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Abbreviations used in this record:

ABACC	Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials
AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARCAL	Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
Assistance Convention	Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Early Notification Convention	Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident
EPR	European pressurized water reactor
EU	European Union
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
G8	Group of Eight
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
INSAG	International Nuclear Safety Group
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
ITER	International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor
Joint Convention	Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NPCs	national participation costs
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PATTEC	Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
Quadripartite Agreement	Agreement between the Republic of Argentina, the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Application of Safeguards
R&D	research and development
RaSSIA	Radiation Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources Infrastructure Appraisal
RSAC	regional system of accounting for and control of nuclear material
SCART	Safety Culture Assessment Review Team
SIT	sterile insect technique
SQP	small quantities protocol
SSAC	State system of accounting for and control of nuclear material
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WHO	World Health Organization

8. General debate and Annual Report for 2006 (continued) (GC(51)/5)

1. Mr. STAGNO-UGARTE (Costa Rica) stressed the important role played by safeguards in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and in supporting the NPT, which must be complied with in full by every Member State at all times and in all circumstances. The additional protocols, which allowed for more intrusive inspection procedures, were essential to ensuring transparency and mutual confidence.
2. There could be no exemptions from verification. Any restrictions or conditions placed on verification would undermine confidence. In response to the growing resistance of certain States, the international community must encourage extensive verification procedures, making use of all avenues offered by the existing legal framework for arms control.
3. Costa Rica urged those countries which still had unsafeguarded nuclear facilities to accede to the NPT. Nuclear-weapon States must make a genuine commitment to disarm by deactivating their nuclear systems, dismantling their stockpiles and destroying their weapons and delivery systems. His delegation rejected any justification or postponement based on the supposed deterrent effect of nuclear arsenals, and reiterated its call for those countries to adopt clear timetables for gradually achieving general and universal disarmament.
4. The abolition of the country's army had been a milestone in Costa Rican history. Panama and Haiti had recently completed a similar transformation. Unfortunately, enormous sums were still being squandered on equipping armed forces in Latin America and other regions of the world.
5. In keeping with Costa Rica's civilian tradition, the administration of President Oscar Arias Sánchez had introduced two international initiatives. One was for an arms trade treaty, a legally binding instrument to control weapons transfers, and the other was the Costa Rica Consensus, which was designed to secure recognition by international financial institutions and donor countries of those States which committed themselves to an 'ethical investment' of their resources by reducing military spending and increasing expenditure on health care, education and other social services.
6. In that connection, a 'disarmament week' had been held in San José, Costa Rica, from 3 to 7 September 2007, at which a number of events had been organized to promote demilitarization and disarmament, including a meeting of the Cluster Munition Coalition, a Latin American regional conference to promote, on the basis of the Tlatelolco model, the establishment of a cluster-bomb-free zone and the prohibition of the use of such weapons, and a seminar for Latin America and the Caribbean on the management and security of stockpiles of small arms and light weapons.
7. Also in keeping with its traditional policy of promoting international peace and security, Costa Rica had assumed the chairmanship of the Preparatory Commission of the CTBT for 2007 and, with Austria, was co-chairing the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT, which had begun the day before in Vienna. His delegation called on all States to commit themselves to the CTBT. Those that had not done so should sign and ratify it without delay.
8. Costa Rica, which had passed basic legislation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in 1969, was about to confirm to the Director General its support for the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, and the supplementary Guidance on the Import and Export of

Radioactive Sources. It urged the Agency to continue to support Member States in establishing safety standards in conformity with Article III of its Statute.

9. The three Agency pillars of technology transfer, safety and security, and verification were of equal importance, and thus there should be a balance in the distribution of resources earmarked for them.

10. Costa Rica acknowledged the importance of the technical cooperation it had received over more than forty years, which had greatly helped to promote development and well-being in the country in such areas as human health, the environment, agriculture, in particular pest control, the management of water resources, and radiological safety and protection.

11. The technical cooperation programme should assist countries, such as Costa Rica, which had achieved a certain level of development but needed to consolidate their national capacities in order to attain self-sufficiency in the use of nuclear techniques and to be able to participate in horizontal cooperation activities to help other less-developed countries.

12. The international community must work together with the Agency to consolidate sustainable development and international security.

13. Mr. SAEED (Sudan) took the occasion of the Agency's golden jubilee to underline the importance of its role not only in applying the safeguards regime and establishing NWFZs but also in making the nuclear energy option available to all Member States and bringing them diverse benefits in the areas of food security, health, poverty eradication and the development of human resources.

14. Sudan complied fully with all its obligations under the relevant international agreements that it had acceded to or ratified. All Member States that had not taken steps to ratify those agreements should be encouraged to do so as soon as possible in order to create an environment conducive to peace and sustainable development. Sudan had ratified the amendment to Article VI of the Agency's Statute and was taking steps to ratify the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Early Notification Convention. It was also about to complete the formalities for ratification of the Pelindaba Treaty on creating an African NWFZ.

15. Sudan, which supported the Agency's efforts to improve the safety and security of radioactive sources, was drafting a law on nuclear energy based on the Agency's guidelines, the most important feature of which was probably the strict separation of the country's regulatory authority from the various users of radiation sources.

16. He thanked the Agency for its support for the project on sustainable management of radioactive waste in Africa, including in Sudan. His country had hosted a project coordination meeting, which had recommended, inter alia, the building of sustainable African capacities for gathering and conditioning spent radioactive sources.

17. Sudan had a strong interest in the nuclear option for electricity generation and hoped for the Agency's support in that regard. The Sudanese Ministry of Energy and Mining had set up a national commission to study the feasibility of using nuclear energy to produce electricity.

18. The AFRA agreement had played an important role in implementing regional projects with Agency support, in coordinating activities related to nuclear technology applications and in ensuring continuity of their results in Africa. In that context, he called for support for the recommendations of the High-level African Regional Conference held in Algeria in January 2007.

19. He emphasized the need for joint action to develop the Agency's water resources management programme, the production of potable water using small and medium-sized nuclear reactors and

PACT. It was also important to support the African Union's PATTEC as well as all Agency activities aimed at developing innovative nuclear technology.

20. He urged the Agency and all Member States to promote an increase in the funding of technical cooperation projects, which were no less important than the Agency's safeguards, verification, nuclear disarmament and other activities. Greater balance should be sought among those activities in order to fulfil Member States' aspirations to enhance their capacities to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and development.

21. He called on the international community to adopt policies based on fairness and equality and to avoid applying double standards, which undermined the credibility of the Agency and its Member States. The Sudanese Government supported Arab and other countries that were deeply concerned about Israeli nuclear programmes, which were not subject to the Agency's safeguards regime and hence represented a threat to regional peace and security. Israel should be required to accede forthwith to the NPT and to place all its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards.

22. Sudan fully supported the agreement concluded recently between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Agency on settling pending issues with respect of the Iranian nuclear programme and hoped for a successful outcome. The Agency was the only body that was competent to decide on the peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme. Moreover, he stressed that every Member State had the right to develop a peaceful nuclear capability in keeping with the provisions of the NPT.

23. Mr. BUGAT (France) said that, in view of the many challenges facing the international community over the central issues of non-proliferation, his country continued to attach particular importance to the NPT. The Treaty limited risks by encouraging nuclear disarmament and allowing access to peaceful uses of nuclear energy, while ensuring that no civilian nuclear facilities and technologies were used for non-peaceful ends. Every effort should be made to support the Treaty and preserve its integrity from the challenges it currently faced.

