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

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Abbreviations used in this record

ARCAL	Regional Co-operative Arrangements for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America
Basic Safety Standards	International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
CTBTO	Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
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
Rarotonga Treaty	South Pacific Nuclear 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
TCDC	Technical co-operation among developing countries
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
Vienna Convention	Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage (May 1963)

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

1. Mr. LEKIĆ (Bosnia and Herzegovina), after welcoming the Republic of Moldova, said that Bosnia and Herzegovina had been a member of the Agency for only a year, and that peace, or rather the absence of war, had prevailed in his country for less than a year. The consequences of the brutal aggression that Bosnia and Herzegovina had suffered were evident throughout its territory. As the victim of such aggression, and having sustained enormous loss of life and considerable destruction, Bosnia and Herzegovina knew only too well the uses to which weapons could be put. It therefore felt fully entitled to appeal to the General Conference, as it had often done in many other cases, for nuclear energy to be used for peaceful purposes for the benefit of mankind, and not for destructive ends. Thus, it strongly supported the NPT and believed that the Agency had a vital role to play in its implementation, which should be supplemented by the efforts of all parties in the field of nuclear disarmament as well.

2. The Agency's efforts to strengthen its safeguards system and the results it had achieved represented a very important contribution to the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and constituted a means of neutralizing weapons programmes. It was therefore important to expand the Agency's access to relevant information and sites.

3. Full support should also be given to the Agency's current or planned activities to combat illegal trafficking in nuclear material, which was a threat to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

4. Promoting the peaceful and safe application of nuclear technology in different areas such as human health, environmental protection and industry should be one of the Agency's main objectives, and it was one that required effective co-operation between Member States and also between different international organizations. The activities carried out by the Agency in that regard had already produced good results. The assistance it provided to developing countries was particularly valuable and must be maintained. Bosnia and Herzegovina was a developing country which had been

devastated and it needed help in a number of areas of the Agency's activities. It had therefore asked for the Agency's support in implementing several projects related to the use of nuclear energy in the areas of health, environmental protection, industry and education.

5. Bosnia and Herzegovina was experiencing severe problems owing to the aggression and destruction that it had suffered. In certain areas of the country which had been under siege for long periods - some of them for almost four years - it was not even possible to carry out dosimetric monitoring of radiation workers. A number of sealed radiation sources had been destroyed, and some had disappeared with no information being available as to their whereabouts. The review and updating of the register of radiation sources was therefore one of the highest priorities. The policy in ex-Yugoslavia had been such that no waste management activities had been carried out and no disposal facilities had been available.

6. Before the period of aggression, Bosnia and Herzegovina had had six nuclear medicine clinics. Their activities had been reduced considerably for different reasons, including lack of material, obsolete equipment, or the departure of some of the specialist staff. The restoration of nuclear medicine to an acceptable level would enable the minimum requirements for diagnostic nuclear services to be met. Reviving the radiotherapy services would also improve the quality of certain treatments.

7. The resumption and expansion of the use of isotopes for non-destructive testing were important to the recovery of industry in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and some activities were already under way in that regard.

8. Following a request for assistance made to the Agency, a fact-finding mission had been sent to Sarajevo, although at that time travelling within the country had still been difficult. Bosnia and Herzegovina appreciated the Agency's decision and the efforts made by the mission. After that visit, the mission had submitted a report and recommendations on projects to be undertaken under the technical assistance and co-operation programme. Several expert missions had also been organized. Bosnia and

Herzegovina hoped that the recommendations made by those missions would be accepted and that implementation of the projects could begin as soon as possible.

9. In addition, Bosnia and Herzegovina would like to participate in some of the regional projects concerned with radiation monitoring and protection, and human resources development. It would also welcome bilateral co-operation and support from Member States. In order to co-ordinate all the activities in that area, the Government had established the Committee for Atomic Energy.

10. In conclusion, he reaffirmed his country's support for the Agency and its objectives in connection with the peaceful use of nuclear energy and thanked the Agency and its staff for the help they had given to Bosnia and Herzegovina

11. Mr. YENNIMATAS (Greece), having welcomed the Republic of Moldova to the Agency and having thanked the Director General and his staff for the work done over the past year in spite of financial constraints, said that his country fully endorsed the Agency's Annual Report for 1995. In addition, he associated himself with the statement made by the representative of Ireland on behalf of the European Union. Since the last session of the General Conference, the international community had continued its efforts towards international peace and security and the Agency had contributed to that process in a number of its main spheres of activity. The decision taken in 1995 to extend the NPT indefinitely and unconditionally, the political commitment to conclude the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the recent establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa and the progress made on disarmament issues placed the Agency at the forefront of international attention.

