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RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-NINTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Neue Hofburg, Vienna, on Wednesday, 24 September 1975, at 11.50 a.m.

President: Mr. FELICKI (Poland)

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** GC(XIX)/559.

The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(XIX)/INF/157/Rev.2.

THE RECORD

GENERAL DEBATE AND REPORT FOR 1974-75 (GC(XIX)/544, 544/Corr.1, 554) (continued)

1. Mr. ADRIAENSSEN (Belgium) said that the past year had provided ample food for thought, both about developments in nuclear energy and about their impact on the maintenance of peace and security in the world. Those reflections had been provoked by the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT Review Conference) [1] and by the subsequent discussions in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD).

2. One of the conclusions drawn from that work was that although substantial results had been achieved in connection with the dual objective of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and peaceful utilization of the atom, nevertheless much remained to be done in those areas if the final objective - the widest possible utilization of nuclear energy for civilian and beneficial purposes in a world living in peace and security - was to be effectively achieved.

3. The role the Agency had to play in the matter had been recognized or confirmed, and Belgium was particularly pleased at some of the conclusions which had been reached at the end of the work in Geneva. He was thinking, in particular, of the recommendations that intensified efforts should be made towards standardization and universality of application of Agency safeguards, that safeguards agreements should be of adequate duration to preclude diversion to any nuclear explosive devices and that such agreements should include appropriate provisions for the continuance of the application of safeguards to material and equipment when they were exported.

4. Belgium also supported the recommendation that: "in all achievable ways, common export requirements relating to safeguards be strenthened, in particular by extending the application of safeguards to all peaceful nuclear activities in importing States not Party to the Treaty". Indeed, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons could only really be ensured if the whole of the nuclear fuel cycle in every country in the world was subject to adequate safeguards. That principle should, moreover, become universal the day that nuclear disaramament was achieved.

5. Much attention had also been devoted to the very controversial problem of peaceful nuclear explosions (PNE) and methods of enabling the world community to participate in the potential advantages of such explosions without thereby hampering the process that would lead to the complete cessation of underground testing for military purposes.

6. He did not intend to discuss problems which belonged to the province of CCD or to the General Assembly of the United Nations, and would confine his remarks to the already recognized role of the Agency in the nuclear explosions field. The Agency had already carried out interesting work on the subject by planning a methodology for meeting the requests for international PNE services and by setting up a special unit in the Secretariat. The four meetings of the Secretariat's Technical Committee on PNE [2] had already provided interesting information.

7. His country fully understood the interest, apart from concerns of an economic type, that scientific applications of PNE might have for the scientific community. Mention need only be made of the study of high density fast neutron fluxes, the production of heavy elements, the study of the effects of high temperatures and pressure on different materials and the study of the interior of the earth's surface by means of seismic waves engendered by such explosions. As a consequence, Belgium felt strengthened in its conviction that complete diffusion of information obtained from PNE experiments and the making of such information available to all interested parties should be a moral and political obligation for the countries authorized under NPT to carry out such experiments, namely the nuclear-weapon States. As his delegation had already pointed out at Geneva, the development of a feeling of frustration in some countries should be avoided at all costs. Only complete access to all the scientific information obtained was likely to dissuade non-nuclear-weapon States from themselves engaging in research on explosives so as to obtain the information they wanted by themselves.

8. By refusing to furnish that information, the nuclear-weapon Powers would inevitably expose themselves to the suspicion of wanting to create for their own benefit a new monopoly in certain scientific and technological fields. Such an attitude could not fail to provide new arguments for the present opponents of NPT who understandably did not want to see themselves relegated to the status of developing countries in the scientific field.

9. His delegation thought that the nuclear-weapon Powers which were currently carrying out nuclear explosion tests for peaceful purposes could make a gesture that would be greatly appreciated by, for example, agreeing to the presence of observers at that kind of experiment. Those observers, without of course having access to the explosive device itself, could

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[1] Held at Geneva from 5 to 30 May 1975. The text of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is reproduced in document INFCIRC/140.

[2] Held at Vienna from 20 to 24 January 1975.

collect on the spot scientific, technological and economic information resulting from those experiments. There were certainly interesting possibilities in that area which the Agency could develop.

