. In order further to develop the proposal, Japan planned to hold a seminar on fuel market transparency during the current financial year.

20. Japan attached great importance to the Agency's technical cooperation activities. It had continuously contributed 100% of its share of the TCF target, and had made significant contributions in terms of financial and human resource assistance in the utilization of isotopes in medicine and industry, among other areas. As a member of the RCA and the current chairing country, Japan contributed to joint research, development and training on nuclear science and technology for developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region. It had also played an important role in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in Asia through the Forum for Nuclear Cooperation in Asia

21. Japan — the only country that had suffered atomic bombings — was determined to appeal continuously and strenuously to the world for the elimination of all nuclear weapons. The 2010 NPT Review Conference was an extremely important milestone. The International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament, established by Japan and Australia in July 2008, would be holding its first meeting in October 2008, and Japan hoped that it would present a meaningful and practical recommendation to the Review Conference.

22. Japan had always ensured international confidence in its nuclear energy activities by maintaining a high level of transparency, and the integrated safeguards system had now been implemented in Japan. Moreover, the world's first site-level integrated safeguards approach had been introduced in his country in August 2008 for facilities including a reprocessing plant. Japan would continue to promote the universalization of the additional protocol where possible, and would continue to host Asian Senior-level Talks on Non-Proliferation meetings and Agency seminars to that end. Japan also attached great importance to ensuring and improving the Agency's independent analytical capabilities, and had made an extrabudgetary contribution to help strengthen the Safeguards Analytical Laboratory.

23. The decision of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to abandon its weapons of mass destruction had set a good precedent and contributed to international peace and security. Japan welcomed Libya's active cooperation with the Agency and stressed the importance of doing everything possible to extend cooperation to Libya to enable that country to become a role model for others.

24. The international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime must not be weakened by civil nuclear cooperation with India, and Japan therefore called upon India to take further actions in order to maintain and strengthen that regime. It also requested India to accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State, and to sign and ratify the CTBT at the earliest possible date.

25. The nuclear development undertaken by the DPRK was a threat to the peace and security not only of Japan but also of East Asia and the entire international community, and represented a serious challenge to the NPT regime. The DPRK had not yet agreed to a concrete framework of verifications; it had halted disablement and was now carrying out restoration activities at the Yongbyon nuclear facility, including having seals and surveillance equipment removed by Agency inspectors. Japan was concerned about the current status of the DPRK's nuclear programme. Its policy was comprehensively to resolve the outstanding issues concerning the DPRK, including the issue of the abduction of Japanese nationals, and nuclear and missile issues, and to achieve normalization of relations. It continued actively to work towards a peaceful resolution of the nuclear issues within the framework of the six-party talks.

26. The Islamic Republic of Iran had regrettably continued with, and even expanded, its uranium enrichment-related activities in defiance of calls by the international community. In order to remove the concerns of the international community and to gain its confidence, Iran had to cooperate fully with the Agency and respond sincerely to the requirements set forth by the relevant Board and United Nations Security Council resolutions. Japan continued to work towards a peaceful and diplomatic resolution of the issues in concert with the international community.

27. Noting that ensuring safety was a prerequisite for promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy, he said that the fundamental safety functions had been ensured following the 2007 earthquake in the Niigata Prefecture and its effect on the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa nuclear power plant, and rigorous efforts were being made to confirm the safety of the reactors. In June 2008, Japan had hosted an Agency workshop to share the lessons learned and had taken the decision to make a new extrabudgetary contribution in that connection. It would also actively support the newly established Agency International Seismic Safety Centre.

28. The safe transport of radioactive material was an essential aspect of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Pursuant to the right of freedom of navigation under international law, Japan would continue to conduct such transport, while employing the most stringent safety measures in accordance with international standards. It would also engage in dialogue with shipping and coastal States, building confidence and enhancing mutual understanding.

29. Japan had initiated projects to help bolster nuclear security, mainly in the Asian region, through its contribution to the NSF. It also been participating in the drafting of Agency guidelines on nuclear security.

30. Finally, he assured participants that Japan would play a leading role in further contributing to the Agency, and asked once again that support be given to Ambassador Amano as a candidate for the post of the next Director General of the Agency.

31. Mr NOVIC (Bosnia and Herzegovina) said that a number of significant events in the field of radiation and nuclear security had taken place in Bosnia and Herzegovina over the previous year. In order to make an adequate response to obligations arising from the European Union's Stabilisation and Association Agreement, and to implement the decision of the Council of Ministers to harmonize Bosnia and Herzegovina's legislation with the European Union's *acquis communautaire*, the Law on Radiation and Nuclear Security had come into force in 2007, establishing the State Regulatory Agency for Radiation and Nuclear Security as an independent administrative body. The Council of Ministers had appointed an acting director of the State Regulatory Agency. Although a number of details still had to be determined, the Regulatory Agency would be responsible for framing State-level policy, ensuring nuclear security, and establishing a system for radiation protection in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He thanked the Agency for the technical assistance it had provided during the legislative drafting procedure and for its suggestions on the establishment of the State Regulatory Agency, in view of the country's specific needs.