12. The international commitment of countries to nuclear non-proliferation was demonstrated by their accession to the NPT and verified by the application of Agency safeguards. Greece had been one of the first countries to accede to the NPT and to accept the Agency's comprehensive safeguards. It continued to have confidence in that Treaty and was strongly in favour of its universality as it was bound to become the main cornerstone of international law in the twenty-first century.

13. In spite of the financial constraints to which the Agency had been subjected since 1985, its safeguards system had largely met the expectations of the international community during the first two decades of the NPT's existence. That was reflected in the Agency's safeguards conclusions and in the consensus statements made at all NPT review conferences. The adoption of the Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference had far-reaching implications for the future of the NPT.

14. Greece supported all efforts made to strengthen the Agency's safeguards system and welcomed the establishment by the Board of Governors of a committee to look into that matter. He thanked Ambassador van Ebbenhorst Tengbergen, who had played a crucial role in bringing about the commitment on the part of all States to examine the necessary legal instrument for implementation of Part 2 of Programme 93+2. He hoped that the Committee would conclude its work by the end of 1996 enabling the Director General to implement Part 2 of Programme 93+2 in order to meet the new challenges. The revised safeguards system should not merely sound the alarm after a diversion of nuclear material had occurred. It should also provide assurances not only with respect to declared or clandestine activities, but also with respect to certain precursor activities or research activities that could indicate the existence of a nuclear-weapons programme. In the current international climate, much more was expected of the Agency's safeguards system. Now that the Cold War was over, there was a need for a universal agreement on the importance of non-proliferation and of an effective and credible international safeguards system. However, the basic responsibility for ensuring that those objectives were attained lay with the States concerned. It also depended on the role of the Security Council with regard to non-proliferation and safeguards and on its relationship with the Agency. Administrative reforms within the Agency were necessary to make that new adjustment possible. The success of the new safeguards system depended not only on the sustained political commitment of national Governments, but also on the tireless vigilance of those responsible at the Agency. The Director General had a key role to play in carrying out the necessary reforms.

15. Greece felt that in order to consolidate the NPT and the Agency's safeguards system in future, solid progress on disarmament was necessary. During the past few years, changes on the political scene, which had previously been considered unthinkable, had already led to some progress. However, it was not enough. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty had not yet been adopted by consensus. The Greek Government and people firmly hoped that a stop would be put to nuclear testing and believed that early implementation of the CTBT would increase co-operation and confidence among States and peoples.

16. In the interests of regional stability, thought should also be given to strengthening the measures to avoid the spread of ballistic missile technology and trade. Development of trade in ballistic missiles could easily jeopardize non-proliferation in the near future, particularly with regard to threshold countries.

17. Regional non-proliferation and safeguards arrangements were already foreseen in various treaties. Those arrangements and the concomitant strengthening of regional co-operation would be of some political interest in the case of the Middle East. If progress were made in the Middle East peace process, more progress could be expected in the area of non-proliferation and regional security. The Director General should spare no effort to continue his consultations with the countries of the Middle East and should keep the members of the Agency informed of any progress in that regard. The regional approach should not, however, be a substitute for an international non-proliferation regime.

18. Effective control of exports of nuclear and non-nuclear material and nuclear-related dual-use items was an additional means of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and strengthening the Agency's safeguards system. Greece was participating fully in that control mechanism and accepted that full-scope safeguards were a condition for nuclear supply. It believed that such a control mechanism was not discriminatory and had not been invented to dictate trade rules. Its main objective was to avoid nuclear proliferation and to provide guarantees that nuclear exports were purely for peaceful purposes. Greece urged all States which exported nuclear material or items, or were engaged in their transit, to adopt those arrangements so as to

contribute to international efforts to ensure non-proliferation and to strengthen the Agency's safeguards activities.

19. He noted with satisfaction that the Convention on Nuclear Safety would finally enter into force on 24 October 1996, following ratification by the required number of States. With regard to the convention on the safety of radioactive waste management, Greece had actively participated in the negotiations which should lead to its adoption. Nevertheless, some fundamental questions remained unresolved. The main issue related to spent fuel: from the legal point of view and in terms of the text under discussion, spent fuel should be considered as waste until it entered a reprocessing facility. His delegation appealed to States which opposed that view to make a serious effort to understand the concerns of countries like Greece. If that question could finally be resolved, the draft convention might soon be submitted for approval at a diplomatic conference.