10. Furthermore, the presence of such observers would have a beneficial effect on the course of disarmament activities, in so far as they would be able to give assurances that the explosion in question had in fact been carried out for a peaceful purpose. It would in the final analysis be a measure of the type described as "confidence-building measures" envisaged in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. That document stipulated:

> "The participating States recognise the interest of all of them in efforts aimed at lessening military confrontation and promoting disarmament which are designed to complement political détente in Europe and to strengthen their security. They are convinced of the necessity to take effective measures in these fields which by their scope and by their nature constitute steps towards the ultimate achievement of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control, and which should result in strengthening peace and security throughout the world".

11. He would comment in committee on Belgium's numerous achievements in the peaceful application of nuclear energy and on some aspects of the budget of particular interest to it. However, he wished at the present juncture to say a few words about the over-rapid increase in the Agency's budget.

12. All countries were passing through a particularly difficult time from the monetary point of view and all were affected more or less seriously by inflation. But precisely because of that difficult situation, measures should be taken which, even if they were unpopular, should aim at keeping the rate of increase of expenditure within reasonable limits. The Belgian delegation intended to take the matter up in greater detail when the draft budget for 1976 was discussed in committee. For his delegation, the Agency was an enterprise whose real output must be in proportion to the expenditure demanded of its Member countries. In short, Belgium would offer active but vigilant co-operation in budgetary matters as in all others.

13. Mr. LEE (Republic of Korea) said that his Government was keenly aware of the need to establish an effective long-term nuclear energy development plan in order to improve the country's capability to meet the rapidly increasing demand for energy, for technical and economic evaluation indicated that nuclear power must play a dominant role in future in the context of long-term energy requirements.

14. The Republic of Korea was embarking upon a major nuclear programme involving about 25 nuclear power plants to generate 25 000 MW(e) by the year 2000. It would cost $30 000 million or more plus another $10 000 million for nuclear fuel. In order to meet such an enormous capital requirement, his country must annually invest on plant construction $1000 million up to 1982 and then $2000 million up to 1987. If the continuous growth of the economy was to be sustained, that increasing trend should persist further in the future. Such growth would impose an unbearable burden on the balance of payment of the developing countries, which relied on advanced countries for their major supplies.

15. His Government firmly believed such a heavy burden could be alleviated by developing its own capability in design and construction management and in fuel cycle technology. In that connection, it fully supported the Agency's initiative in organizing nuclear-power-oriented training courses and in carrying out feasibility studies on the establishment of multinational regional key fuel cycle centres. It was willing to co-operate with other countries in the region in such centres, which were essential since key fuel cycle facilities were, from both the capital and technological point of view, intensive and most developing countries could not afford their own commercially viable facilities in view of their small nuclear programmes. Besides, the major commercial facilities being located outside the area where Korea was situated and the requirements for safeguards and environmental protection becoming more stringent, the transport of highly radioactive spent fuel over long distances would be almost impossible. The regional concept would not only satisfy those requirements but be economically advantageous to the area.

16. His country was a strong advocate of the idea of safeguards and had given proof of its support of the system by signing NPT in July 1968 and by concluding numerous safeguards agreements with the Agency. However, it had not ratified NPT until 23 April 1975, not because it had wanted to keep open the so-called "nuclear option", nor because of the inherently unfair treatment of the non-nuclear-weapon developing countries in NPT but because it had wanted to see the whole of the Korean peninsula brought under the system of NPT at about the same time.

17. Although it had waited all in vain, it still believed in the merit of "package accession". Simultaneous accession by several States should be actively promoted, for it could be one of the best ways of achieving universality of NPT.

18. His Government, by ratifying NPT, had given proof of its strong desire to contribute to world peace in general and to the relaxation of tensions in the area in particular, and believed that action would further promote international co-operation in the peaceful applications of nuclear energy and technology with due

consideration of the special needs of developing countries. It would urge all Member States to collaborate more closely in order to ease tensions and promote international co-operation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy.

19. Mr. IRAOLAGOITIA (Argentina) extended a welcome to the countries which the General Conference had approved for membership of the Agency. [3]

20. Noting that the first nuclear power station in the southern hemisphere had been in operation at Atucha since 17 March 1974, he said that it was performing excellently and with greater reliability than conventional power stations; it had so far supplied 2.5 million MWh of power to the national grid. Also at Atucha was a school for training nuclear power plant personnel which, it was hoped, would not only meet Argentina's manpower needs but also train technicians from other countries.