24. Although the Secretariat and the Islamic Republic of Iran had agreed on a work plan on certain aspects of Iran's nuclear programme, the fact that Iran was continuing its uranium enrichment and reprocessing activities was a cause for alarm. If Iran could not be persuaded to suspend those activities, as required by the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the Board of Governors, more sanctions would be introduced, further isolating the Iranian authorities. Iran had made no commitment to implement the additional protocol and additional safeguards requested by the Agency. They were vital instruments for assessing Iran's replies to its questions.

25. With regard to the DPRK, France supported the six-party talks and welcomed the agreement of 13 February 2007. The return of the Agency's inspectors and the confirmed shutdown of the Yongbyon reactor were positive steps towards compliance with Security Council resolution 1718. The DPRK had chosen to abandon its military nuclear programme in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, as required by that resolution.

26. France supported the strengthening of Agency safeguards and the move towards integrated safeguards. The comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol thereto were vital for boosting both the credibility of Treaty verification and the confidence of the international community. All States which had not yet done so should subscribe to those legal instruments. In that context, France would continue to encourage regional initiatives aimed at universalization of that regime.

27. Through its own programme of continuous support for Agency safeguards, which had recently celebrated its 25th anniversary, France had helped to finance activities in French-speaking countries. That fruitful cooperation with the Agency would continue, focusing in particular on strengthening the safeguards system through the use of new technologies.

28. To reduce the risks of proliferation, the transfer of the most sensitive nuclear equipment, technologies and materials should be more closely controlled. In that regard, the Agency had a central role to play in verifying States' compliance with their commitments. The threat of terrorism called for the utmost vigilance regarding the risk of the acquisition and use of nuclear or radioactive materials. The international community must do all it could to improve the already high level of protection and, of course, the Agency had a leading role to play in that regard. France supported Agency activities under the nuclear security plan by providing both financial and technical support. It also supported the CPPNM and its amendment and welcomed the growing international support for the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

29. France, an active supporter of the technical cooperation programme, paid its contribution to the TCF in full. He highlighted in particular France's involvement under AFRA and ARCAL.

30. Safety was crucial for continuing to develop nuclear energy and France reiterated the importance of the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention in that area. France supported Agency activities aimed at improving every aspect of safety and, in 2007, had decided to contribute to the extrabudgetary programme on the seismic evaluation of existing nuclear power plants. It also supported Agency efforts to organize IRRS missions and had itself requested one in November 2006. With regard to the safety of maritime transport of radioactive materials, France continued to hold talks with its transport and coastal partners to improve mutual understanding and confidence.

31. France was pursuing an ambitious but responsible energy policy founded on the principles of safe supply and sustainable development. Nuclear power was an integral part of its strategy and, in 2006, its 58 operating reactors had accounted for over 78% of the country's electricity generation. Considerable sums had been earmarked for managing radioactive waste as France had opted for a closed fuel cycle. Looking to the future, in April 2007 France had authorized the construction of an EPR-type nuclear power plant in Flamanville with enhanced safety features.

32. Research was the key to developing sustainable nuclear energy and France planned to build a new research reactor at Cadarache to study fuels and materials. The French Atomic Energy Commission (CEA) was also working on an innovative fast-neutron reactor prototype, which would offer new prospects for the fourth generation of reactors.

33. With the nuclear power option being envisaged by a growing number of States, France had a vital role to play in international cooperation. Access to civilian nuclear technologies should benefit as many States as possible provided they respected their non-proliferation commitments and pursued their activities for peaceful purposes in good faith. France was playing an active part in the Agency's work on determining how countries should set up an appropriate infrastructure for the safe and efficient introduction of nuclear power. The issue of funding equipment for countries new to the technology called for detailed discussions involving the international financial institutions, in particular the World Bank.

34. In addition, France was actively participating in international discussions on multilateral approaches to the fuel cycle. It would continue to make constructive proposals so that nuclear energy could be developed responsibly, in the spirit of the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP). Public acceptance hinged upon appropriate consideration of the associated safety, security, non-proliferation and environmental concerns. In 2006, the General Conference had for the first time adopted by consensus a resolution on nuclear power applications that had noted nuclear energy's contribution to supply security and to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. France would do all it could to ensure that the same consensus was reached in 2007.

35. Highlighting the importance of international cooperation in meeting future energy challenges, he pointed to France's involvement in ITER, to be sited at Cadarache, in discussions on innovative technologies under the Generation IV International Forum (GIF), and also in the Agency's INPRO project as a member of its Steering Committee.

36. Mr. WUERMELING (Germany) said that growing energy needs and the problem of global warming had led a number of countries to announce plans to include or expand nuclear energy in their energy mix. Others had decided to stop using nuclear power because of the safety risks involved. Any substantial increase in the use of nuclear energy worldwide would inevitably lead to an increase in demand for the Agency's services, especially in the areas of nuclear safety and security, fuel supply, decommissioning and waste management. His delegation was confident that the meeting of the Scientific Forum, which was taking place simultaneously with the General Conference, would produce a fruitful exchange of views on those issues.

37. Germany welcomed the agreement reached between the Iranian Government and the Agency on modalities to resolve the many outstanding questions about the Iranian nuclear programme. While the Iranian Government had been more cooperative in recent weeks, many doubts still remained about the true scope and nature of its past nuclear programme. The Government had so far refused to suspend critical activities relevant to the development of nuclear weapons, adopt an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement or comply with the decisions of the Security Council. Germany would continue to cooperate with its partners in the Agency, the Security Council and the European Union to convince the Iranian Government to take the concerns of the international community seriously and that it would do better to observe complete transparency in such a sensitive area as the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

38. Although the nuclear crisis in the DPRK remained a source of serious concern, important first steps had been taken towards its resolution, with the shutdown of the Yongbyon nuclear reactor in July 2007 and verification of it by the Agency. The DPRK must now fully disclose its nuclear programme and return to the international non-proliferation regime. Success for the six-party process would provide clear proof of that regime's effectiveness.

39. An effective verification regime was of paramount importance and Germany, like many other Member States, believed that a comprehensive safeguards agreement combined with an additional protocol was the most appropriate standard. He called upon all States which had not ratified an additional protocol to do so as soon as possible.

40. Recent proposals for mechanisms to assure supplies of nuclear fuel included the six-party proposal, in which Germany was participating, to establish a multilateral enrichment facility under the auspices of the Agency. The Director General's report on options for assurance of supply of nuclear fuel (GOV/INF/2007/11) had been helpful in that regard. Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom had recently submitted a joint statement concerning multilateral cooperation on energy security (INFCIRC/713). Much remained to be done; any future framework must provide a balance between non-proliferation aspects and the legitimate rights of potential consumer States to pursue the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and it was important to avoid undue distortion of the existing commercial market. The Agency would doubtless play a key role in the process. Germany was keen to host an international symposium on the issue in Berlin in the first half of 2008.

41. Germany fully supported the Agency's ambitious plans to promote nuclear safety and security. In May 2007, during the German Presidency of the European Union, the European Council had approved the Council Conclusions on Nuclear Safety and Safe Management of Spent Nuclear Fuel and Radioactive Waste, which highlighted the importance of international cooperation in nuclear safety. Also during the German Presidency, the G8 group had reaffirmed that the Agency's standards and

recommendations formed a sound basis for the improvement of nuclear safety and security and for national regulatory systems. Germany welcomed the increased importance accorded to self-assessment in the Agency's safety missions. Germany was currently preparing for an OSART mission in October 2007 and an IRRS mission in mid-2008.

