



GC

GC(40)/COM.5/OR.2
October 1996

GENERAL Distr.

Original: ENGLISH

International Atomic Energy Agency

GENERAL CONFERENCE

FORTIETH (1996) REGULAR SESSION

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

RECORD OF THE SECOND MEETING

Held at the Austria Center Vienna
on Tuesday, 17 September 1996, at 3.15 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. AYATOLLAHI (Islamic Republic of Iran)

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[*] GC(40)/22.

The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(40)/INF/13/Rev.2.

96-03401 (XXII)

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Abbreviations used in this record

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Basic Safety Standards | International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources |
| LDC | Least developed country |
| NEA | Nuclear Energy Agency (of OECD) |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| SAGTAC | Standing Advisory Group on Technical Assistance and Co-operation |
| TCDC | Technical co-operation among developing countries |
| TCF | Technical Co-operation Fund |
| Vienna Convention | Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage (May 1963) |

MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN NUCLEAR RADIATION AND WASTE SAFETY (GC(40)INF/4, 5, 9 and Add.1; GC(40)/COM.5/2, 3 and 11) (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to an additional draft resolution, contained in document GC(40)/COM.5/11, which had been submitted by Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 77.

2. He understood that informal consultations had taken place on the draft resolution contained in document GC(40)/COM.5/2 and invited one of the co-sponsors to report on developments since the previous meeting.

3. Mr. KOÇ (Turkey) said that additional consultations were needed to reconcile conflicting views and produce a text that would secure a consensus in the Committee. He requested that further discussion of the draft resolution be deferred until the next meeting.

4. It was so decided.

5. Mr. TWIST (Ireland), introducing the draft resolution contained in document GC(40)/COM.5/3 on behalf of the Member States of the European Union and other sponsors, said that it was a procedural draft resolution on the Convention on Nuclear Safety that followed on from resolution GC(39)/RES/13 adopted the previous year. The sponsors hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

6. Mr. FU Manchang (China) said that strict safety standards and effective disposal of radioactive waste constituted the basis for sustainable development and public acceptance of nuclear power. China would continue to support Agency action to strengthen international co-operation in that area. The forthcoming entry into force of the Convention on Nuclear Safety was a milestone in the promotion of a global nuclear safety culture and China would join the other Contracting Parties in ensuring its effective implementation.

7. Noting the vital importance of safe radioactive waste management for global environmental protection and the well-being of future generations, he welcomed the progress made by the open-ended group of experts in drafting a convention on the

subject. China had established a special expert panel to present its position at the proceedings and make recommendations on key aspects of the proposed convention. He urged other Member States to join in the drafting process so that an international convention acceptable to all could be completed as soon as possible. In that connection, he expressed support for the draft resolution contained in document GC(40)/COM.5/11.

8. Turning to the preparation, review and publication of safety-related documents, he noted that appropriate measures had to be taken to standardize and co-ordinate such documents in order to avoid duplication and promote consistency and said that commendable progress had been made by the Agency in that respect.

9. Mr. HAMADA (Tunisia) recalled that his Government had signed the Convention on Nuclear Safety in 1994 and that it supported the Agency's efforts to promote international co-operation in that area. The ratification process was under way and was expected to be completed in the near future. As to the revised Regulations for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Material, he welcomed their adoption by the Board of Governors.

10. Turning to the draft resolution contained in document GC(40)/COM.5/2, he said that he would state his position when an amended version had been submitted.

11. Mr. STRATFORD (United States of America) said that he was exceptionally pleased that the Convention on Nuclear Safety would enter into force in October 1996. For its part, his country hoped to complete the ratification process shortly. Expressing support for the draft resolution contained in document GC(40)/COM.5/3, he suggested that the date of the preparatory meeting of the Contracting Parties should be as close as possible to the April 1997 time limit to ensure a large attendance.

12. He commended the progress made by the open-ended group of experts in the drafting of a convention on the safety of radioactive waste management and thanked the Government of South Africa for its offer to host the fifth meeting of the group in November 1996. Turning to the draft resolution in document GC(40)COM.5/11, he said that it was useful for the General Conference to call for resolution of the outstanding

issues in a spirit of compromise. However, he noted that the open-ended group of experts was in the process of discussing whether irradiated spent fuel from nuclear power reactors should be included within the scope of the convention and pointed out that at the time that the group of experts had been established it had not been made clear whether the question of spent fuel should be covered or not. He wondered whether the fact that the draft resolution before the Committee did not mention spent fuel would in any way prejudice the outcome of the discussion in the group of experts on the convention's scope.

