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President: Mr. PADOLINA (Philippines)

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Abbreviations used in this record

AFRA	African Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARCAL	Regional Co-operative Arrangements for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
Basic Safety Standards	International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources
CANDU	Canada deuterium-uranium [reactor]
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review and Extension Conference	Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
OAU	Organization of African Unity
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
R&D	Research and development
SAGTAC	Standing Advisory Group on Technical Assistance and Co-operation
TCDC	Technical co-operation among developing countries
TCF	Technical Co-operation Fund

GENERAL DEBATE AND ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1995 (GC(40)/8) (resumed)

1. Mr. AHMAD (Pakistan), after welcoming the Republic of Moldova as a member of the Agency, pointed out that it was 100 years since the nuclear age had begun with the discovery of radioactivity. Fifty years later, the discovery of nuclear fission had opened new avenues for both the destructive and constructive uses of nuclear energy. Regrettably, the immense might of the atom had been used first for destructive purposes, and only later harnessed for constructive ends. Fortunately, there were signs that lessons were being drawn from past mistakes - albeit belatedly - and that the threat was diminishing.

2. Pakistan supported all the efforts made to achieve the objectives of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. It believed that the competent authorities of the United Nations should have the means to tackle such problems, and regretted that the Conference on Disarmament had been unable to submit to the United Nations a consensus text for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Pakistan supported the objectives of the Treaty, which would only come into being if all countries which had a nuclear capability acceded to it.

3. Pakistan wished to see the whole world, and in particular its own region of South Asia, free of nuclear weapons. It was encouraged by the progress made in recent years to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in different parts of the world, an objective that Pakistan had been advocating at the United Nations General Assembly since 1972. Pakistan had made a number of other proposals and was willing to enter into bilateral negotiations with its neighbour on any fair and equitable proposal for establishing a non-proliferation regime that would ensure peace and stability in the region.

4. While international agreements imposed certain restrictions, surveillance and verification mechanisms were equally important. In that context, the Agency's safeguards system had been notably successful. Safeguards had failed only rarely in almost 40 years of existence, but the unfortunate publicity resulting from those failures had eroded public confidence in a system that functioned remarkably well. Naturally,

any system could be improved, and Pakistan supported the efforts to strengthen the effectiveness and improve the efficiency of safeguards. Programme 93+2 was a step in that direction. However, it would be necessary to give careful consideration to the outstanding issues and employ an acceptable methodology. The important thing was to take time to analyse all the Programme's implications in order to avoid the risk of its implementation being delayed by conflicting interpretations of the new shared obligations. Programme 93+2 was intended for countries which had concluded INFCIRC/153-type safeguards agreements with the Agency and the proposals to extend the Programme to countries without comprehensive safeguards agreements were contrary to the spirit of the Programme.

5. Safeguards and non-proliferation were only one aspect of the nuclear issue. An equally, if not more, important issue mentioned specifically in the Agency's Statute was the promotion of the peaceful uses of atomic energy. The most significant contribution that nuclear technology could make to global peace and development was to enhance the security of energy supplies for developing countries that were deficient in fuel. Nuclear power accounted for approximately one sixth of world electricity production, but only a very small fraction was produced in the Third World, where sustainable energy supply systems were urgently needed. In that regard, it was important to win the public understanding and support that were indispensable to all areas of science and technology, and particularly in the field of nuclear energy. The effective role played by Mr. Hans Blix as ambassador for nuclear energy was well known, particularly in its economic and ecological dimensions. It was now up to the scientists, engineers, managers and planners in the Agency and its Member States to try to give the public a fair and accurate idea of the many and varied benefits that could stem from the peaceful exploitation of nuclear energy, not only for electricity production, but also for desalination. It was encouraging to note the renewed interest on the part of the Agency and some Member States in small and medium power reactors designed for that purpose. Pakistan had participated actively in that discussion and would continue to support the action taken by the Secretariat.

6. Nuclear energy carried a heavy legacy as a result of Hiroshima and Chernobyl, the first of which called for safeguards, non-proliferation and disarmament measures, and the second for measures to improve the safety of nuclear facilities. Pakistan attached high priority to the safety of nuclear facilities and had derived great benefit from the expertise made available through the Agency. The international Convention on Nuclear Safety would soon enter into force, and he hoped that the Agency would ensure the fullest possible exchange of safety-related information and expertise, as stipulated in the Convention. Pakistan would ratify the Convention as soon as the necessary legislative and administrative procedures had been completed.

7. The Agency's promotional activities were best reflected in its technical co-operation programme. He noted with satisfaction that over the previous year the overall financial implementation rate had reached a record 75.7%, resulting in a substantial increase in the number of fellowships, expert assignments and training courses. Pakistan was grateful to the Department of Technical Co-operation and other technical Divisions of the Agency for their excellent work. It also wished to pay tribute to those donor countries which honoured their commitment to support technical co-operation. Although voluntary, the contributions helped to support a vital function of the Agency, and Pakistan urged all Member States to pay their contributions in full and in a timely manner. For its part, Pakistan had always done so, and he was pleased to announce that it pledged its full share of the target of the TCF for 1997.

8. Pakistan had derived great benefit from the Agency's technical co-operation programme in various fields: nuclear energy, nuclear safety, agriculture, medicine, and research and development. At the same time, it had made a modest contribution by providing experts, lecturers and training facilities at its establishments. Moreover, Pakistan's experience and expertise were, through the Agency, available to specialists and technicians from other developing Member States in line with the philosophy of TCDC which had repeatedly been endorsed by the United Nations. That philosophy, which was based on recognition of the fact that different levels of technological advancement existed among developing countries, could, if applied in good faith, lead to mutual benefits. In the current climate of international financial austerity, TCDC had

the advantage of offering a good cost-effectiveness ratio. Pakistan urged the Agency to devote particular attention to the issue in its strategic planning of technology transfer.

9. Turning to the main activities carried out in Pakistan in the area of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, he said that the construction work on the Chashma nuclear power plant was proceeding according to schedule. The reactor dome had been completed the previous November, and the installation of the equipment had commenced.

10. The Karachi nuclear power plant would celebrate 25 years of safe operation in October. Despite embargoes, the plant had performed well. Peer reviews carried out by the World Association of Nuclear Operators and by expert missions from the Agency and the CANDU Owners Group had confirmed that the plant was in good condition. Pakistan was confident that the plant could continue to operate satisfactorily for a further 10-15 years.

11. In the agricultural sector, Pakistan had developed, over the past year, new varieties of wheat, rice and cotton through mutation breeding techniques. He was pleased to learn that the Agency was preparing an interregional project on the sustainable use of wasteland and saline groundwater for plant production. Pakistan would be pleased to offer other Member States the benefit of the experience gained by its National Institute of Agriculture and Biology.

12. Cancer diagnostic and treatment services had been available throughout Pakistan for many years. The programme was a very successful one and some 240 000 patients were now being treated each year. Owing to financial constraints in the public sector, efforts were now being made to encourage the private sector to participate in the further development of nuclear medicine and radiotherapy in Pakistan.

13. Research and development activities were essential for the advancement of science and technology. The Pakistan Institute of Nuclear Science and Technology had been providing support to other institutions with regard to the production of isotopes and in various fields of R&D.

