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RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Conference Centre, Hotel Nacional-Rio, Rio de Janeiro,
on Thursday, 23 September 1976, at 10.40 a. m.

President: Mr. de CARVALHO (Brazil)

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* A provisional version of this document was issued on 18 October 1976.

** GC(XX)/573.

THE RECORD

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ALLOCATION OF ITEMS FOR INITIAL DISCUSSION (GC(XX)/562)

1. The PRESIDENT informed the Conference that the General Committee recommended it to approve an agenda for the session consisting of all the items on the provisional agenda in document GC(XX)/562, and also to allocate items for initial discussion as indicated in that document.

2. The Committee had authorized him to report that one of its Members had entered reservations of a procedural nature concerning the inclusion in the agenda of item 3: Invitation to the Palestine Liberation Organization to attend the sessions of the General Conference in the capacity of an observer. Those reservations were related chiefly to the absence of procedures or precedents for the issuance by the General Conference itself of an invitation to an organization to be represented by an observer at its sessions other than to those organizations specifically referred to in Rule 32 of the Rules of Procedure.

● 3. The Committee's recommendations were accepted.

APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE AGENCY (GC(XX)/563)

4. Mr. NAVARRETE (Mexico) expressed his delegation's satisfaction that Nicaragua, a Latin American country, was applying for membership of the Agency and warmly supported that application.

5. The PRESIDENT took it that the Conference wished to adopt the draft resolution approving Nicaragua for membership of the Agency contained in document GC(XX)/563.

● 6. It was so decided.

INVITATION TO THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION TO ATTEND THE SESSIONS OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE IN THE CAPACITY OF AN OBSERVER (GC(XX)/568 and 572)

7. Mr. AL-SHAWI (Iraq) said he wanted to introduce the draft resolution contained in document GC(XX)/572 on behalf of its sponsors, India, Indonesia, Iraq, the Libyan Arab Republic, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal, Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania, Yugoslavia and Zambia. In his opinion, there were very good legal and procedural grounds to justify the invitation called for in the draft resolution.

8. Article V of the Relationship Agreement between the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency[1] stipulated that "The Agency shall consider any resolution relating to the Agency adopted by the General Assembly or by a Council of the United Nations", and Article III, B.1 of the Agency's Statute laid down

[1] INFCIRC/11, part I. A.

that "In carrying out its functions, the Agency shall 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"

9. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) had been invited under the terms of Resolution 3237 (XXIX) of the General Assembly of the United Nations to participate in the work of the General Assembly as an observer, and it was entitled to participate with the same status in the international conferences convened under the auspices of other organs of the United Nations. Many other United Nations agencies, for example the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), had already accorded observer status to the PLO, and a number of diplomatic conferences had done the same. There were no provisions in either the Agency's Statute or the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference to justify a refusal to invite the PLO to attend the present session and all future sessions as an observer. It might be argued that Rules 30-32 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference referred only to States, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations, but Rule 2 went much further, referring to ". . . such other organizations as the General Conference or the Board of Governors may from time to time decide"

10. Resolution 3236 (XXIX) of the General Assembly of the United Nations affirmed the rights of the Palestinian people in Palestine to national independence and sovereignty and appealed to all States and international organizations to support the Palestinian people in their struggle to regain their rights. As the recognized representative of the people of Palestine, the PLO was interested in the uses of atomic energy, and its special experience regarding the prospects for peaceful applications of atomic energy in the Middle East would make a significant contribution to the Agency's work.

11. Mr. ALI (Bangladesh) said that his country regarded the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and recognized the right of that people to live in Palestine as an independent nation. He believed that the PLO should be entitled to participate, as an observer, in the work of the General Conference and of similar organs in all the other United Nations agencies.

12. Mr. TAPE (United States of America) made the following statement[*]:

(1) "The question before us is whether or not the Palestine Liberation Organization

[*] This statement is reproduced verbatim at the speaker's request under Rule 89(b) of the Conference's Rules of Procedure.

should be invited to attend this session and future sessions of the IAEA's General Conference in the capacity of observer. The position of the United States Government is that an invitation to the PLO should not be extended.

(2) "There is no provision in the Statute of the Agency or in the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference for an organization such as the PLO to attend the General Conference as an observer. Rule 30 of the Rules of Procedure provides for representation by States not members of the Agency, but the PLO is not, and does not claim to be a State.

