



International Atomic Energy Agency

General Conference

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RECORDS OF THE TWELFTH REGULAR SESSION (24 - 30 SEPTEMBER 1968)

ONE HUNDRED AND NINETEENTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Neue Hofburg, Vienna,
on Tuesday, 24 September 1968, at 3.10 p.m.

Temporary President: Mr. NEUMANN (Czechoslovakia)

President: Mr. SANDOVAL VALLARTA (Mexico)

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* GC(XII)/377

OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT declared the twelfth regular session of the General Conference open.
2. In accordance with Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure, he invited the Conference to observe one minute of silence dedicated to prayer or meditation.

All present rose and stood in silence for one minute.

3. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT welcomed the delegates from Member States, the observers from States which were not yet Members of the Agency and the representatives of the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations and of non-governmental organizations who had come to take part in the work of the session. The Conference was also honoured by the presence of the Vice-Chancellor of the Republic of Austria and the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, as well as senior officials of the Government and of the City of Vienna. On behalf of the General Conference he expressed his gratitude to those mentioned for all Austria was doing for the Agency.

4. In conclusion, he said it was to be hoped that all Member States would ratify the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons¹⁾, very shortly, and felt sure that when the time came, the Agency would prove fully capable of carrying out the obligations that the Treaty imposed upon it.

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT

5. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT invited nominations for the office of President.

6. Mr. QUIHILLALT (Argentina) said it was an honour to nominate Mr. Sandoval Vallarta, the delegate of Mexico, who was well known in scientific circles throughout the world. Mr. Sandoval Vallarta had taught in a large number of widely-known establishments and had helped to formulate the so-called Lemaître-Vallarta theory on cosmic rays. In 1946 he had been Chairman of the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission and had taken part in all three United Nations Conferences on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy; he was, furthermore, Chairman of the Scientific Council of the International Centre for Theoretical Physics at Trieste and had led the Mexican delegation at previous

1) This Treaty, which is the subject of Resolution 2373 (XXII) adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 12 June 1968, is subsequently referred to in this records as "the Treaty" or "the NPT".

sessions of the General Conference. He thereby combined all the qualities fitting him to act as President.

7. Mr. NIISEKI (Japan) seconded, and Mr. HIRSCH (France) supported, the nomination.

8. *Mr. Sandoval Vallarta (Mexico) was elected President of the General Conference for its twelfth regular session by acclamation.*

Mr. Sandoval Vallarta (Mexico) took the Chair.

9. The PRESIDENT thanked the Conference for the great honour it had done his country in electing him President. He regarded his election as recognition of the efforts made by Mexico in helping to eliminate the danger of a nuclear war, and hoped that he would have the co-operation of all delegates so as to enable the Conference to carry out its work successfully.

APPOINTMENT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

10. The PRESIDENT proposed, in accordance with Rule 28 of the Rules of Procedure, that a Credentials Committee should be appointed consisting of the following nine Members: Belgium, Bolivia, Hungary, Iraq, Japan, Peru, Philippines, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America.

11. *The proposal was adopted unanimously.*

ELECTION OF THE VICE-PRESIDENTS

12. The PRESIDENT recalled that, under Rule 34 of the Rules of Procedure, the Conference was required to elect its Vice-Presidents after the election of the Chairmen of the two Main Committees. He therefore intended to suspend the plenary meeting for a short time to enable the two Committees to elect their Chairmen.

The meeting was suspended at 3.40 p.m. and resumed at 3.50 p.m.

13. The PRESIDENT invited nominations for the eight posts of Vice-President of the Conference.

14. Mr. TORKI (Tunisia) nominated the delegates of the following States: Australia, Brazil, Canada, India, Japan, Uganda, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

15. Mr. EL-SOLH (Lebanon) seconded the nominations.

16. *The delegates nominated were declared elected to the eight Vice-Presidencies.*

APPOINTMENT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE

17. The PRESIDENT pointed out that, under Rule 40 of the Rules of Procedure, the General Conference was required to elect four additional members to the General Committee. He invited nominations.

18. Mr. AFABLE (Philippines) nominated the delegates of Bulgaria, France, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States of America.

19. Mr. ISTINYELI (Turkey) seconded the nominations.

20. *The delegates of the States nominated were declared elected to the General Committee, which was thus duly appointed in compliance with the provisions of Rule 40 of the Rules of Procedure.*

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE AGENCY (GC(XII)/378, 386)

21. The PRESIDENT invited the Conference to consider the recommendations of the Board of Governors concerning the applications for membership of the Agency made by Liechtenstein and Zambia (GC(XII)/378) and by the Niger (GC(XII)/386) and the relevant draft resolutions.

