

**INTERNATIONAL
ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

Distr.
GENERAL
GC(II)/OR.18
29 October 1958
ENGLISH

General Conference

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

OFFICIAL RECORD OF THE EIGHTEENTH PLENARY MEETING.

Held at the Neue Hofburg, Vienna,
on Thursday, 25 September 1958, at 11.5 a.m.

President: Mr. SUDJARWO (Indonesia)

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* GC(II)/57.

N.B. The list of delegations attending the second regular session of the
General Conference was issued as document GC(II)/INF/17/Rev.3.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. The PRESIDENT announced that since there were only three speakers in the general debate on the list for the present meeting, the General Committee had decided, at its fourth meeting earlier that morning, to recommend that the General Conference should take up agenda item 23, "Election of Members to the Board of Governors", after the listed speakers had made their statements.
2. Mr. BERNARDES (Brazil) said that, while his delegation fully sympathized with the desire of the President and the General Committee to expedite the work of the General Conference, the election of Members to the Board entailed much consultation among delegations, particularly as specific geographical areas had to be represented. Furthermore, the item did not appear as part of the business of the Conference either for that day or for the following day. He therefore proposed that consideration of the item be deferred to the end of the general debate.
3. Mr. SOLE (Union of South Africa) fully agreed. It was quite unprecedented that the general conference of an international organization should be called on to elect members of its governing body at a few hours' notice. He felt that, in fairness to Members of the Conference who were not members of the General Committee, the latter should give at least twenty-four hours' notice of the elections to the Board.
4. Mr. VEJYANT-RANGRISHT (Thailand) also thought it premature to take the item immediately. Delegations should be given more time to consider the matter carefully; not all their members had yet arrived and the item appeared towards the end of the Conference's Agenda.
5. Mr. AHMAD (Pakistan) strongly supported the views of the preceding speakers. He thought that the item should, if possible, be left until the beginning of the following week.
6. Mr. RAJAN (India) felt that the General Committee's recommendation called for some explanation by one of its members. The Committee's duty was to see that the work of the General Conference was concluded by a certain date. In discharge of that duty it had thought fit, since only three speakers

appeared on the list for the present meeting, to recommend that the item should be disposed of immediately so that the remainder of the Conference's work could proceed smoothly.

7. Admittedly the difficulties of certain delegations referred to by the preceding speakers must be considered, but it was equally necessary to pay due regard to Article VI.C and D of the Statute. The Board as at present constituted would cease to exist at the conclusion of the session, and since under Rule 11 of its Provisional Rules of Procedure the Board must be so organized as to enable it to function continuously, the new Board must be ready to take over at once. It was therefore essential to hold the election as soon as possible.

8. The PRESIDENT said he realized that it might be inconvenient to some delegations to elect members to the Board of Governors at the present meeting. He suggested, therefore, that the proposal by the delegate of Brazil that item 23 be taken at the end of the general debate would most conveniently meet the wishes of delegates and the practical requirements of the Statute.

It was so decided.

DETERMINATION OF THE CLOSING DATE FOR THE GENERAL CONFERENCE (continued^{1/})

9. The PRESIDENT announced that the General Committee had decided, under Rule 8 of the Rules of Procedure, to recommend that the second regular session should close on Saturday, 4 October 1958. The Committee had emphasized that that would be possible only if all delegations made every effort to dispose of the work of the session expeditiously. He suggested that the General Conference adopt the recommendation of its General Committee.

It was so decided.

GENERAL DEBATE AND REPORT OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS FOR THE YEAR 1957-58
(GC(II)/39) (continued^{2/})

10. Mr. McCONE (United States of America) hoped that the work of the session would result in policies by which the Agency could progress more

^{1/} GC(II)/OR.15, paragraph 70.

^{2/} GC(II)/OR.17.

rapidly towards its statutory objective of accelerating and enlarging the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world. What was said and done at the Conference might well determine the future significance of the Agency.