(3) "Rule 32(b) provides for attendance at the General Conference by representatives of 'non-governmental organizations enjoying consultative status with the Agency . . . in accordance with such rules as the General Conference has approved'. The PLO is not a non-governmental organization as that term is understood in international law, that is, an organization which may be consulted by an international body by virtue of the possession by the organization of some particular expertise or technical knowledge related to matters within the special competence of the international body. None of the rules of Chapter V apply to such an organization.

(4) "Some would claim that the General Conference can, under Rule 2 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, decide to have the PLO notified by the Director General, ninety days in advance, of the opening date, place and expected duration of each regular session of the General Conference and thereby would cause the PLO to be invited to attend in some capacity.

(5) "While Rule 2 does provide for notification by the Director General to such other organizations as the General Conference may, from time to time, decide, and while this could be read to include the PLO, it would be a painfully strained and thoroughly inappropriate interpretation to find the General Conference's power to grant observer status in a provision which merely instructs the Director General to perform a simple administrative function. Notification does not necessarily mean invitation, especially when elsewhere, the rules and procedures explicitly provide for non-member representation, and that of certain categories of organizations. Rule 2 thus cannot be considered to provide additional authority to invite. Any decision by the Board of Governors or the General Conference in the context of Rule 2 would properly be made only in accordance with the other relevant rules of procedure.

(6) "There are no precedents to serve as a basis for issuing an invitation in this case.

It is clear from this record that, in every instance in which the General Conference considered the question of invitations to organizations to be represented at the Conference by observers, other than those specifically addressed in Chapter V of the Rules of Procedure, the Conference authorized or requested the Board of Governors to decide which organizations should be invited, based upon criteria specified by the Conference. In the two most recent cases, in 1972 and 1975, the Conference included specific discretion to the Board to decide whether representation by an organization - even one meeting the criteria specified by the Conference - would be in the interest of the Agency. For the Conference to invite the PLO to participate as an observer in sessions of the General Conference would be an action completely contrary to all established precedents and procedures of the Conference.

(7) "Since none of the existing procedures of the Agency would permit the General Conference to decide to invite as proposed in document GC(XX)/572 and since all the precedents concerning invitations to organizations whose work is related to that of the Agency and whose attendance is in the interest of the Agency, call for consideration by the Board of Governors, the General Conference should not adopt the resolution. The General Conference should at least have the benefit of consideration and a recommendation by the Board of Governors. To do otherwise, would establish a new precedent which may open the way to representation in the sessions of the General Conference by a host of organizations which could contribute in no way to the work of the Agency but which may, in fact, impede the effective functioning of the Agency. The procedures and precedents followed in the past were obviously designed to avoid such an undesirable situation and it would be well for the Agency to continue to act in the same wise manner.

(8) "Examples of invitations to the PLO to attend or to participate in various conferences sponsored by other organizations have been cited. Such examples do not constitute an authoritative precedent for consideration by the General Conference of the question of an invitation to the PLO to attend its sessions as an observer. The Agency must act in accordance with its own principles and rules of procedure.

(9) "A previous speaker has quoted from the Statute of the Agency. Let me read to you the complete text of Article III, B. 1.

'B. In carrying out its functions, the Agency shall:

'1. 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 and in conformity with any international agreements entered into pursuant to such policies;

(10) "Mr. President, the PLO has never claimed to be other than a political organization with frequently stated political objectives. Whatever privileges may be accorded to it in other international organizations, it is clear that this Agency whose mandate is specific and technical, cannot benefit from association with the PLO.

(11) "These considerations lead inescapably to the conclusion that the proposal for observer status for this organization, far from having anything to do with the interests of the Agency and Member States, has the sole purpose of enhancing this organization's international political prestige. In this connection, we have noted that the resolution document GC(XX)/572 and the explanation memorandum contained in document GC(XX)/568 lack any credible attempt to address the real merits of observer status for the PLO.

(12) "Mr. President, I would like to repeat that decisions taken with respect to observer status in other international organizations are not applicable to this Agency. Over the years, Member States have generally agreed on the vital importance of maintaining the Agency's reputation for objectivity and a responsible approach to its mandated duties, and a recognition of the fact that should the Agency lend itself to political opportunism such as is now proposed, that reputation could be jeopardized, and with it the Agency's credibility in its role in the implementation of an effective non-proliferation regime.

(13) "In conclusion, my Government opposes in its entirety the resolution proposed in document GC(XX)/572. Finally, Mr. Chairman, I wish to request that a vote be taken on the proposal now before us."