32. It would take some time for the State Regulatory Agency to become fully operational. The first step would be the employment of qualified staff. His country, which did not have an educational institution offering specialized training in the field of radiation protection, was grateful to the Agency for the assistance offered with regard to staff training. The Bosnian authorities would also train staff through various schemes. The next step would be to frame the legislation (rules, guidelines and instructions) needed for the legal framework. Existing legislation in the field only partly met the Basic Safety Standards, as many important documents issued by the Agency had not been incorporated into Bosnian legislation. With the Agency's assistance, Bosnia and Herzegovina had found a partner, a Member State of the European Union, that was ready to assist Bosnia and Herzegovina in the process of drafting regulations, on the basis of their experience. He thanked the representatives of the Spanish Regulatory Authority for Nuclear Security, which had agreed to help them in the future, with the Agency playing the coordinating role. He hoped that, with such cooperation, the State Regulatory Agency for Radiation and Nuclear Security would become fully operational in the near future so that it could begin work on its legally prescribed duties and successfully respond to obligations arising from the programme of Bosnia and Herzegovina's integration into the European Union.

33. Bosnia and Herzegovina had shown itself to be totally willing to abide by the international instruments relating to the Agency's activities and would continue to do so in the future. To that end, it had initiated the procedure for adopting the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the amendments to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, the Revised Supplementary Agreement concerning the provision of Technical Assistance to the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, which it hoped to ratify by the end of the year. On 19 September 2008, the Presidency of Bosnia and

Herzegovina had made the decision to accede to the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the Agency.

34. His country expected the regional and country projects under the European Commission's Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance to make a significant contribution to establishing the infrastructure needed for implementing Agency standards and European Union directives. The projects would help Bosnia and Herzegovina to improve its legislation in the field of nuclear security and radiation protection and to establish or increase its capacities to incorporate Euratom directives and other international instruments, standards and recommendations into its own legislation. Since the Agency played an important role in that process, the possibility of overlapping and duplicating projects was thus avoided, along with unreasonable spending of crucial funds.

35. In developing its national policy, Bosnia and Herzegovina would focus on radiation protection and nuclear security. With the introduction of regulations, it would improve its regulatory framework and harmonize the relevant State infrastructure, thereby strengthening the legal basis for all related activities. Bosnia and Herzegovina would continue to meet its obligations in terms of contributions to the Agency's budget.

36. His country was grateful to the Agency for the assistance it had received through various project activities that had had a very positive effect on the country's health care system and public health. Projects concerning, in particular, radiotherapy, nuclear medicine and environmental protection had been successfully implemented. Under the project on strengthening nuclear medicine in Bosnia and Herzegovina continuous staff training was being provided and equipment had been donated. Since three gamma cameras had been installed in clinical centres, the waiting time for certain diagnoses had been significantly reduced. Moreover, staff had received training to work in the two therapy centres that had been constructed with State funds, so that patients did not have to use the services of clinical centres in neighbouring countries. Plans were being made to introduce positron emission tomography, and he hoped that the Agency would be lending significant support in that regard.

37. He thanked the Agency for its assistance in equipping the radiotherapy centre in Sarajevo and drew attention to the cobalt-60 unit and a complete system for high-dose-rate brachytherapy received under technical cooperation projects. The centre had become one of the most modern radiotherapy centres in the region but unfortunately was unable to meet the needs of the ever-increasing number of patients. Preparations were therefore being made to open two new radiotherapy centres in Banja Luka and Tuzla.

38. In April 2008, Bosnia and Herzegovina had welcomed a high-level Agency delegation, led by the Director General. The visit had served to define cooperation priorities between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Agency. Cooperation with the Agency would be extended to fields and programmes that did not yet exist in Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly in areas relating to agriculture, industry, the energy sector, and radioactive waste management. The need to speed up the equipping of border crossings with the necessary infrastructure to prevent the illegal transport of radioactive and nuclear materials had been emphasized, as had the need to maintain activities for increasing radiation and nuclear security. The Agency had offered assistance in resolving the problem of brucellosis, which had become increasingly serious in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

39. Although an exporter of electricity, Bosnia and Herzegovina did not generate energy from nuclear plants, but its electric companies did use WASP software developed by Agency experts for planning needs and future development.

40. A decision had been taken to create the new Country Programme Framework (CPF) for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The existing CPF had been signed in early 2004 and the priorities for the next mid-term period needed to be defined.

41. Noting that implementation of the decision of the Council of Ministers concerning the action plan for implementation of the technical regulations programme would be a priority in the forthcoming period, he said that, in accordance with the priorities of the international community, Bosnia and Herzegovina would continue to support, through the State Regulatory Agency, activities to combat the illegal trafficking of radioactive material. It would also remain fully committed to supporting programmes focused on human health.

42. Mr CHOREV (Israel) said that the opening of the fifty-second General Conference coincided with the Jewish New Year, which started with a ten-day period of reflection and profound introspection. Wishing all delegates and Agency staff a Happy New Year, he expressed the hope that the New Year would bring achievements in all areas of the Agency's work.

43. The steep rise in energy demands and electricity consumption all over the world, coupled with rising oil prices and growing demand for environmentally friendly energy sources, had served to make nuclear power a more attractive energy option. The intensive development of nuclear energy was highly desirable; however, proliferation risks associated with inherently dual-use fuel cycle technologies must be minimized. With the universal recognition of the right of all countries to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes came the absolute duty of each State to honour its international non-proliferation obligations and commitments.