14. The Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Board, which laid down policy in matters related to nuclear safety and radiation protection, had approved regulations on food irradiation in Pakistan.

15. Finally, Pakistan noted with satisfaction that the Agency's performance in the past year had been as good as in previous years. That was largely a result of the Secretariat's efficiency, but also the work of the Policy-making Organs. Nevertheless, there was a feeling that the efficiency and representative character of the Board of Governors would be enhanced by the prudent addition of more Member States. Proposals to that end had been submitted recently by Morocco, Spain and Pakistan. It was high time for the Agency's Member States to address the issue seriously and respond to the urgent need for an appropriate increase in the size of the Board.

16. Mr. AMROLLAHI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the nuclear threat faced by mankind for the past 50 years and the increasing need for clean sources of energy placed a daunting responsibility on the international community. Despite the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the bipolar order, there was always the danger that new poles would develop and that new confrontations would arise. There was still no assurance of the complete destruction of nuclear arsenals so the world was not yet rid of the nuclear threat. The reverberations of recent nuclear tests showed that universality of the NPT had not yet been achieved.

17. Developments such as the end of the Cold War, the slowing down of the arms race, the indefinite extension of the NPT and the gradual consolidation of links between its complementary treaties, and the promotion of the peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology gave room for hope. However, if such hopes were to divert the international community, even for a moment, from moving towards a world that was freed from the nuclear threat but that benefited from the peaceful applications of nuclear energy, it would be difficult to avoid the pitfalls ahead and to provide for the needs of future generations.

18. The decision to extend the NPT indefinitely, taken at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, had demonstrated the international community's commitment

to the objectives of complete elimination of nuclear weapons and promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In his statement to the 1995 session of the General Conference, the Director General had interpreted the extension as a collective commitment to bring about a world in which nuclear energy was used for positive, peaceful purposes and in which no nation possessed any nuclear weapons. In the context of such a clear reality, insistence on the discarded doctrine of two poles - "nuclear" and "non-nuclear"- was in conflict with global commitments. The disastrous consequences of maintaining such an "apartheid" would be the continuation of a fundamentally illegitimate race to acquire nuclear weapons and the refusal of nuclear-weapon States to take serious steps to destroy their arsenals. Thus the nuclear option would remain for many years a tool whereby States with nuclear weapons could threaten those without, which could only be interpreted as a move away from the ideal of peace, health and well-being for all peoples of the world.

19. To achieve the objectives of the NPT, the primary responsibility for creating confidence within the international community lay with the nuclear-weapon States. To hesitate in destroying nuclear weapons, to continue nuclear weapons testing and, more seriously, to threaten to deploy nuclear weapons was incompatible with that responsibility at the dawn of a "new order" that appeared to promise peace, development and protection of human rights.

20. Regrettably, despite the global consensus against the nuclear threat that had emerged at the NPT Review and Extension Conference, and notwithstanding the words of the representative of the Government claiming leadership in the global efforts to extend the Treaty indefinitely, the highest-ranking military official of that country had made a clear threat to deploy nuclear weapons in the region of the Middle East. The statements made by the Secretary of Defence of the United States of America in March 1996 indicating his country's readiness to use nuclear weapons to defend the Zionist régime had shattered the global consensus on the need to strengthen the NPT and undermined all the initiatives aimed at creating a climate of confidence. The Islamic Republic of Iran regretted and abhorred that clear threat to world peace and



security and asked the international community to adopt an unambiguous position on the issue.

21. In any collective move towards the complete destruction of nuclear weapons, it was vital to stop the production and use of fissile material for nuclear weapons. The international community should therefore give its full support to the finalization of a convention to prohibit the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. It must be stressed, however, that any international treaty on the subject should clearly define the boundary between the production of nuclear material for weapons and the production of nuclear material for peaceful purposes. Ambiguity in that area could well serve as grounds for implementation of the current biased policies and the introduction of illegitimate political objectives in the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

22. In view of the Middle East's long record of military, political and historical conflict, it was necessary to eliminate all weapons of mass destruction in that region in order to implement fully the provisions of the NPT there. Iran, which twenty years previously had been the first country to propose the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the sensitive region of the Middle East, supported the resolutions on the subject adopted by the United Nations, the NPT Review and Extension Conference and the General Conference.

23. Israel's failure to conform to the provisions of the NPT had so far prevented a global consensus being reached on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and was a real danger to peace and security in the region and in the world. Regrettably, that policy was supported by countries which claimed to be champions of the NPT and which had assumed the roles of public prosecutor, defence attorney, jury and judge rolled into one on a global scale. Considering the complexity of global security issues, no country's one-sided views that gave priority to national concerns instead of international considerations could be accepted.

24. Linking the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East to the establishment by the Zionist régime of a so-called "peace" there, which it had

widely publicized, promoted the arms race in the region and clearly violated the principle of non-proliferation by undermining the efforts made to strengthen it. Legitimizing such a trend and supporting it, for whatever reason, encouraged policies of threat and blackmail in international relations. One could expect similar situations to develop in other regions with similar security problems. The General Conference and the international community should state loudly and clearly that the right to live in security, even under the assumption of legitimacy, could not be used as a pretext for confiscating the lands of others, violating the rights of other nations, flouting credible international treaties and making nuclear threats.

25. The Arab Summit Conference held in Cairo in June 1996, which had stressed the need to establish a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the region of the Middle East, had been the latest and most comprehensive expression of the commitment of Arab and Muslim countries to an important objective of the NPT. Their appeal should not remain unanswered. The Islamic Republic of Iran endorsed the broad consensus that had emerged.

26. Nuclear accidents, because of their transboundary dimensions, could not be considered to be the problem of an individual country. It was therefore regrettable that the reports and information concerning the radioactive leaks at the Dimona "research" reactor in Israel and the hazards linked to the disposal of radioactive waste within the vicinity of the reactor had not received the appropriate coverage and response. The reports had only added to the concerns in the Middle East region about Israel's non-transparent nuclear activities and its refusal to place its nuclear activities under international supervision. The useful life of the reactor in question had long since expired, the facility did not conform to international safety rules and, furthermore, it was located in an uncontrollable region.

27. The deep concerns of the Islamic Republic of Iran had been conveyed to the Director General in a letter dated 10 April 1996. The Arab Member States of the Agency and of the Board of Governors in a letter to the Director General of the Agency, and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States in a letter to the United Nations Secretary-General, to the Security Council and to the IAEA, had called for

emergency intervention. Regrettably, the response of the Zionist régime had been neither convincing nor reassuring, and the reactor continued to pose a threat. The Islamic Republic of Iran therefore requested the Agency to continue its investigations into that problem.

28. The establishment of nuclear security in the world of the future and the promotion of the peaceful applications of nuclear energy depended on the Agency, which should implement safeguards in a clear, unprejudiced and fair manner, should detect violations and above all adopt strong measures in the event of non-compliance. The 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference had emphasized the Agency's central role in international co-operation for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and in verifying Governments' compliance with their non-proliferation commitments. The Conference had clearly recognized that the Agency was the body responsible for monitoring the implementation of safeguards. In that connection, it had requested the Parties to direct their concerns regarding possible safeguards violations together with any supporting evidence and information to the Agency so that it could consider, investigate, draw conclusions and decide on necessary actions. The rationale behind that request, which was aimed at preserving the credibility of the Treaty and strengthening confidence within the international community, was that it was preferable to benefit from the expertise and experience of a neutral arbitrator than to be misled by arbitrators pursuing specific political objectives.