13. Mr. SCHMIDT (Austria) stressed that his country, which had no nuclear power plants, was particularly concerned about the safety of such plants in neighbouring countries and therefore warmly welcomed the forthcoming entry into force of the Convention on Nuclear Safety. It also commended the results of the informal meetings of signatory and other interested States, particularly the draft guidelines on national reporting and the review process. Austria hoped that agreement could be reached at the preparatory meeting of the Contracting Parties on the important issue of participation by countries in the review of national reports by nuclear operators in neighbouring States. His country was taking steps to ratify the Convention in time to participate in that meeting.

14. Turning to the convention on the safety of radioactive waste management, he said that he trusted that the open-ended group of experts would complete the drafting by the end of 1997. He thanked the Government of South Africa for offering to host the next meeting and for linking it with another scientific meeting on radioactive waste management, thereby providing an opportunity for more countries in that region to become involved in the drafting of the convention. As to the question of whether spent nuclear fuel fell within the scope of the proposed convention, Austria strongly believed that it did.

15. Mr. YAMANAKA (Japan) urged all Member States that had not yet done so to ratify the Convention on Nuclear Safety and expressed his full support for the draft resolution contained in document GC(40)/COM.5/3. As to the Standing Committee

on Liability for Nuclear Damage, he trusted that it would complete its work as soon as possible.

16. Mr. MANNINEN (Finland) said that his country, as an early ratifier of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, warmly welcomed its forthcoming entry into force and attached great importance to the proposed review process. During the preparation of that Convention, Finland had emphasized the importance of international conventions aimed at ensuring the safety of not only land-based civilian nuclear power plants, but also of other nuclear facilities. He therefore believed that every effort should be made to include all types of nuclear waste, regardless of origin, in the draft convention on the safety of radioactive waste management.

17. Turning to the establishment of the Department of Nuclear Safety, he said that it should be followed by further measures to strengthen the Agency's leading role in international co-operation in the area of nuclear and radiation safety.

18. As to the relationship between the Agency and national safety bodies, Finland believed that there was currently inadequate interaction as demonstrated by the lack of participation or low-key participation of Member States in the Agency's activities in the field of nuclear safety. Experts from Member States should therefore be more actively involved in the initial planning stages of the biennial safety programme rather than asked for comments after its establishment and the exchange of safety experts between the Agency and national bodies should be increased. In addition, the availability of qualified experts for Agency activities would be enhanced if notice of programme items such as technical meetings was provided prior to the establishment of national plans.

19. The Agency should also collaborate more closely on nuclear safety with other international bodies such as the Nuclear Energy Agency of the OECD and the European Union, which co-ordinated advanced safety research, relying on a small number of highly qualified participants who were often supported by separately allocated national resources. To ensure the effective transfer to all Member States of background information on the latest developments that would subsequently form the basis for

safety codes and guidelines, the Agency should seek to involve in its activities individuals who had prior experience of such work in other organizations.

20. Finally, he noted that as a result of the Agency's extensive work in assessing the safety of old nuclear power plants and making recommendations for improving their safety, the nuclear community had reached broad agreement on the most important measures and the order of priorities.

21. Mr. GONZALEZ (Director, Division of Radiation and Waste Safety), replying to the remarks made by the representative of Finland concerning the low-key participation of Member States in Agency meetings and his comment that Member States should be involved in the planning stage of the safety programme rather than after its elaboration, pointed out that, as indicated in paragraph 7 of document GC(40)/INF/5, the Department of Nuclear Safety had carried out discussions with experts designated by Member States, including Finland, on the 1997-98 programme being submitted to the General Conference for approval. All the recommendations for major changes made by the group of experts were described in paragraphs 6, 7, 8 and 9 of document GC(40)/10. As to collaboration with other international bodies, in particular the OECD's Nuclear Energy Agency, he said that the Agency was responsible for establishing and applying standards of safety in collaboration with other specialized agencies. Each time the Secretariat initiated the preparation of a set of safety standards, it invited other specialized agencies to co-sponsor its work. The Basic Safety Standards, for example, had been co-sponsored by the NEA. Collaboration with other international agencies, in particular the NEA, was in fact excellent.

22. Mr. TITKOV (Russian Federation) said that there had been a broad international response to the Moscow Summit on Nuclear Safety and Security convened on the initiative of President Boris Yeltsin in April 1996. Foremost among the issues discussed were the safety of global nuclear power development and the safe disposal of radioactive waste. He trusted that the Agency would act on the recommendation by the participants in the Summit that there should be wide involvement of international organizations in that area.