44. The most practical approach to minimize proliferation risks was to supply nuclear reactors as a power-producing 'black box'; to supply fuel for the entire lifetime of the reactor, and to organize a scheme for the take-back of spent fuel by the supplier. His delegation was pleased that the issue of assurances of fuel supply had been placed on the global agenda and that the Agency was among those making efforts to facilitate dialogue on that crucial topic.

45. Israel's advanced nuclear expertise and know-how could play an important role in shaping the future of its energy sources and needs. His country attached great importance to the nuclear non-proliferation regime, although experience had shown that applicability of the NPT in the Middle East was, at best, limited. In recent years, Israel had brought itself even closer to the regime, including by developing robust legislation on export controls. It endorsed the call to bring non-NPT States closer to the regime, and therefore welcomed the United States-India civil nuclear cooperation initiative and its endorsement by the NSG.

46. In 1993, the Israeli Cabinet had approved a vision calling on States in the region to establish jointly in the Middle East a mutually verifiable zone free of ground-to-ground missiles, and of chemical, biological or nuclear weapons. Fifteen years later, his country had not lost hope that States in the region would one day engage in multilateral cooperative dialogue to achieve that goal. However, in recent years the world had been witnessing significant and dangerous developments regarding nuclear proliferation in the Middle East. Some countries had been developing clandestine nuclear programmes in total disregard of their international non-proliferation obligations and commitments and contrary to their stated policy. Israel, like others, was following those developments with great concern, and called on the countries in question to comply with their obligations and commitments and to halt their military nuclear activities. He hoped that the Agency would be able to investigate and clarify those activities, thus assisting the international community in its efforts to prevent dangerous proliferation of nuclear weapons and abuse of the right to nuclear energy.

47. The implementation of an effective and timely inspection process was one of the most critical elements of international non-proliferation efforts. It was essential to improve and enhance the Agency's verification capabilities. In that context, his delegation welcomed the next generation safeguards initiative launched in September 2008 by the United States Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration.

48. Adequate safety, physical security measures and national regulatory regimes were also essential for the international acceptance of nuclear power. The Israel Atomic Energy Commission sought to ensure the implementation of strict safety standards in Israel's nuclear centres, and measures and guidelines consistent with Agency safety requirements, guidelines and codes of conduct were applied. Israeli scientists also contributed to the work of the Agency in that field. The National Radiation Protection Centre at the Soreq Nuclear Research Centre the main centre in Israel for licensing and issues relating to protection against ionizing and non-ionizing radiation.

49. No State alone could confront the global threat posed by transnational terrorist networks and supporting rogue regimes, where secret and sudden attacks with chemical, biological, radioactive and nuclear weapons could become a chilling reality. The unprecedented surge in global demand for nuclear energy and technology made more urgent the common task of Agency Member States in preventing nuclear and radioactive materials becoming available to terrorists; no effort should be spared to that end. Israel had joined the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism in 2007 and planned to host an activity under that Initiative in 2009. Having commended the Agency's efforts to address the issue of illicit trafficking of radioactive and nuclear materials, he said Israel had joined the Megaports Initiative led by the United States, and was in the process of installing portals at points of entry into the country.

50. Israel greatly appreciated the Agency's technical cooperation activities, and had been cooperating with the Agency and other Member States in the most recent cycle to extend the benefits of peaceful nuclear energy applications to a greater number of Member States worldwide.

51. Israel had also recently joined the INPRO project as an observer and had identified several INPRO collaborative projects to which Israeli scientists could contribute. His Government would also consider, in due course, joining that important initiative as a member.

52. Compliance with legally binding non-proliferation commitments was a basic confidence-building measure and vital for creating conditions that would facilitate the process of turning the Middle East into a zone free of WMDs. Three out of the four widely recognized cases of non-compliance with such obligations concerned States in the Middle East that were parties to the NPT. Unfortunately, instead of tackling those pressing issues, some countries were trying to impose on the General Conference an agenda item on the so-called Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat, an item that had been removed from the agenda in 1993 and never acted upon since. Some of the sponsors of the relevant draft resolution were States that did not recognize the State of Israel and even called for its annihilation. He would question the moral standing of those sponsors that did not recognize Israel's right to exist while criticizing Israeli policies aimed at securing that very existence.

53. Agenda item 20 concerned the establishment of the Middle East as a NWFZ, to which his country remained committed. Such a zone could not be established out of context; it could only emerge from a gradual process of mutual acceptance, reconciliation and lasting peace, followed by more confidence-building and modest arms control measures. Israel had joined consensus on relevant resolutions for many years, despite its grave reservations about their modalities and about the relevance of the General Conference as a forum to address the issue. Unfortunately, consensus had been lost on the resolution for the first time after 14 years in 2006, because certain States had insisted on introducing amendments to the text that had not been negotiated. It was not too late to reach a consensus on the item, and Israel appreciated the efforts of a number of delegations in that regard.

54. Mr WICKS (United Kingdom) said that a nuclear energy white paper on meeting the energy challenge, which had been published by his Government in January and marked the end of a public consultation process, had announced the decision that civil nuclear power should play its part in a

balanced and diverse energy strategy for the United Kingdom. A new strategy had also been devised for the safe disposal of nuclear waste, with deep geological disposal the preferred long-term solution.

55. The United Kingdom was in favour of new civil nuclear power for two major reasons: climate change and energy security. There could be no doubt that climate change — global warming — represented the major challenge facing the planet in the current century. If States did not tackle global warming, the consequences for nations, such as flooding, mass population migration and other phenomena, would be momentous.