11. The United States remained firm in its support of the Agency and in its conviction that the Agency was one way "by which the miraculous inventiveness of man shall not be dedicated to his death, but consecrated to his life". The United States would do all in its power to maintain an appropriate role for the Agency as an organization of primary importance in international co-operation in atomic matters; it would both initiate and support programmes designed to strengthen and advance the Agency in that position. As time went on and experience increased it would, with due regard to its other obligations, look to the Agency as the principal medium through which United States' international programmes for the peaceful use of atomic energy would be implemented and carried forward.

12. The United States welcomed and wholeheartedly endorsed the statement of the delegate of Japan that his Government intended to request the Agency to administer, when prepared to do so, the safeguards provided for in the Agreement for Co-operation between the United States and Japan^{3/}. The vigour and imagination with which Japan was developing its programme indicated the speed with which the Agency should move in establishing the safeguards system required by Article XII of the Statute. The United States therefore strongly supported Japan in its request that the Agency approach that task immediately.

13. The importance of international co-operation had been demonstrated by the Second United Nations International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy recently held at Geneva; the great wealth of technological material presented there provided in itself a basis for specific programmes with which the Agency was uniquely qualified to deal. Many matters relating to atomic energy could be handled only on an international basis; they included the necessary development of standards and regulations for protection against radiation, the careful use of technical manpower, and the drafting of an

^{3/} GC(II)/OR.17, paragraphs 1 - 11.

international convention on third-party liability. The references to the last point in statements by previous speakers amounted, in the view of the United States delegation, to an instruction to the Director General to proceed with the necessary work immediately.

14. The General Conference must frankly and openly appraise the problems facing the Agency and unite in a constructive effort to resolve them with the same energy and devotion as had been displayed at the Conference on the Agency's Statute.

15. The Agency had not fulfilled all hopes, but the United States believed that its record to date could fairly be regarded as encouraging. The Report of the Board of Governors (GC(II)/39) gave evidence of greater substantive accomplishment than could justifiably have been expected a year earlier. As the Director General had pointed out in his statement at the fourteenth meeting^{4/}, the Agency's fellowship programme was already in operation; procedures for disseminating information had been devised, technical consultants made available, field missions completed, and a radiation protection manual drafted, the initial organizational difficulties had been overcome, and agreements with other international organizations for the pooling of talents to promote the benign uses of nuclear energy had been placed before the Conference.

16. Despite that progress, however, the Agency still faced organizational and substantive problems which it must solve in order to achieve its objectives. The United States recognized the collective duty it shared with all other Members to help the Agency to do so, and, in particular, the duty it shared with other atomically-advanced Members to provide initiative and leadership. It was prepared to make suggestions; but other Members must do the same.

17. The General Conference was not merely a forum, or even a meeting to consider activities proposed by the Board, but a conference at which a broad exchange of views could generate fresh ideas inspiring the Board and the

^{4/} GC(II)/OR.14, paragraphs 32 - 50.

Director General to develop a full range of future activities. Other speakers had expressed similar views, and those statements taken together might serve as useful guidance to the Board and the Director General.

18. The United States Government unequivocally supported the budget submitted to the General Conference by the Board.^{5/} It attached paramount importance to the funds recommended for Agency fellowships and grants in aid. The need for training was universally recognized, and trained men clearly required appropriate facilities to apply and develop their knowledge. It also supported the provision for a central laboratory; there could be no reasonable doubt of the need for permanent laboratory facilities at the Agency's exclusive disposal.

19. The United States Government had carefully considered other desirable activities not included in the budget, and put forward six proposals for new activities or for greater emphasis on activities already in progress or planned.

20. First, the Agency should inaugurate, as a major endeavour, a programme of training, research and application in the field of radioisotopes, with special emphasis on their use in medicine, biology and agriculture. The benefits were immediately available; there would certainly be further advances, but there was no need to await them before applying the medical, biological and agricultural uses of radioisotopes to many of the problems of the less developed areas and particularly to the alleviation of the crushing burden of hunger. With its fellowships, its equipment grants and its mobile radioisotope laboratories, the Agency could launch a co-ordinated programme for the establishment of radioisotope training and research centres in many Member States. He urged that such a programme be energetically pursued, and pledged his Government's co-operation with the Agency in jointly sponsoring seminars and courses and in continuing to make its own facilities available to foreign students.