20. On the issue of liability for nuclear damage, the Standing Committee on Liability for Nuclear Damage had met a number of times without reaching a final conclusion. Although some progress had been made, a number of problems remained unresolved. Greece regretted that a number of States believed that the Standing Committee's current mandate only authorized it to discuss the revision of the Vienna Convention. In view of the fact that the lifetime of nuclear reactors in the world was increasing significantly and that old reactors were still in operation, representing a real danger for all, liability questions could not be covered by simply revising the Vienna Convention. A separate convention on supplementary funding was more than necessary.

21. He was grateful to the Agency's Secretariat, and the Department of Technical Co-operation in particular, for the technical assistance provided to his country, even if the quality of that assistance was frequently well below that provided to countries with a similar or higher level of nuclear development. Greece could in fact practically be considered a donor country. A large number of scientists from developing countries had been trained in Greece and Greek experts had participated in a number of

technical missions organized by the Agency. However, the use of Greek experts for such missions could be increased.

22. Together with the countries of the European Union, Greece had often expressed increasing concern about illicit trafficking in nuclear material.

23. His Government fully supported the initiative taken by the Agency in June 1995 to seek advice on its programmes and management beyond the year 2000. Once again, his delegation drew attention to the problem of recruitment in the Professional category. Although it understood the difficulties confronting the Director General in that regard, it urged him to pay more attention to the qualifications of the staff who were recruited and to the justified complaints of some Member States.

24. In conclusion, Greece approved the Agency's Annual Report for 1995 and the Programme and Budget for 1997 and 1998. While the budget should, as far as possible, be kept within the limits of zero real growth, that should not be to the detriment of the new enlarged tasks under Programme 93+2 and under the nuclear safety and nuclear waste management programme that might fall to the Agency as a result of urgent needs. He reiterated that his country's national policy was based on non-proliferation and nuclear safety in general, peaceful co-existence with all nations, in particular with its neighbours, mutual respect and co-operation.

25. Mr. AL-ATHEL (Saudi Arabia) said that the Agency had a vital role to play in promoting the nuclear option and disseminating the peaceful applications of nuclear techniques in developing countries. It should therefore take the necessary measures to deal with the potential risks of nuclear practices and illicit trafficking in nuclear material and other radioactive sources, to promulgate safety and radiation protection standards and requirements, to strive for nuclear safety and to establish an international regime of liability for nuclear damage. Saudi Arabia appealed to Member States to support the Agency in the efforts it made to those ends and to accede to the Convention on Nuclear Safety.

26. He was pleased to note that technical co-operation with his country was being carried out on a permanent basis. A regional course on assessment of potential

radiation exposure of workers would be organized in Riyadh from 9 to 23 November 1996. Nevertheless, it was regrettable that the financing of technical co-operation had not yet reached an acceptable level and was hindering the implementation of certain programmes. He hoped that Member States would work together to arrive at a formula enabling technical co-operation to be financed through the Regular Budget in such a way as to ensure that programmes could be implemented.

27. With regard to the financial situation, the Agency was suffering from delays in the payment of contributions to the Regular Budget. Notwithstanding that insoluble problem, the Agency was putting forward proposals to expand safeguards activities, although Member States had not yet finished examining the question of their financing. His delegation reiterated what it had said in the Board of Governors, namely that it should take its time in implementing the Part 2 measures of Programme 93+2 to enable it to examine beforehand the results of application of Part 1 of that Programme. Similarly, in view of the economic and political developments in Member States, the Agency would have to maintain zero growth in its Budget and take heed of the experience of UNIDO, which had managed to adapt to the situation created by a financial crisis lasting approximately one year.

28. He also reaffirmed that the control mechanism foreseen in the NPT made it possible to verify that States were meeting their non-proliferation commitments without detriment to their legitimate right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Consequently, there was reason to hope that the necessary confidence would be achieved in the Middle East region for the establishment of peace and security through the accession by all the countries of the region to the NPT and their commitment to apply comprehensive safeguards. In the same vein, Saudi Arabia welcomed the fact that the General Assembly had adopted, one week before the Agency's General Conference, a resolution on the cessation of nuclear testing, and trusted that the States concerned would honour their commitments.

29. In conclusion, he recalled his country's position with regard to the amendment of Article VI of the Statute, namely that Saudi Arabia was in favour of expanding the composition of the Board of Governors, particularly to the benefit of the Middle East

and South Asia region, which was the most under-represented on the Board despite its geographical importance and the size of its population.