22. Mr. HIRSCH (France) warmly supported the application presented by the Niger, a country with which France had numerous ties.

23. Mr. WEARING (United Kingdom) supported the application made by Zambia, which was a member of the British Commonwealth.

24. Mr. HOCHSTRASSER (Switzerland), mentioning the close ties that united Switzerland and Liechtenstein, supported the application for membership made by that State.

25. Mr. HALUSA (Austria) said that for similar reasons he joined with the Swiss delegate in supporting the application.

26. *The three draft resolutions were adopted unanimously.*

27. The PRESIDENT stated that Liechtenstein, the Niger and Zambia would become Members of

the Agency as soon as their instruments of acceptance of the Statute had been deposited with the United States Government, in accordance with Article XXI.C of the Statute.

28. Mr. AUWÄRTER (Liechtenstein) thanked the General Conference for the confidence it had shown in his country. Close co-operation with Switzerland had enabled Liechtenstein to carry out useful research work in the field of atomic energy, to develop new materials for reactors and to train nuclear energy experts.

STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

29. The DIRECTOR GENERAL recalled that at the previous session of the General Conference he had referred to the growing concern in the world at the development of nuclear weapons techniques and the dangers inherent in their proliferation.²⁾ Since then the experts appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to study the effects of the possible use of nuclear weapons had stressed the detrimental effects of the proliferation of such weapons on world security and the economic burden which their acquisition entailed³⁾. Seen in that perspective, the General Assembly's resolution June 1968 commending the NPT constituted perhaps the most significant international agreement since the advent of the nuclear age.

30. Long and difficult negotiations had preceded the acceptance of the draft of the Treaty, particularly Article III, which concerned international safeguards, and was of prime importance to the Agency. Eighty-one States had already signed the Treaty, but many non-nuclear-weapon States that were among the most advanced in nuclear technology had not done so. He hoped the latter States would do so in the near future and, in that connection, he realized that the Agency had a responsibility to publicize its safeguards system more widely and define the terms of the safeguards agreements on which implementation of the Treaty would be based.

31. In closing the previous session of the General Conference the President had expressed the Conference's desire that the Agency should undertake its appropriate role in relation to safeguards under the Treaty⁴⁾. After the General Assembly had adopted the NPT resolution, he (the Director General) had informed the President of the General Assembly of the Agency's readiness to assume the responsibilities vested in it by the Treaty. The Secretariat had already analysed the provisions of the Treaty

2) GC(XI)/OR.III, para.26.

3) See United Nations document A/6858.

4) GC(XI)/OR.118, para.29.

together with its various legal, technical, operational and financial implications. It would continue working with the assistance of consultants in October and November and in the light of its analysis would formulate a model safeguards agreement that could serve as a basis for discussions in the appropriate bodies of the Agency.

32. Since the Agency would not be called upon to exercise its safeguards function under the Treaty until the latter came into force and individual safeguards agreements were concluded, there would be a transition period of one or two years which could be profitably used to train the necessary personnel. Scientific and technical research and development work seemed to be of prime importance from the standpoint of formulating general principles that could underlie the safeguards system and developing detailed safeguards procedures for the system; Member States had made much greater efforts in that direction during the preceding year, and although the Agency did not have the means to contribute materially to those efforts, it was able to promote work at the national level by participating in joint research and by endeavouring to co-ordinate national programmes.

33. He was aware of the fact that the cost of applying international safeguards in the future gave rise to concern. Estimates relating to the scope and the cost of safeguards only became meaningful when related to estimates in respect of safeguarded installations. It was doubtful whether it was possible to make reliable prognostications for more than five or six years ahead, and he was quite certain that countries advanced in the nuclear field should set up national systems for nuclear materials management and safeguards controls which, when harmonized with the Agency's safeguards system, would facilitate its operation. The size of installations under safeguards was likely to increase considerably, and that meant that the application of the safeguards system would require a proportionately smaller staff. The influence of those factors was difficult to determine quantitatively, but figures recently quoted in the literature appeared to be much too high.

34. The answer to the question whether the Agency would be able to cope with the tasks imposed upon it in Article III of the NPT was definitely in the affirmative, but so far no mandate had been received in the form of budget allocations for such tasks. His conviction was based upon the fact that there was qualified and competent personnel in the Secretariat other than in the Department of Safeguards and Inspection who could assist in performing functions under the NPT. Furthermore, the Agency was already planning to use outside laboratories, for example for the analytical services necessary for safeguarding fuel reprocessing plants.

