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President: Mr. ADEKANYE (Nigeria)

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Abbreviations used in this record

ARCAL	Regional Co-operative Arrangements for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America
ASSET	Analysis of Safety Significant Events Team
CANDU	Canada deuterium-uranium [reactor]
DGEN	General Directorate for Nuclear Energy (Guatemala)
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EURATOM	European Atomic Energy Community
ICRP	International Commission on Radiological Protection
INSAG	International Nuclear Safety Advisory Group
KANUPP	Karachi Nuclear Power Plant
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
OPANAL	Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
RADWASS	Radioactive Waste Safety Standards
RBMK	High-power channel-type reactor (Soviet Union)
RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
SAGSI	Standing Advisory Group on Safeguards Implementation
START	Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms
TACF	Technical Assistance and Co-operation Fund
WAMAP	Waste Management Advisory Programme
WWER	Water-cooled and -moderated reactor

GENERAL DEBATE AND ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1991 (continued)

1. Mr. VILAIN XIIII (Belgium) said that during the past year the Agency had demonstrated its ability to adapt to the changing world situation and to play the role assigned to it. That was clear from its efforts to implement the Security Council's resolutions on Iraq, the Board of Governors' decisions concerning the strengthening of safeguards, and the work being done to elaborate a convention on nuclear safety.

2. The statement made by the representative of the United Kingdom on behalf of the European Community accurately reflected the basic position of the Belgian Government. He wished to expand on only two points, namely safeguards and nuclear safety.

3. Over the past year, the safeguards system had once more been at the centre of attention. The recent decisions by the Board of Governors on special inspections and the provision and use of design information represented an important step towards strengthening safeguards. Those measures should significantly enhance the Agency's ability to detect any use of nuclear energy for purposes other than peaceful ones and should thus increase the international community's confidence in the commitment to the peaceful use of nuclear energy made by States that had signed a comprehensive safeguards agreement.

4. The international consensus on non-proliferation had also made headway during the past year. The accession of France and China to the NPT, the implementation of safeguards agreements in South Africa and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the accession of additional countries to the Tlatelolco Treaty had brought the world closer to a universal safeguards regime. In that connection, Belgium attached special importance to efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and to the role the Agency could play in that area.

5. Certain commitments entered into by States were also encouraging. In particular, the European Community countries had worked out a common approach to providing the Secretariat with supplementary information, on a voluntary basis, concerning the production of uranium ore concentrate, inventories of

nuclear material, and international transfers of sensitive equipment. He appealed to all Member States to participate in that initiative, since the provision of such information would be fully effective only if a large majority of Member States agreed to do so.

6. He welcomed the Director General's proposal to conduct a comprehensive review of major developments of relevance to safeguards over the past few years. It was now more important than ever to re-examine the safeguards system as a whole, in the light of its fundamental objectives and the changes that had occurred on the international scene. The purpose of the exercise should be to reform the safeguards system with a view to improving its efficacy and ensuring its viability. Efforts to strengthen safeguards must go hand in hand with efforts to rationalize safeguards criteria and the working methods and structure of the Department of Safeguards in order to optimize the use of available resources. The geographical coverage of safeguards and the Agency's safeguards duties were constantly expanding, but there was little prospect of a corresponding expansion of resources. A significant reduction in costs was therefore imperative and, he was convinced, perfectly feasible.

7. The basic text for comprehensive safeguards agreements, namely INFCIRC/153, needed no amendment. However, it should be reinterpreted in such a way that certain provisions which had remained inoperative could be implemented. He was thinking in particular of those provisions that allowed the Agency to engage in qualitative verification and to pass judgement on qualitative aspects of national safeguards systems. Without prejudice to quantitative verification efforts (in the level of verification), greater attention should be paid to qualitative analysis (risk of detection and probability of diversion), which was more relevant to the current threat of nuclear proliferation.

8. His delegation attached great importance, for budgetary reasons among others, to the constructive partnership being developed between the Agency and EURATOM. Since July 1992, technical discussions had been under way and an initial technical agreement on many of the activities to be carried out jointly by the two inspectorates had been reached. The practical implementation of that agreement could lead to a significant streamlining of the

inspections undertaken by the Agency in European Community countries. The coexistence of two independent and highly qualified inspectorates was clearly a unique situation that should permit significant savings. Those savings should help to keep the growth of the safeguards budget under control and the co-operative arrangements created could serve as a model for Agency activities in other regions.

9. Belgium, which had a large nuclear power programme, was greatly interested in international co-operation in nuclear safety. The deficiencies in nuclear safety which had come to light over the past decade in facilities in certain Member States called for an appropriate response from the international community. Belgium was actively involved in multilateral and bilateral efforts to improve the level of safety in Eastern European nuclear power plants.

10. Nuclear safety was certainly not a new subject for the Agency. Since its inception, the Agency had enjoyed an enviable reputation as a universal meeting place where specialists in nuclear safety could exchange their experience and knowledge. The convention on nuclear safety that was now being prepared should promote such exchanges through regular meetings of parties to the convention. Through its OSART and ASSET missions, the Agency was in a position to sound the alarm about greater or lesser deficiencies in nuclear safety. The thrust of the efforts of the Group of 24 must now focus on the high-risk areas where the most urgent problems arose. A redirection of efforts would be appropriate in some cases, while in others an increase in financial and human resources seemed to be necessary.

11. The Agency could take on the onerous responsibilities involved only if the Secretariat was able to preserve its independence in relation to the nuclear safety authorities in Member States and operators of nuclear facilities. It should not become involved in providing technical assistance on reactor safety or participate in the selection of safety strategies and priorities. To do so would be to forfeit its impartial role in OSART missions, for example. The Agency should therefore limit its safety activities to fields in which it possessed substantial experience and complete independence of judgement. That was the way in which it could best serve the international community.

12. Ms. DOMBROWSKI (Venezuela) said that her country had always taken a special interest in the Agency's technical co-operation activities, which should continue to be an essential part of the Agency's mission. In that connection, she wished to stress the importance of achieving a better balance in the distribution of the Agency's budgetary resources between the various programmes. It was a matter of deep concern that technical co-operation continued to depend on voluntary contributions to the TACF. Although it was true that the level of the TACF had increased significantly over the years, there was no guarantee that it would continue to show real growth. The slow but steady decline in the percentage of the target pledged and paid clearly demonstrated that timely, assured and predictable resources were needed to ensure the delivery of an effective technical co-operation programme to meet the growing socio-economic needs of developing Member States.