56. The current era was one of unprecedented global demand for energy and of growing geopolitical risks. With global energy prices becoming increasingly volatile, it had never been more imperative to increase the amount of energy obtained from secure and sustainable sources.

57. His Government had embarked on a series of steps that would set a sound basis for a new phase of nuclear power in the country, and utility companies had shown a readiness to respond quickly to investment opportunities in that area..

58. The nuclear renaissance in the United Kingdom was taking place within the context of over sixty years of experience. He would be joined at the British Embassy in Vienna the following day by top decision-makers from the country's nuclear industry to speak further on the subject at a seminar entitled Nuclear Power: the UK Experience. He looked forward to welcoming participants at that event.

59. The number of new reactors built in the United Kingdom would depend on commercial planning decisions taken by private sector utility companies. However, there was no doubt that there was likely to be a substantial demand for nuclear power worldwide, and strong international partnerships were an essential component of successful national strategies for the exploitation of nuclear energy. The Agency had a significant and indispensable role to play in that regard and had shown its strength in giving objective guidance, setting standards and monitoring; it must now actively address the challenges of a reinvigorated nuclear future. The recent report by the Commission of Eminent Persons on the Future of the Agency contained in document GC(52)/INF/4 was a timely publication in that regard, which sought to identify some of those challenges and initiate a debate among Member States. Although the Agency would not have the lead role in addressing all the varied challenges of a nuclear renaissance, it did have an important part to play, concentrating on its core mandate and prioritizing those activities where it could make a major and unique contribution. The United Kingdom stood ready to be a full and active participant in helping to define the Agency's strategic vision up to 2020 and beyond, and hoped that all Member States would be actively involved in the shaping of an Agency fit to address the challenges of the first quarter of the century.

60. The Agency's work in the area of non-proliferation would remain of crucial importance in view of the need to maintain confidence in the fact that nuclear technologies were being used for peaceful purposes only. The NPT, the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, was of the utmost importance in addressing threats to global security and stability. It was regrettable that 30 non-nuclear-weapon States still did not have comprehensive safeguards agreements in force, and the United Kingdom called on those States to conclude and bring into force the comprehensive safeguards agreements that were required of them. It also strongly urged those and all other non-nuclear-weapon States that had not yet done so to conclude and implement an additional protocol. The Agency's strengthened safeguards system would be fully effective only when all non-nuclear-weapon States had both measures in place.

61. The United Kingdom underscored its steadfast support for the Agency's continuing work on specific urgent safeguards verification issues. His Government shared the serious concern expressed by the Director General about Iran's failure to ensure cooperation and transparency as the Agency

sought essential answers to questions about that country's nuclear activities. It had joined the unanimous call in United Nations Security Council resolution 1835 (2008) for Iran to comply fully and without delay with its obligations under Security Council resolutions and to meet the requirements of the Agency's Board of Governors.

62. His delegation looked to the authorities of the DPRK to resume cooperation with the Agency at the earliest opportunity and to implement their commitment to the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantling of the DPRK's nuclear programme.

63. The danger of nuclear materials being obtained by terrorists was one of the major issues facing the international community, and the United Kingdom was a strong supporter of the Agency's nuclear security programme

64. His Government welcomed the Agency's regulations on the safe transport of radioactive materials. The establishment of the European association of competent authorities ensured even greater harmonization concerning transport regulations.

65. The United Kingdom had placed strong emphasis on developing partnerships in both training and site security. It supported the Agency in facilitating substantial integrated physical protection upgrades at key locations and was pleased that the Agency was working with the United Kingdom so effectively in areas including procurement and risk management.

66. The United Kingdom continued to be a major contributor to the voluntary NSF, having contributed more than US \$7 million. It called on other Member States to support the Agency's efforts in that vital area.

67. In meeting the challenge of climate change, States should seek to use clean, green, secure and sustainable energy. For the United Kingdom, nuclear energy formed part of the answer. That was not to suggest that nuclear energy was a panacea: it involved major capital, long-term decisions, and risks that must be assessed and addressed. A reactor that ran for 40, 50 or even 60 years required fuel to remain operational. Hence the importance of secure nuclear fuel supplies. Given the global interdependence of nuclear industries, all States should face the problem of fuel security together. A key part of the solution, as identified early on by the Agency, would be the development of multinational approaches to the fuel cycle. Several countries, individually and collectively, had put forward proposals to provide assurances of nuclear fuel supply. The United Kingdom's own proposal was for a fuel enrichment assurance, or 'enrichment bond' — a binding arrangement to underpin commercial contracts and assure supplies over a specific time frame. His Government intended to engage with the Agency and interested countries to ensure that ideas were both fair and practical. To that end, the United Kingdom intended to host a major international conference on nuclear fuel supplies before March 2009.

68. Mr KHELIL (Algeria) said that his delegation took note of the report of the Commission of Eminent Persons on the role of the IAEA to 2020 and beyond contained in document GC(52)/INF/4; the discussions taking place during the current Scientific Forum would undoubtedly help consolidate thinking on that subject.