35. The Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America made the Agency responsible for applying safeguards, and the first safeguards agreement under that treaty had very recently been concluded with the Government of Mexico⁵⁾. The experience gained by the Agency in preparing that agreement was important, since some of the problems created by an open-ended agreement concluded with one country at the latter's request had been defined.

36. Turning to technical achievements since the last session of the General Conference, he said that it should be stressed that the development of nuclear power had fulfilled the most optimistic expectations, as a result of which countries had reviewed the uranium supply situation on both national and regional levels. Producers of uranium displayed a marked tendency to under-estimate their potential resources. Since the quantities of nuclear fuel required were growing, it was necessary to establish new fuel fabrication and reprocessing plants; in order to achieve the maximum economy, it would seem natural that reprocessing plants in particular, should be built on a regional basis.

37. The Agency's general programme of work contained a detailed account of activities and expenses for the years 1969-70 and of the expected developments during 1971-74. A new format had been adopted in compliance with the Board of Governors' decision in June 1967 to give effect to the recommendations of the General Assembly's Ad Hoc Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies⁶⁾. A similar programme was to be drawn up every two years, and in the intervening years the General Conference would only deal with budgetary proposals relating to second year of the detailed programme. To improve the structure of the Agency, all publication services had been brought under the Department of Technical Assistance, now renamed the Department of Technical Assistance and Publications; furthermore, a Division of Development had been set up within the Department of Safeguards and Inspection.

38. With regard to the International Laboratory or Marine Radioactivity, he said that the Board had authorized him to negotiate and conclude an agreement with the Monegasque authorities to provide for its continued operation over the years 1969-74. The work of the Laboratory was being concentrated more on waste disposal problems and co-ordinated closely with that of the Division of Health, Safety and Waste Management.

⁵⁾ INFCIRC/118.

⁶⁾ United Nations document A/6343.

39. The International Centre for Theoretical Physics at Trieste had moved into new headquarters provided by the Italian authorities and when the new building had been inaugurated, a Conference on Contemporary Physics had been held, which had been attended by about 300 of the world's most prominent theoretical physicists. Negotiations with UNESCO on the conversion of the Trieste Centre into an enterprise operated jointly by the Agency and UNESCO were continuing, although the financing of the Centre was still a problem since the conversion could not be carried out before 1970. He thanked the Governments which had made financial contributions to the Centre and said he would continue to seek other sources of funds.

40. With the increase in the Agency's safeguards activities, the Seibersdorf Laboratory would have to do more analytical work in support of safeguards inspections. In that connection it was essential that the Agency should work independently of Member States, although it should be possible to make use of their services for the bulk of the routine work. He had continued his efforts to have some of the Laboratory's work done in laboratories in Member States but the response had not been very encouraging. The possible need to expand the Laboratory had led him to convene a group of consultants consisting of scientists and administrators to advise on the Laboratory's work.

41. The Board and the General Conference had given considerable attention to technical assistance, and had urged that more emphasis should be placed on the provision of such assistance to developing countries. Member States had not been prepared to make available the financial resources required. In 1968 the situation had continued to deteriorate and only 59 out of 98 countries had expressed their willingness to make voluntary contributions; only 68% of the \$2 million target had been reached, and that target would meet only half the needs expressed by developing countries; yet as a result of the rise in prices, it had been calculated that a 22% increase in resources would be necessary to provide the same amount of assistance as in 1962. That state of affairs was largely due to the fact that certain economically developed Member States were contributing a substantially smaller share than would be needed to be proportional to their assessed share of the Regular Budget. He therefore urged economically developed countries to make up their pledges to at least the level of their assessed share, and less developed countries to make at least a token contribution; he referred in that connection to the provisions of Article IV of the NPT.

42. Of a total nuclear power capacity of 133 000 MW (e) in power stations in operation, in construction or firmly planned, only 2000 MW(e) were to be

found outside the most industrially advanced countries of North America, Western Europe, Japan and the USSR. Efforts should be made to prevent a situation arising in which the use of nuclear power would have the effect of widening rather than closing the gap between advanced and developing countries. It was probable that technical progress would make smaller-sized power reactors competitive. Major indirect advantages could be derived from the introduction of nuclear technology in developing countries, and he hoped that the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and regional investment banks would take those advantages into account when considering requests for loans for the building of nuclear power stations in those countries.

43. Referring to large desalting plants and energy centres, he pointed out that the magnitude of the financial efforts involved in such projects made international co-operation imperative. The Agency/US/Mexico study on the feasibility of a dual-purpose plant⁷⁾ had been completed and would be followed by a detailed study of the engineering aspects. Construction of the Shevchenko Plant by the Caspian Sea in the USSR was under way and in one or two years' time it should yield valuable information on different desalting techniques. Desalted water was too expensive for general use in agriculture, but long-term studies of large nuclear desalting plants showed that in the 1980's the production and use of desalted water in agro-industrial complexes could be profitable, particularly in arid or semi-arid regions, and the Agency ought to lend support to the studies made in that field.