13. The technical assistance that Venezuela had received from the Agency had enhanced the understanding and safe use of nuclear technology in priority sectors such as health, agriculture and livestock breeding, radiation protection, industry and the environment. However, problems still remained which could only be solved through further co-operation with the Agency.

14. Her delegation had noted with great satisfaction that in 1991, the first year of the biennial cycle, the implementation rate for technical co-operation activities had reached 63.6%. However, it must be emphasized that the success of technical co-operation could not be measured by implementation statistics alone: a qualitative assessment of projects and activities was also essential.

15. She wished to reiterate her country's support for the ARCAL programme, which was a highly valuable instrument for furthering the goals of the Latin American region. She urged the Agency to continue its efforts to provide the necessary funding for ARCAL projects and regional co-ordinators' meetings. Her Government wished to thank those countries and institutions from outside the region which had supported the ARCAL programme: such financial assistance was vital to the success of the programme.

16. Venezuela, which had signed the Tlatelolco Treaty in 1967 and acceded to the NPT one year later, had always striven for the creation of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in Latin America and the Caribbean. It had actively supported the work of OPANAL and had done its utmost to get those countries in the region which had not acceded to the Tlatelolco Treaty to become members of the organization. In that connection, it had supported the amendment of the OPANAL charter to allow Guyana and Belize to join OPANAL.

17. At the international level, Venezuela had welcomed the disarmament initiatives taken by the superpowers, contributed to discussions on the elimination of chemical and bacteriological weapons, and vigorously supported initiatives aimed at establishing a comprehensive nuclear test ban.

18. As a party to the NPT, Venezuela attached particular importance to the Agency's safeguards system, which had helped prevent the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. However, it was concerned at the persistent imbalance in the Agency's budget between safeguards and non-safeguards activities. While her country was in favour of strengthening the safeguards system, it was convinced that that could be achieved without having to increase the financial burden on Member States, and especially those whose nuclear programmes were small or in their early stages. A review should be made of the safeguards system with a view to rationalizing costs and criteria and to increasing reliance on Member States' safeguards support programmes, which were funded from extrabudgetary contributions and could absorb growth in the safeguards programme.

19. Another area of great importance was nuclear safety and radiation protection. The Agency's activities in that sphere benefited all mankind, since they helped establish the technical basis for the safe operation of nuclear power plants and other facilities which employed nuclear technology in industry, medicine, research and agriculture. However, some of those activities brought greater and more direct benefit to developing countries than others. She would therefore like to see activities directly related to the safety of power reactors, in particular those concerning design and siting to be financed from extrabudgetary resources. Also, the Agency should take into account the work being done in that area by other organizations. That

might release financial resources that could be used to improve the safety of nuclear applications in medicine, agriculture, industry, and research and to strengthen radiation protection infrastructures in developing countries.

20. Although Venezuela considered that each State was responsible for the safety of the nuclear facilities on its territory, it supported the development of internationally accepted basic principles, standards and guides that would promote the safe use of nuclear technology. Her delegation intended to examine carefully the results of the work being done to draw up a nuclear safety convention, in particular the implications for developing countries and the financial consequences for the Agency.

21. Mr. SQUICCIARINI (Holy See) said that one of the Agency's most important tasks was to protect and promote life through the peaceful use of nuclear energy. To achieve that goal, it was essential to work together and deal constructively with the complex and many-faceted sectors of human life. His Holiness Pope John Paul II, on the occasion of his visit to the Vienna International Centre in 1983, had stressed that the first obligation was that of working together, sharing expertise and building up a consensus through common effort and commitment, and that the overriding characteristic of the organizations' work should always be to unite, not to divide. That characteristic stemmed from the spirit that had called the organizations into existence.

22. Generally speaking, in every sphere of science and technology the highest standards of safety should always be observed in the interests of mankind. Nature, understood as a creation of God for the benefit of man, was not meant to be irresponsibly exploited but rather to be wisely cultivated, protected and preserved for the good of mankind. It was thus extremely important to maintain the primacy of man as the criterion for judgements and decisions and the consequent obligations of stewardship and solidarity. The Holy See had expressed that view clearly during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in June 1992.

23. Man was, under God, the measure and end of all the projects attempted in the world. In scientific and nuclear programmes designed for the benefit of society, the human person was the guiding criterion. No project, however

technically perfect or industrially sound, was justifiable if it endangered the dignity and rights of the persons involved. Every initiative of the Agency and its Member States should satisfy moral demands: did it contribute to the preservation and improvement of human life? Did it advance the cause of humanity? Today, one of the most important ecological problems facing mankind was global warming. Scientists should be focusing their research on seeking feasible solutions to that serious problem.

24. The commitment and effort of the Agency and its Member States in the technological and scientific field must always be matched by a sensitivity and dedication to the cause of man, who was formed in the image of God and was worthy of total dignity and respect. Man, however, lived in a society, and it should be the concern of all to provide for the well-being of society. A successful technological project, whether launched by the Agency or by a government, should be seen as a positive contribution that was of benefit not only to a particular nation, but to all the people of the world. Its worth could be measured by its impact on the cultural, social, economic and human values of peoples.

25. As his Holiness Pope John Paul II had stated in his address to the international organizations in Vienna, the promotion of the common good demanded respect for the cultures of nations and peoples coupled to a sense of the solidarity of all peoples and nations under the guidance of a common Father. The advancement of one nation could never be realized at the expense of another. The advancement of all through the equitable exploitation of the expertise available was the best guarantee of the common good that ensured that all peoples had what they needed and deserved.

26. Historical events in Europe and in the world since 1989 provided a great opportunity for international bodies such as the Agency to work together for the welfare of humanity. Genuine partnership and co-operation could lead to solutions to complicated global problems, and the Holy See would encourage any initiatives in that direction.

27. Mr. UTCHANAH (Mauritius) said that the increasing number of signatories to the NPT, while welcome, raised the question of how safeguards agreements could be implemented effectively. In a world of rapidly evolving technology, it was essential for the Agency to have the capacity to adapt to the changing requirements of its safeguards duties. He therefore welcomed the proposals put forward by the Agency for improving the information basis for its safeguards activities and for carrying out special inspections under safeguards agreements.

28. In the light of recent geo-political changes, there was a need to take a close look at Article VI of the Statute with a view to bringing it more into line with the changing world. That task would not be an easy one, but he was confident that an objective attitude on the part of States would lead to good results.