42. Germany also welcomed the entry into force of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, which it intended to ratify before the end of the year. His country would continue to participate in Agency efforts aimed at further developments in that field.

43. The Agency's technical cooperation programme provided valuable assistance in the fields of health, agriculture, water management and environmental protection, which improved living conditions in Member States and their scientific and commercial potential. Germany would continue to support those activities.

44. The Agency would inevitably face new challenges in the future, which would require effective management and priority-setting. Funding and staff levels could not expand beyond certain limits. Germany was willing to contribute to the Director General's "20/20" initiative to study the consequences of those new challenges. With open-mindedness and flexibility on the part of all concerned, it would be possible to find an appropriate and economically viable way for the Agency to continue the indispensable work it had begun fifty years before.

45. Mr. YUTHAVONG (Thailand) said that for half a century the Agency had provided outstanding service to the global community in the fields of nuclear technology, safety and verification. In the face of significant challenges in recent years, the Agency had defended and enhanced its integrity through unfaltering impartiality. Thailand, a founding member of the Agency, was proud to have contributed to its mission and would continue to do so in the future.

46. In July, the Director General had given a keynote address at the sixth Congress on Science and Technology for Development in Bangkok, in which he had noted that nearly every aspect of development — from reducing poverty to improving health care — required reliable access to modern energy services. In that regard, the Thailand Government's recent initiatives on nuclear technology and sustainable development were consistent with the need for clean, safe and secure energy options. Thailand was promoting a 'sufficiency economy', taking a moderate, reasonable path towards economic development in the context of globalization and exploring all possible options.

47. Energy consumption in Thailand, as in many other developing countries, had increased significantly. Although his country relied traditionally on fossil fuels, in particular petroleum products and natural gas, national energy security had been maintained through a diversity of energy sources. Thailand attached great importance to clean and environmentally-friendly energy sources, and his Government continued to support research into alternative and renewable energy technologies. Nuclear power was one such energy option. In view of the recent increases in oil prices and environmental concerns, his Government had adopted a nuclear energy option in its national power development plan for 2007–2021, providing for the generation of some 4000 MW of electricity by the year 2020. The use of nuclear energy came with responsibility, and Thailand would ensure that the necessary infrastructure was in place and that international standards were met. Funding had been obtained for the development of manpower, for public awareness and for safety and security programmes. Risk management was being given high priority in all stages of future planning as a key element of the Government's efforts to obtain public acceptance of nuclear power development.

48. Nuclear activities in Thailand had focused on R&D in nuclear technology and science, and on the production and application of radioisotopes for medical, agricultural and industrial use. The nuclear infrastructure had been reorganized with the Office of Atoms for Peace as the regulatory agency, and the Thailand Institute of Nuclear Technology as the operating and R&D agency.

49. Thailand was keen to strengthen its cooperation with the Agency in launching its nuclear power programme. The National Energy Policy Council (NEPC) had already begun to cooperate with the Agency concerning technical assistance to support the implementation of the programme. Thailand had also appointed a Nuclear Power Infrastructure Preparation Committee to assume overall responsibility for the preparation of the nuclear power infrastructure plan. Representatives of the Committee had already met with Agency experts; further discussions would be held in Thailand at the end of the month and a workshop arranged in early 2008.

50. The Thai people were enjoying the benefits of nuclear applications in such fields as agriculture, nutrition, human health and water resources management. The SIT had proven to be technically and economically feasible in Thailand. Food irradiation was one of the most promising and effective techniques, making it possible to meet standards for export controls and playing an important role in food security. Also, Thailand had started a national programme in isotope hydrology. It had a comprehensive water cycle plan aimed at improving irrigation lines for farming, protecting against subsidence and preparing for climate change.

51. Having thanked the Agency for its efforts in support of the Millennium Development Goals and the Agenda 21 principles for sustainable development, he said that many nuclear activities in Thailand had grown out of the active cooperation between Thailand and the Agency, in particular through the technical cooperation programme. Thailand reaffirmed its continuing support for the TCF and recognized the need for sufficient, assured and predictable funding.

52. Thailand attached great importance to the Agency's safety and security standards for nuclear and radioactive material. It had made every effort to ensure adherence to the international safety regime by reviewing and revising national legislation and procedures, thereby ensuring that Thailand was meeting its obligations and enhancing the regime's effectiveness. As a State Party to the Early Notification and Assistance Conventions and other related conventions, Thailand had already participated in various training activities.

53. His country reaffirmed its commitment to the Agency's safeguards and verification system as well as to the Agency's work concerning the physical protection of nuclear material, particularly in the context of nuclear terrorism. The Agency's capacity to respond adequately to current and future proliferation challenges should be enhanced. Thailand was prepared to ratify the relevant protocols and conventions as soon as its domestic legal requirements had been met.

54. Turning to non-proliferation, he expressed the hope that the outcome of the first preparatory meeting for the 2010 NPT Review Conference would serve as a basis for more positive developments in the future. Global efforts to strengthen the non-proliferation regime should be matched by efforts of the nuclear-weapon States to address general and complete nuclear disarmament. Thailand shared the views of NAM in that regard.

55. Thailand remained committed to the inalienable right of all States to develop research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes under the NPT. It therefore supported Iran's right to do so, provided it complied with its international safeguards obligations and transparency measures. Thailand welcomed the work plan devised for Iran to address and resolve all outstanding issues within a definite timeline as it created another window of opportunity for dialogue and diplomacy. It hoped that Iran would intensify its cooperation with the Agency and demonstrate its commitment to the full and timely implementation of the work plan. All parties concerned should exercise patience to allow the negotiation process to take its course and avoid confrontation.

56. Thailand welcomed the Agency's work in verifying and confirming the shutdown of the Yongbyon facility in the DPRK, which was as a step in the right direction. It strongly encouraged the

DPRK to continue its cooperation with the Agency and its participation in the six-party talks with a view to achieving a comprehensive peace and the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

57. The year 2007 marked the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the Southeast Asia NWFZ under the Bangkok Treaty, which provided a timely opportunity to reflect on past progress and look to the future. His country fully supported the plan of action endorsed in July by the Commission for the Southeast Asia NWFZ, seeking to strengthen the Treaty. The establishment of the NWFZ underscored the region's commitment to peace and to the nuclear non-proliferation regime as a whole.

58. In conclusion, he said that human security depended to a large extent on freedom from want. Peaceful nuclear applications, including nuclear power could serve as a viable vehicle for sustainable development. Thailand had decided to opt for nuclear power with a view to diversifying its energy resources and to shield itself from external energy factors and the destabilizing effects of globalization.

59. Mr. FERNÁNDEZ ZUCCO (Dominican Republic) said that his country attached particular importance to the Agency's work on promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, particularly its efforts to guarantee the safe and reliable use of nuclear energy and to enable its Member States to benefit from those technologies through its technical cooperation programme. Committed to the Agency's mandate "to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world", the Government of the Dominican Republic was willing to cooperate closely with the Agency in all of its functions, including combating poverty in developing countries. In view of the importance his Government attached to the peaceful use of nuclear energy the National Energy Commission had been elevated to ministerial status, enabling it to step up its activities on promoting nuclear energy applications and strengthening radiological protection nationwide. In the same spirit, his Government had made a commitment to pay in full all its outstanding arrears to the Agency.