21. Secondly, the Agency should press forward with the development of international standards and regulations for the safe transport, handling and use of radioactive materials and for the disposal of radioactive waste, and with the drafting of safety codes on reactor siting and operation and on the protection

^{5/} GC(II)/36 and Corr.1.

of workers in atomic energy establishments. Other important matters that needed early attention by the Agency were material-accounting procedures and a convention on third-party liability. The Agency should also be established as the central authority for standardization and calibration.

22. Thirdly, his Government strongly urged that measures over and above the fellowship programme be taken to make the Agency the central co-ordinating body for the training of scientists from countries which now stood only on the threshold of the atomic age; such training was universally recognized to be absolutely essential.

23. Fourthly, the Agency should draw on the fund of scientific and **technical** competence that existed throughout the world but was not being fully used. His Government was prepared to explore with the Agency the possibility that the United States might assign specific research projects to the Agency, which could enter into contracts with existing research centres throughout the world for their execution. The United States Government would bear all the contract costs, and the results - relating, for instance, to ceramic fuel elements, high-temperature metallurgy, human metabolism and the use of radioisotopes in agriculture - would be made available through the Agency to all its Members. That offer was made because the Agency's budget did not provide funds for such activities and the United States believed that they were urgently needed. He hoped that the results would encourage other Governments to follow a similar course.

24. The fifth proposal concerned the question of nuclear power, which the Geneva Conference, and particularly its President's opening speech, had done much to place in proper perspective. Nuclear power would undoubtedly become a significant factor in world economics, but many problems must be solved before its use could become widespread. The technology of nuclear power production had been developed, but the cost was in many instances substantially greater than that of conventional power. Member States should not be discouraged, however; the long-range problems must be tackled by coming to immediate grips with nuclear power technology as a whole, and in the end the higher cost of nuclear power would no longer be inevitable. A long view, however, must be taken, covering not one or even five years; plans should be

on a fifty year basis. The Agency should encourage atomic power development with due regard, especially in the timing of projects, to the special needs and conditions of the undeveloped areas. Guidance was obviously necessary.

25. Another important Agency function was to provide for safe handling and accounting of power reactor fuels, and the Director General's suggestion^{6/} that all foreign shipments of source materials should be registered with the Agency deserved study. The Agency could also render its Members a valuable service by making available to them the results of current research and development programmes, which, as the Geneva Conference had shown, were already impressive when viewed as a whole.

26. The United States accordingly proposed that the Agency should undertake, as an essential and immediate first step, an intensive and continuing survey of existing reactor types, their costs, the criteria for their introduction into new areas, and the means by which it could promote nuclear power production at reasonable cost. The General Conference might also request the Board of Governors to submit, at the third regular session, a co-ordinated long-range programme of assistance to Members in the development or acquisition of nuclear power plant, with additional emphasis on the development of smaller plant suitable for areas where the demand for power was limited.

27. Sixthly, the Agency should continue to develop into a major centre for the collection and distribution of scientific information on the peaceful uses of atomic energy, and should encourage Members to make use of those services. It should sponsor scientific conferences and symposia with vigour and imagination in order that the most effective use might be made of the knowledge gained at Geneva and elsewhere. Further conferences like that just concluded at Geneva should be held under the Agency's auspices, and it should act as a centre through which Members engaged in research on controlled thermonuclear fusion would freely exchange technical information and thus extend the constructive co-operation they had started at Geneva. The United States Government would co-operate fully to that end.

^{6/} GC(II)/OR.14, paragraph 49.

28. The six United States proposals were based on sober recognition of the present state of nuclear science and technology, and on the knowledge that the Agency's resources were limited. To propose costly programmes at present would impede rather than promote attainment of the Agency's statutory objectives. If the Agency's programme, as recommended by the Board, were carried out and further realistic projects of the kind just outlined were accepted, however, the Agency would make firm and significant progress towards its objectives in the coming year.