13. Mr. EILAM (Israel) said there was no reason why the Agency should be guided, in all respects, by the action taken by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Indeed, that could involve the risk of compromising the Agency's entire efforts. In dealing with the draft resolution contained in document GC(XX)/572 the General Conference had two courses of action open to it: if it acted in accordance with the principles embodied in the Agency's own Statute it would have to reject the draft resolution; by adopting it the Conference would be submitting to political pressures. Since it was clear that the PLO could neither help the Agency nor receive help from it,

the draft resolution should be rejected. The draft resolution was in fact rooted in the polemics contained in the explanatory memorandum in document GC(XX)/568, which employed such offensive phrases as "the aggressive designs of Israel" "The PLO was a terrorist group; to invite it to attend the sessions of the General Conference would involve the Agency in a loss of credibility and would jeopardize the security of the international community.

14. His country was opposed to the draft resolution and hoped it would be rejected.

15. Mr. EROFEEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said his Government supported the draft resolution. As had already been pointed out, Resolution 3237 (XXIX) of the General Assembly of the United Nations had invited the PLO to attend the meetings of the General Assembly as an observer and called upon other United Nations agencies to do the same. A number of other organizations such as UNESCO, ILO, WHO and so on, had already taken the action recommended in the resolution, thereby establishing a precedent which the Agency should follow.

16. Mr. SATTAR (Pakistan), associating himself with the statements by the delegates of Iraq, Bangladesh and the Soviet Union, said that, as the PLO had been accorded observer status by the General Assembly of the United Nations and by several other organizations of the United Nations family, it would be a reactionary and negative step not to admit the PLO as an observer to the Agency's General Conference. He shared Iraq's view that there was nothing in the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference to preclude the Conference granting the PLO observer status.

17. Mr. GHENEA (Romania) welcomed the move to invite the PLO to participate in the Conference, as that would constitute further acknowledgement of the right of the people of Palestine to self-determination as well as recognition of the PLO as the sole representative of that people. There was nothing in the Agency's Statute or the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference to prevent the PLO being invited; indeed the Agency was founded on the principle of universality and in accordance with Article II its prime objective was to "accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world". Inviting the PLO to attend the General Conference could only serve to promote that objective.

18. Mr. OSREDKAR (Yugoslavia), supporting the draft resolution, said that the PLO should be given the opportunity to participate in the work of the Agency in view of the importance that nuclear energy would have in the future for Palestine. Although the Agency was a technical organization, no scientist or engineer could divorce himself from political issues, nor could the Agency as a body remain aloof from political reality.

19. Mr. BASSOY (Turkey), recalling that his delegation had made its position clear at the June

meetings of the Board of Governors, reiterated his support for the draft resolution.

20. Mr. GEORGE (Australia) said his delegation would abstain from voting because his Government did not feel that the PLO constituted the type of organization that could properly be granted observer status according to the terms of Articles 30-32 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference.

21. Mr. AMAT FLORES (Cuba), expressing support for the draft resolution, recalled that Cuba's position had been made quite clear in an intervention the previous day. [2] Some delegates had claimed that the Agency was an organization removed from politics, but indeed the very nature of the Agency made deep political involvement inevitable. Article II of the Statute stated one of the Agency's objectives as being to contribute to peace. Peace was not an abstract concept any more than war, and both were dependent on politics. He did not see how the Agency could ignore Resolution 3237 (XXIX) of the General Assembly of the United Nations giving the PLO observer status "in the sessions and work of all international conferences convened under the auspices of other organs of the United Nations" Not to follow suit would be to adopt a political position contrary to the spirit of the Agency.

22. The PRESIDENT proposed that, as it was clear that the Conference could not reach a consensus on the draft resolution before it, the matter should now be put to a vote as requested by the delegate of the United States of America.

● 23. At the request of Mr. Al-Shawi (Iraq) a roll-call vote was taken.

● 24. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

● 25. The result of the vote was as follows:

In favour: Ecuador, Egypt, Finland, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Japan, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Republic, Malaysia, Mexico, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Algeria, Bangladesh, Brazil, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cuba, Czechoslovakia.

Against: Israel, South Africa, United States of America, Costa Rica.

Abstaining: Denmark, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Republic of Korea, Liechtenstein, Netherlands, Norway, Panama, Portugal, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Canada, Chile.

● 26. There were 46 votes in favour and 4 against, with 21 abstentions. The draft resolution was adopted.

27. The PRESIDENT said that the Conference had thus agreed to invite the Palestine Liberation Organization to attend the sessions of the General Conference in the capacity of an observer, and that he, in his capacity as President, would like to exercise the privilege of welcoming the representative of that body.