29. With regard to measures to strengthen international co-operation in matters relating to nuclear safety and radiation protection, his delegation considered the foremost requirement to be the establishment of appropriate standards. He was therefore pleased to note that Basic Safety Standards for Radiation Protection were due to be published the following year. In Mauritius, the legislation on radiation protection had been passed in 1991 and, once they became available, the Basic Safety Standards would be incorporated into national regulations. For developing countries, however, safety standards on their own had little value unless the required trained personnel were available. Progress in the field of safety could only be achieved if there were a sustained, worldwide effort to meet the education and training needs of developing countries. A long-term training programme organized by Member States and the Agency would go a long way towards satisfying those needs.

30. Nuclear damage knew no political frontiers, and an operational framework for liability for such damage was therefore urgently needed. He was pleased to note the action taken by the Agency in that regard, and the entry into force of the Joint Protocol Relating to the Application of the Vienna and Paris Conventions.

31. Technical co-operation with the Agency had been the main vehicle through which developing countries had benefited from new developments in nuclear science and technology. It was thus a matter of concern that the level of funding for the technical co-operation programme - and especially the development of human resources - had not kept pace with the requirements of developing countries. A joint effort by the Agency and advanced countries could help to resolve the growing problem of the lack of trained manpower in developing nations.

32. Regional co-operation agreements were a highly cost-effective mechanism for providing training. He greatly appreciated the Agency's contribution to Africa's regional co-operation programme, which had been set up recently and which included many projects concerned with the development of technical and human resources.

33. Finally, at a time when some countries were facing severe financial difficulties and others were engaged in major structural adjustments, the Agency was to be commended for having managed to keep its Regular Budget for 1993 to a minimum level of growth.

34. Mr. LOUHANAPESSY (Indonesia), after welcoming Croatia, Slovenia, and Uzbekistan as new Members of the Agency, said that the world had arrived at a juncture in its history unmatched since the end of the Second World War. The global political situation was changing, and there was a transition towards new patterns in international relations portending greater opportunities as well as greater challenges in mankind's constant search for a better and more peaceful world. In facing those challenges, the principle of multilateralism had to be upheld, for the building of world peace was a task which had to be undertaken by all nations and could not be left to the major powers alone. For its part, the Agency should make the adjustments needed to meet the challenges of a changing world, notably through the formulation of a medium-term plan.

35. Despite financial difficulties, the Agency had demonstrated its capacity to carry out its functions in an efficient and effective manner. Substantial progress had been made during 1991, particularly in the field of safeguards. As a party to the NPT, Indonesia attached great importance to the

further strengthening of the Agency's safeguards system. The programme of technical assistance to developing countries had also been intensified in 1991. He expressed his gratitude to the Agency for the continuous support which it had extended to the Government of Indonesia. His Government hoped that in the future Agency assistance to developing countries would keep pace with the expected increase in safeguards activities.

36. With regard to nuclear safety, his Government considered that the preparatory work on the establishment of a nuclear safety convention should continue and would make every effort to contribute to those efforts.

37. Nuclear technology had become an important element in Indonesia's five-year development plan, the establishment of a modern multipurpose research reactor, nuclear laboratories and other facilities at Serpong, Jakarta, having already contributed substantially to national development. Although the main purpose of those installations was to support Indonesia's nuclear power programme, his Government was willing to share them with other Member States as part of its efforts to foster co-operation between developing countries. When setting up those laboratories and facilities, very careful attention had been paid to environmental protection measures, in accordance with current legislation, so as to ensure that there would be no negative impact on the environment.

38. As an agricultural country with a large population, Indonesia had a strong interest in maintaining a steady increase in food production. His delegation therefore appreciated the Agency's efforts in the area of food preservation and was very much looking forward to the preparation of a detailed project proposal for Agency assistance in the practical utilization of food irradiation in developing countries.

39. Mr. GUTIERREZ LEYTON (Chile) said that it was a matter of great regret that the deterioration of the Agency's financial situation in the past year had necessitated the postponement of a number of important activities. His delegation believed that it was essential to develop a balanced strategy to optimize the use of the Agency's restricted financial resources for all its statutory activities. The agreement reached in the Board of Governors in relation to the 1993-94 programme and budget clearly showed that all Member States shared that view.

40. His delegation welcomed the Board's decision in 1991 to continue the system of biennial programming for technical co-operation activities. The results of the first biennial period had been good, especially in respect of the programme implementation rate.

41. His delegation was pleased to note the completion of the International Chernobyl Project, which was a valuable contribution to the study of the effects of radiation on human beings, and also the Agency's continuing efforts to promote safety at nuclear facilities and in the management of radioactive waste. The latter efforts were essential to the safe development of nuclear energy in all spheres and to widespread public acceptance of the nuclear option.

42. However, his country was concerned that the absence of international standards regarding the timely and universal notification of accidents during the transport of radioactive waste and materials could hamper the timely communication to States of information on the impact of such incidents. He would therefore like to see a study made of arrangements which would respond to the growing concern of countries over that matter and which would respect both the right of free passage and State sovereignty over national territory, seas and air space.

43. His delegation had been pleased to note the technical competence and efficiency with which the Agency had carried out the mission entrusted to it under Security Council resolution 687. The events which had given rise to that resolution had triggered a debate which had led to proposals for strengthening the safeguards system. In pursuing those proposals, however, the Agency must seek solutions which did not conflict with its statutory powers. There was a danger in interpreting the Statute too broadly and, from the legal point of view, it would be preferable to aim for a comprehensive revision of the Statute in order to provide the Agency with greater powers in relation to safeguards.

44. He wished to re-emphasize his country's commitment to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. It believed that the safeguards regime should be viewed as a system of confidence-building measures and that it should embrace both horizontal and vertical non-proliferation. While that

might be one of the main themes of the NPT Review Conference in 1995, the Agency should begin now to explore alternative safeguards approaches which could lead to a more effective and efficient non-proliferation system. The report of the expert group on safeguards and the Director General's opening statement had both provided many useful ideas and suggestions concerning possible ways to proceed in that important area.

45. His Government, together with those of Argentina, Brazil and Mexico, had recently sponsored certain amendments to the Tlatelolco Treaty which foresaw - inter alia - an important role for the Agency in the performance of special inspections. He hoped that, following ratification of the amendments, it would be possible to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America. That would demonstrate the region's commitment to and participation in the global disarmament process. In that context, his country welcomed the conclusion of a safeguards agreement with South Africa and hoped to see the speedy and full implementation of the Joint Declaration between the Republic of Korea and the DPRK, together with the implementation of the latter's safeguards agreement with the Agency.