44. Member States continued to show a keen interest in the proposed International Nuclear Information System (INIS) and the Secretariat was at present seeking to formulate a definitive proposal for submission to the Board of Governors in February 1969 which, if adopted, would enable the system to become operational in 1970. At the end of 1968 the Agency would take delivery of the new IBM 360/30 computer, which it required for INIS and the nuclear data programme.

45. At its twenty-second session the General Assembly of the United Nations had adopted a resolution requesting the Secretary-General to prepare plans for a fourth international conference on the peaceful uses of atomic energy, to be held in 1970 or 1971⁸⁾. The Secretary-General's Scientific Advisory Committee had subsequently suggested that the Conference be held in 1971, with the fullest possible participation of the Agency; the Agency's assistance could naturally be taken for granted.

7) See document INFCIRC/75.

8) General Assembly Resolution 2309 (XXII).

46. Turning to the question of the disposal of radioactive waste into the sea, he recalled that Member States had been requested to furnish information with a view to establishing an international register. He urged those that had not done so to reply; even if the Agency was not yet in a position to recommend any regulatory steps that might be taken, it was important to record what had been disposed.

47. Referring to the new permanent headquarters of the Agency at the Donaupark, he said that joint studies with UNIDO and the Austrian authorities had made progress; construction was due to begin before 1971, and occupation of the buildings would be possible in 1973 or 1974. He again paid tribute to the Austrian Government for its positive interest in all Agency matters and its unfailing support.

48. As regards budgetary matters, the total expenditure provided for in the Regular Budget amounted to \$11 251 000, and increase of 7.4% over 1968. More than half the increase was due to rising prices and increases in staff salaries; the rest related principally to the development of INIS and to the Agency's expanding responsibilities in the field of safeguards, but it should be borne in mind that the increase for safeguards activities did not cover any added responsibilities which the Agency would have to assume under the NPT.

49. The development of the Agency would be closely bound up with developments arising out of the NPT, and the Agency's safeguards system would need to be adapted to the provisions contained in Article III of the Treaty. He stressed, furthermore, that the signatories of the NPT had requested more opportunities than afforded them under the Statute to participate in the adaptation process.

50. The discussions in the General Assembly had shown that some of the provisions of the NPT, more particularly Articles IV and V, were still not sufficiently precise, and that point had been stressed at the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States⁹⁾. Having personally attended some sessions of the Conference, he had been surprised to hear it suggested that the Secretary-General of the United Nations should be requested to appoint a group of experts to prepare a report on all possible contributions of nuclear technology to the economic and scientific advancement of the developing countries¹⁰⁾. He did not think those experts could add anything to the knowledge already available in the Agency, and he would prefer experts to be appointed who could advise on where to find the means needed to implement already existing programmes.

9) Held at Geneva from 29 August to 28 September 1968.

10) See United Nations document A/CONF.35/RES.2.

51. The Conference at Geneva had demonstrated that there was an appalling ignorance of the Agency's activities and also, apparently, a serious lack of co-ordination between the political and scientific bodies in some of the countries represented. The instructions given by countries to their representatives at the Conference appeared to be completely inconsistent with those given to delegates to the Agency's General Conference. He therefore urged the delegates present to do their utmost to avoid a situation where their countries gave the impression of speaking with two voices on important issues, especially those dealing with atomic energy and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and he emphasized once again that the main problem facing the Agency was how to acquire the means to implement already existing programmes.

52. A large number of non-nuclear-weapon States had voiced concern at the possible limitations imposed by the NPT on the use of nuclear explosives for peaceful purposes, and some had even proposed the setting up of a special organization to deal with that matter. The use of atomic energy for that purpose was still at the development stage and it would be optimistic to expect genuine industrial development of that use for some years. He therefore felt it would be premature to set up an organization specifically for that purpose, and also pointed out that the proposals to that effect ignored the fact that the problem was under constant study by the Agency. In his closing speech at the eighth regular session of the General Conference he had referred to the Agency's interest in the matter¹¹⁾ and he stressed that it was both willing and fitted to undertake tasks in that area.