29. In his historic address in 1953 President Eisenhower had envisaged the Agency as a symbol which would "allow all peoples of all nations to see that ... the great Powers of the earth ... are interested in human aspirations first, rather than in building up the armaments of war"^{17/}. In that spirit the United States reaffirmed its offer of 5,000 kg of uranium-235 for the Agency's use, and would continue to match the offers of all other Members until 1 July 1960. By such steps, coupled with progress in disarmament, the day when the Agency would be the principal custodian of the world's fissionable material would be brought closer. If the Agency moved forward wisely, the world would be infinitely richer, and the Agency's example of international co-operation for a common purpose might lead to the lasting peace sought by all mankind.

30. Mr. El ANNABI (Tunisia) expressed satisfaction at the remarkable progress made by the Agency during its first year of operation. The comments he was about to make should not be interpreted as criticisms, they were intended rather to point to activities which were, or could be, of special interest to small countries such as his own.

31. The Agency should, in the first place, act as a sort of bureau of standards - it could, for instance, define methods for the irradiation and utilization of isotopes and, in conjunction with other international organizations, recommend standard handling techniques and health and safety measures.

32. It should also pay close attention to the co-ordination of research programmes, taking due account of special experience or skills gained in particular fields by various countries, in order to secure the most rational use of

^{17/} United Nations document A/PV.470, paragraph 122.

available knowledge and facilities. Tunisia, for example, as an essentially agricultural and maritime country, would naturally develop its research primarily in plant and marine biology and oceanography, but the results would undoubtedly be of general and not merely local interest.

33. Moreover, the Agency could usefully investigate the economics of small reactors. Previous studies had related mainly to large reactors of 100 MW or more, which, at least for the time being, could find no place in the smaller or less advanced countries, but those countries formed a majority of the Members of the Agency and looked to it for just such specialized assistance and technical co-operation in bringing about the free exchange of scientific information.

34. Tunisia proposed, under its six-year plan, to set up a small research reactor during the coming six months, and every second year thereafter a power reactor for the production of industrial heat for enterprises manufacturing commodities required to develop its agriculture. It therefore placed great hopes in co-operation between the Agency's experts and Tunisian technicians in investigating the theoretical and practical problems raised by the plan.

35. His Government also greatly desired the Agency to underwrite the international financing of national programmes executed with Agency assistance. Such guarantees might often be a decisive factor in persuading banks or other institutions that a given project was financially viable. It would be difficult to deny that one of the duties of an international organization such as the Agency was to grant material aid to under-developed countries for the purpose of implementing projects designed to improve and balance their economies in the interest of world prosperity and stability - always provided, of course, that those countries undertook to discharge honourably the obligations they had incurred.

36. The Tunisian delegation, in common with many others, believed that the Agency should seek to co-ordinate its activities as closely as possible with those of the specialized agencies, more particularly the International Labour Organisation, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization; in that respect it associated itself with the proposal made at

a previous meeting by the head of the French delegation.^{8/} Such co-ordination was bound to enhance the prestige and authority of the Agency and so assist it to become the instrument which the authors of its Statute had intended it to be.

37. Tunisia was a small country rich in traditions and culture, but poor in ready economic resources. It counted greatly on the co-operation of its friends, both old and new, for the assistance it needed to exploit its latent economic and intellectual potentialities and to attain the objectives for which the Agency had been created.

38. Mr. TAMMES (Netherlands) said that at the time of its establishment the Agency had been regarded as having three main objectives. They followed one from the other, and had been recognized successively.

39. The first was to spread the benefits of nuclear energy, particularly nuclear power, equally over the world, and more especially therefore to the less-developed countries.

40. The second was to prevent the peaceful use of atomic energy from raising the world level of radioactivity beyond reasonably safe limits. His delegation, among others, had had in mind that an effective system of control of the peaceful uses of atomic energy might create a climate more favourable to control of other uses and to comprehensive disarmament.

41. The Agency's third main objective was the co-ordination and planning of international effort for the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. That had only become fully recognized as a necessary aim through realization that a large number of specialized activities within the Agency's field had in fact already been started.

42. Each of those three objectives was fundamental to the Agency. Its other functions were secondary, and nothing had intervened since its inception to change that picture. He would consider each objective in turn in the light of present circumstances.

43. Spectacular direct contributions to development of the use of atomic energy were not, of course, to be expected at the present stage. A cautious approach was indicated, owing to the very nature of the subject. The Agency had made a slow start, but would keep pace with the march of technological events.