28. Mr. EILAM (Israel) said that, by adopting the resolution inviting the PLO to attend the sessions of the General Conference in the capacity of an observer, the Conference had forced the Agency to betray the trust of its Members and might well have initiated the disintegration of the Agency as an objective scientific organization. The fact of the matter was that the Agency had now officially accepted international terrorism into its bosom and had given the PLO the opportunity of exercising nuclear blackmail and jeopardizing international security. Moreover, it had happened at a time when nations were acutely sensitive about the physical protection of nuclear material and facilities. Acceptance of the resolution cast serious doubt on the future of the Agency and its inspection activities. His Government and perhaps others as well would have to reconsider their attitude to the Agency. In conclusion he recorded his country's appreciation for the ceaseless efforts made by the Agency and the Director General on behalf of the international community and expressed the hope that the present turn of events would not in fact prevent the Agency from continuing to function in the same way in the future as it had done in the past.

GENERAL DEBATE AND REPORT FOR 1975 (GC(XX)/565) (resumed)[3]

29. Mr. KAMIL (Indonesia), paying tribute to the Director General, said his delegation would continue to place its trust in him. He went on to congratulate Nicaragua and the PLO on the decisions taken in their favour by the General Conference.

30. The delegations from Asia and Africa were particularly grateful to the Government of Brazil for its invitation to the General Conference to hold its twentieth regular session in Brazil, as they thus had an opportunity to witness the great strides made by the countries of Latin America in developing their economies and achieving greater social justice.

[2] GC(XX)/OR.186, para. 67.

[3] Ibid., paras 1-29 and 33-88.

31. His delegation was on the whole well satisfied with the documents prepared by the Secretariat and was especially pleased that the annual report (GC(XX)/565) now covered one full calendar year.

32. It was gratifying to note that in 1975 the financial resources available for technical assistance within the framework of the Agency and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) had increased by 36% and 28% respectively. However, assistance in kind had decreased by some 10%, which was somewhat discouraging as developing countries had hoped and expected that donor countries would increase their assistance in the form of equipment to meet technically sound and reasonable requests.

33. Commending the Director General on having reduced by 26 the number of posts in the manning table proposed for 1977, thereby saving some \$1 million, he expressed the hope that he would continue with his policy of stringent financial economy. Although further savings could be achieved with greater determination and co-operation on the part of everybody concerned, his delegation accepted the Regular Budget proposed for 1977[4].

34. His delegation was disappointed, however, that only a very small part of the budgetary increase of over \$6 million was intended for activities in the field of food and agriculture. It hoped that research aimed at boosting food production would not receive low priority.

35. Noting that Indonesia was very interested in food irradiation, he said that Indonesian scientists were carrying out research in that field under contracts with the Agency and participating in the radiation preservation of fish under the Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology[5]. In that connection, he recalled the offer made by the Netherlands Government a few years previously to establish in the Netherlands an international facility which would provide reliable data on the scientific and economic feasibility of food irradiation and asked what had become of that offer.

36. His delegation was pleased to note an increase in the budget of the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (the Trieste Centre), which enjoyed great esteem in the scientific community and offered excellent training facilities for all scientists.

37. On the other hand, the Regular Budget figures relating to technical assistance and training did not create a happy impression; there was to be an increase of only \$198 000, compared with a proposed increase of more than \$1.5 million in safeguards expenditure.

[4] See document GC(XX)/567.

[5] The text of the agreement is reproduced in document INFCIRC/167.

38. The target for voluntary contributions to the General Fund was to be raised by \$500 000 to \$6 million. In the opinion of his delegation, that increase was insufficient to meet the growing need of developing countries for technical assistance. Like many other developing countries, Indonesia believed that the target should be \$6½-7 million. In that connection he recalled that in 1974 the General Conference had adopted a resolution in which it was stated that in setting the target account should be taken of the need to compensate for such factors as inflation and currency fluctuations.

39. In the preceding few years, far more Regular Budget funds had been spent on safeguards than on technical assistance and training, despite the fact that the framers of the Statute had placed equal emphasis on aiding developing countries and applying safeguards. In the annual race for appropriations between technical assistance and safeguards, technical assistance had always lost, even though the number of Member States in need of technical assistance had increased.

40. Indonesia's requests for technical assistance had received a satisfactory response in recent years, and he wished to thank the Agency and all donor countries. In particular, he wished to thank France, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States of America for the provision of training in the planning of nuclear power plants and looked forward to their also providing training in nuclear power plant construction and maintenance.