46. In the past year, Chile's nuclear activities had focused mainly on the areas of health, mining, agriculture, industry and the proper exploitation of the country's natural resources. Chile was seeking to integrate its nuclear activities fully with its scientific, technological and productive sectors and in so doing to optimize the use of its resources. That approach was well illustrated by its new research projects involving lithium. Chile possessed extensive reserves of that element, was endeavouring to increase exports and develop new uses for it, and had initiated joint projects with other countries involving ceramic materials containing lithium. Furthermore, his Government considered that only those projects which brought real economic benefits to the population should be approved. Projects too often used up large amounts of money for political prestige, to the detriment of other more urgent requirements. Accordingly, Chile was endeavouring to obtain the best possible return from its facilities, for example by increasing the range of uses of its research reactors.

47. Other activities to which Chile attached great importance were the application of nuclear techniques in the study of environmental pollution and the local production of materials for the diagnosis of diseases in newborns.

48. In the international context, his country's desire to strengthen regional co-operation was reflected in its co-operative agreement with Argentina, a bilateral agreement with Uruguay and its active involvement in the ARCAL programme. All countries of Latin America were seeking new ways of co-operating with one another, both under the ARCAL programme and outside it, with the aim of raising the level of research, and a number of centres of excellence had been set up in specific fields.

49. It was clear that, in order to be successful, any nuclear programme needed the acceptance of the public. It was therefore vitally important to ensure that groups which were opposed to nuclear activities were provided with the technical background information which they lacked. Chile also assigned high priority to programmes for disseminating information designed to counteract public distrust regarding the use of nuclear energy. In that connection he wished to thank the Agency for its assistance in organizing an international seminar on educating the public about nuclear energy which was to be held in Chile in March 1993. The seminar was intended for specialists from the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, who would learn of the experience Chile had gained through its national programme in that sphere.

50. The Agency's technical co-operation programme had greatly benefited his country, as an evaluation carried out by the Agency in October 1991 had revealed. The evaluation had covered 62 projects either under way or completed during the period 1981-91. A total of 262 professionals had taken part in training courses and 40 research contracts had been implemented, the total value of which was US $325 000. The Agency's evaluation had confirmed that those activities had made a significant contribution to Chile's economic and social development. That had been possible because the projects had been geared to national development priorities and because the executing bodies had been selected for their capacity to carry out research and to transfer the knowledge acquired.

51. Mr. CONNOLLY (Ireland), having associated himself fully with the statement made by the representative of the United Kingdom on behalf of the European Community, welcomed the new Members of the Agency.

52. In the nuclear field, effective non-proliferation measures and improved safety continued to be the two essential tasks before the international community. The Agency's responsibilities in those areas were growing steadily, but its resources continued to be constrained by budgetary limits and a shortfall in contributions. In the circumstances, priority must be given to those two important challenges.

53. Turning first to the task of strengthening safeguards, he recalled that a significant step forward had been taken at the 1991 session of the General Conference. On that occasion, the European Community countries had proposed a number of concrete measures. The Board of Governors had since tackled the question of the strengthening of safeguards, taking up a number of the Community's proposals. He was looking forward to further progress in that area and to the creation of a more effective and transparent confidence-building regime.

54. The case for improving the safeguards system to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons had never been clearer, with continuing revelations over the past year about Iraq's clandestine programme to develop nuclear weapons. He commended the Secretariat for its excellent work in implementing Security Council resolutions 687, 707 and 715. Ireland deplored Iraq's failure to co-operate fully with the Agency in that matter.

55. That situation again demonstrated the Agency's crucial role in the nuclear non-proliferation regime, a role which would become increasingly clear as the 1995 NPT Review Conference approached. His Government welcomed the growing international support for the NPT and, in particular, the recent accession of France and China; those were encouraging moves towards making the Treaty universal. It was, however, a cause for concern that many important countries still remained outside it, and Ireland again appealed to those States which had not yet done so to accede to the Treaty.

56. His delegation attached considerable importance to the full and speedy implementation of both the safeguards agreement ratified by the DPRK and the bilateral agreement between that country and the Republic of Korea on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. That was vital not only for the fulfilment of the DPRK's obligations under the NPT, but also for the reconciliation of the two countries.

57. The other essential challenge facing the Agency was improved nuclear safety. The Agency had a vital function as the universal forum for the promotion of internationally acceptable safety levels in the nuclear industry. In the past year, a group of experts had begun work on a draft convention on nuclear safety. His Government welcomed that development and hoped that an effective convention would emerge containing concrete obligations and embracing all aspects of the nuclear power and fuel cycle, including fuel reprocessing and waste disposal. But the momentum generated in 1991 must be maintained if public expectations were to be met. Ireland urged the group of experts not to adopt a minimalist approach to the scope and content of a future convention: a meaningful convention was far more important than early results. It was also to be hoped that the group of experts would be responsive to the wider political context and produce a draft convention that reflected the concerns expressed at the International Conference on the Safety of Nuclear Power held in 1991 and in the debate at the General Conference the same year.

58. The substantial risks associated with certain nuclear power plants built to earlier standards had been known for some time. He noted with great concern the Agency's findings on the safety of such plants, particularly WWERs and RBMKs. The Agency should continue to encourage the relevant Member States to have expert safety evaluations undertaken in those plants and to make the necessary improvements as a matter of urgency. The offers of technical and financial assistance made by various Member States should be taken up without delay.

59. His delegation endorsed the revision and expansion of the Basic Safety Standards for Radiation Protection to reflect the recommendations of the ICRP and hoped that work could be completed in the coming months and new standards published in 1993.

60. Ireland was deeply concerned about the increased reprocessing of nuclear material. Such an expansion was no longer justified, as earlier expectations regarding fast reactors and the supply of uranium fuel had failed to materialize. His Government was troubled about a number of aspects of reprocessing: the concentration at a few sites of large quantities of hazardous nuclear material; the risks of accidents and environmental pollution associated with reprocessing, the discharge of waste, increased transport and international trade in nuclear materials; and, above all, the hazards from both a safety and safeguards point of view that the growing stockpile and trade in plutonium and other highly active materials entailed. In that connection, his delegation noted with great interest the remarks made by the Director General concerning plutonium stocks in his opening address. The entire question of reprocessing, together with the related issues of transport, discharges, storage and supervision of plutonium, must be more widely debated and given increased attention in the Agency's future programme.