23. Having expressed support for the draft resolution contained in document GC(40)/COM.5/3, he said that the forthcoming entry into force of the Convention on Nuclear Safety was an important stage in the process of improving existing international legal regimes for the regulation of nuclear activities. His country had signed the Convention and initiated its practical implementation in April 1996. The Russian Federation also attached great importance to the drafting of a convention on the safety of radioactive waste management, which it hoped would be completed in the near future.

24. He was satisfied with the progress made to date by the Standing Committee on Liability for Nuclear Damage in revising the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage and in preparing a convention on supplementary funding for compensation of nuclear damage. The Russian Federation had signed the Vienna Convention and was preparing to submit it to the Federal Assembly.

25. Finally, he expressed support for the Agency's work on the preparation of safety standards and safety-related documents and noted that the revised version of the Regulations for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Material adopted by the Board of Governors at its last series of meetings would substantially enhance the safety of such transports.

26. Mr. MULTONE (Switzerland) welcomed the progress achieved in the drafting of a convention on the safety of radioactive waste management and said that he was confident that the final version would be completed by spring 1997. For its part, Switzerland considered that the convention should cover the safety of spent fuel elements whose further use had not been decided or which were awaiting reprocessing.

27. As to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, his country had ratified it on 22 August 1996 and welcomed its forthcoming entry into force.

28. Mr. DUFVA (Sweden) joined previous speakers in welcoming the entry into force of the Convention on Nuclear Safety in October 1996 and said that he hoped that as many Member States as possible would ratify it in time for the first review

meeting. Sweden looked forward to attending the preparatory meeting of the Contracting Parties to be held by April 1997 and trusted that the decisions at that meeting would pave the way for constructive and effective review meetings.

29. Turning to the draft convention on the safety of radioactive waste management, he said that its scope should be as broad as possible, including both spent fuel and radioactive waste resulting from military operations. His country strongly supported the work of the open-ended group of experts and hoped that it would be concluded in time for the convening of a diplomatic conference in 1997.

30. Mr. RAGHURAMAN (India), having stressed the priority that his country attached to the Agency's nuclear, radiation and waste safety programme, noted that India had signed the Convention on Nuclear Safety and was currently in the process of ratifying it.

31. In view of the importance of an internationally endorsed approach to the safe management of radioactive waste, India had been actively participating in the drafting of a convention on the safety of radioactive waste management. As his country's nuclear power programme was based on a closed fuel cycle, India could not agree to the inclusion of spent fuel in such a convention. It viewed spent fuel as a resource rather than as waste. On the other hand, the convention should certainly cover radioactive waste resulting from military operations, which had to date been largely responsible for most of the environmental degradation and other adverse phenomena recorded on a global scale.

32. Mr. POSTA (Hungary) appreciated the Agency's efforts to strengthen international co-operation in nuclear, radiation and waste safety and welcomed the entry into force of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, which Hungary had already ratified.

33. Good progress had also been made in the elaboration of a convention on the safety of radioactive waste management, which Hungary hoped would soon be concluded. In drafting the convention, it was important to ensure broad scope and at the same time wide acceptance.

34. The recent developments in the revision of the Vienna Convention were promising and advances had been made in the elaboration of a supplementary funding convention. However, a compromise was needed in the financing arrangements to allow for a phasing-in system in the Vienna Convention and a general contribution to the supplementary funding scheme which would differentiate between those States with nuclear power plants and those without. The supplementary fund should also be accessible to all victims and not exclude those in the State in which the accident took place. Despite the problems still to be solved, it was to be hoped that the Standing Committee on Liability for Nuclear Damage would successfully conclude its activities and that a diplomatic conference could take place in 1997.

35. Mr. AAKRE (Norway), referring to document GC(40)/COM.5/11, agreed with the representative of the United States that the draft resolution's failure to mention spent fuel might prejudice the discussions taking place in the open-ended group of legal and technical experts. He would therefore like mention to be made of spent fuel.

36. Mr. PAPANIMITROPOULOS (Greece), having noted the high priority attached by his country to the question of nuclear safety and the importance of international co-operation in that area, said that Greece, having been one of the first to sign the Convention on Nuclear Safety, was now in the process of ratifying it. He appealed to all Member States that had not yet done so to become parties to the Convention.

37. Greece was participating fully in the work of the expert group set up to draft a convention on the safety of radioactive waste. He hoped that the next meeting, to be held in South Africa, would reach a final conclusion so that a diplomatic conference could be convened as soon as possible. As to the convention's scope, he believed that it should include spent fuel that had not yet reached reprocessing facilities.