60. The Dominican Republic was committed to creating a satisfactory nuclear infrastructure, so that it could benefit safely and efficiently from nuclear applications and contribute to the efforts of the Agency and the international community to guarantee radiological and physical security and meet the threats of nuclear terrorism and illicit trafficking in nuclear materials. His Government was grateful for the Agency's support in strengthening its radiological protection infrastructure, including training staff in handling radioactive sources, the disposal of disused sources, emergency response and controlling illicit trafficking in nuclear materials. Also, it had set up regulatory bodies to coordinate controls at all points of entry and exit.

61. The Dominican Republic acknowledged the Agency's activities to strengthen cooperation in the areas of nuclear, radiation and transport safety and waste management. As a coastal State with a special interest in the safety of the maritime transport of radioactive materials, it supported the establishment of an international regime on liability for nuclear damage. It also welcomed the process of dialogue among relevant shipping and coastal countries and stressed the need for shipping countries to notify coastal countries in advance of shipments of radioactive materials.

62. Nuclear energy applications lay at the forefront of the search to solve the problems facing humanity. Over the previous half a century, those applications had expanded to practically every field of human activity. In the field of health, nuclear medicine for the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases, especially cancer and heart disease, was vital for saving human life. Isotope techniques played a very important role in many aspects of food and agriculture, such as detecting soil pollution, creating new plant varieties, controlling pests by means of the SIT and fortifying foods, especially for pregnant women. Nuclear techniques were also vital to improve understanding of water cycles and for the sustainable use of aquifers, and nuclear science provided effective tools for analysing air and sea

pollutants. Nuclear power now accounted for 17% of the energy consumed worldwide and in future small and medium-sized reactors, combining electricity production with water desalination, would help to meet basic needs in developing countries.

63. The Agency's technical cooperation programme was crucial for transferring nuclear technologies to developing countries. In the Dominican Republic the Agency's technical cooperation had helped develop national capabilities for nuclear science and technology applications. Thanks to Agency support, personnel had received training in nuclear techniques in health, agriculture, water resources, the environment and radiation protection. The Agency had also played a vital role in the installation of cancer diagnosis and treatment facilities, the creation of dosimetry laboratories and the adoption of radiation protection regulations. The wide range of ministries, directorates, universities, hospitals and other institutions that had benefited from Agency cooperation in his country reflected the extent of its impact. The Dominican Republic would continue to strengthen its technical cooperation with the Agency, focusing on areas where nuclear technology could contribute more effectively to the Government's development priorities.

64. The Agency's technical cooperation programme was also providing support for the Dominican Republic's neighbour, Haiti. The Dominican Republic was cooperating closely with the international community and the Government of Haiti to help the Haitian people. It was taking part in many joint projects, in particular along the border, following the creation of the Dominican and Haitian Joint Commission, to which the National Energy Commission of the Dominican Republic belonged. Nuclear energy could continue to contribute considerably to joint solutions to the problems both countries faced and Agency support was welcome in the establishment of mechanisms enabling the two countries, which shared a single island, to cooperate more closely.

65. At the Ministerial Conference on "Energy in a Changing World", held in May 2007 under the auspices of UNESCO, it had been agreed that access to adequate energy supplies should be accorded as much priority as health and education. Poverty reduction hinged on reducing dependence on fossil fuels and increasing diversification and on the use of cheaper, more environmentally friendly fuels. Priority should be given to developing energy production, such as biofuel, that would increase economic and environmental self-sufficiency, to fostering renewable energy and to studying different options for generating electricity and increasing energy efficiency. Most countries were net importers of hydrocarbons and were obliged to devote valuable resources that should be spent on health and education on fuel supplies. The Agency's activities in response to the growing interest in the use of nuclear energy for electricity generation were important. His Government appreciated the Agency's assistance to Member States studying that option. Small countries, like the Dominican Republic, might consider building mini-nuclear power plants.

66. He drew particular attention to Agency efforts to promote the design of smaller, low-cost reactors and the establishment of common criteria for developing and installing nuclear plants in developing countries, taking into account institutional and infrastructure factors and technology and design options. Those could offer viable solutions for countries like his own and Haiti. The Government of the Dominican Republic was very interested in taking an active part in that process.

67. His country recognized the importance of the Agency's verification activities in ensuring that nuclear materials were used for peaceful purposes and not for producing weapons. Thus, in accordance with its obligations under the NPT and the Tlatelolco Treaty, the Dominican Republic had signed an agreement with the Agency for the application of safeguards, which had entered into force in 1973. Also, along with 17 other countries, it had accepted the amendments to the SQP approved by the Board of Governors in 2005. During the General Conference he would be signing, on behalf of his Government, the additional protocol to his country's safeguards agreement.

68. He concluded by reiterating the Dominican Republic's support for and commitment to the Agency's work to ensure that atomic energy served peace and progress. The world was a safer place thanks to the Agency's peaceful vision.

69. Mr. WINKLER (Austria) said that now, more than ever before, the Agency was at the centre of world attention in its efforts to enhance global security. People were increasingly concerned about the dangers of nuclear energy and the threat of illicit trafficking in nuclear technology, nuclear terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. The pressing issue of nuclear proliferation dominated the political debate and was a major challenge for the international community.

70. In her welcoming address the day before, Austria's Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik had called for a revitalization of the vision of a nuclear fuel cycle under multilateral control as one possible solution. A multilateral approach could make a valuable contribution to overcoming international tensions regarding the use or misuse of sensitive nuclear technology. Austria fully endorsed the Agency's assessment that the long-term goal must be a new multilateral framework for nuclear energy that would eventually include converting enrichment and reprocessing facilities from national to multilateral operations and limiting such facilities to exclusively multilateral operations.

71. The dual-track initiative proposed by Minister Plassnik at the meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference held in Vienna earlier in the year would increase transparency beyond current Agency safeguards obligations and start a gradual multilateralization of the nuclear fuel cycle under Agency auspices and control.

72. One key element of such a regime would be a new approach to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, namely no distinction being made between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots', only between the 'wants' and the 'want-nots'. For those that had chosen nuclear energy, access to nuclear fuel should be a strictly regulated but impartial and fair exercise. The only long-term alternative to open proliferation of sensitive technology was a system in which all enrichment and reprocessing facilities were under multilateral control.

73. A system in which all States felt that they had ownership of the sensitive technology would be the best way to counter a climate of mistrust. The EU could point to the success of its own founding instruments, which had multilateralized potentially dangerous goods and technologies and thereby contributed to the close relations of mutual confidence that EU members shared today.

74. For Austria, the strength and foundation of the NPT was in the carefully crafted balance of its three pillars: non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. However, some actors were preventing the Agency from fulfilling its duties under the Treaty, thus calling into question the whole legitimacy of the cornerstone agreement of the disarmament and non-proliferation system, which had been further undermined by recent developments. A strong commitment of the entire international community to enforcing compliance with the Treaty's non-proliferation obligations was urgently needed. If the basic bargain of the NPT came undone, if non-compliance was tolerated or exceptions were conceded, the system would seriously be harmed.

75. There was a clear linkage between nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. The only sustainable long-term approach to addressing the dangers of nuclear proliferation was to reduce reliance on nuclear weapons. Consequently, States possessing nuclear weapons must honour their commitments and take serious steps towards disarmament. That was becoming a matter of credibility. It was high time to overcome the differences that had characterized the disarmament and non-proliferation debate in the past years and to reach a new consensus.