69. With regard to technical cooperation, he said that Algeria was grateful for the assistance it had received in areas including the introduction of nuclear power, the strengthening of radiation protection infrastructure and for the fellowships and courses from which its national experts had benefited. Welcoming the fact that no fewer than 122 States benefited from the Agency's technical cooperation, he said it was necessary to establish an effective mechanism to ensure that financial resources for the Technical Cooperation Fund were sufficient, assured and predictable. For its part, Algeria would continue to pay its contributions on time, including to the TCF. Adoption of the AFRA Regional

Strategic Cooperative Framework for 2008–2013 would improve the activities undertaken by the Agency in conjunction with the AFRA programme. Algeria encouraged the Agency to make its contribution to implementation of the Plan of Action adopted by the High-Level Regional Conference on the Contribution of Nuclear Energy to Peace and Sustainable Development, organized in Algiers in January 2007. Cooperation would also be useful with the African Energy Commission, officially launched in Algiers in February 2008. Inter-Agency cooperation was also a gauge of the success of the Agency's technical cooperation activities and programmes, and he drew attention to the importance of strategic partnerships with other international organizations and national institutes.

70. Algeria was continuing its cooperation with the Agency in terms of the safety and security of radioactive sources and the national regulatory infrastructure for nuclear safety and security in order to comply with international standards and ensure the safe use of nuclear energy. Algeria remained committed to combating terrorism in all its forms, and supported the Agency's action plan to combat nuclear terrorism. Algeria encouraged implementation of international instruments, such as the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, both of which had been ratified by his country.

71. Algeria continued to consider the Agency as the body duly mandated to deal with safeguards and verification, and wished to express its confidence in the Secretariat for its impartiality and professionalism. His delegation welcomed the serious discussions that had been held in the Advisory Committee on Safeguards and Verification, which Algeria had had the privilege of chairing. His country thanked the Secretariat for its assistance in support of national efforts to prepare for signature of the additional protocol.

72. Algeria was in favour of in-depth discussions under the aegis of the Agency on the political, economic and legal implications arising from the proposals of Member States concerning nuclear fuel supply; such proposals should in no way jeopardize the inalienable rights of State Parties under Article IV of the NPT. Algeria remained committed to dialogue and cooperation as a means of resolving disputes, particularly of matters relating to collective peace and security. For Algeria, the concerns raised by the non-proliferation regime were just as legitimate as those raised by the lack of progress in general and complete disarmament. There needed to be tangible progress in the universalization of the NPT, the implementation of concrete and verifiable disarmament measures, the conclusion of a legally binding international agreement on negative security assurances, the negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material, the cessation of the arms race in space, the rapid entry into force of the CTBT and the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

73. Israel, whose authorities had publicly acknowledged that country's possession of nuclear weapons, was the only State in the region that was not Party to the NPT, and its persistent refusal to accede to that Treaty unbalanced the region's security. The establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East was a crucial confidence-building measure for regional and international security. In that context, his delegation encouraged the Director General to continue his efforts for the implementation of comprehensive safeguards in the Middle East and the organization of the forum to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

74. With regard to the DPRK, Algeria called for the consolidation of the progress made in the six-party talks, leading eventually to the normalization of relations between the DPRK and the Agency, and to the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

75. Algeria welcomed the cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Agency, which had enabled remaining questions to be resolved and should be continued in order to restore confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of that country's nuclear programme.

76. Finally, Algeria called on those Member States that had not yet done so to ratify the amendment to Article VI of the Agency's Statute.

77. Ms SONJICA (South Africa) congratulated the new members of the Agency. The entry of the Kingdom of Lesotho increased the number of African Member States in the Agency to 39, indicating a heightened interest on the African continent in both nuclear technology and the benefits derived from the Agency's programmes.

78. Safeguards and verification remained the key to facilitating the peaceful use of nuclear applications for development; however, additional work was needed. The Agency ought to be continuously equipped with the appropriate tools to ensure that declared nuclear material worldwide was fully accounted for. It should also be able to verify that nuclear capabilities were being used for peaceful purposes only, and also to provide assurances regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear materials and activities. The additional protocol was a crucial instrument in that regard, and South Africa believed that it was incumbent upon all States to build confidence and provide assurance that their nuclear capability was being used for peaceful purposes only.

79. With regard to the implementation of NPT safeguards in the DPRK, South Africa had been following with a great sense of optimism the progress made in the six-party talks and had observed with disappointment the recent developments in Pyongyang. She urged the DPRK to work towards restoring its NPT status.

80. South Africa welcomed Iran's continued cooperation with the Agency with regard to the implementation of NPT Safeguards. It hoped that Iran would continue to provide the Agency with access to declared nuclear material and would submit the required nuclear material accountancy reports in connection with declared nuclear material and activities. Through such cooperation, Iran would be able to build further confidence in the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme. South Africa also believed that it was important for Iran continuously to commit itself to the implementation of the provisions of the additional protocol.