38. Turning to the question of nuclear liability, he said that Greece was also participating actively in the work of the legal expert group set up to consider the question of liability for nuclear damage and was particularly interested not only in the revision of the Vienna Convention, but also in the conclusion of a supplementary funding convention.

39. Mr. LABROSSE (France), having welcomed the establishment of the new Department of Nuclear Safety, said that France, which had played a very active role in the drafting of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, had already ratified the Convention and called upon other States to do likewise.

40. He welcomed the progress made by the Standing Committee on Liability for Nuclear Damage, but warned that there were still some unresolved problems related to supplementary funding that needed to be settled before a date for a diplomatic conference was fixed.

41. In the light of the very recent informal discussions on the convention on the safety of radioactive waste management, it was evident that the question of spent fuel was still a cause of concern to some Member States. He was nevertheless optimistic that agreement could be reached and that the draft resolution contained in document GC(40)/COM.5/11 would serve to encourage the work of the open-ended group.

42. Mr. ORLINSKI (Poland) welcomed the entry into force of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, which it had already ratified, and looked forward to the meeting of the Contracting Parties. His country also attached great importance to the question of nuclear liability, and was grateful to the Standing Committee for its work and the detailed documentation that had been provided.

43. Mr. QUAYES (Bangladesh), noting that Bangladesh was one of the 25 States that had ratified the Convention on Nuclear Safety, said that since the enactment of its Nuclear Safety and Radiation Control Law in 1993, his country had intensified its nuclear safety and radiation control activities and drafted nuclear regulations in line with the Agency's Basic Safety Standards. It was also in the process of strengthening the infrastructure and developing the necessary human resources. Turning to the draft resolution contained in document GC(40)/COM.5/3, he said that he particularly welcomed its operative paragraph 3 in which the Agency proposed to provide support to the Contracting Parties in preparation for implementation of the Convention.

44. Bangladesh also supported the draft resolution contained in document GC(40)/COM.5/11 on measures to strengthen international co-operation in nuclear, radiation and waste safety.

45. Mr. HULSE (United Kingdom), referring to the draft resolution contained in document GC(40)/COM.5/11, said that his delegation could accept it on the understanding that its aim was to encourage the group's work rather than to discuss the substance of any of the outstanding issues.

46. Mr. OKONKWO (Nigeria) said that, having already spoken on the agenda item under discussion, he merely wished to express support for the draft resolution contained in document GC(40)/COM.5/11, which had not been available earlier. While appreciating the views expressed by some delegations, he hoped that the final version submitted to the Conference for adoption would remain focused and encourage swift progress in the discussions of the open-ended group of legal and technical experts.

47. Mr. MAFFEI (Argentina), adding to the statement he had delivered at the previous meeting, pointed out that his country had always supported the work on the Convention on Nuclear Safety. It was actively involved in the working group on its implementation and fully supported the draft resolution contained in document GC(40)/COM.5/3.

48. Mr. BOSMAN (Netherlands), referring to the draft resolution contained in document GC(40)/COM.5/11 and the comments made by certain representatives regarding the possible inclusion of spent fuel in the convention, said that that was a matter for further discussions in the open-ended group of legal and technical experts. However, he shared the concern expressed by the representative of the United States that the wording of the draft resolution should not be regarded as in any way prejudicing the outcome of those discussions.

49. Mr. KEMPEL (Austria), referring to operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution contained in document GC(40)/COM.5/3, endorsed the comment made by the representative of the United States in the morning's meeting that the preparatory meeting should be convened as close as possible to the April 1997 deadline in order

to ensure wide participation. Fixing the date of the meeting as late as possible would also provide an incentive for speeding up the relevant national ratification procedures.

50. The CHAIRMAN suggested that operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution in document GC(40)/COM.5/3 be amended to indicate that the preparatory meeting should be held "at the latest possible date to be agreed upon but not later than April 1997".

51. Mr. LABROSSE (France), supported by Mr. PETROV (Bulgaria), Mr. QUAYES (Bangladesh) and Mr. MANNINEN (Finland), pointed out that, while he had taken note of the comments made, the deadline for the holding of the preparatory meeting was set in the Convention itself and the Agency should not be encouraged to hold its meetings as late as possible. A number of countries had made special efforts to complete the ratification process in a timely fashion and delaying the meeting would hardly encourage other States to speed up their ratification process. It therefore seemed inappropriate to amend the text of the draft resolution.

52. Mr. KAYSER (Luxembourg) noted that a State's accession to the Convention on Nuclear Safety only became effective on the ninetieth day after the date of deposit of its instrument of ratification. In other words, a State had to ratify the Convention by the end of December 1996 in order to be able to participate in the preparatory meeting.