21. It was expected that the 600 MW(e) CANDU reactor being built at Embalse under a contract concluded by the Argentine National Atomic Energy Commission with Atomic Energy of Canada Limited and the Società Italiana Impianti p.A. would go into operation in 1980. On 6 December 1974, Argentina had signed an agreement for the voluntary submission of the Embalse reactor to Agency safeguards, and his Government hoped that work on the construction of that reactor would not be hampered by factors extraneous to the letter and spirit of the agreement, which had been approved officially by the three Governments involved in the project.

22. A study of the national and regional demand for electricity in Argentina had led to the formulation, for the period 1974-90, of an electrical power plant construction plan in which the construction of nine nuclear plants of 500-600 MW(e) each and of one of 1000 MW(e) was envisaged.

23. The construction of three 500-600 MW(e) reactors using natural uranium as fuel and heavy water as moderator and coolant was planned for the next ten years: a second reactor at Atucha, work on which was to start in 1976 and which was expected to go into operation in 1982; a reactor at Cuyo, the construction of which was scheduled to start in 1978; and a reactor at Bahia Blanca, the construction of which was scheduled to start in 1979.

24. The National Atomic Energy Commission was placing emphasis on the intensive training of personnel to design - in conformity with international standards - instrumentation for the Embalse plant and on the creation of the industrial infrastructure necessary for the design and production of nuclear power plant control instruments in general.

25. With regard to nuclear raw materials, the immediate purpose of uranium prospecting and of the evaluation of Argentina's uranium resources was to ensure that the needs of the country's nuclear power plants could be met from local sources. With the same purpose in mind, the establishment of complexes of economic size for the production of uranium concentrates was planned, including one - at Sierra Pintada - with an initial capacity of 600 tons of uranium scheduled for 1979.

26. The production of uranium concentrates was proceeding normally at the "Malargue" and "Don Otto" plants, the combined output of which was sufficient for the needs of the Atucha reactor. At Córdoba, a plant for refining uranium concentrates to UO_2 was being constructed. Development work at the "Los Adobes" mine had been initiated through the award of a contract to a private company.

27. With regard to the Sierra Pintada complex, drilling, sampling and hydrometallurgical studies had been carried out, and progress was being made in the matter of tenders. Meanwhile, the Agency had successfully completed a feasibility study and the necessary infrastructure was being created.

28. A fuel element fabrication plant with an initial capacity of 250 tons was scheduled to start operation in 1978. The first stage - acquisition of equipment and invitation of tenders for the building - had already been initiated.

29. A heavy water production plant with an initial capacity of 400 tons/year was scheduled to start normal operation in 1980. The feasibility study had been completed and future action decided upon.

30. The use of radioisotopes and ionizing radiation in medicine, industry and agriculture was being strongly promoted, and isotope production by the National Atomic Energy Commission had approximately doubled during the past year. Promotion activities had included courses on radioisotope methodology given at Rosario de Santa Fé and at La Plata.

31. In addition to those courses, training was continuing to be provided through courses at the Balseiro Physics Institute, San Carlos de Bariloche, which were being attended by the holders of fellowships awarded by the National Atomic Energy Commission. A metallurgy course lasting approximately eight months had been held during 1974; it had been attended by nine Argentinians and ten participants from other parts of Latin America.

32. Although initial steps had been taken, implementation of the agreement with Canada for the transfer of technology had been delayed for reasons beyond Argentina's control.

33. Special attention was being paid by the Argentine Government to international

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[3] See document GC(XIX)/OR.176, paras 14-16.

co-operation, and in that connection an ambitious programme had been formulated in collaboration with the Agency's Division of Technical Assistance; the programme would involve all the countries of Latin America and also some countries in other regions.

34. Argentina was very grateful for the technical assistance which it had received from the Agency, and he wished to emphasize his country's desire for broad co-operation in keeping with the peaceful objectives of its entire nuclear programme.

35. Mr. CLEMENTEL (Italy) said that the present General Conference was taking place at a time when a major international effort was being made to reduce tensions and create in the world relations based on the principles of security and peaceful co-operation among peoples.

36. Italy wished to express its greatest appreciation of the work done by the Agency in the period 1974-75, as outlined in the annual report (GC(XIX)/544 and Corr.1) and in the oral statement made by the Director General [4]. The results achieved had been particularly gratifying, especially considering the complexity of the problems now raised by the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, which had become established as the only valid alternative to conventional energy sources. Those problems included, among others, those relating to conservation of the environment, radioactive waste management, fuel supplies and physical protection of nuclear materials; the Agency was doing highly important work towards their solution.