53. In conclusion he repeated that the Agency would have to adapt its services and functions to fulfil its obligations under the NPT. The Secretariat would also undertake studies with a view to meeting the urgent requests expressed at the Conference of Non-Nuclear Weapon States. He considered it most important not to take action until Member States had given their assurance that the proposed solutions were acceptable. In order to achieve solutions acceptable to all, there would have to be continuous and careful consultations between Member States and the Agency. Questions concerning the NPT could only be solved in an atmosphere of confidence and the Treaty could not become a corner-stone in nuclear disarmament unless that confidence were maintained and further developed. The entry into force of the NPT would entail a shift of emphasis in the work of the Agency and more weight would have to be given to the control functions. He hoped that the Agency would continue to be an organization which was mainly concerned with technical

11) GC(VIII)/OR.90, para.68.

matters, although the political situation in the world would inevitably impinge on its work to a much greater extent than in the past.

STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

54. Mr. WINSPEARE GUICCIARDI (representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations) said that he was very pleased to attend, as representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the annual Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

55. In spite of the political divisions and conflicts in the world, the work of the Agency was continuing and constituted a constructive element in international life which was of utmost value to the maintenance of peace. The scientific community was playing an ever-increasing role in modern society, and the work of an organization whose members collaborated for peace and for the improvement of the human condition was therefore particularly important.

56. Turning to one of the most prominent developments in the United Nations and in international politics during the past year, namely the negotiations which had led to the conclusion of the NPT, commended by the General Assembly in June, he emphasized the Secretary-General's deep desire that the largest possible number of States—whether in possession of nuclear weapons or not—should accede to the Treaty. Other political developments, however grave, should not prevent the ratification and entry into force of a treaty which was of transcendent importance to the future of mankind.

57. Similarly, it was the earnest hope of the Secretary-General that other promising developments such as the possibility of discussions between the super-Powers aimed at reducing the scale and development of atomic armament might not be discouraged or allowed to lapse because of the reactions on one side or the other to particular events of a political nature.

58. As far as the Agency itself was concerned, the Secretary-General had noted with great satisfaction its readiness to accept the responsibilities assigned to it under Articles III and IV of the Treaty.

59. At the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States, which was currently taking place in Geneva under the auspices of the United Nations, many delegations had expressed their confidence in the ability of the Agency to assume increased functions and responsibilities.

60. It was clear that the functions to be entrusted to the Agency under the Treaty could have far-reaching political implications in the future. In that connection, he recalled the special relationship between the Agency and the United Nations provided for in the Statute of the Agency¹²⁾ and in the Agency's relationship agreement with the United Nations¹³⁾. Under Article III.B.4 of its Statute the Agency had to report directly to the General Assembly each year, and notify the Security Council if "in connection with the activities of the Agency there should arise questions that are within the competence of the Security Council".

61. Moreover, Article III.B.1 of the Statute provided that in carrying out its functions the Agency should "Conduct its activities in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations to promote peace and international co-operation, and in conformity with policies of the United Nations furthering the establishment of safeguarded world-wide disarmament...".

62. The provisions of the Agency's Statute concerning relations between the Agency and the political organs of the United Nations would assume particular significance when the NPT entered into force, and he was certain that the United Nations organs concerned would follow closely the development of the Agency's work which, he hoped, would enhance the effectiveness both of the Agency and of the United Nations in the vital field of arms control and disarmament.

63. The United Nations placed great hopes in the Fourth International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, which was to take place in 1971 and in which the Agency would play the same vital role as in the Third International Conference¹⁴⁾. The United Nations Scientific Advisory Committee had recommended that the Conference have as its theme the "Benefits for Mankind from the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy".

64. In the field of nuclear power, arrangements had been made during the previous year for closer liaison between the two organizations. The application of science and technology to development was also a common concern of the two organizations, and he was pleased that the Agency was continuing to participate actively in the work of the United Nations Advisory Committee on that subject.

65. The Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly had devoted considerable attention to the development of sea resources and to marine science and technology. He was sure that

12) Article XVI.

13) INFCIRC/II, part I.A.

14) Held at Geneva from 31 August to 9 September 1964.

work in that field would be facilitated by the research being conducted by the Agency on the pollution of the sea by radioactive wastes. The United Nations was also increasingly concerned with questions relating to the human environment—another problem in which the Agency was involved.

66. As the second United Nations Development Decade approached, collaboration between the United Nations and the Agency within the United Nations family of organizations became increasingly necessary.

The Administrative Committee on Co-ordination was a key element in that inter-agency system and, in that connection, the Secretary-General wished to thank the Director General, Mr. Eklund, for the constructive part which he had always played on the Committee.

67. In conclusion, he conveyed the Secretary-General's best wishes to the Conference for a successful session and to the Agency as a whole for a future of increasingly useful and responsible work.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.