53. Mr. DUERDEN (Australia) agreed with the representative of Luxembourg and added that Article 21 of the Convention on Nuclear Safety indicated that the preparatory meeting of Contracting Parties should be held not later than six months after the date of entry into force of the Convention. As the Convention would enter into force on 24 October 1996, the deadline for the preparatory meeting was in fact 23 April 1997. He would be in favour of holding the meeting as close as possible to that deadline.

54. Mr. RICHARDSON (United States of America) clarified that his delegation did not intend that the wording of the draft resolution should be changed, but merely

wanted the Secretariat to take note of the desirability of holding the preparatory meeting as late as possible in order to permit the maximum participation.

55. The CHAIRMAN took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the Conference that it take note of the information contained in documents GC(40)/INF/4, 5 and 9, with the hope in the latter case that the Standing Committee on Liability for Nuclear Damage would conclude its work early in 1997. He further took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the Conference that it adopt the draft resolutions contained in documents GC(40)/COM.5/3 and 11.

56. It was so decided.

57. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee revert to its consideration of the draft resolution contained in document GC(40)/COM.5/2 at a later stage following further informal consultations by the co-sponsors.

58. It was so decided.

STRENGTHENING OF THE AGENCY'S TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION ACTIVITIES (GC(40)/5 and GC(40)/COM.5/4)

59. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to document GC(40)/5, which contained a report by the Director General on the strengthening of the Agency's technical co-operation activities that had been submitted pursuant to General Conference resolution GC(39)/RES/14 and document GC(40)/COM.5/4, which contained a draft resolution submitted by Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 77.

60. Ms. HASAN (Pakistan), introducing the draft resolution which had been submitted by Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 77, said that the issue had been discussed in detail within the Group of 77 and that the resolution reflected the great importance which the Group attached to the Agency's technical assistance activities.

61. Mr. OKONKWO (Nigeria) noted with satisfaction that SAGTAC had been able to meet twice since its establishment by the Director General and said he hoped that the Director General would continue to give all necessary assistance to SAGTAC

in order to facilitate the early elaboration of a strategic plan for the Department of Technical Co-operation. He felt sure that the Agency's technical co-operation activities would be strengthened by the proposals which SAGTAC would put forward.

62. He also welcomed the various initiatives taken by the Secretariat to enhance technical co-operation among the developing countries, such as increased use of experts from the developing countries. The fact that 1995 had seen the highest programme delivery ever was a positive development, attributable in part to the careful use of overprogramming.

63. In conclusion, he associated himself with the draft resolution contained in document GC(40)/COM.5/4, which stressed the importance of the transfer of nuclear technology to the developing countries to enhance their scientific and technological capabilities and generate rapid economic development.

64. Mr. Chan Ho HA (Republic of Korea), having supported the draft resolution in document GC(40)/COM.5/4, commended the Department of Technical Co-operation for the excellent work it had done in 1995 and, in particular, for the unprecedented high implementation rate. He endorsed the Secretariat's actions and initiatives to strengthen the Agency's technical co-operation activities, in particular the establishment of SAGTAC and the promotion of technical co-operation among developing countries, which aimed at encouraging self-reliance and the sharing of common experience among Member States with a similar level of development. He also welcomed the successful implementation of such key activities as Model Projects, Country Programme Frameworks and thematic planning.

65. Since the success of technical co-operation activities was dependent on the availability of resources, adequate and stable funding was highly important. It was therefore encouraging that the downward trend in the resources of the TCF in recent years had improved and he thanked Member States for the co-operation they had shown in that regard, which he hoped would continue.

66. As a country which had benefited tremendously from the Agency's technical co-operation programme, the Republic of Korea wished to contribute to the

advancement of nuclear technology by participating actively in technical co-operation activities. His country would be establishing an international nuclear training centre with a view to sharing the technical expertise it had accumulated in the design, construction, operation and maintenance of nuclear power plants with other Member States by hosting various Agency training courses and scientific visits. It would also continue to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy throughout the world.

67. Mr. HERRERA ANDRADE (Mexico) welcomed the follow-up measures which had been implemented pursuant to the resolution adopted by the previous General Conference and the new initiatives which had been undertaken, in particular the establishment of SAGTAC.

68. With respect to paragraphs 11 and 17 of the report contained in document GC(40)/5, he agreed that it was likely that new sources of funding could be found for technical co-operation activities and he urged the Agency to intensify its efforts in that direction.