29. The baseless allegations frequently made by the United States and the Zionist régime about Iran's so-called non-peaceful nuclear activities undermined the NPT regime and caused international anxiety. More seriously, those allegations seemed to contain open or veiled threats to destroy Iran's peaceful nuclear installations! The fact that no tangible evidence of nuclear activities in Iran had been passed to the Agency was surely proof in itself that such allegations were groundless. How could the international community allow such an important global treaty to be attacked in such a way and the Agency slighted? How could it allow a treaty aimed at strengthening world security to become merely a tool for furthering illegitimate political aims and punishing independent countries which did not tolerate interference? The Iranian

delegation considered the Director General's position that, on the basis of the evidence and the results of safeguards activities, the allegations of non-peaceful nuclear activities in Iran were without foundation to be sufficient and final.

30. In the course of the past forty years, the Agency, within the framework of its Statute, had taken important steps to promote non-proliferation. Non-nuclear-weapon States, particularly in the developing world, were seriously concerned about the way in which the Agency currently operated and the effectiveness of its monitoring of States' nuclear activities in response to global power diplomacy and its political consequences. The realization of the ideal at which those countries aimed, namely, a world free of the nuclear threat, in which the nuclear activities of all countries would be put under Agency supervision in a totally transparent manner, required joint action. In the sensitive region of the Middle East, Israel's resistance to the non-proliferation regime had hitherto been the main obstacle to the Agency's efforts in the area of safeguards. Its insistence on the expansion and strengthening of safeguards, despite its refusal to submit to them, supported unequivocally by certain world powers, could only be interpreted as an attempt to undermine the national sovereignty of other States in the region which complied with their international obligations.

31. International consensus, which was an indispensable condition for strengthening the Agency's safeguards, could only be based on a balance between the respective obligations of the nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States under the non-proliferation regime and could not ignore the right to national sovereignty and the bias and unfairness in the implementation of that regime. Consultations should accordingly continue until a consensus emerged; the Agency's ability to implement safeguards in an equitable manner was a prerequisite for their widespread acceptance and survival.

32. In the new energy policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which was fortunate in being endowed with large and relatively cheap fossil fuel resources, investments in clean energy production had a special place. Those policies took into account new models of sustained development, the need to preserve freedom of choice for future generations and the long-term effects of population growth on energy consumption.

Considerable effort had accordingly been made to produce energy using water, wind and the sun. At the same time, since those energy sources would not account for a substantial share of the total energy output for several decades at least, the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran had decided to make major investments in nuclear power, which, according to the Agency, was one of the cleanest methods of electricity production. Commercial operation of the first unit of the Bushehr nuclear power plant would start at the end of the Republic's second five-year development plan, providing it with the electricity generating capacity to meet almost the total demand.

33. The Agency's key role in technical co-operation for promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear technology was irrefutable. That role had been duly recognized at the NPT Review and Extension Conference, and the Agency had been commended for its technical assistance and co-operation programmes. At the thirty-ninth regular session of the General Conference, the Director General of the Agency had reported important new developments in that connection. The Agency's programmes to promote technical co-operation between developing countries had led to positive results. The success of the Agency's current programmes in that area, particularly the implementation of technical projects in some countries by those more advanced in the particular field involved, could lead to the further enhancement of peaceful nuclear activities in the developing countries. The expansion of such co-operation would undoubtedly improve confidence and transparency between States and the Agency.

34. The Agency's technical co-operation programmes in Iran had greatly helped the progress of the country's nuclear industry. The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran was now ready to transfer to countries which so desired its scientific and technical skills in the fields of agriculture, medicine, isotopes and research and development programmes.

35. A non-proliferation regime could not be established without first creating a co-ordinated, solid system to combat the illegal transfers of fissile materials. The Agency had a useful role to play in that connection, but the fundamental responsibility of States with nuclear materials and technologies could not be overlooked. Furthermore, the negative effects of certain exaggerated reports disseminated by the

media for political reasons should not be underestimated. The international community, and the Agency in particular, should strive to re-establish the truth.

36. The promotion of the Agency's role in the years ahead to achieve the objectives of non-proliferation, and particularly the principles and objectives of the NPT Review and Extension Conference, might give rise to political conflicts. Iran earnestly hoped that the Agency would succeed in avoiding the pitfalls and his country was ready to support the Agency's independent efforts to attain the objectives of world peace.

37. Mr. JIANG (China), having congratulated the Republic of Moldova on its admission as a new member of the Agency, noted that as the Agency prepared to mark its fortieth anniversary, it was important to keep in mind, when reviewing the past and envisaging the future, the two objectives set out in the Agency's Statute, namely that:

"The Agency shall seek to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world. It shall ensure, so far as it is able, that assistance provided by it or at its request or under its supervision or control is not used in such a way as to further any military purpose."

China believed that the Agency should adhere to those objectives and, in particular, should promote international co-operation for the peaceful use of nuclear energy as well as the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons through safeguards and that it should strike an appropriate balance between the two. That was the common aspiration of all Member States of the Agency, and it was also the basis upon which the Agency operated and developed.

38. The Chinese Government had always attached great importance to the peaceful use of nuclear energy and nuclear technology. As was known to all, the fast growth of China's economy had led to a pressing need for the development of its energy resources: depending on coal alone for the country's energy needs would be problematic for China in terms of production, transportation and environmental protection. Furthermore, although China was rich in water resources, their geological distribution was not ideal. The country therefore needed to develop nuclear power

more extensively by the beginning of the twenty-first century, and that was why it had decided to build four more nuclear power plants consisting of eight units with a total capacity of 6600 MW. In June 1996, the second phase of the main project for the Qin Shan nuclear power plant had officially been launched, marking a new stage in China's nuclear power plant construction programme. It was estimated that by the year 2010, China's total nuclear power generation capacity would be 20 000 MW.

39. In developing nuclear power, China attached great importance to international co-operation on an equal and mutually beneficial basis. It had already concluded intergovernmental or ministerial agreements on co-operation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy with some 20 countries and had established technical co-operation and trading relationships with more than 40 countries and regions. The construction of the 300 MW nuclear power plant that China had exported to Pakistan was now progressing smoothly: in November 1995, the reactor building had been completed and the installation of equipment had started. Construction of a second nuclear power plant, in co-operation with France, had already begun in Guangdong province. In addition, bilateral co-operation projects for nuclear power plant construction between China and the Russian Federation were being prepared. China was ready to expand its co-operation in that area to other countries and international organizations.