81. With regard to strengthening the effectiveness of non-proliferation and safeguards, she said that those who had been involved in the illicit network of proliferation activities had been prosecuted in South Africa. The accused had been convicted in the Pretoria High Court after pleading guilty to seven charges of contravening the Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction Act and the Nuclear Energy Act. Such action attested to her country's commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

82. Global issues had recently affected her country's ability to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The negative impact on the poor of high fuel and food prices, the financial melt-down and continuing concerns about energy security still posed some of the most pressing challenges that the world had to confront. While energy demand was increasing, the contribution of some primary energy sources to climate change presented new challenges. Energy supply should be diversified by developing advanced, non-polluting, more efficient, affordable and cost-effective energy technologies. The pursuit of nuclear power technology was one of the key sources of energy security. Her Government's vision, strategic direction and framework for climate change policy, which covered a number of themes, had recently been published in the Long-Term Mitigation Scenarios document. The nuclear energy policy for the Republic of South Africa had been approved in June 2008, and its main objectives included: promoting nuclear energy as an important electricity supply option through the establishment of a national industrial capability for the design, manufacture and construction of

nuclear energy systems; contributing to the national programme of social and economic transformation, growth and development; attaining global leadership and self-sufficiency in the nuclear energy sector in the long term; and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The nuclear energy policy also set out a phased approach for the management, sustainability and expansion of the nuclear industry in South Africa. Under the policy, the current infrastructure would be maintained and upgraded until 2010, when the construction of new nuclear plants was expected to commence.

83. An extensive infrastructure was required for South Africa's planned nuclear energy expansion programme. However, sustaining an appropriate level of nuclear technical capacity was a challenge globally. The introduction of new technologies, such as the Pebble Bed Modular Reactor, the proposed new build programme and the resurgence in uranium mining would result in increased competition for scarce skills. South Africa was already taking action to enhance its infrastructure with regard to skills, engineering capacity, manufacturing and regulation. In that regard, State-owned institutions had been engaged in strengthening national capacity and had launched a number of strategic initiatives. In addition, in response to the announced nuclear expansion programme, the national nuclear regulator had developed a strategy for the licensing of new plants, which included the development of safety criteria for the siting of new plants.

84. The African continent had demonstrated that, by working together, much could be achieved with respect to the application of nuclear science and technology. As a member of AFRA, South Africa had participated in the promotion of national and regional self-reliance in nuclear science and technology. It had also taken part in expert missions in African Member States to address urgent needs, at the Member States' request. The Nuclear Energy Corporation of South Africa had conducted projects in collaboration with the Agency to assist in the conditioning and repatriation of spent sources.

85. There was a heightened need to use regulatory forums to strengthen cooperation and coordination, information exchange and best practices, and address common problems within the African continent, and she drew attention to the establishment of a Forum of African Regulators in that regard.

86. With regard to strengthening the safety effectiveness of South Africa's facilities, the Koeberg nuclear power station, owned and operated by the South African electricity utility Eskom, was now in its twenty-fourth year of safe operation. In line with the Agency's recommendations regarding ten-yearly safety reviews, the scope for the second ten-year safety review had been agreed between Eskom and the national nuclear regulator and was being implemented.

87. Participation in nuclear safety conventions was very important for the promotion of nuclear and radiation safety through the process of peer review. The fourth national report concerning the Convention on Nuclear Safety, which South Africa had submitted at the recent review meeting of Contracting Parties, held in Vienna, in April 2008, had been well received.

88. With regard to radioactive waste management policy and strategy, South Africa had undertaken to separate the generator of waste from management of disposal by establishing an agency to manage radioactive waste disposal on a national basis. The South African Parliament had recently approved legislation establishing the South African Radioactive Waste Disposal Institute, which would become operational during 2009. South Africa's report on the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management had also been finalized, and South Africa looked forward to a valuable exchange of information and experience.

89. South Africa supported the current initiative on the rationalization and harmonization of the Agency's safety standards, and continued to contribute to the development of those standards by

serving in various capacities on all the safety standards committees. There should be greater harmonization between the requirements related to safety and those related to security.

90. The Agency needed to address the challenges of ensuring the safe and secure use of nuclear energy and enhance its crucial contribution to the improvement of living standards and combating poverty, which would strengthen international peace and security. The Agency's central role in the common endeavours of Member States to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons by preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons would also need to be strengthened.

91. As a founding member of the Agency, South Africa had decided, with the endorsement of the African Union, to nominate Ambassador Abdul Samad Minty, a seasoned diplomat with decades of experience and dedication to preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, to succeed Dr ElBaradei as Director General of the Agency. Since South Africa's democratic transformation in 1994, it was the first time that a South African candidate was being nominated for such a post. The Agency needed at its helm a good manager, someone with integrity, fairness, experience and deep commitment to the objectives of the Agency. Throughout the long liberation struggle and since 1994 South Africa had had a long record and principled position on advancing the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and Ambassador Minty had played a pioneering role in that regard. Africa as a whole and many countries all over the world believed that South Africa's experience and knowledge of nuclear matters enabled it to share the perspectives of the developed and developing countries alike. Ambassador Minty was therefore eminently qualified for the post of Director General of the Agency.

92. Mr VITARANA (Sri Lanka) said that his country attached great importance to the mandate and functions of the Agency. It was heartening to note that the Agency had withstood many of the pressures on it and had acted in an impartial and objective manner under the Director General's leadership.

93. As the era of fossil fuels drew to a close and research into solar and other sources of renewable energy continued, nuclear energy was at present, the main, established technology that could meet the world's increasing demands for power. He called upon the Agency to intensify its research in the promising field of nuclear fusion and, pending advances in that area, to support and supervise countries' use of nuclear energy using fission technology in a responsible manner. He urged all governments to work for a total ban on the production and use of nuclear weapons and for the implementation of the NPT.