69. Paragraph 50 of the report mentioned the electronic submission of technical co-operation project requests from Member States. That initiative would be very useful and the possibility of a similar arrangement for the forms for fellowships, scientific visits and training courses should be looked into. The improvement in communications and the flow of information which had been achieved via the use of the Internet, as mentioned in paragraph 51, was also a welcome development. The Agency should also continue with the expansion of electronic communication with other organizations and Member States envisaged in the 1995-96 technical co-operation information technology plan. However, the wide use of electronic communication should not be limited to the Department of Technical Co-operation, but should extend to the other Departments of the Agency. It would be very useful if the many working documents which were circulated between the Agency and Member States were available in electronic form.

70. Expressing support for the concepts of partnership in development and TCDC, he said that Mexico would continue to co-operate with the Agency, making available

its experts, providing individual or group training opportunities, and participating in activities which came within the Agency's field of competence.

71. Mr. MAHMOUD (Iraq) commended the steps taken to strengthen technical co-operation activities, in particular the Model Project initiative and welcomed the overall improvement in the co-ordination of technical co-operation activities. However, he regretted the continued imbalance between the Agency's promotional and safeguards activities and noted that resources for the latter were being increased, while those for the former were being maintained at the same level despite their crucial importance.

72. Iraq was grateful for the assistance provided to it by the Agency in the fields of agriculture, desalination, nuclear medicine and various humanitarian projects, but noted that priority was not being given to Iraq in technical co-operation activities despite the severe difficulties facing Iraq as a result of the embargo imposed by the United States.

73. Mr. FU Manchang (China) noted that, under its Statute, the Agency was entrusted with the task of promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for the welfare of humanity and that for many years the Agency had promoted the economic development of developing countries through its technical co-operation programme. Since the economic development and social progress of the developing countries would promote global economic development and provide a foundation for more widespread international co-operation and trade, the strengthening of technical co-operation was in the common interest of all Member States.

74. The Director General's report in document GC(40)/5 reflected the developments which had taken place since the preceding year's General Conference in the technical co-operation area. Encouraging progress had been made in such fields as radiation protection and the safety of radioactive waste, Model Projects, Country Programme Frameworks, thematic planning and special training programmes. Those initiatives constituted a fitting response to the resolutions of the preceding General Conference aimed at improving the capabilities of the developing countries in the field of the

peaceful use of nuclear technology. They also constituted a significant contribution to the goal of achieving sustainable economic development.

75. While he welcomed the improvements in technical co-operation management that had resulted in a record implementation rate in 1995, he noted that technical co-operation activities still faced several constraints, the most important of which was funding. The situation of the TCF had improved somewhat in 1995, but there were still problems. He therefore urged all Member States, and in particular those which were not experiencing serious economic difficulties, to pay their contributions to the Fund in time and in full. In the light of the increase in the total resources available for technical co-operation from \$8.6 million in 1979 to \$63 million in 1995, he considered that funding for promotional activities, in particular technical co-operation management funds, should be increased in the Regular Budget.

76. In conclusion, he expressed his support for the proposed draft resolution.

77. Mr. CASTERTON (Canada) said that his country remained very supportive of the partnership strategy which the Agency had adopted for its technical co-operation activities. With the introduction of the Model Project concept, the Agency was in a position to make a real contribution to national development. He looked forward to the completion of one of the Model Projects so that that contribution could be properly demonstrated.

78. Canada appreciated the efforts that were being made to improve the management of technical co-operation. Although the Director General's report provided details on a number of initiatives, it did not address an important matter which was mentioned in the Technical Co-operation Report for 1995 contained in document GC(40)/INF/3. With respect to the interregional Model Project on upgrading radiation and waste safety infrastructures, it was stated in paragraph 121 of that document that the successful management of that initiative would require the designation of a clearly identifiable single focal point for the project. He wondered whether the Secretariat felt that that should be a general requirement for the management of technical co-operation activities.

79. As to the funding of technical co-operation, his delegation continued to believe that if the Agency wished to increase the funds available, it was essential that there be a broader base of contributors to the TCF.

80. Mr. HAMADA (Tunisia), having endorsed the draft resolution submitted by Pakistan, congratulated the Agency on its technical co-operation activities and, in particular, welcomed the introduction of Model Projects, one of which was being implemented in Tunisia, and the establishment of SAGTAC. With respect to TCDC, Tunisia had reached a high level of development in the field of radiation protection with the Agency's support and, as a result, it had been able to receive Agency fellowship holders in Tunisian institutions.

81. Ms. BATACLAN (Philippines) said that despite the many initiatives taken following the resolution which had been passed by the General Conference in 1995 and the successful implementation of the Agency's technical co-operation activities during the past year, it was still worth submitting a draft resolution on the subject as there was always room for improvement.