37. His country also unreservedly approved the activities designed to develop the utilization of nuclear energy and to halt the slowing down in the growth of installed nuclear capacity, which trend was due to both financial and psychological factors. Particular importance was attributed to the efforts designed to foster nuclear activities in the developing countries. From that standpoint, the proposed broadening of objectives in the Agency's technical assistance programme in favour of developing countries would be extremely useful and would also serve to strengthen international co-operation.

38. With reference to his country's activities in the nuclear sector, on both the international and the domestic levels, he said that Italy had always been an active participant in international co-operation in the sectors within the Agency's field of activity. In that context, its ratification of NPT constituted further evidence of his Government's full adherence to the Treaty's guiding principles and its consistent support for efforts to achieve general, complete and controlled disarmament.

39. The NPT Review Conference had provided the opportunity for a serious and thorough review of the Treaty, aimed at adjusting its provisions to present-day international realities and enhancing its effectiveness by adding to its adherents. Italy had taken an active part in the Conference, with the general objective of creating the necessary conditions for a better negotiating climate. The most positive outcome of the Conference had been its contribution to an increasing awakening of the international community to the risks entailed by proliferation and the genuine concern that existed regarding the slowness of the nuclear disarmament process. In addition, stress had been laid on the need for study of the requirements attaching to the process of acquisition of nuclear technology for peaceful uses, so as to ensure the proper application of safeguards designed to avert proliferation hazards.

40. He would like to mention some particular points which lay more clearly within the Agency's competence. The NPT Review Conference had reconfirmed the right of the Contracting Parties to NPT to the broadest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information. In that regard, a stricter wording would have been desirable, specifically recognizing the obligation to transfer nuclear equipment, know-how and materials at a fair price and on a continuing basis.

41. Since Italy had been working towards the concluding of an international agreement on peaceful nuclear explosions, with specific reference to the tasks which the Agency might perform in that delicate field, it accordingly welcomed the recent establishment of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Nuclear Explosions for Peaceful Purposes, and intended to participate in its work.

42. Italy shared the view that it was necessary to improve safeguards in countries which had not adhered to NPT, in order to meet a basic political requirement and to prevent possible adverse economic repercussions for parties to NPT.

43. Another important problem taken up by the NPT Review Conference was the physical protection of nuclear materials, a matter which was now of concern to all countries, whether or not adhering to NPT, in face of the growing amounts of nuclear materials treated and the more frequent transfers, which led to greater risks of diversion, theft and sabotage. The Conference had stressed the need for further studies and recommendations in that area, particularly on well-defined criteria to establish the responsibility of States for ensuring the enforcement of uniform minimum standards. Italy was helping to explore that problem within the European Economic Community (EEC) and accordingly welcomed the work already begun in the Agency on the drawing up of relevant recommendations.

44. All those issues would undoubtedly be taken up again at the second Review Conference,

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[4] GC(XIX)/OR.176, paras 21-59.

scheduled for 1980. It was to be hoped that the prospect of such further discussions would, in the interim, contribute towards a balanced and effective operation of NPT.

45. Despite its current economic problems, Italy had been making a dual effort to increase its contribution to the proposed broadening of the objectives of the Agency's technical assistance programme. The Italian Nuclear Energy Commission had increased the number of grants available to researchers and students from developing countries to 200 man-months; and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had allocated the sum of L. 100 million to be used for the award of scholarships to candidates from developing countries.

46. Coming to the main features of the development of peaceful nuclear activities in Italy, he said that, as in the major industrialized countries, the rising cost of petroleum had led to review of the country's energy policy objectives. In particular, plans had been made for containment of consumption, reduction of energy waste, reconsideration of other conventional primary sources (geothermal energy) and development of alternative sources (solar energy, fusion). The only valid alternative, however, had proved to be nuclear energy, mainly for the generation of electric power. A number of measures had therefore been taken, including the inclusion in the National Electric Board programme of 20 nuclear power plants, with a capacity of up to 20 000 MW(e), to be committed by 1978. By 1980, nuclear energy was expected to account for approximately 12-14% of total power production, by 1985 about 40% and by 1990 from 50-70%; towards the end of the century the proportion was expected to reach 85-90%.