61. Finally, the Agency must continue to take a strong lead in the area of liability for nuclear damage. Ireland had participated in recent years in the work of the Standing Committee on Liability for Nuclear Damage and welcomed the progress made to date. Some items remained to be agreed upon by the Committee, such as procedures for the settlement of claims, the application of a liability convention to military installations and the relationship between civil and State liability. While the entry into force earlier in 1992 of the Joint Protocol Relating to the Application of the Vienna Convention and the Paris Convention would strengthen the existing nuclear liability regime, further progress in the work of the Standing Committee was essential. Every effort should be made to achieve as broad a consensus as possible.

62. Mr. AHMAD (Pakistan) extended a warm welcome to Croatia, Slovenia and Uzbekistan as new Members of the Agency. A number of important developments had taken place since the previous session of the General Conference. Some independent States with nuclear capability had emerged following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, initially causing considerable uncertainty and concern over the control of tens of thousands of nuclear weapons. It was heartening that appropriate controls for those nuclear weapons had been worked

out by the Commonwealth of Independent States. The agreements between the United States and Russia to reduce their nuclear arsenals substantially and to withdraw tactical nuclear weapons were also welcome. The international community looked forward to a further acceleration of that process so that the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons could be reached in the near future.

63. Pakistan remained committed to non-proliferaton and was convinced that regional arrangements offered a constructive and confidence-building approach to global non-proliferation. Pakistan had been advocating the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia since 1972. In June 1991, the Prime Minister of Pakistan had proposed a conference with the participation of the United States, Russia, China, India and Pakistan to discuss an arrangement that would ensure nuclear non-proliferation in the region. So far, all but one of the proposed participants had agreed to attend. Pakistan would continue its efforts in that direction.

64. At the same time, Pakistan remained prepared to enter into bilateral negotiations with India on the non-proliferation issue. It was well known that Pakistan had made a series of bilateral proposals, including the simultaneous accession by Pakistan and India to the NPT or the acceptance by both of full-scope Agency safeguards. He hoped that those efforts would result in an equitable, non-discriminatory non-proliferation regime in the region.

65. As the Conference would recall, India and Pakistan had agreed, as a confidence-building measure, not to attack each other's nuclear facilities. He was pleased to report that that accord was being implemented through the exchange of lists of those facilities.

66. He recalled that, in the Board of Governors, his country had supported proposals put forward for the strengthening of safeguards. It was vital, however, that changes in the safeguards regime should not be politically motivated or inconsistent with existing safeguards agreements. The Agency, as a United Nations organization, should fully respect the sovereignty of all nations.

67. His country had also supported the Secretariat's proposals for improvements in the implementation of safeguards and hoped that those improvements would, as far as possible, be effected through greater efficiency and not through the diversion of resources from the equally vital objective of promoting the peaceful applications of nuclear technology. Pakistan was strongly in favour of a balance between the Agency's regulatory and promotional activities, which should be regarded as complementary.

68. Access to nuclear technology had often been denied to certain countries in the name of non-proliferation. Such measures were counterproductive: the cause of non-proliferation was better served by co-operation than by the denial of technology for peaceful programmes.

69. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992 had highlighted international concerns about environmental matters and adverse climatic changes. There was a growing awareness that the greater use of nuclear power could be vital in controlling the greenhouse effect. That and other positive developments had led to a resurgence of interest in many countries in nuclear power, and it was imperative that the benefits of that technology be made accessible to energy-starved countries of the Third World. The Agency had in the past sought a solution to the problem of financing nuclear power in capital-weak developing countries, and the time was now ripe to take a fresh look at that problem. It would also be helpful if the Agency could take concrete steps to promote the development of standardized medium-capacity nuclear power plants and to remove impediments to the transfer of nuclear technology to countries with nuclear power programmes that were subject to safeguards.

70. Nuclear material which was becoming available from the dismantling of nuclear arsenals could be turned into fuel for civil commercial nuclear power reactors under safeguards. The Agency should consider establishing a nuclear fuel bank, as provided for under Article IX of the Statute, to enable such materials to be used in the peaceful nuclear activities of Member States. His delegation would like a feasibility study to be made of that proposal.

71. He welcomed the programmes being undertaken by the Agency, in co-operation with Western countries, to upgrade the safety of nuclear power plants in East European countries. A similar initiative should be taken in respect of ageing nuclear power plants in developing countries.

72. With regard to the subject of an international nuclear safety convention, he wished to stress that, while there was a need for minimum binding international safety standards, nuclear safety was, and should remain, the responsibility of national regulatory authorities. The Agency's OSART, ASSET, WAMAP and other services could be of tremendous help to national regulators, and he encouraged Member States to make fuller use of them.

73. Turning to the Agency's financial difficulties, he welcomed the news that some countries had taken steps to pay off their arrears. The Agency's co-ordinated research programme had suffered badly during the financial crisis and he hoped that resources would be found for that programme.

74. Pakistan's nuclear programme had recently taken some major strides. In December 1991, Pakistan had signed an agreement with China for the supply of a 300 MW(e) reactor which would operate under Agency safeguards. The supply of that plant represented a milestone in south-south co-operation in the nuclear sphere. His country expected the Agency to take major initiatives to encourage north-south and south-south co-operation in the nuclear power and nuclear desalination programmes.

75. With technical assistance from the Agency, his country had upgraded a 5 MW research reactor which had been in operation since 1965. The power of the reactor had been increased to 10 MW and its fuel had been converted from high-enriched to low-enriched uranium. Most of the refurbishing effort had been undertaken locally, while the fuel had been fabricated in China. The upgraded reactor remained under Agency safeguards.

76. Pakistan's 137 MW(e) Karachi Nuclear Power Plant (KANUPP) was the second oldest CANDU reactor in operation in the world, having completed over two decades of safe operation. As a result of an Agency ASSET mission, the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission had decided to undertake a comprehensive long-term diagnostic programme to evaluate any inherent safety deficiencies of the plant. The Agency had approved a technical assistance project for the period 1991-94 to ensure the continued safe operation of the plant.

77. Pakistan had also continued to use radioisotopes and radiation sources in agriculture, medicine and industry. In agriculture, 18 varieties of field crops had been developed using induced mutations. In 1992, the National Institute for Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering had started functioning at a new complex in Faisalabad. Nine medical centres in Pakistan were using nuclear techniques in the diagnosis and therapy of malignant diseases and in 1992 had treated over 170 000 patients. Pakistan appreciated the role played by the RCA as a catalyst for south-south co-operation, especially in the areas of the industrial applications of radiation technology and nuclear medicine.

78. The Agency's achievements over the past 35 years were primarily due to the fact that, in fulfilling its mandate under the Statute, the Agency had been able to act independently. Pakistan was confident that the Agency would continue to perform its functions with the same independence in the future.