82. The recipient countries were aware of the role they had to play in strengthening technical co-operation activities. Paragraph 3 of document GC(40)/INF/3 underlined the importance of the involvement of recipient countries in technical co-operation activities, a position which her delegation naturally shared. She also endorsed the comment which had been made by the representative of Canada regarding the need for national focal points in countries and stressed the need to integrate technical co-operation in national development. It was also important that all countries should pledge and pay their contributions to the TCF.

83. Mr. KHALILOPOUR (Islamic Republic of Iran) thanked the staff of the Department of Technical Co-operation for their contribution in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear technology in developing countries and endorsed the draft resolution which had been submitted by the delegation of Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 77.

84. Mr. STUB (Norway), having stressed the importance of the issue, said that while he was happy overall with the draft resolution which had been submitted by the

delegation of Pakistan, he felt that some improvements could be made. For instance, in view of the length and complexity of operative paragraph 2, it might be better to delete the last five words, "and at achieving sustainable development", and insert a new operative paragraph which might read:

"Emphasizes that these programmes should contribute to achieving sustainable development in developing countries".

85. Mr. DUERDEN (Australia) commended the Agency's efforts to improve the quality of its technical co-operation activities through such initiatives as the development of Model Projects and the establishment of SAGTAC. Those initiatives should help enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of technical co-operation activities by increasing their relevance, impact and sustainability which, in turn, should benefit the whole programme. However, those reforms were only initial steps and more still needed to be done. He also agreed that the measures to improve the technical co-operation programme were a key means by which the Agency might secure further support for its technical co-operation activities. In particular, he welcomed the recent evaluation of the approach used for and the progress achieved in preparing the Country Programme Frameworks, which had been conducted by a team of external and internal experts. Evaluations of that kind were an essential part of the efforts to improve performance and effectiveness. The projects financed from the TCF should be developmentally sound and responsive to the needs of recipient Member States. He also noted that Australia had been collaborating with the Department of Technical Co-operation on improving the quality of country programming and project development and, subject to competing priorities, would continue to do so.

86. Finally, he endorsed the proposed amendment to the draft resolution which had been put forward by the representative of Norway, and suggested that the current operative paragraph 3 could also be clarified by the addition of the phrase ", with regard to TCDC activities," before the word "encourage".

87. Mr. RAGHURAMAN (India) welcomed the progress made by the Department of Technical Co-operation in strengthening the Agency's technical

co-operation activities, in particular the establishment of SAGTAC and the new developments relating to TCDC, and said he hoped that the strengthening process would continue in future years. The Secretariat should make every effort to enhance the peaceful use of nuclear technology for sustainable development, bearing in mind the special need for increased assistance to LDCs not only in such areas as water resources and sea water desalination, measures against desertification, the rehabilitation of arid and semi-arid zones, the use of the sterile-insect technique, food irradiation and radiation safety, but also in the harnessing of nuclear energy for electricity generation.

88. He was pleased that the Model Project concept had been further strengthened and noted that the Partner in Development concept would help the developing countries enhance the capability of their national institutions to define, organize and manage the application of nuclear technology for sustainable human development. He welcomed the fact that, as part of the thematic planning process, the Department of Technical Co-operation and the Division of Nuclear Installation Safety had joined forces to establish radiation and waste safety infrastructures in certain countries which had not yet met the Basic Safety Standards. The Department of Technical Co-operation and the Division of Nuclear Power and the Fuel Cycle should also collaborate on the introduction and development of nuclear power in developing countries, since energy was the ultimate key to progress.

89. He called upon Member States and the Secretariat to find a solution to the problem of providing assured and predictable resources for the technical co-operation programme. He welcomed the news that the Ambassador of South Africa had agreed to chair the working group which had been established to look into that problem and wished her success. It was imperative that a balance be maintained between the Agency's promotional and non-promotional activities. In addition, more experts should be engaged from the developing countries, more equipment procured from them, and more training courses conducted in them.

90. In conclusion, he associated himself with the draft resolution which had been submitted by the representative of Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 77.

91. Mr. HULSE (United Kingdom) expressed support for the Australian amendment.

92. Mr. PAPADIMITROPOULOS (Greece), having noted that his country benefited from the Agency's technical assistance programmes and at the same time helped provide scientific facilities to train scientists from developing countries, endorsed the resolution put forward by Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 77, with the amendments suggested by Norway and Australia.

93. Ms. BATACLAN (Philippines), recalling her earlier statement, said she also had no problem with the two amendments proposed by Norway and Australia.