47. Secondly, his Government had recently drafted a number of laws, relating in particular to the siting of nuclear plants, and designed to permit speedy implementation of the energy programme, while safeguarding the autonomous powers of the regions and municipalities. Another draft law under study related to the creation of a High Commissariat for Energy, whose task would be to supervise the implementation of the national energy policy.

48. Thirdly, steps were on foot to rationalize the national nuclear energy industry through concentration of the companies concerned into large industrial groups.

49. Fourthly, under its third five-year plan, based on the guidelines laid down by the Interministerial Committee for Economic Planning, and involving investments of about $750 million up to 1978, the Italian Nuclear Energy Commission was to intensify its activities in both technological research and industrial promotion, including increased work on proved and advanced reactors and various phases of the fuel cycle. The Commission was participating, jointly with AGIP NUCLEARE, in the multinational company EURODIF in the sector of uranium enrichment (each to the extent of 12.5% of the company's capital); and a second reprocessing plant was now entering into production. Lastly, research was being conducted in the fields of radioactive waste disposal, nuclear safety and thermonuclear fusion.

50. It was gratifying to note the appreciation of other Member States for the role played by Italy in the advancement of nuclear technology which had resulted in the confirmation of Italy among the States represented on the Board of Governors. Italy would continue to co-operate to the utmost in the Agency's work, with a view to consolidating cohesion among Member States and achieving increasingly efficient utilization of the resources available for international co-operation.

51. Speaking on behalf of the States Members of EEC, he expressed deep satisfaction concerning the conclusion of the co-operation agreement between the Agency and the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) [5]. The draft agreement, which had been approved on 15 September 1975 by the Council of Ministers of the EEC countries, represented the formalization of the fruitful co-operation developed between the two bodies over the past years. And lastly, on behalf of EEC, he would extend a wholehearted welcome to Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and the United Republic of Tanzania on their admission to membership of the Agency.

52. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that the Agency would continue and further intensify its work, which was of particular value at the present delicate stage in the world's energy situation. As in the past, the Italian Government would extend to that work its constructive support.

53. Mr. BOT (Netherlands) expressed the hope that the spirit prevailing during the seventh special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, devoted to development and international economic co-operation, would gradually permeate the whole United Nations system, including the International Atomic Energy Agency.

54. One of the results of the seventh special session had been increasing emphasis on assistance to the least developed countries and the countries most seriously affected by current critical situations. The statement in the Director General's report on the provision of technical assistance by the Agency [6] that the long-range objective of a project should be clearly identified with the receiving countries'

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[5] The draft agreement is set out in document GC(XIX)/556, Annex.

[6] GC(XIX)/INF/154, para. 89.

overall development goals and that a logical link should exist between the project's immediate and long-range objectives was therefore to be welcomed. Equal approval was due to the statement in the same document that projects involving highly sophisticated or advanced technology, or both, required particularly careful appraisal to ensure effective implementation, [7] as in no other way could the countries concerned derive optimal results from the assistance rendered.

55. His delegation appreciated the inclusion of those points, as they were evidence of the Secretariat's efforts to bring its assistance more in line with the recommendations of the General Assembly. The technical assistance programme of the Agency should be ever more closely linked with activities financed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). His Government therefore supported the proposed target for the General Fund and was pledging $70 400 for it, which amount corresponded with his country's assessed contribution.

56. A further subject of discussion at the seventh special session had been the world energy situation. The Director General had paid detailed attention to that subject, and the Government of the Netherlands in principle shared his view that nuclear energy based on fission remained the only immediately available alternative to fossil fuel. However, the rapidly increasing application of nuclear energy required special measures for the protection of public health and the environment and all Governments should be aware of their responsibilities in that respect. The Agency's efforts to extend its programme on nuclear safety and environmental protection were therefore gratifying. However, adequate solutions to such problems could only be found if authorities and experts from all over the world co-operated as closely as possible, and the Agency, as the most universal organization in the field of nuclear energy, had the important task of facilitating international communication and stimulating international co-operation in that domain. He was pleased to note that, after some initial friction, fruitful co-operation between the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Agency appeared to be developing.

57. Another event of importance for the work of the Agency had been the NPT Review Conference, which had unanimously recognized the Agency as the appropriate international body stipulated in Article V of NPT, and had regarded the participation of the Agency in the NPT Review Conference as a valuable asset. His Government looked forward with interest to the inclusion of effective Agency safeguards in the Agency's programme for 1977-82.