76. In the field of nuclear safety, Austria welcomed the performance of the Agency's SCART. However, recent events in Europe and worldwide indicated that the safety culture was deteriorating in

both the operating organizations and in regulatory oversight. That was a cause of concern and his delegation urged the Agency to increase its activities in that respect. Austria looked forward to the implementation of measures within the global nuclear safety regime to enhance the impact on safety improvement through measured change, as proposed by INSAG. It was concerned, however, that after fifty years Agency safety standards were still not fully applied by the entire nuclear community. It thus supported the Agency in its effort to ensure that all safety standards were applied in a harmonized manner and to the full extent.

77. Austria took note of the Agency's information document entitled "Considerations to Launch a Nuclear Power Programme", and in particular the preconditions which the Agency set with regard to nuclear safety and security and to relationships with neighbouring States and the international community. Austria shared the Agency's view that strong involvement by all stakeholders, especially the citizens affected, was essential. That also held true in a transboundary context.

78. The Agency's examination of innovative and proliferation-resistant nuclear technologies should focus on challenges arising from new technologies for the governments and regulatory authorities of nuclear and non-nuclear countries alike. Austria would therefore have difficulty accepting Agency activities designed to support the development of technologies for new and innovative nuclear reactors. That was clearly a matter for the nuclear industry. Instead, the Agency should be a driving force in enhancing the safety of such nuclear installations.

79. Many meetings, conferences and workshops in recent years, some of them co-organized by the Agency, had pointed to an imminent renaissance of nuclear energy. Despite nominal safety improvements in nuclear power plants, the long list of near misses showed that serious accidents could never be excluded and nuclear installations could be only marginally protected against terrorist attacks. Proliferation continued to be a serious problem and a sustainable solution of the radioactive waste problem was not in sight.

80. Looking ahead to the fourth review meeting under the Convention on Nuclear Safety, which was due to take place soon, he said that Austria would continue to contribute to all international activities which aimed at improving safety levels worldwide. The Convention on Nuclear Safety was a very important tool in that regard, and its review meetings provided a welcome opportunity to assess progress in Member States and exchange views on how best to implement its provisions.

81. The Agency's safeguards system was an indispensable part of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. Repeated cases of clandestine nuclear programmes that had gone undetected by traditional safeguards measures had demonstrated the need to strengthen that system. It was of the utmost importance for the Agency to be able to draw safeguards conclusions regarding the peaceful use of all nuclear material in States. The additional protocol to the comprehensive safeguards agreement provided the Agency with much more complete insight into States' nuclear programmes, thereby making detection of clandestine activities possible. Austria therefore continued strongly to advocate adherence to the additional protocol and it called on all States to negotiate and conclude additional protocols to their safeguards agreements without further delay. In Austria's view, the conclusion of an additional protocol was a legal obligation for non-nuclear-weapon States party to the NPT. Regrettably, a number of such States had still not even concluded a comprehensive safeguards agreement.

82. Austria attached great importance to the CPPNM. The amended Convention would be an important contribution to both the fight against nuclear terrorism and to nuclear non-proliferation, but progress in the ratification of the 2005 amendment was disappointingly slow. His delegation encouraged all States Parties to that Convention to do their utmost to ensure the earliest possible entry into force of the amendment.

83. Nuclear cooperation and trade could not take place without the proper nuclear security environment. States party to the NPT could supply nuclear items only if they could be confident that they were not misused for a nuclear weapons programme or for acts of nuclear terrorism. Comprehensive safeguards, including an additional protocol, must go hand in hand with an effective physical protection system, effective measures to combat illicit trafficking and effective export controls.

84. The Agency had proven often enough its reliability and efficiency on the international scene. With its special focus on monitoring, verification and assistance, it made a vital contribution to strengthening Vienna as a centre of competence for the interrelated issues of security and development.

85. His Government greatly appreciated the dedicated work of the staff of the Agency in the previous year. As in the past, Austria would continue to lend its full support to the efforts of the Agency to bring about a safer world.

86. Mr. EL-KHOURY (Lebanon) said that Lebanon was still suffering the destructive consequences of Israel's abominable attack on the country one year previously. However, thanks to the united stance of the Lebanese people in support of the Government and the resistance, Lebanon had come through its ordeal and drawn up a reconstruction plan. Yet hundreds of thousands of cluster bombs were still scattered over the south of the country, claiming innocent victims every day and restricting the freedom of movement and employment of the local population. The Israeli aggression thus continued to inflict damage even after the cessation of hostilities pursuant to Security Council resolution 1701(2006). The United Nations Human Rights Council had described such conduct as equivalent to war crimes. Lebanon warmly thanked Arab and other countries that had provided or pledged generous assistance for reconstruction in the form of grants and loans.

87. It was hoped that the requisite measures to establish an international tribunal on the assassination of Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri would be completed by the end of 2007, reflecting the determination of the international community to halt political violence and assassinations and to ensure that justice prevailed in a peace-loving country that was a model in today's troubled world of intercommunal coexistence and collaboration.

88. Lebanon's sufferings in summer 2006 illustrated the need for all States concerned to promote the implementation of international resolutions concerning the liberation of southern Lebanese territory that continued to be occupied by Israel, the release of Lebanese prisoners from Israeli jails, and the handover by Israel of maps indicating the location of mines planted in Lebanese territory prior to its withdrawal from part of that territory in 2000 and of a list of sites on which cluster bombs were dropped during the 2006 aggression. The international community, which had stood by Lebanon during and after the aggression, should now bring pressure to bear on Israel to halt its attacks and to comply with international resolutions in order to bring about a just and comprehensive peace in the region. In that connection, he noted that the latest Arab peace initiative launched at the Beirut summit called, inter alia, for the return of Palestinian refugees to the land from which they were expelled in 1948.

89. Referring to the draft General Conference resolution concerning Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat, he said that Israel's accession to the NPT and the placing of its nuclear capabilities — the existence of which had been confirmed by the Prime Minister on 11 December 2006 — under Agency safeguards would reduce the threat to peace and stability in the region and hence in the world as a whole. The international community should approach the matter from the standpoint of its aspiration for a just and comprehensive peace.

90. Lebanon believed that every State had the right to use nuclear energy and technology for peaceful purposes in the framework of agreements concluded with the Agency. All issues related to that right should be addressed objectively without reference to political considerations.

91. The Agency continuously supported the Lebanese Atomic Energy Commission. It had drawn up a human resources training programme under national and regional technical cooperation projects as well as specialized academic programmes. Projects to prevent illicit trafficking in nuclear material were currently being implemented. Lebanon was also establishing a national nuclear security commission pursuant to the NPT and Security Council resolution 1540(2004). His country was particularly grateful to the Agency's Department of Nuclear Safety and Security for its assistance during the Israeli aggression in 2006 in establishing whether there were any traces of depleted uranium or other radioactive material in areas subjected to bombardment as well as for the assistance of UNEP. Lebanon also greatly appreciated its close cooperation with the Department of Technical Cooperation.

92. Lebanon was taking steps to accede to the small number of conventions to which it was not yet a party. A few days previously it had ratified the amendments to the SQP. The Council of Ministers had referred a bill concerning the Agreement on Privileges and Immunities to the Chamber of Deputies, and the Chamber of Deputies had authorized the Government to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

93. Ms. FEROUKHI (Algeria) said the Agency played a leading role in disseminating scientific knowledge for the safe and responsible use of nuclear technologies in national development efforts. Algeria welcomed the Agency efforts to promote the use of atomic energy for peaceful ends and prevent its diversion for military purposes, which contributed to the international community's key objectives of disarmament, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the use of nuclear energy for sustainable development.