94. Technical cooperation from the Agency had enabled Sri Lanka to develop its capacity in major sectors such as industry, agriculture, human health, nutrition and radiation protection. In recent years, Sri Lanka had received technical assistance in improving the micronutrient health status of adolescent girls through dietary modification and in enhancing the quality of radiotherapy services. Technical assistance concerning the molecular diagnosis of major infectious diseases had been effectively utilized to diagnose outbreaks of diseases such as dengue, malaria and chikungunya. He commended the PACT programme and expressed appreciation of the Agency's efforts to curb and reduce cancer in Sri Lanka. Recalling that an imPACT mission had visited Sri Lanka in January 2008 and had recognized Sri Lanka as a PACT Model Demonstration Site, he said that his Government had introduced a mandatory cancer screening programme for women over 40 years of age. All female teachers working in Government schools had already been screened free of charge. The Sri Lankan Atomic Energy Authority worked closely with the Ministry of Health and the national cancer control programme to implement the recommendations given by the imPACT mission. Sri Lanka would welcome the Agency's assistance in future development initiatives.

95. Since 1976, Sri Lanka had played an active role as a member of the RCA. RCA programmes had been instrumental in the establishment of end-user oriented national programmes on the use of

nuclear technology in the healthcare, agriculture and industry sectors. The Government required further technical assistance from the Agency in a number of areas, including nuclear power planning in view of the current energy crisis.

96. His Government wished to strengthen its cooperation with the Agency in the area of nuclear security, and had requested a visit from a team of experts to study the establishment of a practical infrastructure for the security of nuclear and other radiological materials. An International Nuclear Security Advisory Service (INSServ) mission was scheduled to visit Sri Lanka in October 2008.

97. Sri Lanka had signed and ratified the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and had taken steps to prevent illicit trafficking of nuclear materials through Sri Lankan ports. It inspected and monitored radiation materials and adhered strictly to licensing procedures for the physical protection of such materials.

98. His Government required the Agency's assistance in developing national capabilities to respond to radiological emergencies, including the establishment of a national centre for environmental radiation and a monitoring facility. Sri Lanka had been one of the first four countries to collaborate in coordinating international assistance in the event of radiological accidents.

99. While noting with satisfaction that in 2007, the programme implementation rate had been 74.9% and that 28.3% of funds had been allocated to programmes related to human health, he said that the TCF target for the triennium 2009–2011 was not sufficient to meet the needs of developing countries. The TCF must be allocated sufficient and predictable funds.

100. The application of nuclear technology for national economic development was a major area of technical cooperation activity. His Government had signed an agreement with an Indian supplier for the purchase of a multipurpose gamma irradiation facility, which represented a milestone in its efforts to harness nuclear technology for socioeconomic development. It hoped for Agency assistance in the implementation of the project.

101. His country had met its financial obligations to the Agency promptly, and had hosted three international events related to Agency and RCA activities. It had sought the Agency's assistance in a number of nationally important projects in the technical cooperation programme for the period 2009–2011.

102. The report of the Commission of Eminent Persons on the future of the Agency contained in document GC(52)/INF/4 expressed diverse and valuable opinions about the future of the Agency. The recommendations made should be the subject of greater discussion and debate.

103. Mr NAMBURETE (Mozambique) said that nuclear science and technology had an increasing role to play in tackling major development challenges all over the world. Technical cooperation was of the utmost importance in increasing, promoting and disseminating the use of nuclear energy for peaceful and developmental purposes, particularly within the context of developing countries' endeavours to eradicate poverty and disease, and eliminate the obstacles to economic, technological and social development. However, strengthened technical cooperation activities would yield positive results only if the technological gap that existed between developed and developing nations was removed, or at least, narrowed. Atoms were needed not only for peace, but also to combat hunger, preventable diseases and poverty, and above all, for economic and social development. In that regard, he welcomed the Agency's continuous efforts to support developing countries in the development and implementation of peaceful nuclear applications, and commended those countries that contributed to the Technical Cooperation Fund.

104. Mozambique hoped that the five technical cooperation projects that it had submitted for the period 2009–2011, which would contribute to national efforts to eradicate poverty and promote social

and economic development, would be approved by the Agency. The good interaction between Agency experts and officials from Mozambique involved in project design and implementation was an encouraging signal of his country's positive and growing relationship with the organization.

105. Mozambique had become a member of INIS, and was hopeful that the INIS centre to be set up in the country would play a key role in capacity building to improve knowledge and information on nuclear science and technology, and build the critical mass that the country required for its sustainable socio-economic development.

106. In order to strengthen its cooperation with the Agency, including at the regional level, Mozambique was at a very advanced stage in the process of joining AFRA. It was also acceding to additional instruments, including the Assistance Convention and Early Notification Convention, and the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the Agency. Universalization of the safeguards system was essential in order to ensure the effectiveness of the Agency's verification activities, and Mozambique was in the process of finalizing its accession to its safeguards agreement and additional protocol.

107. Mozambique trusted that the Agency would continue to provide assistance regarding the establishment of a regulatory agency for the development of activities involving nuclear technology. It looked forward to the forthcoming Agency mission that would assess the current status and advise the Government of Mozambique on the establishment of the institution.

108. The use of nuclear science and technology brought added responsibilities in regard to safety and security. The international community must work together to strengthen safeguards, promote safety and security and the contribution of nuclear energy to peace, health and economic and social development. The Agency played a crucial role in ensuring the necessary balance between development needs using nuclear energy on the one hand and non-proliferation commitments on the other. The challenges posed by the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the threat of nuclear terrorism and illicit trafficking of nuclear weapons called for intensified international cooperation in a multilateral framework. To that end, States should comply fully with their legal obligations in the areas of non-proliferation and disarmament, and demonstrate serious political will and commitment.