79. Mr. FERNANDEZ (Guatemala) welcomed the Agency's new Member States and expressed his satisfaction at the accession by China and France to the NPT.

80. Applications of nuclear energy were making a valuable contribution to Guatemala's development, through projects using nuclear techniques to promote improvements in the areas of health, technology and agriculture. At the same time, care was being taken to ensure adequate radiation protection of the population, the environment and workers who were occupationally exposed. The fact that the Secondary Standard Dosimetry Laboratory at the Guatemalan General Directorate for Nuclear Energy (DGEN) had become fully operational was an important development in that respect.

81. Guatemala was grateful to the Agency and to all those countries, particularly the United States of America and the United Kingdom, for the assistance which they had provided to it. His country fully supported and participated actively in the ARCAL programme, and he was pleased to report that the DGEN was being used for national and regional courses.

82. With regard to nuclear applications in the health sector, the purchase of a gamma camera with extrabudgetary resources made available by the United States would further improve the diagnostic imaging services provided to the population.

83. In the agricultural sector, nuclear techniques were being used in research on mutation breeding. Improved varieties of bean, which would provide the Guatemalan population with a staple foodstuff and thereby help to combat malnutrition, and early varieties of rice with physical resistance to pathogens were being bred for subsequent distribution to farmers.

84. In the area of nuclear analytical techniques, there had been many improvements in the infrastructure, and a programme for monitoring soil to determine natural background radioactivity had been established. Guatemala hoped, with the Agency's assistance, to set up a more comprehensive laboratory in the near future to provide support to private firms in elemental analysis and in certifying agricultural exports as free from radioactive contamination.

85. As to radiation protection, the highest priority was being given to training, the improvement of installations and the preparation of regulations. Licensing regulations governing radioisotopes and ionizing radiation had been signed by the Guatemalan President and would enter into force in the near future.

86. In 1992, his Government had started a radioactive waste management project with the aim of concentrating all spent radioactive sources and other radioactive waste in three specially designed facilities constructed in accordance with the recommendations made by various Agency expert missions, including WAMAP. The DGEN was also making every effort to survey all radioactive material used in Guatemala and to establish a national inventory of radiation sources and all equipment involving the use of ionizing radiation for medical, dental and industrial purposes.

87. In conclusion, he wished to pledge his Government's assessed share of the TACF target for 1993, a pledge which his country would make every effort to fulfil.

88. Mr. NGUYEN DONG HAI (Viet Nam) said he wished first to extend a warm welcome to the new Members of the Agency. Over the years, Viet Nam had received considerable assistance from the Agency through technical co-operation projects and research contracts. That assistance had had a marked impact on the development of nuclear science and technology in his

country and had stimulated progress in the application of nuclear techniques in such sectors as agriculture, industry, biology and medicine. As part of its action plan for 1992-93, Viet Nam was planning to implement various projects that would build on the progress achieved during the preceding five-year plan. It was also planning to carry out a comprehensive upgrading of the Da Lat reactor, which had been operating safely for 30 years. The 100 kCi irradiation facility in Hanoi would also be brought into operation after one year's test operation. Agency assistance would be vital to the success of those plans. Technology transfer could not be achieved effectively without international co-operation and it was essential that technology transfer be implemented on a non-discriminatory basis, particularly since it was the most effective way of promoting the advancement of developing countries.

89. In a desire to create a co-operative climate and political stability in the region, Viet Nam had explicitly demonstrated its commitment, within the framework of the Association of South-East Asian Nations, to the settlement of all conflicts and disagreements by peaceful negotiations and the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South-East Asia.

90. In response to the appeal issued by the recent United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, he joined others in urging developed countries to curb environmental pollution, which threatened to bring the earth to the verge of disaster. Nuclear power had emerged as a promising alternative energy source in the context of sustainable development. For that alternative to be viable, however, the Agency and its Member States had to solve the problems of nuclear safety, public acceptance, and waste disposal. Viet Nam had made great efforts to raise public awareness of the peaceful applications of nuclear energy by publicizing State-run projects and Agency technical co-operation projects. He hoped the Agency would continue to assist Viet Nam in absorbing advanced technology, since that was an effective way of convincing the public of the advantages of nuclear energy.

91. Viet Nam had a firm commitment to Agency safeguards. With respect to the strengthening of the safeguards system, he noted that safeguards and the NPT should be applied on a global basis and without discrimination, that vertical proliferation should be halted and nuclear tests banned, and that the

process of political democratization should be promoted so as to avoid a situation where countries might use their military or economic power to take advantage of an unstable world situation and force other countries to relinquish their own ideologies or political views. Viet Nam shared the legitimate concern of many Member States with respect to the problems of national sovereignty raised by the safeguards and safety issues, and urged the Agency to pay careful attention to those problems.

92. Mr. AALTO (Finland) said he wished to welcome Croatia, Slovenia and Uzbekistan as new Members of the Agency.

93. The past twelve months had been marked by intensive activity in the areas of nuclear safety and safeguards, as well as unprecedented financial problems. The Agency had had to learn to live with a shortfall in assessed contributions which had impaired its ability to fulfil its approved activities and compelled the Director General to make programme cuts of 13% in the current year. The same might be necessary in 1993. During the 1991 session of the General Conference, his country had proposed that, as a basis for the cuts, the programme should be reviewed and those parts which were of low priority should gradually be phased out. That task had now become even more urgent.

94. Nuclear safety was not simply a national matter but a subject of legitimate international concern, and the most important current endeavour in that field was the preparation of an international convention. Early agreement on the convention would be a major achievement. Member States held widely differing views on the content and scope of a convention, but they shared the same basic interests. Finland's view was that the essence of such a convention should be a commitment to internationally agreed safety principles. While primary responsibility for safety would rest with national organizations, jointly agreed principles would provide the necessary basis for national safety practices and improved quality control. The convention should also provide for suitable follow-up measures that would encourage regular contacts and transparency in the exchange of regulatory findings and operational data. Those elements were prerequisites for a credible and effective control system.

95. Thus far the work on the convention had addressed civilian activities only, as they offered the best chance of rapid progress. Yet the military use of nuclear energy also created safety concerns. The convention should include those issues, and, at the very least, should make a general reference to the importance of long-term safety aspects such as the management of wastes from military applications.

96. Significant progress was needed at the meeting of the group of experts in October if the momentum was to be maintained. A convention could not in itself guarantee the safety of nuclear energy, but it would be an important move in the right direction.