94. The work of the Scientific Forum of the 2007 General Conference on the development of atomic energy in the next 25 years would no doubt be a source of inspiration for the Agency's work.

95. The Agency's achievements in the area of technical cooperation were praiseworthy. With over 780 projects in 115 Member States in 2007, technical cooperation had come a long way since its modest beginnings in 1957. The technical cooperation programme contributed to the promotion of civil uses of nuclear energy and the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals in the fields of health, agriculture and environmental protection. While the efforts of donor countries were commendable, greater financial resources were necessary to enable the Agency to respond to the growing needs of Member States, especially developing countries.

96. Much progress had been made in Algeria's national cooperation programme with the Agency, which was being implemented in line with its CPF and the priorities identified in the 2005–2009 national plan for economic recovery and preservation of natural resources, with 80% of targets fulfilled in 2006. Those positive results illustrated Algeria's commitment when it came to implementing projects and to paying its NPCs. Delays in the release of funds by the UNDP, however, had hampered the timely launch of certain projects. Algeria intended to make voluntary contributions to the TCF in 2008 and further enhance its cooperation with the Agency in the period 2009 to 2011.

97. In the area of human health, Algeria encouraged the Agency to support anti-cancer efforts and the use of positron emission tomography. In that context, it was worth recalling that the Agency had formally recognized Algeria's secondary dosimetry calibration laboratory as the regional centre for French-speaking Africa in July 2006. Also, Algeria supported the Agency's PACT and had decided to earmark its 2005 surplus for relevant activities. It welcomed the coordination of the work of PACT, the technical cooperation programme and WHO, which had facilitated the mobilization of greater financial resources. Algeria remained prepared to host a PACT regional centre for Africa.

98. Isotope hydrology techniques were useful in the management of water resources and access to drinking water, which were a strategic priority at the national and regional levels. Algeria was participating in the implementation of relevant objectives identified under the Millennium Development Goals and by NEPAD, and had attended the Fourth World Water Forum and the Ministerial Conference in Mexico. Although the Agency's publication of the *Atlas of Isotope Hydrology for Africa* was commendable, more should be done to strengthen the efforts of Member States to build national competencies in that crucial area.

99. Algeria was also involved in the African Union's PATTEC to eradicate the tsetse and trypanosomiasis, which was being carried out in cooperation with the Agency. She commended the Agency for launching a pilot project on the use of nuclear techniques to control desert locusts, following recommendations made at the regional conference on that pest held in Algiers in July 2006. In that context, Algeria shared the concerns of the Group of 77 and China regarding the withdrawal of funds from FAO/IAEA joint projects, recommended in an independent external report on FAO activities. Such a step would not only undermine efforts to coordinate the implementation of projects between different United Nations agencies, but also hamper R&D efforts in developing countries.

100. Member States should support measures aimed at the conservation of natural resources and environmental protection. Of particular relevance were national programmes for radiological monitoring of the marine environment and the use of nuclear analysis and radiotracers to identify pollutants.

101. Algeria was grateful for the Agency's assistance in regard to its energy development programme and had requested further support for developing nuclear electricity generation in order to meet its energy needs and provide an alternative to fossil energy sources.

102. The introduction of the new Programme Cycle Management Framework had been very beneficial for Africa. The rate of implementation of regional programmes in 2006 had stood at 77%, which illustrated the interest of African States and recipient institutions in the Agency's technical cooperation programmes.

103. Algeria continued to work towards the attainment of objectives under AFRA. Agency support was necessary for the development of a regional human resource capacity-building programme, and in particular the promotion of young persons and women in science and technology.

104. The High-level African Regional Conference on the Contribution of Nuclear Energy to Peace and Sustainable Development, organized by Algeria in cooperation with the Agency on 9 and 10 January 2007, had adopted an action plan that had subsequently been endorsed by the African Union Summit of Heads of State and Government. Implementation of that plan required the support of the Agency and it was important to form strategic partnerships for the implementation of the regional cooperation programmes.

105. In the framework of the regional project on sustainable energy development in Africa, the Secretariat should pursue its efforts to promote the use of the Agency's energy planning models and establish a framework for cooperation with the African Energy Commission (AFREC), whose headquarters were in Algiers.

106. Algeria shared other States' concerns about terrorist threats. It firmly supported all instruments aimed at combating nuclear terrorism, as well as the Agency's efforts to implement its nuclear security plan. The international community must do more in that regard, inter alia by working towards nuclear disarmament. Although the main responsibility for safety and security fell to States, pertinent international instruments, including the Agency's Illicit Trafficking Database, which facilitated

information exchange between Member States, could help strengthen national and international efforts in that regard.

107. Algeria had ratified the amendment to the CPPNM and signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. Its cooperation with the Agency in the area of safety and security of radioactive sources included the organization of a relevant national seminar in Algiers in February 2006, followed by a RaSSIA mission and a mission to evaluate the regulatory infrastructure for the control of radioactive sources.

108. The Agency must work towards finding a satisfactory solution to problems in the supply of radioactive sources for use in industry or medicine, striking a balance between safety and security and the requirements of national development projects.

109. Algeria trusted that the Director General and the Secretariat would continue to fulfil the Agency's unique verification mission with integrity, impartiality and professionalism. Algeria had had the privilege to preside over the Advisory Committee on Safeguards and Verification within the Framework of the IAEA Statute and had welcomed substantive discussions on the measures proposed by the Secretariat to strengthen the Agency's safeguards system. For its part, Algeria was about to sign an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement.

110. Training to improve SSACs and RSACs was essential. In that connection, Algeria supported the South African initiative to establish a Regional Regulatory Forum, for which Agency assistance had been requested.

111. Algeria, which firmly opposed the militarization of outer space, was following with interest the work of the Commission on Safety Standards, as well as the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

112. Algeria attached great importance to the universal application of the NPT as a means to facilitate rapid disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, which were intrinsically linked. The nuclear-weapon States had a special responsibility, pursuant to Article VI of the Treaty, to work resolutely towards nuclear disarmament. The work of the 2007 Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference had shown worrying trends in that area, including the renaissance of the nuclear programmes and arsenals of nuclear-weapon States and the development of new hybrid nuclear weapons that did not require testing. She urged the international community to intensify its efforts to rid the planet of weapons of mass destruction, in accordance with the commitments undertaken at the 2000 and 2005 NPT Review Conferences.

113. Algeria, as a co-sponsor of the Ministerial Conference for the promotion of Article XIV of the CTBT, urged the ten States whose ratification was necessary for the entry into force of that Treaty to speed up that process.

114. The resumption by the Conference on Disarmament of a substantive debate on nuclear disarmament, the negotiation of a treaty prohibiting the production of fissile materials, a stop to the arms race in space, and security guarantees was of the utmost importance. The declaration on nuclear energy and non-proliferation joint actions issued by the United States of America and Russia on 3 July 2007 should be implemented in order to achieve an effective and verifiable reduction in strategic offence weapons.

115. Algeria welcomed the agreement reached on the DPRK nuclear programme and paid tribute to the six-party talks that had facilitated that successful outcome. Algeria endorsed the process launched by the agreement, which had already led to the resumption of the Agency's verification activities, opened doors for the normalization of relations with the DPRK and a climate of peace and security on the Korean Peninsula.