94. Mr. QUAYES (Bangladesh) suggested that in addition to the deletion of the last five words proposed by Norway, certain editorial changes should be made to operative paragraph 2 in order to improve its clarity. He suggested that the paragraph be reworded slightly to read:

"Requests the Director General to pursue efforts to strengthen the technical co-operation activities of the Agency through the development of effective programmes aimed at improving the scientific and technological capabilities of developing countries, in consultation with Member States, and taking into consideration the respective level and infrastructure of technology of the countries concerned, in the fields of peaceful applications of nuclear energy, including both the applications of nuclear methods and techniques and the production of electricity;"

95. Mr. KEMPEL (Austria) and Mr. OKONKWO (Nigeria) supported the amendment proposed by the representative of Bangladesh.

96. Mr. GREGORIČ (Slovenia), having expressed support for the draft resolution put forward by Pakistan and the modifications proposed by Norway and Australia, said he supported the Agency's efforts to strengthen technical co-operation activities as reported in document GC(40)/5. His country had benefited greatly from the Agency's technical co-operation in the past and was now, thanks to its development in the nuclear field, in a position to share its expertise with other Member States.

97. Mr. EL-SAIEDI (Director, Division of Technical Co-operation Implementation), replying to the point raised by the representative of Canada regarding the need for a focal point, said that focal points were a spin-off of Model Projects. Improving radiation protection in a country, for example, involved many bodies within that country. The management approach adopted was to define a clear action plan, to be agreed between the Member State and the Agency, to ensure implementation as foreseen. It was therefore important to have a focal point, nominated by the country, for communication between the Agency and all the parties concerned within the country. There were, of course, other projects which were not so complex and in each case the Secretariat endeavoured to set up a management scheme appropriate to the project concerned with a view to ensuring its success.

98. The CHAIRMAN asked the Committee whether it could accept the following amended wording for operative paragraph 2:

"Requests the Director General to pursue efforts to strengthen the technical co-operation activities of the Agency through the development of effective programmes aimed at improving the scientific and technological capabilities of developing countries, in consultation with Member States, and taking into consideration the infrastructure and the level of technology of the countries concerned, in the fields of peaceful applications of nuclear energy, including both the applications of nuclear methods and techniques and the production of electricity;"

99. He further asked the Committee whether it could accept the following wording for a new operative paragraph 3:

"Emphasizes that these programmes should contribute to achieving sustainable development in developing countries;"

100. Finally, he asked the Committee whether it could accept the following amended wording for operative paragraph 3:

"Further requests the Director General to follow up actions on initiatives mentioned in his report and with regard to TCDC activities to encourage developing countries to provide more experts, training and equipment;"

with appropriate renumbering of that and subsequent paragraphs.

101. Mr. RAGHURAMAN (India) supported the amendments to the draft resolution as read out by the Chairman.

102. Mr. JAMEEL (Pakistan), having also supported the proposed amendments, said, in response to a request by the representative of Brazil for clarification of original operative paragraph 4, that the view of the General Conference referred to was that Member States should pledge their respective share of the target and make the payment as pledged. Furthermore, he pointed out that the language of that operative paragraph was based on that of the resolution adopted the previous year on that issue.

103. Mr. OURO-PRETO (Brazil) said it was his delegation's understanding that payment to the TCF was not a condition for the delivery of technical co-operation.

104. Mr. DUERDEN (Australia), while agreeing to the wording of the original operative paragraph 4, recalled that all Member States, including those which received technical assistance, should pledge and pay their contributions to the TCF in full and urged all Member States to do so.

105. The CHAIRMAN took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the draft resolution contained in document GC(40)/COM.5/4 as amended during the discussion.

106. It was so decided.

PLAN FOR PRODUCING POTABLE WATER ECONOMICALLY (GC(40)/4 and Add.1)

107. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to document GC(40)/4, which contained the Director General's report on the subject to the Board and the General Conference, and the Addendum thereto, which contained an update on the progress since the June Board.

108. Mr. TERIGI (Argentina) reiterated his country's support for the programme to produce potable water economically, which was being developed most efficiently. In particular, he welcomed the completion of the options identification programme. In view of their importance for many countries, nuclear desalination studies should be

given the necessary priority. His delegation therefore supported the setting up of an advisory group and offered the services of Argentine experts for that group.

109. Mr. ABDEL HAMID (Egypt) expressed satisfaction with the work done by the Agency regarding the desalination of sea water. The activities and studies carried out over the past two years had identified several solutions to the problem, which Egypt felt should be given appropriate priority.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.