97. The safety of old reactors in Eastern and Central Europe was causing great concern. Every effort should be made to improve the safety of risk-prone reactors until they were shut down, including the backfitting of safety systems, the establishment of a sound legal and regulatory framework, and personnel training. Finnish organizations were already engaged in bilateral projects with Russian organizations for enhancing the safety of two nuclear power plants. At the multilateral level, his country was assisting with the implementation and financing of the necessary technical improvements. In that context, he welcomed the steps taken by the Group of 24 to improve the co-ordination of that assistance. A firm commitment on the part of recipient countries and the utilities concerned was a precondition for progress.

98. The assessments made of the status of the oldest WWER and RBMK reactors were good examples of the Agency's useful contribution to joint international efforts. The Agency could also play a role in the development of legal and regulatory structures for the Eastern and Central European countries.

99. Preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons was the main task of the parties to the NPT. Finland's goal for the 1995 NPT Review Conference was the indefinite extension of that Treaty. His country welcomed the accession of China and France to the Treaty and urged all countries which had not yet acceded to the NPT to do so in order to make the Treaty universal before the time came - in 1995 - for it to be extended. He welcomed the new safeguards agreements, notably with South Africa, Argentina and Brazil, the DPRK and Syria. Of special concern were the countries belonging to the Commonwealth of

Independent States. He noted with satisfaction Uzbekistan's accession to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State. Statements made in various international fora by representatives of Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan inspired the hope that they, too, would soon sign the NPT.

100. Some 50 countries had still not concluded safeguards agreements within the prescribed time limit. Safeguards agreements were not a mere formality, and he urged the countries in question to conclude the requisite agreements with the Agency without delay.

101. Progress in arms control and disarmament, including the Lisbon protocol on implementing the START treaty and various far-reaching unilateral nuclear disarmament commitments by both the United States and the Russian Federation, had enhanced prospects for an indefinite extension of the NPT. He noted with pleasure the co-operation between the Russian Federation and the United States on the commercial use of Russian highly enriched uranium in electricity production as it became redundant during the disarmament process.

102. In order to strengthen further the NPT regime by tightening export controls on sensitive material and equipment, Finland had, along with 26 other Agency Member States, committed itself earlier in the year to the guidelines for transfers of nuclear-related dual-use equipment, material and related technology. The principle of full-scope safeguards as a condition of supply had finally been established by a number of countries, including Finland. That should be recognized as a most important step towards strengthening the non-proliferation regime.

103. The Iraqi case had brought to light some serious shortcomings in the present safeguards system. While the Agency had performed its duties fully in accordance with existing rules and practices, it had been possible for Iraq to engage in activities aimed at developing nuclear weapons. He noted with satisfaction that certain proposals for the strengthening of safeguards had been approved by the Board of Governors, and he looked forward to further measures being taken. In that connection, his country intended to follow the Board's recommendation on the voluntary reporting of exports, imports and inventories of nuclear material and equipment. For safeguards to be credible and effective, the Agency must be able to make full use of the mandate given to it in the Statute and in safeguards agreements if circumstances so required.

104. The safeguards agreements concluded recently had created new obligations for the Agency. Also, recent technological and political developments were posing new challenges for the Agency at a time of budgetary constraints. Consequently, the safeguards system would have to be streamlined to enable the Agency to cope with the additional workload. As the Agency was simultaneously facing increasing demands and financial constraints, it must strive for improved quality and efficiency in all areas of its work and clear priorities should be set. Finland was prepared to contribute to these endeavours.

105. Mr. ETTINGER (Israel) said he wished to take the opportunity to congratulate Slovenia, Croatia and Uzbekistan on joining the Agency.

106. In the coming years, the problem of the world's increasing energy needs would pose a major challenge for the international community. Annual global electricity consumption was expected to double between 1990 and 2010, and much of that growth would occur in developing countries, where it was essential to ensure a reasonable standard of living. How could all that electricity be produced with minimum environmental impact? Reliance on fossil fuels could only exacerbate the already serious problem of pollution, with dire consequences for the health of the world's population.

107. Nuclear power was the only viable non-polluting method of electricity production. Construction of new nuclear power plants at the rate of 60 GW(e) a year could bring about a 38% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2010 in comparison with an all-coal system. Yet there was such prejudice and distrust regarding the safety of nuclear power that that option was not being considered seriously by planners. The Agency should do more to convince the public and policy-makers of the environmental merits of nuclear-produced electricity. The success of such a campaign would depend upon a dynamic approach being taken to reactor safety and waste disposal. It was not enough to quote repeatedly the statistics on so many reactor-years of operation without an accident, or to express the belief that a Chernobyl-type accident could not happen again. The main requirement was for safer nuclear power plant designs - high-temperature reactors and high-temperature gas-cooled reactors, for example - that incorporated the inherently safe features which had recently been proposed.

108. The issue of power reactor fuel cycles as a possible factor in nuclear weapons proliferation must also be tackled. Fuel cycle schemes designed to "denature" plutonium produced in natural or low-enriched uranium fuel had been proposed and should be thoroughly evaluated. Also, the public had to be convinced that safe, long-term solutions to the radioactive waste problem were really available.

109. Nuclear energy could also help solve the grave problem of water shortages in arid areas of the world. An increasing number of countries, particularly in the Middle East and Africa, were suffering from a shortage of potable water. Seawater desalination seemed the most promising solution to that problem for many countries. The Agency had been active in that area until 1977, at which time most desalination technologies were either not sufficiently mature or were expensive. Since then, however, considerable progress had been made, and large quantities of good quality desalinated water could now be produced at lower cost using reliable techniques such as reverse osmosis or evaporative desalination. In the last few years the Agency had renewed its activities, concentrating on feasibility studies of desalination plants run by nuclear power units. An Agency group of experts had prepared a document on the latest desalination technologies and their coupling to nuclear reactors. Further investigations of the potential and economics of constructing nuclear desalination units were in progress.

110. Israel had concentrated on the indigenous development of the evaporative desalination method and had acquired ten years of experience with a very large and modern desalination unit coupled to a power station, which had been designed, built and operated as a full-scale simulation of a nuclear desalination system.

111. His delegation recommended that the Agency's future work on desalination proceed along the following lines: first, the most promising combinations of types of nuclear power unit and desalination process should be identified for a variety of plant sizes and capacities; second, all significant parameters associated with those combinations should be optimized; and third, efforts should be made to encourage steam turbine manufacturers to provide large-size, back-pressure steam turbines suitable for operation with dual-purpose nuclear power and desalination plants.