116. With regard to the Iran nuclear issue, Algeria was of the view that all problems relating to peace and international security must be resolved through dialogue and cooperation. It therefore supported the efforts of the Director General that had culminated in the adoption of a work plan to resolve outstanding questions regarding Iran's nuclear activities. She urged all parties concerned to maintain dialogue in order to reach a peaceful and lasting solution.

117. Her delegation deplored the lack of progress in the implementation of safeguards in the Middle East, owing to the refusal by Israel to accede to the NPT and submit its nuclear installations to the Agency's safeguards system. The possession of nuclear weapons by Israel, as acknowledged by the Prime Minister himself, undermined the climate of trust created by the other States in the region by their joining the NPT, concluding comprehensive safeguards agreements with the Agency and submitting their nuclear installations to Agency safeguards. Furthermore, Israel was disregarding the wishes of the international community by ignoring the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, the General Conference and the NPT Review Conferences on the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East. As a non-nuclear-weapon State and a signatory to all instruments pertaining to disarmament and non-proliferation, including the Pelindaba Treaty, Algeria encouraged the Director General to continue his efforts to facilitate dialogue between States in the region on that strategic issue, which had repercussions for peace and security in the region and the entire world.

118. Given the renewed interest in nuclear energy worldwide and increased Agency membership, Algeria hoped that the amendment to Article VI of the Agency's Statute, which had been adopted following painstaking negotiations, would enter into force without undue delay. She called on all Member States that had not yet done so to ratify the amendment to Article VI to ensure that membership in the Agency's main governing body was a faithful reflection of the number and diversity of its Member States.

119. Mr. KIRIENKO (Russian Federation) began his statement by reading out an address from President Putin:

"I send my greetings to the participants at the 51st session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and my congratulations on the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the organization.

"All these years, the IAEA has been actively promoting the development of international cooperation in the field of Atoms for Peace, and monitoring compliance with the nuclear weapons non-proliferation regime.

"Today, the potential and unique capabilities of the IAEA are in ever greater demand. Thus, Russia is in favour of further strengthening of the role and authority of the Agency.

"One example of our successful cooperation is the implementation of the IAEA's International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles, pursuant to a Russian initiative.

"Russia is also in favour of intensifying practical efforts to establish a global infrastructure capable of ensuring equal access by all interested parties to nuclear energy, as well as reliable compliance with the requirements of the non-proliferation regime. A key element of this infrastructure would be international centres providing nuclear fuel cycle services, including enrichment, under the control of the IAEA. The first such centre has already been established in Russia.

“I am convinced that the Agency’s activities will continue in the future to promote effectively progress in the field of nuclear power, the dynamic development of advanced technologies, and strengthening of international stability and security.

“I hope that your work is successful and fruitful.”

120. A reliable energy supply was essential for political stability and sustainable economic development. Over the next 25 to 30 years, the demand for energy would increase. At the same time fossil fuels would be gradually diminishing and concerns about the impact of energy on the environment and climate change would be growing. Russia’s decision to use nuclear power had not been simply a political one but was based on an appropriate legislative, financial and organizational infrastructure.

121. There was a direct link between large-scale global development of nuclear power and access by more and more countries to nuclear technologies, materials and equipment. That in turn raised questions about nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear and ecological safety, the security of nuclear materials, the competitiveness of nuclear energy and risk reduction. States with a developed nuclear industry should therefore assist other States interested in developing nuclear power.

122. On 3 July 2007, the Presidents of the Russian Federation and the United States of America had issued a declaration on nuclear energy and non-proliferation joint actions, which reflected common approaches to a new format for cooperation to expand the use of nuclear energy and implement existing initiatives in the field of multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle.

123. With the new challenges and threats facing the international community, the NPT was acquiring ever-greater significance, as was the role of the Agency. In January 2006, the Russian President had put forward an initiative concerning the creation of a global nuclear power infrastructure to ensure equal access to nuclear energy for all interested parties provided that they met the requirements of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. That initiative offered a real possibility for the safe and rapid development of nuclear power in the world while recognizing the need to prevent the proliferation of highly sensitive technologies. Russia’s approach, as was the case for its national nuclear power development programme, was practical and carefully thought out.

124. Bearing in mind that uranium enrichment was a fundamental part of the process to manufacture nuclear fuel for power plants and the most sensitive part of the nuclear fuel cycle from the proliferation point of view, the first International Uranium Enrichment Centre had been established in the city of Angarsk in the Russian Federation. In accordance with an intergovernmental agreement signed on 10 May 2007, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Kazakhstan were the founders of that Centre. It offered States an assured supply of enriched uranium enabling them meet their nuclear fuel needs without having to establish their own nuclear fuel cycles. It had been set up in the form of an open joint stock company in order to ensure market conditions and to enable participating organizations to receive a share of the income and dividends from the Centre. It was open to organizations from third parties without any political conditions, and had been entered into the list of nuclear fuel cycle facilities to which Agency safeguards could be applied.

125. With regard to the Director General’s initiative to establish a nuclear material bank under the auspices of the Agency, his country was prepared to offer a guaranteed supply of enriched uranium, to be managed by the Agency, sufficient for two loads for a 1000 MW reactor. The material could be supplied at the request of the Agency in the event that a State that was developing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and meeting its non-proliferation obligations was refused uranium for political reasons. His delegation hoped that the Russian offer of a guaranteed supply at the International Uranium Enrichment Centre, acting as a branch of the Agency bank, would be conducive to the development of a new mechanism and help create a global nuclear power infrastructure for the future.

126. Recently, 16 countries had signed a statement of principles concerning the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership, laying the foundation for the establishment of a new multilateral cooperation mechanism for expanding the use of nuclear power. All countries intending to use or develop nuclear power should be given a free choice of strategies in the area of the nuclear fuel cycle to enable them to benefit from nuclear energy, while reducing the proliferation risk.

127. Russia attached great significance to the Agency's work in increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the safeguards system. The additional protocol was the most effective tool in that regard. On 14 September, the State Duma had ratified the protocol additional to the safeguards agreement between the USSR and the Agency. Russia called on all States that had not yet done so to sign and bring into force an additional protocol as soon as possible and pledged its continued support for the Agency's efforts to strengthen the safeguards system.

128. Russia was completing the work on the decommissioning of its industrial uranium and graphite reactors. It had already completed the dilution and conversion of weapons-grade uranium enriched to more than 90% ^{235}U and more than 313 tonnes had been used as fuel for nuclear power plants. By 2013, more than 500 tonnes of highly enriched weapons-grade uranium would have been destroyed.

129. The Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism put forward by the Presidents of the Russian Federation and the United States had been joined by more than 60 countries to date. It sought to mobilize the efforts of States to meet their commitments under the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the CPPNM.

130. Russia welcomed the Agency's efforts to assist States in developing and strengthening national systems for regulating nuclear and radiation safety. He drew particular attention in that regard to the meeting organized by the Agency to promote an exchange of information on the implementation by States of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, and the supplementary Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources.

131. His country would continue to provide support for INPRO, including financial assistance. It supported the implementation, during phase-II, of joint research in areas including innovative nuclear reactor and fuel cycle systems and their role in national, regional and global scenarios for the further development and expansion of nuclear power. Russia suggested starting research within the framework of the Agency in the areas of infrastructure, legal, institutional and other aspects of new forms of nuclear power development, the supply of fuel on condition of its return after use, and others.