41. The training abroad of university teachers so that they could provide instruction in atomic and related sciences was of great importance to Indonesia, and he appealed to the Agency and to donor countries to make fellowships available for that purpose. He added that his country would also welcome assistance in improving the teaching facilities at its universities.

42. While Indonesia was satisfied with the progress which it had made in the use of nuclear energy, it would not for ever remain satisfied at being merely a consumer of nuclear technology created and developed abroad. In the declaration of the seventh special session of the United Nations on the creation of the New International Economic Order, all advanced countries and international organizations were called upon to take measures for the speedy transfer of technology to the developing countries. He was sure that the Agency would not turn a deaf ear to that call.

43. The desire of some developing countries to acquire facilities and know-how relating to the more sophisticated part of the nuclear fuel cycle had given rise to misgivings on the part of some advanced countries, which were trying to persuade those developing countries to abandon their plans to achieve independence in peaceful nuclear applications. Thus, countries which had announced their commitment to Agency safeguards were being discouraged from advancing their peaceful nuclear technology, as if they had become objects

of suspicion. For its part, Indonesia was not party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)[6], but it had put its research reactor under Agency safeguards, and urged other countries to make full use of the Agency's safeguards system.

44. Reviewing the first 20 years of the Agency's existence, he remarked that brinkmanship had been replaced by détente, that more than two thirds of the countries of the "third world" were now Member States, that those Member States were demanding a greater share in the running of the Agency, that priority in the allocation of funds was being given increasingly to safeguards rather than technical assistance, and that more thought should be given to the relationship between the promotional and the regulatory activities of the Agency. In the light of the changes which had taken place since the establishment of the Agency, he felt that the time had come to contemplate a thorough review of the Statute and of the Rules of Procedure of the Agency's policy-making organs.

45. Lastly, he expressed the hope that the motives of the developing countries demanding a change in the composition of the General Committee would not be misunderstood. His delegation was confident that the composition arrived at would bring the Agency closer to the situation where, as stated in Article IV. C of the Statute, "The Agency is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its members".

46. Mr. GHENEA (Romania) said that he first wished to express heartfelt gratitude to the people and Government of Brazil and to the Rio de Janeiro authorities for the extremely cordial welcome they had given the Conference in their beautiful city and country.

47. He also had the agreeable duty of telling the Director General, Sigvard Eklund, of the profound respect in which Romania held his constant devotion to the cause of the Agency.

48. In the name of the Romanian Government he wished to express gratification at the invitation to the PLO to attend the sessions of the General Conference in the capacity of an observer, and also to utter a cordial welcome to that organization's representative.

49. Likewise, he wished to congratulate Nicaragua on its admission to membership of the Agency.

50. The Agency, founded two decades ago to "accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world", had been entrusted with highly responsible tasks expressly defined in the Statute, particularly in Article III concerned with functions. In the ensuing twenty years it had achieved remarkable things; however, there were still some shortcomings and imperfections.

51. The twentieth regular session of the General Conference offered an appropriate opportunity to pause and take stock of the Agency's position. That being so, his delegation wished to offer a number of observations on the activities pursued by the Agency thus far.

52. Over the years the Agency had played a useful role in promoting the peaceful applications of nuclear energy and fostering international co-operation in that field. It had provided technical assistance of value and thus contributed, despite its modest resources, towards a solution of the economic and social problems faced by Member States, particularly the developing countries. Much good work had been done in many different areas, notably nuclear power, and also in the applications of nuclear techniques in industry, agriculture, medicine, biology and hydrology. The help given developing countries in those areas had been valuable. The research contract programme, too, had provided the essential support which developing countries needed in order to embark on basic and applied research. The value of the Agency's training programme was also beyond dispute, and it was to be congratulated on the interregional courses it had organized and on its support for nuclear power projects.

53. The forthcoming International Conference on Nuclear Power and its Fuel Cycle (the Salzburg Conference) to be held in 1977, was undoubtedly a valuable initiative, and the Director General was to be congratulated on it.

54. The Agency's work aimed at preparing codes and guides for the construction and operation of nuclear power plants, its nuclear information system, its activities in the nuclear data field and in environmental protection - all those achievements deserved commendation.

55. As the Agency entered its third decade, it behoved the General Conference to define - in the light of experience and in view of the new tasks lying ahead - the priority tasks the Agency should pursue and the practical modes of action it should choose in order to fulfil its statutory obligations completely and satisfy the requirements of Member States. Obviously, world events and the evolution of the world scene would have to be taken into account.