109. Lastly, he expressed his country's support for the candidacy of Mr Minty from South Africa for the office of Director General.

110. Mr DILLO (Chad) said that since Chad had joined the Agency in November 2005, it had sought to uphold the Agency's objectives. His Government remained committed to nuclear safety and security, the transfer of nuclear science and technology, and to ensuring the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. It had fulfilled a large part of its obligations concerning contributions to the Regular Budget and the Working Capital Fund. Moreover, the national authorities were in the final stages of signing an additional protocol.

111. In Chad, activities associated with the use of nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes were still at an embryonic stage, in particular the national radiation safety structure. Special attention should be given to Chad to enable it to reach a level enjoyed by other countries, in particular with regard to fighting cancer and infectious diseases, and ensuring the sustainable development of water and energy resources, and environmental preservation. It had submitted four project concepts for the period 2009–2011, namely a concept for a feasibility study concerning the establishment of a national radiotherapy centre at the Ministry of Public Health; a concept for the creation of a tsetse-free zone in the South of Chad; a concept concerning molecular techniques to combat malaria; and a concept for strengthening the capacities of the national radiation protection infrastructures.

112. Lastly, he welcomed the positive comments already expressed at the Conference regarding increased technical assistance for poorer and developing countries.

113. Mr SOLTANIEH (Islamic Republic of Iran) recalled that the Agency had been established with a promotional objective, as stipulated in its Statute, and not with regulatory and verification mandates. The Agency had, on some occasions, been used with political motivation, by a few western countries interfering in the Secretariat's activities and undermining its authority and impartiality. In dealing with the Iranian issue, the Agency had gone beyond its statutory mandate, turning voluntary measures into legal obligations, and threatening national security on the pretext of verification. That could not be allowed to continue, and he urged Member States to remain vigilant with respect to the trend towards a shift from the spirit and letter of the Statute.

114. Turning to Iranian nuclear policy and activities, he said that his country was embarking on a well-defined long-term nuclear energy plan. With an annual economic growth of 6–8% and speedy industrial development, some 4000 to 6000 MW(e) had to be added to the national grid annually. That requirement should surely be met in part using nuclear power, in view of environmental advantages and the limited capacity of other sources of energy. His Government had been entrusted to take serious steps for the production of 2000 MW(e) from a nuclear power plant over the next 20 years, and potential international suppliers were invited to submit bids with a view to achieving that goal. Following an international tender, some companies had recently been chosen to begin site selection for future nuclear power plants. Intensive work had also commenced to design a 360 MW light water power plant.

115. The Bushehr nuclear power plant was supposed to have become operational almost three decades earlier. However, because of the western supplier's failure to meet its contractual and legal obligations, the project remained unfinished, and Iran had not received compensation for damages.

116. Unjustified, unprecedented measures, such as the suspension of enrichment activities and robust verification measures beyond those stipulated in the comprehensive safeguards agreement, had inflicted huge damage on Iran in terms of security, credibility and finances. Iran was determined to pursue the process for compensation.

117. The absence of an assured supply of nuclear fuel was a matter of concern. In order to overcome the lack of confidence that existed among potential suppliers to Iran, a law had been passed enabling the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran to embark on indigenous enrichment for low-enriched uranium in order to fulfil part of the fuel requirement for its light water nuclear power plants. Iran had also taken serious steps in all parts of the fuel cycle, including with respect to the Saghand and Gachin mines, uranium enrichment at Natanz, and the fuel fabrication plant that was in the final stages of construction.

118. Discussions on multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle must take into account the concerns of developing countries, and any decisions on the subject must be taken by consensus without prejudice to the inalienable right of Member States to choose their own fuel options. Iran endorsed the views expressed in that regard by NAM and the G-77 and China.

119. The Islamic Republic of Iran was fully committed to the principles of non-proliferation and disarmament. His Government remained seriously concerned regarding the non-compliance of nuclear-weapon States with their obligations under Article VI of the NPT and the spirit and letter of the Agency's Statute. The Agency should report on the latest situation regarding the non-compliance of the United States, the United Kingdom and France with Article I of the NPT, in accordance with which nuclear-weapon States Parties undertook not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. His delegation had repeatedly requested the Director General to report on the nuclear capabilities of Israel by sending inspectors on a fact-finding mission.

The shameful silence of the western powers on the acknowledgement by Israel of its possession of nuclear weapons and Israel's military aggression against other Member States left no doubt about the urgent need for a reform in the United Nations, particularly the Security Council.

120. Following robust inspections, the Director General had repeatedly reported that the Agency had not found any evidence in Iran of the diversion of nuclear materials and activities to prohibited purposes. The Islamic Republic of Iran was determined to continue its cooperation with the Agency in accordance with the comprehensive safeguards agreement. The illegal and unjustified involvement of the Security Council would have no effect on Iran's determination to pursue peaceful nuclear activities, including enrichment. The Security Council resolutions on punitive measures, such as sanctions, would strengthen Iran's determination to pursue its righteous path and would create obstacles for the negotiations that Iran had initiated and had always advised other parties to enter into without precondition or delay.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.