40. In addition to the development of nuclear energy, China had also made great progress in the peaceful use of nuclear technology, particularly in promoting industrial modernization, achieving the technological innovation of traditional industries and raising the living standard of the people. In agriculture, the technique of radiation-induced mutations had become widespread throughout China, the sterile insect technique had been successfully used in insect control, and the application of isotope tracer techniques had improved the utilization of fertilizers and reduced environmental pollution caused by pesticide residues. In the area of nuclear medicine, over 1000 Chinese hospitals were equipped with facilities such as gamma cameras, single photon emission tomography systems and cobalt-60 therapy machines. Cobalt-60 therapy units developed and manufactured by China had been exported to many developing countries through Agency technical assistance projects and had helped to improve the

health of local populations. In the field of industry, progress had been made in the development and application of nuclear techniques such as radiation processing, nuclear logging, non-destructive testing and isotope tracer techniques.

41. It should be pointed out that all of those achievements were the immediate results of the work of Chinese nuclear scientists and engineers and also attributable to multilateral or bilateral co-operation. Thanks to the Agency's technical assistance and co-operation, China had drawn from the experience acquired by other countries, while sharing with others the results of its own efforts. The use of nuclear techniques was of great importance in promoting agricultural production, improving human health and protecting the environment. In recent years, requests to the Agency from developing countries for assistance in those fields had increased. His delegation fully supported the Agency's unremitting efforts in the field of technical assistance and co-operation. Since the emergence of the Model Project concept, technical co-operation was being increasingly focused on end-users, thereby strengthening the economic and social impact of nuclear technology for the economic development of the countries concerned. The initial success of the first Model Projects had invigorated the Agency's technical co-operation activities. New measures taken by the Agency - setting up the Country Programme Frameworks and thematic programmes and improving internal management - had played a positive role in enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of technical co-operation.

42. Nevertheless, the new difficulties and challenges in the area of technical co-operation should not be underestimated. Firstly, there was an increasingly obvious imbalance between the Agency's efforts to strengthen safeguards, on the one hand, and to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy on the other. Secondly, reliable resources for technical co-operation were lacking, the percentage of pledges in recent years remaining stagnant at around 70% of the TCF target and extrabudgetary contributions becoming rare. The inadequacy of technical co-operation in the face of the pressing demands of Member States was becoming increasingly apparent. In order to meet the technical assistance needs of a large number of developing countries, the Agency should seriously study the strategic issues involved, including the financing of



technical co-operation. It should provide more substantial support for technical co-operation in terms of financial and human resources, and SAGTAC's role should be reviewed so as to improve the technical co-operation programme and guarantee the balanced development of the Agency's promotional and safeguards activities.

43. Preventing nuclear proliferation was also one of the Agency's objectives. It was the Agency's duty to implement safeguards in accordance with its Statute and international treaties such as the NPT. In the past year, the Agency had made progress in strengthening the effectiveness of the safeguards system and improving its efficiency, within the framework of Programme 93+2. The Chinese delegation had actively participated from the start in the discussions on that Programme in a serious and responsible manner and had put forward many constructive comments and suggestions.

44. China attached great importance to the Agency's work in the area of safeguards and would support any appropriate measures that the Agency took to strengthen the effectiveness of the safeguards system and improve its efficiency. China believed that improvement of the safeguards system should be based on the principles of justice, reasonableness and practicality. The new safeguards measures adopted should be implemented strictly in accordance with the legal framework of the Agency's Statute and the relevant international treaties, in line with the premise that the sovereignty of the countries concerned must be respected and their legitimate rights guaranteed. Strengthening of safeguards should run parallel with the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and should not hinder any countries, particularly the developing ones, from developing nuclear technology and industry and participating actively in international co-operation for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

45. With regard to broader access to information, the Chinese delegation was of the opinion that the Agency should make use of and improve its own system for information collection and analysis, instead of relying on the technical resources of a few countries. To guard against abuse of safeguards information, the Agency should work out strict and effective measures to protect confidentiality. With regard to increased physical access to specific locations, his delegation was of the view that the

necessary criteria and procedures should be established for resolving the question of inconsistencies. To prevent the possible abuse of inspections, the Agency must establish initial procedures to be used in the event of inconsistencies. For the financing of safeguards, both the effectiveness of the safeguards system and its cost-effectiveness must be taken into consideration; Member States should not be overburdened as a result of the strengthening of the system and the balance in the allocation of resources among the Agency's main activities should not be affected.

46. That having been said, his delegation supported the work of the Committee on Strengthening the Effectiveness and Improving the Efficiency of the Safeguards System and was participating actively in it. While welcoming the progress made with Programme 93+2, his delegation was concerned about certain undercurrents audible in recent discussions that might lead to a deviation from the Programme's original purpose and complicate matters. China hoped that all sides would value the understanding reached and the progress made through extensive consultations and in-depth discussions, and that the Agency would continue to work for the establishment of a just, rational, effective and efficient safeguards system in accordance with the orientation that had been clearly confirmed.

47. China was a peace-loving and responsible country. Its opposition to nuclear proliferation was well known, and it had never assisted other countries in developing nuclear weapons. As a party to the NPT, China made sure that all the items it exported were subject to Agency safeguards and provided no assistance to nuclear facilities that were not placed under safeguards. China had never violated its international obligations and would never accept the groundless accusations directed against it by certain countries.

48. One of the Agency's important tasks was to enhance nuclear safety and international co-operation in managing radioactive waste. He welcomed the fact that, thanks to the efforts of all sides, the Convention on Nuclear Safety would enter into force in October 1996. A high level of nuclear safety was the basis for the sustainable development of nuclear power and one of the key factors in ensuring public acceptance of nuclear power. The Convention's entry into force would mark a new

stage in the co-operative efforts of the international community to strengthen nuclear safety. As one of the countries that had initiated the preparation of the Convention and one of the first to sign it, China had deposited its instrument of ratification on 9 April 1995. It intended earnestly to fulfil its obligations under the Convention and further to develop co-operation in the field of nuclear safety with the Agency and other countries.

49. The negotiation and drafting of the convention on the safe management of radioactive waste was now under way; the experts involved had convened four meetings so far and had reached agreement on many issues, although some divergences still existed with regard to the convention's scope of application. His delegation believed it should be restricted to radioactive waste derived from civilian applications, and that for radioactive waste and spent fuel derived from military uses, Member States could refer to the relevant provisions of the aforementioned convention on the safe management of radioactive waste. The Chinese delegation hoped that, in the context of consultations conducted on an equal footing, the search for common ground with due consideration for differences of view, would, with the concerted efforts of all involved, enable a universally acceptable convention to be concluded at an early date.

50. The progress made by the Standing Committee on Liability for Nuclear Damage since the previous session of the General Conference in amending the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage and in drafting a convention on supplementary funding was welcome, although some questions of principle remained to be resolved, such as the amount of compensation, the geographical range and the definition of nuclear damage. The opinions of all parties should be heard while taking into consideration the capabilities of the developed and the developing countries, it being understood that any victim of a nuclear accident should be granted timely and adequate compensation. Due regard should also be given to the development of nuclear industry in developing countries so as to encourage more countries to accede to the convention, thereby making it more universal.

51. If one looked at the activities undertaken by the Agency over the past 40 years, it was clear that the Agency bore a tremendous responsibility for preventing nuclear proliferation and promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and international co-operation in those fields. He was convinced that the Agency would be able to contribute still further to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, provided there was no departure from the objectives laid down in the Statute and all Member States made concerted efforts.