56. In that context the increasing determination of peoples to be master of their own destiny and of their national wealth, to act as independent nations and participate in the solution of the great problems of humanity, was something that had to be respected. The role of small and medium-sized countries, of developing and non-aligned countries in international life should be enhanced. Part and parcel of that trend was the struggle to end misery, to achieve economic and social progress, to eliminate colonialism, racism, apartheid, neo-colonialism and all forms of interference in the internal affairs of other people. Détente, peace, security, the democratization of international relations and the institution of a new economic order - of a better and fairer world - were the goals on which all should fix their gaze.

[6] Reproduced in document INFCIRC/140.

57. For an increasing number of countries the peaceful uses of nuclear energy were entering a new stage; they were no longer just a promising hope for the future but a present reality.

58. Those, in brief, were the new political, economic and scientific realities which the Agency must consider in framing its future programmes, if it was to discharge effectively the weighty responsibilities its Members had entrusted to it. It must be a true international forum, where all States, large and small, advanced or developing, possessors of nuclear weapons or not, would have the opportunity to decide together, on an equal footing, the destinies of the organization in which they placed so much hope and trust.

59. That presupposed a substantial reinforcement of the Agency's activities and their continuous adaptation to the specific requirements of Member States. More resolute action to ensure the Agency's universality and to provide conditions favourable for participation by national liberation movements was likewise required. In that context the role of the General Conference should be enhanced.

60. Romania believed that the Agency should deploy its whole strength in an effort to institute a new international economic order. A vital part of that effort would consist in facilitating untrammelled access by all peoples to the peaceful uses of atomic energy and the latest achievements of science and technology, in substantially increasing technical assistance, and generally in applying atomic energy so as to reduce the gap between the haves and have-nots.

61. Special attention, together with the necessary funds, should be devoted in future years to the training of staff in the peaceful uses of atomic energy.

62. Romania believed it essential that the Agency should accord priority to assisting countries to implement their national nuclear power programmes. That assistance should cover the various phases of the fuel cycle, fuel element fabrication, the technology of power station component manufacture, quality control, irradiated fuel reprocessing and waste management.

63. The Romanian delegation believed that the Agency's Statute and NPT constituted a proper legal foundation for broad international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy as a whole. In the application of NPT, particular pains should be taken to ensure observance of Articles IV, V and VI.

64. Similarly, a just balance had to be struck between the Agency's fundamental statutory function of accelerating and enlarging the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world, and its safeguards responsibilities. A corresponding balance should be maintained between the financial resources allocated to those two functions.

65. If the peoples of the world were to benefit fully from the potential blessings of the atom, it was essential that atomic energy should never again be used for purposes of destruction. That was why the Romanian Government was resolutely opposed to the armaments race, and stood out in favour of general and complete disarmament, including nuclear disarmament.

66. Romania was making substantial efforts to increase its industrial and agricultural output, a task calling for ever greater quantities of power. The country therefore intended to launch a programme of nuclear power station construction. At the same time, the extension and diversification of the use of isotopes in the usual fields was not being neglected, and substantial success had already been registered.

67. True to the spirit of its foreign policy, Romania maintained close co-operation in the nuclear field with many countries, and was also grateful to the Agency and UNDP for the assistance it had received in the promotion of nuclear technology.

68. In conclusion he wished to reiterate his Government's support for the Agency and its confidence in the Agency's ability to satisfy the important demands being made on it by all peoples.

69. Mr. BOT (Netherlands) said he was happy to note that the three specific functions of the Agency, referred to by his country's delegate at the first General Conference, namely supervision of the use of fissionable materials, provision of technical assistance and co-ordination of all international efforts in the field of the peaceful uses of atomic energy, although considerably expanded and intensified over the preceding two decades, were still the prime concerns of the organization. During that period important results had been achieved, for which the Secretariat as well as the Member States deserved to be commended. The Netherlands would continue to render every assistance to the Agency in realizing its lofty ideals and in efficiently fulfilling its functions.

70. The Agency had always operated in a businesslike manner and it was hoped that the practice would continue in the future without being hampered by extraneous political considerations, which only diverted attention from the complex and real problems associated with the use of nuclear energy. His delegation was convinced that the Agency, which was responsible in a field of human activity directly influencing the lives of people today and the lives of generations yet unborn, would remain an effective instrument for the progress and self-protection of mankind. In that connection, the Salzburg Conference to be held the following year had an important task. The Netherlands would actively participate in that major event.

71. Although over the years the use of nuclear energy had rapidly expanded, it was regrettable that opposition to nuclear energy had also

increased. There were indeed problems related mainly to the application of safeguards, which deserved continuous and serious attention especially because exports of nuclear material, equipment and technology were growing.