58. The Government of the Netherlands, although fully aware of certain basic imperfections inherent in NPT, had nevertheless decided to ratify that Treaty without reservations, in concurrence with four other States Members of the European Communities. It hoped that other countries, too, would overcome their hesitations and accede to NPT. In the meantime it was encouraging to know that the basic ideals of non-proliferation were more widely entertained and were of a more global nature than the number of formal adherents to that instrument for the self-protection of mankind seemed to indicate.

59. His Government had on various occasions stressed the vital importance of the Agency's work on the application of safeguards, both as applied under agreements in connection with NPT and under agreements outside the scope of the latter.

60. It was a matter of urgency to improve safeguards techniques, especially measurements and accountancy methods, if the Agency was to fulfil its task effectively. His delegation therefore welcomed the establishment of the standing advisory group on the implementation of safeguards and the commissioning of the Safeguards Analytical Laboratory at Seibersdorf.

61. Safeguarding nuclear exports to non-nuclear-weapon States not parties to NPT was an increasingly pressing problem. He fully shared the view of the Director General and several delegates that it was essential that the major nuclear materials exporting countries should reach agreement on procedures and criteria serving as minimum common standards for safeguards requirements, in order to prevent the diversion of nuclear materials to other than peaceful purposes.

62. Discrepancies existed between the safeguards system applicable to parties to NPT and the more traditional Agency's Safeguards System (1965, as Provisionally Extended in 1966 and 1968) [8]. They were illustrated in the book "Safeguards against nuclear proliferation" published by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute in January 1975 and written by an official of the Agency; the book discussed some basic issues relating to safeguards and their application and suggested that the Agency's Safeguards System based on document INFCIRC/66/Rev. 2 might be modernized and improved. Safeguards applied in connection with NPT and the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (the Tlatelolco Treaty) [9], based on document INFCIRC/153, were more severe and indeed "safer" than those embodied in document INFCIRC/66/Rev. 2. The Netherlands Government fully shared the view of the Director General that an overall satisfactory safeguards system could not be achieved unless the placing of supplies of equipment and materials under the

[7] Ibid., para. 91.

[8] Set forth in document INFCIRC/66/Rev. 2.

[9] United Nations Treaty Series, Vol. 634, No. 9068.

Agency's safeguards were made a condition for their delivery.

63. With great interest his delegation had noted paragraph 6 of the annual report mentioning the increasing importance attached to the concept of nuclear fuel cycle centres on a regional basis. Both economically and from the point of view of physical security, such regional centres were preferable to national ones. The question seemed justified whether it was right that many countries, both industrialized and developing, should be continuing to strive for national nuclear fuel cycle centres, which were more expensive and less secure and represented a potential threat to non-proliferation. Perhaps the Agency should reconsider whether and, if so, to what extent it should continue its technical assistance to countries which were intending to establish nuclear fuel cycle centres on a purely national basis, in spite of the danger involved. In a matter of such vital importance, those countries should not be allowed to adduce legal or administrative problems, however real they might be, to justify their behaviour.

64. The Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom had jointly set up an enterprise that was operating facilities in Great Britain and the Netherlands and would soon start to produce enriched uranium on an industrial scale by means of ultracentrifuge technology. The three countries hoped that their joint efforts would contribute in a positive way to the peaceful use of nuclear power.

65. His delegation trusted that the conference on nuclear power and its fuel cycle, to be held at Salzburg in 1977, would result in specific recommendations for international or regional arrangements concerning enrichment, fabrication, reprocessing and waste management. The Netherlands therefore looked forward with great interest to the results of the Agency's study of the subject.

66. The Agency would have to concern itself more than ever before with the question of physical protection against theft or other illegal action. The Netherlands Government had recently studied the problem in some depth and had been strengthened in its view that an international convention, formulating specific standards and techniques for protecting materials while in use, storage, and transfer, would be the appropriate solution. The Agency's recommendations on the subject were providing useful guidelines and should be further developed.

67. His Government had some reservations as to the feasibility and desirability of using nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, and therefore not only welcomed the establishment within the Secretariat of a special section to deal with requests for services relating to PNE, but also attached considerable importance to the establishment by the Board of Governors of an Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Nuclear Explosions for Peaceful Purposes.

68. In conclusion, he affirmed that the Netherlands would continue to give its full support to the Agency.

● The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.