52. Mr. HOBEICA (Lebanon) said that currently the Agency's role was so important that it was universally consulted in the event of any nuclear threat or accident. He therefore welcomed the establishment by the Agency at Beirut, as part of a Model Project, of an office for monitoring nuclear safety in the region of the Middle East and Western Asia. Lebanon would make every effort to ensure the success of that initiative.

53. In its determination to make up for lost time, the Lebanese Government had submitted three conventions to Parliament, namely the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage, the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency. All three had been ratified. It also intended in the near future to accede to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

54. Welcoming the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa in compliance with the Pelindaba Treaty, he said Lebanon would like to see a similar zone established in the Middle East. Such a zone was urgently needed and was a precondition for lasting peace in the region. Israel's signature of the NPT would be a first step towards the establishment of such a zone, but until it did so and placed its facilities under Agency safeguards, Israel would remain a danger to its neighbours and a threat to world peace. The international community would therefore have to put pressure on Israel to accede to the NPT, particularly in view of the fact that it was a country which believed in the use of force and violence in its international relations, as was evident in its zone of occupation in South Lebanon, in the way it treated

civilians and its bombing of a United Nations camp in the village of Kana, which had killed and injured hundreds of civilians sheltering there.

55. With regard to the safeguards system, the Agency's need for information would have to be balanced against the need of States to secure their legitimate interests and respect their constitutional obligations. The only way to strengthen the effectiveness of the safeguards system and improve its efficiency was to apply it uniformly to all States. That was particularly true of the Middle East region, where Israel continued to refuse to place its facilities under Agency safeguards.

56. The amendment of Article VI of the Agency's Statute was a very important issue, since it could serve as a first step towards more equitable geographical representation in the Board of Governors. Lebanon hoped that the General Conference would achieve real consensus on the issue, while reaffirming the right of any group to decide on its own membership.

57. Lebanon attached great importance to the safe management of radioactive waste and was therefore participating in the meetings of the group of experts drafting a convention on the subject and had hosted several workshops and a conference.

58. Lastly, with regard to technical co-operation, he welcomed the establishment of a section with responsibility for technical co-operation programmes in the Middle East and Central Asia. The Agency had established three Country Programme Frameworks, of which one applied to Lebanon. The fact that assistance provided by the Agency had risen from US \$8.6 million in 1979 to \$13 million in 1995 was the best proof that the policy adopted by the Agency on the subject was dynamic and sound.

59. Mr. OTHMAN (Syrian Arab Republic), having welcomed the admission of the Republic of Moldova to the Agency, applauded the Secretariat's efforts to increase the peaceful use of nuclear energy for development purposes. The Agency was seeking to enhance co-operation with developing countries in order to meet their technological needs, in line with national objectives and the requirements of sustainable development. Another noteworthy development was the Agency's

improved performance and rationalization of its expenditure, as evidenced by Model Projects and Country Programme Frameworks.

60. The Syrian Arab Republic warmly welcomed the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa and believed that it was essential to take similar measures in neighbouring regions. The establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa lost its significance when one considered that to the east of the continent Israel had a formidable nuclear arsenal.

61. Although the General Assembly had recently adopted the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the text of that Treaty took no account of the justified concerns of the vast majority of States, which did not have nuclear weapons, since it included no commitment on the part of nuclear-weapon States to eliminate their arsenals within a reasonable period of time. Furthermore, it did not explicitly preclude recourse or threat of recourse to nuclear weapons, nor did it refer to the need to ensure the universality of the NPT. The most curious point was that the Treaty authorized signatory States to take measures against non-signatory States, which could include measures taken by the Security Council under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter. In other words, it interfered with the sovereign right of States to decide freely whether or not to accede to the Treaty. The Treaty's deficiencies and, in particular, its listing of Israel among the countries of the Middle East and South Asia region - an unprecedented step of particular concern in view of the explosive situation prevailing in the Middle East because Israel was the only country in the region that possessed nuclear weapons - were viewed with grave concern by the Syrian Arab Republic.

62. The application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East was once again on the General Conference's agenda. While various resolutions had been adopted on the subject, none had mentioned Israel by name, although it was the only country in the region which had nuclear weapons and had consistently refused to accede to the NPT or to place its nuclear installations under Agency safeguards. Israel's continued defiance of international resolutions requiring it to place its nuclear installations under Agency safeguards was an open challenge to the international community. Similarly, the rejection by Israel of the principles that ought to govern the establishment of a just

and lasting peace founded on the resolutions adopted by the Madrid Conference and on the "land for peace" principles, the continued occupation of Arab territories and the launching of an expansionist operation to establish settlements against the international community's wish to make the Middle East a region of peace, security and stability were all signs of Israel's refusal to countenance the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East despite the wishes of the countries of the region and of the international community. The Syrian Arab Republic therefore reiterated its request for adoption of an appropriate resolution on the subject. Failure to mention Israel by name in such a resolution would be tantamount to according it a further opportunity to evade international resolutions, thus perpetuating tension in a zone where the situation was explosive.

63. With regard to Programme 93+2, the imposition of further stringent restrictions on non-nuclear-weapon States was likely to militate against research and development and create imbalance and a climate of mistrust among States. It was to be hoped that the Programme would not lead to an increased financial burden for Member States that were partially exempt.

64. As far as revision of Article VI of the Agency's Statute was concerned, the Director General's report indicated that, according to information provided by the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, the composition of the various groups was entirely in the hands of the groups themselves. In addition, paragraph 14 of the report noted:

"The above background indicates that the attribution of a State to a particular area is one in which factors other than geographical considerations play a role. It also confirms the absence of any complete indication among Member States of the States in each of the areas set out in Article VI".

That merely confirmed the Syrian view that political factors were instrumental in attributing a State to a group, a fact that ought especially to be taken into account in the case of the Middle East and South Asia region. One could well ask how Israel could become a member of a group of neighbouring countries whose territories it was partially occupying. Furthermore, those countries were the target of acts of overt

aggression: Israel had no hesitation, as demonstrated by the massacre at Kana in the Lebanon, in attacking civilian targets in violation of international law.

65. The Syrian Arab Republic therefore asked that consideration of the issue be deferred until a just and lasting peace had been established in the region, and Israel had acceded to the NPT and placed its nuclear installations under Agency safeguards. It should be recalled that the peace talks were at a standstill precisely because the Israeli Government had, in violation of international law and practice, gone back on undertakings made by previous Israeli Governments. The response of the new Israeli Government to a Syrian invitation to resume the talks at the point they had reached under the previous Labour Government had been to embark on operations to set up new settlements on the Golan heights and other occupied Arab territories. The Syrian position, which was supported by the international community, was that there could be no solution to the problem without a just and overall peace.

66. The Syrian Arab Republic, in co-operation with the Agency, had in recent years made rapid and tangible progress in the peaceful uses of atomic energy. It had, for example, brought an irradiation plant for sterilizing medical articles and industrial products into operation in 1995. The plant was currently working for both the public and private sectors. Furthermore, a 30 kW miniature neutron source reactor imported from the People's Republic of China had recently been installed for research purposes. In addition, the Model Project on neonatal hypothyroidism screening had moved into its implementation phase, which should help to solve one of the country's most serious health problems. With regard to the International Nuclear Information System, the Syrian Nuclear Energy Commission was arranging, in collaboration with the Agency, for a regional workshop to be held in Damascus in November 1996.