72. The Director General's statement clearly indicated the Agency's awareness of the problems involved. The Netherlands delegation shared his opinion that nuclear energy was at present the only real alternative to the more traditional energy sources in spite of the fact that the Netherlands had huge reserves of natural gas.

73. The need for nuclear energy in the face of growing opposition to it made it imperative for the Agency to contribute to the public acceptance of nuclear energy. In his Government's opinion, that could be achieved, among other things, by continuous Agency activities in the field of nuclear safety and environmental protection. It was therefore somewhat discouraging to note the comparatively modest increase in the budget for the relevant part of the programme amounting to only 6.6% as compared to that for 1976. The Netherlands was highly interested in the Research Project on Risk Assessment jointly undertaken by the Agency and the International Institute of Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), to which it intended to second a scientist.

74. His Government agreed with the Director General that nuclear energy should be considered in the broader context of energy policy in general. The reactor centre in the Netherlands had recently been given a wider scope and renamed Netherlands Energy Research Foundation.

75. Although the possibilities of other non-conventional sources of energy should indeed be explored by Member States, the Agency's involvement in that field, as well as excessive broadening of the scale of its activities, which could be seen in the new draft medium-term programme, might lead to fragmentation. It was therefore imperative that in defining the priorities of the Agency's activities clear emphasis should be laid on nuclear energy and not on the energy field as a whole.

76. His Government approved the Agency's past activities and future programme in the area of energy production by nuclear fusion. Although many problems would have to be solved, that method appeared to be promising for the future. The huge outlays involved in fusion research made international co-operation desirable, in which the Agency should play a co-ordinating role.

77. The Director General had rightly pointed out that, in view of the world-wide proliferation of nuclear energy facilities, it was all the more necessary to strike a proper balance between the Agency's regulatory and promotional activities. His Government considered those two activities to be inseparable and interconnected.

78. The Netherlands had always held that the application of safeguards was the primary function

of the Agency. It welcomed the policy trend calling for the extension of safeguards to technological information, since such technical know-how could also be used for manufacturing nuclear weapons.

79. In that connection, the United Kingdom had taken a commendable initiative earlier in the year to provide an additional option for countries not party to NPT to place all their nuclear facilities and material under full Agency safeguards. It was to be hoped that those countries would avail themselves of the opportunity and thus contribute to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. It was gratifying to note that the relevant resolution had been adopted by the Board of Governors by consensus.

80. Two nuclear-weapon States had taken a praiseworthy step by expressing their willingness to submit their civil nuclear facilities to the Agency's safeguards. His Government would urge the other nuclear-weapon States, whether or not party to NPT, to follow the example set by the United Kingdom and the United States.

81. As regards regional fuel cycle centres, the Netherlands Government welcomed the Agency's study dealing with the institutional aspects of those centres, which it was studying in detail, and intended to use it in determining its final policy in that area. That study would gain in value when it was combined with the one, now under way, on nuclear waste management.

82. The Netherlands wished to join the Director General in appealing to all countries which had not signed NPT to reconsider their position and to accede to the Treaty, since it firmly believed that placing a country's entire nuclear programme under the Agency's safeguards was an essential element in ensuring that nuclear material, equipment and information were being used only for peaceful purposes.

83. As for the Agency's technical assistance programme, his delegation was in favour of the proposed re-evaluation of its focus, guiding principles and general operating rules. In view of the technological and political developments, it would be quite appropriate to review the programme, bearing in mind that transfer of highly sophisticated technology in the field of nuclear energy should fit into a country's overall infrastructure and its development plan. His Government had always considered technical co-operation with developing countries a major policy goal and attached particular importance to such co-operation within the framework of the Agency.

84. In conclusion, the Netherlands delegation wished to express its satisfaction with the Agency's work.

85. His Government considered the Agency's new programme to be in conformity with the role which the Agency was expected to play, and pledged its wholehearted support for that programme.

86. Mr. MAKINEN (Finland) said that it was a particular pleasure to attend a session of the General Conference at Rio de Janeiro, in a country whose future was so full of promise owing to its great natural wealth and, above all, to the qualities of its people, a country, moreover, which had never known and never would know such a thing as racial discrimination.

87. Since the creation of the Agency the peaceful uses of nuclear energy had made rapid progress, and the same was true of world trade in nuclear materials. NPT had been concluded, one might well think, none too soon. As far as the practical application of NPT was concerned, it was quite possible that the stage which had now been reached would prove to be decisive. Decisions that needed to be taken at the present time would determine to what extent the system of security which NPT aimed at setting up merited the confidence of the world community and in what degree hopes were likely to be deceived.

