

# Dr. Eklund re-appointed director general

By acclamation the delegates at the thirteenth session of the General Conference confirmed the Board of Governors' decision to re-appoint Dr. Sigvard Eklund Director General of the Agency. His speech after being sworn in emphasized the challenge presented by the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the anxieties about the present state of its political acceptance.

This is Dr. Eklund's third term of office. He was first appointed in 1961 and was renewed in the post in 1965, when the General Conference sessions were held in Tokyo. He will now hold the office for another four years.

After being sworn in, Dr. Eklund thanked the delegates for the many kindly references to his services during the general debate.

"I look back over the past eight years not with complacency or complete satisfaction" he said "but with a sense of gratitude that I have been entrusted with the task of guiding the Agency towards the fulfilment of the ideals of its founders".

He recalled that his service with the IAEA began at a time of considerable international tensions. Today, although there were many problems, the general climate of understanding between nations had improved vastly, and it was this spirit which enabled the Agency to act more efficiently.

Events since 1957, when the Agency came into existence, had verified that the founding fathers were right in their evaluation of the new energy

source. Development of nuclear weapons had increased their explosive power a thousandfold. Simultaneously development in the utilization of atomic energy for power had presented problems which only an international organization could solve. The fact that power reactors are now being built at such a rate that they will produce some 300 000 megawatts of electricity in 1980 as compared with 10 000 in 1968 means that fissile material will in the future be available in large quantities in a number of countries which do not now have access to it, said Dr. Eklund. This material could be used for military purposes unless proper safeguards were applied.

"This is the reason" he declared, "why I consider the Agency's role in the field of safeguards to be of utmost importance in the future, a role which will be further enhanced if, I emphasize if, the Non-Proliferation Treaty comes into effect."

He referred to the necessity of establishing and implementing a system of safeguards inspection acceptable to all, and the carrying out of inspection duties under the Treaty with a minimum of friction and a maximum of acceptance to the Member States concerned.

#### Paying for peace

It was well to realize that world peace effected through NPT must involve financial costs. Since the benefits of peace were universal the expense of safeguards should be one which all Member States, whether nuclear or otherwise, should be happy and ready to undertake.

Dr. Eklund referred also to the reluctance of Member States to sign and ratify NPT for various reasons. The reasons were worthy of respect and he hoped that obstacles could be overcome. There were probably ways in which the Safeguards System could be improved and he hoped that these questions would be discussed in as wide a form as possible in order to create a basis having maximum acceptability for the agreements the Agency had to conclude with individual or groups of Member States under MPT. Without these agreements the Treaty would be just a scrap of paper.

"Let me make it perfectly clear that I am very worried about the situation at present with regard to the political acceptance of the Agency's Safeguards System and the NPT" continued Dr. Eklund. "The Agency is now controlling 70 reactors in 30 countries out of which two are nuclear weapon states. If the distribution of these countries over the world is analysed we find that all Member States in Latin America, South East Asia and the Far East having reactors have submitted them to Agency's safeguards. The situation of Europe in this respect does not give cause for satisfaction. Outside the nuclear powers there are 22 countries with reactors, only eight of which have submitted them to Agency safeguards, although four other countries participate in a regional safeguards system".

"I repeat that I am worried about this position and its implications on the NPT. The situation with regard to the Treaty is not improved by the fact that two of the major sponsors of the NPT still have not ratified it and this has not reassured nations who are hesitant about signing and ratifying the Treaty. Indeed their reluctance may have been strengthened because of the underground tests which are being carried out, even during the period in which the Treaty has been open for signature and ratification".



Dr. Eklund, a native of Sweden and a Master and Doctor of Science, held senior positions at the Nobel Institute for Physics, the Research Institution for National Defence, the Royal Institute of Technology and AB Atomenergi, all in Stockholm, before joining the IAEA in 1961. He is a member of the Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences, a Fellow of the American Nuclear Society, an Honorary Member of the British Nuclear Energy Society, an Honorary Doctor of Philosophy of Graz University and a recipient of the Atoms for Peace Award (1968).

Is there an alternative?

What was the alternative to NPT? As long as nobody had presented anything more attractive they could only envisage a situation in which nuclear weapons might proliferate. The consequences had been very well presented in a report to the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1968 on the effects of the possible use of nuclear weapons and the security and economic implications for States of the acquisition and further development of these weapons. Although this report unfortunately seemed to have become forgotten, it needed to be recalled by all interested in the problems.

On the question of the composition of the Board of Governors, he considered it a healthy sign if an international organization from time to time looked at its Statute to review it and adjust it to the rapidly changing world. He hoped that Member States would in the end demonstrate some unselfishness and generosity, without which it would be very difficult to reach a compromise acceptable to the necessary two thirds of the membership.

He also considered it would be advantageous politically if the General Conference were held periodically in a country outside headquarters and in a region other than Europe.

Many nuclear applications had become routine applications in different disciplines. It followed that corresponding activities in the Agency could be decreased or terminated. He would like to see the resources of manpower and equipment thus released made available for initiating the same activities in developing countries.