112. His country felt that there was an urgent need to strengthen the international liability regime for nuclear damage and had played an active part in the Standing Committee on Liability for Nuclear Damage. It would continue to contribute to the Standing Committee's efforts to formulate a draft text of an amended Vienna Convention.

113. Israel had been following with interest work on the elaboration of a convention on nuclear safety that would require the parties to share their experience and knowledge and to consult each other on safety problems. However, it did not welcome the proposals made with a view to imposing peer reviews on States that would encompass all areas of nuclear activity and would pass judgement on national practices and authorities. Such a measure would be counterproductive, as would any attempt to include in the convention areas and activities for which no widely accepted standards existed and in which national practices varied significantly. A lack of standardization did not in itself imply a lack of safety. Arguments about whose practices were better would serve no purpose and could only increase disquiet among those whose distrust of nuclear technology was already strong.

114. A more practical approach would be to adopt a convention obliging States to observe general safety principles such as those recommended by INSAG and to create a network facilitating consultations and the sharing of experience. Moreover, since nuclear power plants were the primary issue of public concern and since there was a high degree of agreement on their basic safety requirements, it would be wise to restrict the convention at present to such plants. Many Member States had expressed similar views on the matter. Despite the present lack of consensus on the scope and content of the convention, he hoped that it would soon be concluded and that it would provide a useful tool for enhancing co-operation on nuclear safety throughout the world.

115. In conclusion, he wished to share his pleasure at the assistance rendered by the staff of the Israeli Atomic Energy Commission to the archeological community. Non-destructive testing techniques had been used routinely in the identification and cleanup of archeological objects and to investigate ancient metallurgical techniques. For example, neutron and gamma radiography

had been applied to numerous ritual artefacts dating from 6000 to 4000 BC. Gamma radiography had also been used to study ancient shipbuilding techniques and microfocus X-ray techniques had been employed to study previously unknown multilayer forging techniques used in the manufacture of a ceremonial sword from the biblical kingdom of Judea about 2600 years previously. Coming from a land in which the ancient and the modern were so intimately intertwined, he found the application of nuclear-based technologies to the study of cultural history particularly gratifying.

116. Mr. KIENER (Switzerland), after welcoming the Agency's new Member States, expressed his satisfaction with the accession of China, France and South Africa to the NPT and appealed to all Member States which had not yet done so to accede to the Treaty in the interests of its universality. He was also pleased to note the safeguards agreements concluded by the Agency with the DPRK, Argentina and Brazil.

117. The credibility of the NPT had been enhanced by the progress made by the United States and the Russian Federation in dismantling their nuclear arsenals and by the temporary discontinuation of certain nuclear tests. Non-proliferation was not without its problems, however, as was illustrated by the difficulties presented by the dismantling of thousands of nuclear warheads in the former Soviet Union and the monitoring of the storage and re-use of the fissile materials recovered. Several cases of trafficking in radioactive material with Eastern Europe had been publicized in the media in recent months.

118. In Iraq, despite the work of the United Nations Special Commission, it could not be claimed that the situation was now entirely free of danger. Without an integrated policy embracing the entire region, it was unlikely that political problems could be solved merely by intensifying vigilance.

119. With regard to the control of nuclear exports, major progress had been made early in the year. The Nuclear Suppliers Group had adopted a new regime for the control of dual-purpose nuclear equipment and material and had introduced a policy of requiring comprehensive safeguards as a condition for future nuclear supplies. In that connection, he encouraged all countries engaged in nuclear exports to abide by the previous and the new guidelines on nuclear transfers recently published by the Agency.

120. It was pleasing to note the steps taken in the past year to improve the effectiveness of the safeguards system, including the proposed modifications to the procedures for the declaration of and provision of design information on facilities. In contrast, the extension of verification procedures relating to nuclear material and exchanges of equipment seemed to enlarge the safeguards system without necessarily making it more effective. Those measures largely concerned NPT States and, on the whole, would serve merely to confirm known transactions or those which complied with the regulations in force rather than uncovering fraudulent transfers.

121. The Agency should work with countries possessing the necessary experience to explore ways of making safeguards more effective at no extra cost or at a lower cost. Asking SAGSI to offer suggestions was a step in the right direction, but interested countries should be given the opportunity to become more closely involved in its work. He therefore supported Japan's proposal to permit the participation of a number of additional governmental experts in SAGSI.

122. There was a need to define priorities for the implementation of safeguards by making a qualitative inventory of the characteristics of nuclear materials and technologies. Also, an analysis should be made of routine safeguards activities in order to classify them according to their potential effectiveness in detecting a diversion of nuclear materials. On the basis of the priorities thus established, it should be possible to devise a satisfactory system of routine safeguards combined with judiciously selected special inspections to create a flexible, reliable and efficient system. Moreover, the cost of safeguards activities should be commensurate with the expected non-proliferation benefits. That condition would not be fulfilled if comprehensive safeguards were applied in nuclear-weapon States.

123. In the past year, both the nuclear industry and governments had become more aware of the need for an international nuclear safety convention. While the work done so far on such a convention was to be commended, it was vital to specify which of the standards proposed called for absolute compliance. It was gratifying to note that good progress was being made with the new Basic Safety Standards for Radiation Protection, which were to be published the following year.

124. Switzerland supported the Agency in its role as the co-ordinator of measures to improve nuclear safety standards worldwide. It had provided financial and technical assistance for the Agency's programme on the safety of WWER-440/230 reactors and had also decided to contribute 200 000 Swiss francs to the Agency's study of the safety of RBMK reactors.

125. The operation of Swiss reactors had once again been entirely satisfactory from the point of view of both safety and electricity production. Nuclear power plants supplied 40% of the country's energy needs. Despite the 10-year moratorium on the construction of new plants, nuclear power continued to be strongly opposed, with heated discussions taking place whenever authorization was sought for the continued operation of an existing power plant or the siting of waste storage or disposal facilities. The public continued to have an irrational attitude to nuclear power, rejecting the means of production while none the less wanting the product. In order to reduce conflict and thereby extricate the country from its present political impasse, discussion groups had been started with participants representing the various parties concerned, including operators, ecological organizations, scientists, government authorities and officials from the particular cantons affected by waste storage and disposal plans.

126. Finally, he noted that there had been little improvement in the Agency's financial situation because of the late payment or non-payment of contributions. Although Member States were anxious to create a climate of material confidence in the nuclear sphere, when it came to providing the resources necessary for doing so they, quite illogically, suffered a failure of nerve. Not paying the assessed contribution in full was tantamount to depriving the Agency of the means of fulfilling its primary mission.

The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.