67. In conclusion, he hoped that the General Conference would adopt resolutions that were fair and impartial and avoid the dangerous policy of applying double standards.

68. Mr. ZAIDE (Philippines), welcoming the Republic of Moldova as a new member, noted that the increase in the number of Member States could only enhance



international co-operation. The Philippines was committed to the principle of the sovereign equality of States, a principle that required that all Member States be adequately represented on the Board of Governors and thus that objective criteria be introduced for the designation of members of the Board.

69. The General Conference was taking place at a time when important developments offered an opportunity for the Agency to attain its development objectives. The General Assembly had just adopted the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by an overwhelming majority, immediately following upon the extension of the NPT for an indefinite period and, in October 1996, the Convention on Nuclear Safety would enter into force. The international community therefore had reason to hope that the atom would be used for peaceful purposes to enhance the quality of life of all people. The Philippines was ready to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in the hope that once it had entered into force, the international community would take the next steps towards complete disarmament, including disarmament in the nuclear field.

70. That welcome trend was reflected in various regional initiatives, including the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in South East Asia and Africa. He called on nuclear-weapon States to accede to the Protocol to the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear- Weapon-Free Zone and to the Pelindaba Treaty establishing the African nuclear-weapon-free zone. It was to be hoped that other nuclear-weapon-free zones would be established in other regions.

71. At the current session of the Conference, Member States should endeavour to strengthen the norms and standards to ensure the peaceful and safe use of nuclear energy. The Philippines had noted and endorsed the measures to strengthen international co-operation in nuclear, radiation and waste safety outlined in document GC(40)/INF/5. In particular, it was encouraged by the progress made in drafting a convention on the safety of radioactive waste management and had noted with satisfaction the Director General's report on the implementation of measures against illicit trafficking in nuclear materials and other radioactive sources.

72. Strengthening the Agency's safeguards system was of crucial importance. His delegation therefore welcomed the implementation of additional measures within existing legal authority as approved by the General Conference in 1995. The Philippines had consistently supported Programme 93+2 and looked forward to early completion of the work on the draft protocol to comprehensive safeguards agreements providing for new measures to improve the Agency's capability to verify declared nuclear material and to detect undeclared nuclear material and activities in States that had signed comprehensive safeguards agreements.

73. His delegation had noted with satisfaction that, in 1995, the Agency had found no indication that safeguarded nuclear material had been diverted for nuclear purposes or unknown purposes or that safeguarded facilities, equipment or non-nuclear material had been misused. It regretted, however, that the Agency was unable to verify the correctness and completeness of the initial declaration on nuclear material made by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It called on that country to co-operate fully with the Agency in implementing the safeguards agreement.

74. The Agency's mandate was not confined solely to ensuring that atomic energy was used for non-destructive purposes. Its other fundamental mission was to promote the use of atomic energy to enhance the quality of life of all people. His delegation therefore welcomed the efforts made by the Agency to strengthen technical co-operation, as reflected in document GC(40)/5. The identification of areas where nuclear technologies could be used most effectively in each country and the concentration of assistance on fewer, but better, projects would have a significant impact at the national level.

75. The Philippines was pleased to have participated in the formulation of the Country Programme Framework. Nuclear technology alone could not solve all problems, but it could play an important role in the search for solutions. It was to be hoped that an increasing number of projects would qualify as Model Projects, but when the nuclear infrastructure of a country had not yet attained the critical mass, the relevant policy should be sufficiently open and flexible to ensure that the necessary assistance could be given.

76. The Philippines wished to express appreciation for the valuable technical assistance extended by the Agency in 1995-96 in the form of 29 technical co-operation projects, including projects under the RCA, 31 research projects, 8 expert missions and 71 fellowships.

77. In the past year, the Philippines had co-hosted a number of meetings with the Agency: in July, the first research co-ordination meeting on the second phase of the reference Asian man project, dealing with ingestion and organ content of trace elements of importance in radiological protection; in April, the final research co-ordination meeting on treatment technologies for low- and intermediate-level wastes generated from nuclear applications; and in January, an expert advisory group meeting on national services to establish procedures and guidance on mutual assistance.

78. In 1996, the Philippines was to co-host two more meetings with the Agency: a regional training course on quality assurance of dosimetry in radiation therapy, in October; and an expert advisory group meeting to report on the status of biological dosimetry, including chromosomal aberrations, in November. Those meetings were part of the celebrations in the Philippines of the centennial of the discovery of radioactivity that would culminate on 10-12 December 1996 in the Philippines Nuclear Congress, to be held in co-operation with non-governmental organizations and professional societies. The aim of that multisectoral forum of approximately 500 participants would be to assess national and international factors affecting public response to the peaceful applications of nuclear energy. He thanked the Director General for his support for the Congress and looked forward to welcoming him in Manila. His presence would contribute to the success of the Congress and of its review of future applications of nuclear energy for development needs.

79. He was pleased to announce that the Philippines would contribute its share of the target of the TCF for 1997 and would increase its contribution to the RCA.

80. There were other areas of international co-operation through the Agency in which the Philippines was interested. Firstly, the current energy plan of the

Philippines covering the period 1996-2005 included nuclear power in the energy mix starting in the year 2020. In spite of intensified efforts to tap indigenous energy sources, the rapid growth in energy requirements related to the country's accelerating development would necessitate greater use of imported energy. The introduction of nuclear power would be preceded by a comprehensive information campaign on the merits of nuclear energy. That was why the President of the Philippines, Mr. Fidel V. Ramos, had created a nuclear power steering committee in May 1995 to study that option. The Philippines looked forward to the Agency's continuing support in that area.

81. Secondly, as a developing country, the Philippines welcomed and intended to avail itself of the benefits of the policy recently announced by the United States of America with regard to accepting and managing spent fuel from foreign research reactors. The Philippines wished to explore the possibility of further technical assistance from the Agency in such areas as the planning of shipments and the training of personnel.

82. Thirdly, as an island country, the Philippines was seriously affected by the so-called "red tide" phenomenon which poisoned marine products and consequently threatened the lives and livelihoods of millions of people in the Pacific Ocean. It would like the Agency to explore the possibility of carrying out research to determine whether nuclear techniques could be used to detect, reduce or eliminate that phenomenon.

83. Fourthly, there had been a number of encouraging developments in food irradiation in the ASEAN region. An ASEAN working group on food irradiation had been established upon the initiative of the Philippines, which looked forward to continuing Agency support for the promotion of food irradiation in the region.

84. In a related area, there was growing interest within the private sector in the Philippines in establishing a facility for the sterilization of medical products. The Philippines believed it was necessary to harmonize the regulations in the region to ensure the quality and acceptability of irradiated medical products. He thanked

Malaysia and Indonesia for their generous assistance to the victims of the fire that had taken place in March 1996 in Manila. The dried radiation-sterilized amnions they had provided on that occasion had helped to save many lives. That was another fine example of close technical co-operation among developing countries in the region.