88. Hope had already been disappointed to some extent. It was regrettable that the application of NPT had not made it possible to establish among the contracting parties a vast zone of free trade in nuclear materials under the protection of a safeguards system such as the authors of the Treaty had had in mind. So far it had not been possible to extend the control systems to the whole of the nuclear fuel cycle - or, to put it another way, to require that importing countries adhere to the system set up under NPT as an absolute condition of delivery.

89. Bilateral arrangements had of course done something to fill the gap. A situation was in fact emerging where those arrangements weighed upon parties to NPT but not upon third countries which had never wanted to accept effective controls; members of the NPT system on the other hand had to give accurate accounts of the nuclear materials used by them at all times, even when exporting to a country outside the Treaty. The system risked becoming less and less attractive to the States that had thus far remained outside it, and the establishment of a universal regime to replace the complex network of bilateral agreements was accordingly an urgent task.

90. What was required, in the opinion of his Government, was a situation in which parties to NPT could be sure of receiving distinctly greater benefits than those that remained outside the Treaty. Finland had therefore asked the Director General to give the Board a summary of its ideas on how the Agency's safeguards could be strengthened in the form of an information document issued in June. That memorandum was not an official document of the General Conference, but he hoped that it would nevertheless be given careful study by delegates.

91. Since the Agency's work as a supplier of technical assistance and other services appeared to be focused increasingly on fission technology and nuclear power, consideration might be given in future to enlarging the scope of the requests

for application of safeguards envisaged in the Statute - in fact, requests for comprehensive controls should be possible. In sum, all Member States should do their best to support the extension of the safeguards system and make it more effective.

92. The growth of nuclear power had also made people more aware of the stages in the fuel cycle which required stricter control measures. Differences between potential risks had been identified and their importance assessed. The task of careful differentiation should be pursued further to prevent the safeguards system from becoming unduly cumbersome. Special attention should be given to the last stage of the cycle.

93. The situation was bound to change when reprocessing was carried out on a large scale. Measures aimed at preventing the growth of plutonium stocks were sensible and would remain so until it could be shown that that material would be needed in the near future. Concentration of fuel cycle installations in a few well protected places which lent themselves to ready surveillance would do much to improve security.

94. His Government had noted with great satisfaction the Agency's decision to examine the possibilities offered by regional fuel cycle centres. Since Finland was constant in its desire to strengthen NPT, it saw in the Director General's initiative an additional step towards the goal of maintaining the number of reprocessing plants at a minimum - and that was equivalent to an effort to minimize the risks involved in the storage and management of plutonium. Different States might be interested in different problems, and there were many which naturally emerged in such a study: Finland, for example, was particularly interested in environmental protection and would accordingly focus attention on all problems related to the management of radioactive waste.

95. Later on the Agency should play an active role in the elaboration of safety and environmental standards for regional centres. Bilateral safeguards arrangements should be broadened and put on a regional basis. In that way transfers of nuclear materials between States participating in a regional scheme could be made easily, without recourse to burdensome controls.

96. In that way, too, solutions could probably be found to the problems presented by the establishment of regional fuel cycle centres. The concept of "denuclearized zones" designed to limit the proliferation of nuclear weapons had long been familiar, and Finland wished to suggest the establishment of "zones for the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy".

97. Finland was a country which, to a large extent, was obliged to adapt its policies to the decisions of States possessing large nuclear resources. He wished therefore to appeal in the first instance to the nuclear-weapon States and the great Powers to strengthen the system that

had been evolved to ensure that nuclear weapons would not proliferate further.

98. He would not conclude without saying a few words about the special international problem of nuclear waste. In that sphere the ordinary technical problems of treatment and disposal were further complicated by a whole series of problems relating to liability, international security and so on. Since NPT and the arrangements associated with it imposed numerous obligations on other States, it was not unreasonable to suggest that the great nuclear Powers should seek model solutions to those problems. In that connection the Agency would naturally have an important role to play.

99. Finland, obliged as it was to invest fairly sizable resources in the production of nuclear power, and desirous of pursuing a policy of strict neutrality, was well aware of the advantages to be gained from close collaboration with the Agency. It was a matter for satisfaction that the Agency had continued to improve and enhance the assistance of various kinds which it gave to Member States. His Government accordingly supported without reserve the Agency's efforts on behalf of peace and international co-operation.

● The meeting rose at 1.15 p. m.