132. At the 2007 G8 Summit in Heiligendamm, it had been noted that innovation was one of the crucial drivers of economic growth in countries. It was therefore agreed to take action to promote innovation as well as R&D. The INPRO project and the Generation IV International Forum had become major initiatives to address issues associated with large-scale nuclear power development on the basis of international cooperation. In July 2006, Russia had decided to become a member of the Forum, and the necessary procedures would be completed by the end of 2007.

133. The Agency's role in ensuring energy security at the global and national levels and in enabling all countries to harness the benefits of nuclear energy could not be overemphasized. Russia wished the Agency and its Director General further success in their activities to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear power.

134. Mr. LUKMAN (Nigeria), welcoming the Agency's new Member States, encouraged more States to follow suit since enlarging the Agency's membership would foster international cooperation in developing the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, in maintaining nuclear safety and in promoting nuclear non-proliferation.

135. Congratulating the Agency on its 50th anniversary, he expressed appreciation for its work under the able leadership of the Director General. Over the years, the Agency had proved beyond doubt its ability to fulfil its tripartite mandate, including its commitment to enhancing cooperation among nations for the peaceful application of nuclear technology. Nigeria remained committed to supporting the Agency in achieving its objectives.

136. One of the Nigerian President's highest priorities was ensuring an adequate energy supply to drive his country's national development process. Nigeria was endowed with energy resources which, if properly and adequately harnessed, would galvanize the process of rapid industrial and socio-economic growth. He expressed gratitude to the Director General for his invaluable role in focusing Nigeria's national interest in nuclear energy, and to the Agency for assisting in fine-tuning the country's national energy policy and renewable energy master plan in order to develop a proactive, holistic and sustainable solution.

137. As part of initial efforts to solve its energy problem, Nigeria had taken measures to diversify and strengthen its national energy generation base to include nuclear electricity, and looked forward to continued partnership and cooperation with the Agency and the international community in achieving its objective. A technical framework and detailed implementation strategy had been produced, with the agreement of the Agency, for the deployment of nuclear power plants in Nigeria by the year 2017.

138. Nigeria was working hard to develop a culture of nuclear safety and nuclear security in all areas. It had endorsed the Agency's Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and the associated Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources, and in 2006 had promulgated domestic regulations on the safety and security of radioactive sources and the transportation of such sources. The Nigerian Nuclear Regulatory Authority (NNRA) continued to work closely with the Agency to improve the country's nuclear safety, security and regulatory framework and radiation protection measures.

139. Greater use of radioactive sources in the oil industry in Nigeria, the expansion of nuclear medicine and radiotherapy facilities in the country, and the need to manage waste generated by the small research reactor had necessitated the development and operation of appropriate radioactive waste management facilities.

140. The NNRA, working in tandem with the Agency, had developed a national regulatory framework which would establish and enforce safe and secure practices in its fledgling national nuclear industry. Plans and procedures for responding to any nuclear or radiological emergency were being prepared in conformity with the Agency's standards and requirements, with a view to integration of the national nuclear radiological emergency response plan into national emergency management procedures. In the area of waste management, Nigeria had promulgated both a national policy on radioactive wastes and regulations on waste management.

141. As proof of its commitment to peaceful applications of nuclear energy, Nigeria had signed and ratified an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement with the Agency and all the relevant treaties, including the Pelindaba Treaty. Furthermore, it intended to increase its support for activities to combat nuclear terrorism by contributing financially to the Nuclear Security Fund.

142. He expressed appreciation for Agency assistance to his country under the technical cooperation programme, in particular in the fields of energy planning, human health, food security, agriculture and water resources management.

143. To ensure a solid foundation for its national nuclear electricity programme, the Nigeria Atomic Energy Commission (NAEC) had been established in 2006 with a mandate to provide an institutional framework and technical capability to explore, exploit and harness atomic energy for peaceful

applications. With the assistance of the Agency, Nigeria had already developed a significant capacity for the application of nuclear techniques and would continue to develop sustainable programmes in such areas as human resource development, support for nuclear technology and nuclear knowledge management.

144. Nigeria also looked forward to cooperation in building regional and subregional capacities to enhance regional integration in the development and use of facilities. The gamma irradiation facility at the Sheda Science and Technology Complex (SHETSCO), Abuja, was one such facility. It was a semi-commercial irradiator which could serve as a regional training centre for food irradiation and agricultural applications, including the SIT.

145. The recent progress made in the advancement of nuclear non-proliferation on the Korean Peninsula had proven that multilateral diplomacy was indispensable in maintaining international peace and security in an increasingly volatile and unpredictable world. He hoped that other regions of the globe with comparable situations could profit from the example set and move towards constructive regional cooperation.

146. Mr. MARCUZZO DO CANTO (ABACC) said that Brazil and Argentina had developed a common understanding in nuclear matters through a long process of economic, political, technological and cultural integration, which was characterized by consensus. A number of bilateral mechanisms had been established, including the 1991 Agreement for the Exclusively Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy, which contained a clear commitment to use nuclear materials and facilities exclusively for peaceful purposes. His own organization had been set up to administer the Common System for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (SCCC). Under the Quadripartite Agreement, also dating from 1991, Argentina and Brazil accepted the application of safeguards to all nuclear material under their jurisdiction in order to ensure that such materials were not diverted for military purposes. The joint work by ABACC and the Agency had created an atmosphere of mutual confidence and produced excellent results.

147. No country should be excluded from the benefits of economic development. With greater awareness of the potential environmental impact of the associated increase in energy requirements, nuclear energy was set to play a leading role. A number of countries were turning to it as a reliable source of energy which did not contribute to the greenhouse effect. On the other hand, there was concern about the possibility of diversion of nuclear materials for military purposes. Those that had access to the necessary scientific and technological expertise bore a major responsibility for ensuring that nuclear power generation was both economically feasible and safe. The best way to guarantee the peaceful use of nuclear power was to promote understanding and cooperation among nations by means of mechanisms such as the Quadripartite Agreement.

148. Argentina and Brazil had decided to reactivate their respective nuclear programmes. The Argentine Government was to invest some \$3.5 billion in its nuclear programme, while the Brazilian Minister of Science and Technology had recently declared that solar and wind energy were not feasible in Brazil on a large scale. ABACC would, therefore, have an even more important role to play in inspection, accounting and control for years to come.

149. In 2006, ABACC had been able to guarantee that all nuclear material and other safeguarded elements in both Argentina and Brazil were properly accounted for and used exclusively for peaceful purposes. That achievement had been made possible by the officials, technicians, inspectors, consultants and laboratories working under the organization's senior supervisory body, the ABACC Commission. A policy had been developed to improve the qualifications of its officials and inspectors in the areas of non-destructive analysis, containment and surveillance, training and safeguards, with the assistance of the Agency, the United States Department of Energy and Euratom. ABACC took

pains to ensure that existing managerial and operational staff transferred their knowledge, experience and skills to their successors.

150. With a view to increasing safeguards efficiency, work was being done under the Quadripartite Agreement to evaluate new safeguards technologies, such as surveillance devices and state-of-health transmission systems, as well as innovative safeguards approaches. A new UF₆ sampling method, the ABACC-Cristallini method, had been developed with promising results. It could lead to a reduction in sampling costs and in the number of rejections.

151. He reaffirmed ABACC's commitment to improving the application of nuclear safeguards in Brazil and Argentina. It would continue to share information as required under the Quadripartite Agreement while preserving the necessary confidentiality.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.