85. On 17 May 1996, at the International Conference on the Future of Asia held in Tokyo, Japan, the Philippines President, Mr. Fidel V. Ramos, had called on the countries of the region to discuss growing concerns related to the promotion of nuclear safety in Asia. He had pointed out that the total demand for energy in Asia, and particularly in East Asia, would keep on rising, in step with the region's economic expansion, and that the region's use of nuclear energy as a source of power was expected to outpace that of other regions. That growth would inevitably generate its own challenges and opportunities throughout the region and the world in many important areas, especially nuclear safety.

86. The Philippines believed that an ASIATOM-type regional arrangement could help to promote regional co-operation in the field of nuclear energy, specifically in terms of ensuring nuclear safety and addressing radioactive waste concerns. The Philippines would consult extensively with its potential partners in the region and gather their reactions in due course.

#### ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CONFERENCE

(a) ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ALLOCATION OF ITEMS FOR INITIAL DISCUSSION

87. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee, which had authorized him to report to the Conference, recommended that the agenda for the current session should consist of all the items on the provisional agenda set forth in document GC(40)/1.

88. As regarded the allocation of items for initial discussion, the Committee recommended that all the items listed in document GC(40)/1 be taken up for discussion as indicated in that document.

89. With regard to the order of items, the Committee recommended that the order of items proposed in document GC(40)/1 be maintained, it being understood that, depending on the progress of the Conference's work, changes in the order might be made after due notice had been given.

90. All of the General Committee's recommendations regarding the agenda for the current session were accepted.

91. The agenda was adopted.

(b) CLOSING DATE OF THE SESSION AND OPENING DATE OF THE NEXT SESSION

92. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee recommended that the Conference set Friday, 20 September 1996, as the closing date of the fortieth regular session and Monday, 29 September 1997 as the opening date of the forty-first regular session, which would be held in Vienna.

93. The Committee's recommendations were accepted.

#### REQUESTS FOR THE RESTORATION OF VOTING RIGHTS (resumed)

94. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee had had before it requests from Iraq, Peru and Bolivia that the last sentence in Article XIX.A of the Statute be invoked in order that they might be permitted to vote during the current session of the General Conference.

95. The Committee recommended that the requests by Bolivia and Peru should be granted on the understanding that such action did not constitute a precedent for the future.

96. The Committee's recommendation with respect to the requests by Bolivia and Peru was accepted.

97. The PRESIDENT said that with regard to the request by Iraq, the prevalent view in the Committee was that it should not recommend the restoration of Iraq's voting rights.

98. Mr. FARIS (Iraq) emphasized that until 1990 his country had regularly paid its contributions to the Agency's budget; it had subsequently failed to do so only because it had been placed in a situation of *force majeure*. For reasons beyond its control, the Iraqi Government had been unable to transfer any funds since 1990. Iraq was firmly resolved to fulfil its financial obligations once the conditions currently imposed upon it ceased to apply.

99. Politics in the present instance ought to give way to the legal aspects of the issue: no provision of any Security Council resolution had withdrawn Iraq's voting rights. In view of the fact that circumstances over which it had no control had prevented Iraq from fulfilling its financial obligations, he hoped that the General Conference would allow his country to exercise its voting rights in accordance with Article XIX of the Statute. It was unfortunate that the General Committee had seen fit to make a recommendation guided by political instead of legal considerations.

100. The PRESIDENT, noting that no other delegation had requested the floor, concluded that the General Conference accepted the Committee's recommendation with regard to Iraq.

101. The General Committee's recommendation with respect to Iraq was accepted.

GENERAL DEBATE AND ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1995 (GC(40)/8) (resumed)

102. Mr. CHAFE (Nigeria) welcomed the Republic of Moldova to the Agency and thanked the Secretariat for the excellent documentation before the General

Conference, which indicated that the Agency's efficiency had not been compromised, in spite of the changes that were taking place.

103. His delegation had taken note with satisfaction of document GC(40)/8 on the Agency's activities in 1995, a year during which Nigeria had continued to receive assistance from the Agency, particularly in the area of technical co-operation. The Secretariat had adopted a number of positive measures in that area, one of the most important steps being the establishment of the Standing Advisory Group on Technical Assistance and Co-operation with the responsibility of elaborating a strategic plan for the Department of Technical Co-operation. The Group had already held two meetings, and he had no doubt that its efforts would enhance technical co-operation. The Secretariat had taken other initiatives to promote technical co-operation among developing countries: the increased use of experts from those countries, in response to requests made by a number of Member States, would certainly improve the delivery of approved programmes.

104. Nigeria had noted with satisfaction the improvements made in management, such as the systematic assessment of radiation safety in Member States and the planning of follow-up activities. Those measures, together with the careful use of overprogramming, had combined to produce the highest rate of programme delivery ever.

105. Nigeria would continue to give its full support to the Agency's efforts to develop a strengthened safeguards system, especially in the context of Programme 93+2. The Board of Governors had acknowledged that additional information, environmental sampling and increased physical access would strengthen the Agency's ability to detect undeclared nuclear material and activities. However, his delegation joined others in requesting that the measures to be adopted should strike the proper balance between the Agency's need for information and access on the one hand, and the need of States to protect their legitimate interests and respect their constitutional obligations, on the other. It was also important that those measures should be subject to strict rules of confidentiality with regard both to information received and to the entire verification process.



106. The cost of implementation remained a source of concern to a number of Member States, including Nigeria. However, the Secretariat had indicated that after an initial implementation phase involving a net cost increase, it expected some savings to be made fairly soon in line with the objective of cost neutrality. In that regard, his delegation welcomed the establishment of the Committee on Strengthening the Effectiveness and Improving the Efficiency of the Safeguards System, which had met for the first time in July 1996. His delegation had participated in that meeting and would take part in subsequent ones, in the hope that the necessary amendments to the draft model protocol could be completed in a timely manner so that the new measures could be implemented in a transparent and non-discriminatory manner.

107. In connection with the Convention on Nuclear Safety, which was to enter into force on 24 October 1996, his delegation had noted with satisfaction that over the past two years, the Secretariat had been able to organize three open-ended informal meetings of future signatories and other interested States to involve them in the work being done prior to the Preparatory Meeting of the Contracting Parties. Nigeria had been one of the early signatories of the Convention during the thirty-eighth session of the General Conference and its Government was considering ratification in order to demonstrate its continuing commitment to the Convention's objectives.

108. The open-ended expert group responsible for elaborating a convention on the safety of radioactive waste management had made commendable progress. He hoped that the outstanding issues would be resolved in a timely manner so that a draft convention could be submitted in early 1997 at the latest. At the present stage, every effort should be made to encourage greater participation by developing countries in the negotiations, since they would ultimately be bound by the provisions of the future convention.

109. At its thirty-ninth session, the General Conference had welcomed the progress made towards the conclusion of a treaty establishing an African nuclear-weapon-free zone on the basis of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, which had been adopted by the Summit of Heads of State or Government of the Organization of African Unity in July 1964, and of resolution 49/138 adopted by the General Assembly in

1994. The signing ceremony of the Pelindaba Treaty had taken place in Cairo on 11 April 1996 and Nigeria had been among the first countries to sign. It would be recalled that 51 Member States of the OAU were already parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and had thereby undertaken to use nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes and accepted the application of Agency safeguards. The nuclear-weapon States that had promptly signed the Protocol to the Pelindaba Treaty were to be commended. Nigeria had great confidence in the Agency's ability to verify, through its safeguards system and in accordance with the complaints procedure provided for in the Treaty, compliance by the States Parties with their commitment to use nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes.