^{8/} GC(II)/OR.16, paragraph 10.

44. Valuable as the exchanges of information had been at the second Geneva Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, many experts still felt that it was difficult for electricity authorities, planning to build nuclear power installations, to decide what equipment to choose; the execution of certain countries' programmes might consequently be delayed. One of the problems with which the Agency would need to deal in the next few years was therefore the choice of the reactors best suited to particular countries. Fuel costs, the size of the reactor, the amount of capital investment required and many other factors differed from place to place. It would be helpful if the fact-finding teams, whose activities were to be extended under the 1959 programme, were to do preliminary work on the evaluation of different types of reactor.

45. One of the most important of the Agency's tasks in the near future was technical assistance to Member States. In some cases, before a country could make full and effective use of atomic power its scientists needed to acquaint themselves with the principles of atomic physics and atomic energy in small chemical, physical and isotope laboratories. Fact-finding teams of experts were needed to investigate such cases. They in their turn could not do their job properly unless they had laboratory facilities of their own. The Agency laboratory envisaged in the programme ought therefore not merely to perform servicing functions, but also to provide the Agency's scientists with a place in which to prepare for their work.

46. Regarding the second of the Agency's main objectives, his delegation was in favour of having a Division of Safeguards. The Agency must prepare for the time when its Members would eventually authorize it to perform its safeguarding functions.

47. With regard to the third objective, work on atomic energy had been started in a quite uncoordinated manner by institutions within States, by States and by various international organizations. The Agency could at least promote co-ordination among international organizations, which were not sovereign States, and even formal relationships between them should be constantly adaptable to changing conditions and needs. Delimitation of their spheres of competence was less important than provisions - such as those included in the proposed relationship agreements with specialized agencies - for mutual consultation when overlapping threatened. In addition to the conclusion of formal bilateral agreements

between international organizations, channels for continuous consultation between certain of them had already been opened, permanent representatives were being exchanged, and joint organs had been set up. The decisions of the joint organs were bound to affect the decisions of the participating organizations, which would thus be welded, so to speak, into a system of autonomous systems. The United Nations Administrative Committee on Co-ordination was an outstanding example of such an organ. It would be desirable to have, in addition, a similar body at the policy-making level.

48. In its resolution 694 E (XXVI)^{2/} the Economic and Social Council had pointed out that effective co-ordination required, in addition to formal bilateral arrangements under the relationship agreements, the development of day-to-day working relationships within the framework of general multilateral arrangements for co-ordination. His delegation emphatically agreed. It looked forward to the achievement of concerted action in the sense of a jointly-conceived and united plan aiming at a broad common objective.

49. Two fields where such concerted action would be valuable were radiation hazards and waste disposal. In the first there was as yet no comprehensive plan integrating the activities of various specialized agencies, the United Nations, and the Agency; a unified, jointly-conceived plan was imperative.

50. The second question had been raised at the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea in connexion with sea pollution, and at the second Geneva Conference, where the Netherlands delegation had drawn attention to the need for international control of contamination in Western Europe. The Netherlands, owing to its geographical position, was particularly interested in research on waste disposal into the sea and rivers. Worldwide co-operation between experts was required for the collection and analysis of all available data on the way in which radioactive nuclides in water moved into and through mineral and biological systems.

51. The Agency might properly be expected to play an initiating and stimulating part in all fields in which it had primary responsibilities. That task would be facilitated by the establishment of regular relations with the Economic and

^{2/} GC(II)51, Appendix.

Social Council, to which it should submit annual reports to serve as a basis for the Council's annual debate on co-ordination, harmonization and concerted planning.

52. A principle fundamental to the conception of the Agency was that of voluntariness. The Agency had been conceived as one which would operate effectively only in so far as its Members were prepared to use it, by providing and receiving assistance. Certain Member States seemed to be less sure that they wanted to use it than had originally been expected. Nevertheless, a great deal of devoted work had been put into the Agency, and its staff had become a force in its own right. A stage would soon be reached when the Agency would move forward under its own power. There was no going back: substantial funds had been put into the Agency and the only choice was to go forward with all available energy.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.