110. In addition to ensuring the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear energy, the Pelindaba Treaty committed the Parties to promote individually and collectively the use of nuclear science and technology for economic and social development. The Parties were encouraged to make use of the Agency's programme of assistance and to strengthen co-operation under AFRA.

111. Nigeria was looking forward to taking over the chairmanship of AFRA at the end of the current session of the Conference. It had already hosted the seventh technical working group meeting held at Zaria in April 1996. He thanked the Secretariat for its assistance, which had made a major contribution to the successful outcome of the meeting. He also wished to express appreciation to South Africa for the vision and commitment it had brought to the activities of AFRA in the past year: under its chairmanship, and through constant evaluation of projects, AFRA had been managed in a business-like manner. Finally, he noted that the budget for AFRA programmes for 1997 was \$4 million, of which the Agency was to provide some \$2.5 million, leaving a shortfall of \$1.5 million. He urged Member States that were in a position to do so to assist in ensuring the implementation of AFRA programmes, which were now concentrated in the areas of radiation protection and safety, clinical radiotherapy, agricultural production and various radiation applications.

112. Illicit trafficking in nuclear materials and other radioactive sources remained a cause of great concern. The Agency was playing a major role in dealing with that

issue, in co-operation with Member States. A programme had been included in the Agency's programme and budget for 1997, with a Regular Budget allocation of \$560 000 and extrabudgetary contributions expected to amount to \$1.2 million. His delegation had noted that the establishment of a database, assistance to Member States in improving physical protection and control of nuclear material, border control measures and supporting the adoption by States of the Basic Safety Standards pertaining to illicit trafficking were all projected under that programme.

113. The issue of the amendment of Article VI of the Statute had been before both the Board of Governors and the General Conference for nearly two decades. In its most recent resolution on the subject, adopted in 1995, the General Conference had, inter alia, requested the Board of Governors to continue consultations with Member States through the open-ended consultative group and to submit recommendations on proposed amendments of Article VI for approval by the General Conference at its fortieth regular session. It was regrettable that the General Conference would not have before it the text of an agreed amendment, but a number of specific proposals worthy of consideration had nevertheless been put forward. He was convinced that the time had come to muster the necessary courage and political will to enable Article VI to be amended, so as to address the obvious under-representation of the African region, as well as of the Middle East and South Asia, on the Board.

114. The Director General had provided useful information on the staffing of the Agency's Secretariat. His efforts to rectify the poor representation of developing countries, and especially of women from developing countries, in the Agency's Secretariat were to be commended. In that respect, his delegation had taken note of a number of measures that had been adopted to achieve the objectives set by resolutions GC(39)/RES/19 and GC(39)/RES/20 adopted by the General Conference in 1995. With those and other initiatives, it would be possible to bring about a substantial increase in the number of staff recruited from developing countries, especially in the Professional and higher categories, which would further improve the excellent work of the Agency.

115. The project and supply agreement between the Agency and the Governments of Nigeria and the People's Republic of China for the supply of a miniature neutron source reactor, approved by the Board of Governors in March 1996, had entered into force on 29 August 1996. Nigeria was very grateful to the Director General and the Secretariat, particularly the Department of Technical Co-operation and the Legal Division, for their vital roles in the preparation of both the agreement and the commercial contract. There was no doubt that the Agency would continue to offer the necessary assistance for that important project, and Nigeria, for its part, would endeavour to meet all its obligations in that regard.

116. Nigeria was aware of the Agency's growing responsibilities, particularly in the areas of safeguards and promotional activities. It hoped that all Member States would meet their financial obligations, without which the programmes approved by the General Conference could not be implemented. For its part, the Nigerian Government was prepared to pay its share of the target for the TCF for 1997.

117. Mr. VILLACÍS (Ecuador) thanked the Secretariat for its work to promote peace, which was one of mankind's most precious commodities, and said that the efforts made by the Agency to promote the elaboration and negotiation of various safeguards agreements and to prevent nuclear technology from being diverted for purposes other than peaceful ones were of decisive importance.

118. Thanks to the Agency's support, nuclear technology was being used every day in Ecuador for treating the sick, diagnosing diseases, sterilizing products, detecting environmental pollutants, seeking to solve various agricultural problems and resolving the hydrological problems that were becoming more and more frequent. He thanked the Agency and donor countries that had enabled his country to place nuclear technology at the service of the development and well-being of the population.

119. Ecuador wished to make the most rational and cost-effective use possible of the significant water resources required to meet the growing needs of its numerous citizens living in the country without electricity and potable water. Ecuador placed

great hopes in the progress made by the Agency regarding the cost-effective production of potable water and would support any activities carried out in that field.

120. With the Agency's assistance, the Ecuadorian Atomic Energy Commission had concluded agreements with the educational and manufacturing sectors to promote the symbiosis that seemed necessary to ensure balanced and sustained development. In that connection, the authorities were to establish, together with the Technical University of Machala, an institute for research on bananas that would be responsible for creating conditions favourable to the optimum use of fertilizers, thereby contributing to environmental conservation, and would investigate the appropriate use of fertigation and ways of optimizing root activity of banana plants. The University would also measure the presence of heavy metals in shrimp farms as well as the presence of pesticides using the facilities of the ecotoxicological laboratory of the Ecuadorian Atomic Energy Commission. An agreement would be reached with the Army Higher Polytechnical School to establish a centre for environmental research, for which a "clean" laboratory that would make it possible to determine very small concentrations was being built. Finally, an agreement had been made with PETROECUADOR to quantify heavy metals in the slurries and residues from oil wells and in formation waters, as well as the presence of total hydrocarbons and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons.

121. Ecuador fully supported the activities carried out by ARCAL at the regional and subregional levels. The programme had established ties of friendship and co-operation among countries in the region that had similar interests and problems. The Agency's support contributed to integration and harmony in a region where a number of countries were becoming true partners for development.

122. Ecuador had noted with satisfaction the adoption by the General Assembly of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. That decision, supported by an overwhelming majority of States, showed that it was possible to strengthen peace and prepare the way for progress for future generations. He appealed to all countries to ratify the Treaty so that it could enter into force as soon as possible. He welcomed the fact that more and more countries the world over were concluding safeguards

agreements with the Agency, thereby subjecting themselves to effective controls to ensure that nuclear energy was used properly. Ecuador welcomed in particular the recent conclusion of a safeguards agreement with Chile and the proposed conclusion of a similar agreement with the Czech Republic.

123. As the pilot Internet access plan was coming to an end, the Permanent Mission of Ecuador in Vienna, which had benefited from it, thanked the Secretariat for that initiative that had had important multiplier effects and which, owing to the assistance provided throughout the project, had given access to the Agency's vast database. Now that the project was coming to an end, the beneficiaries had acquired the necessary know-how to continue it on their own.

124. Ecuador was closely following the Agency's activities and would do everything possible to help it fulfil its statutory obligations. As long as it was strengthened and supported by all Member States, the Agency would be capable of assisting them in providing for an easier, safer and more prosperous life for their populations and future generations.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.