30. Mr. PALADE (Romania), after welcoming the admission of the Republic of Moldova to the Agency, noted that the current session of the General Conference was taking place at a time when conditions favoured the intensification of efforts in the area of the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy. The international community was in the process of adopting new and effective measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Those measures constituted an important step towards the establishment of a denuclearized world.

31. Having associated himself with the statement made by the delegate of Ireland on behalf of the European Union and associated countries, he said that with the commissioning in April 1995 of the first unit of the Cernavoda nuclear power plant, Romania had joined the group of nuclear-power producers. The unit was currently operating at 75% of capacity, and it was estimated that by the end of October it would be operating at full capacity, i.e. 660 MW(e). The event was one of special significance for Romania. Unit 1 of the Cernavoda plant would make a substantial contribution towards improving Romania's energy balance by providing some 8% of its annual electricity production. The plant was the result of successful collaboration with companies from Canada, Italy, the United States and other countries, with support from the Governments of Romania and the countries mentioned. Romania was also grateful to the Agency for the competent and effective assistance it had provided for the unit's commissioning.

32. The Cernavoda plant had to operate safely and without harming the environment, and the Romanian Government was aware of its responsibility in that regard. The fabrication process at the Pitesti nuclear fuel plant had been developed with those considerations in mind. Romania hoped that for the construction and commissioning, by the year 2000, of Unit 2 of the Cernavoda nuclear power plant, it would again receive technical assistance from the Agency. Such assistance was particularly important in view of the difficult conditions that Romania was experiencing

owing to the fact that it was in a period of transition. The assistance would also make it possible to strengthen Romania's nuclear supervisory and licensing body.

33. At present, the main objectives of Romania's National Atomic Energy Agency were: evaluation of the nuclear fuel cycle for CANDU reactors and identification of solutions for the nuclear facilities at the Cernavoda plant; evaluation of the possible options for improving performance and nuclear safety in CANDU-type nuclear power plants; and assessment of the possibilities for participation by Romanian industry in the construction of units 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the Cernavoda plant.

34. Over the past year, Romania had continued its peaceful nuclear activities relating to reactor physics, materials physics, radiobiology, radioecology and the use of isotopes and radiation, in areas such as agriculture, medicine, industry and hydrology. For Romania, the Agency's technical assistance and co-operation programme remained a very effective means of technology transfer that was beneficial to the development of the nuclear sector in Romania. Given the problems that it was currently facing, Romania would like the technical assistance it received to be increased in 1997, or at least maintained at the same level as in 1996.

35. Pursuant to a resolution adopted by the thirty-ninth regular session of the Agency's General Conference, Romania's National Atomic Energy Agency had provided the Secretariat with a list of Romanian experts who could be assigned to Agency technical co-operation activities. Romania hoped that the Agency would make efficient use of their services. The intention was to contribute to the promotion of the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy in other countries.

36. Romania fully supported the measures by which the Agency intended to strengthen the non-proliferation regime in the context of the indefinite extension of the NPT. It was determined to continue applying in good faith the measures provided for in Part 1 of Programme 93+2. It was granting the Agency's inspectors multiple-entry visas in order to enable them to carry out no-notice inspections at the nuclear facilities on its territory. In addition, the owners of those facilities were simplifying the procedure for access to locations containing nuclear material.

37. The Romanian Government had endorsed the Agency's proposed measures for strengthening the existing system of nuclear material accounting and control by submitting information on the construction and modification of nuclear facilities and on specific items of nuclear equipment and material.

38. Like the European Union, Romania believed that it was important to draw up a draft model Protocol to the existing comprehensive safeguards agreements in order to improve the Agency's monitoring of nuclear material and facilities. The draft model Protocol submitted by the Secretariat constituted a sound basis for elaborating the final text. The discussions which had already taken place and the amendments submitted by certain delegations showed that that important problem was being handled responsibly. Romania hoped that at the next meetings, well-balanced formulas acceptable to all parties would be found so that the Protocol could be adopted as soon as possible by the Agency's Member States. Its adoption would constitute another very important step towards consolidating the non-proliferation regime.

39. Romania supported the adoption of measures to strengthen the safe operation of nuclear facilities and the safe storage of nuclear waste. It welcomed the imminent entry into force of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, and was determined to fulfil its responsibilities as a party to that Convention. It was also ready to contribute to the finalization of the Protocol to amend the Vienna Convention and to the work on the draft convention on supplementary funding. Likewise, it was participating in the negotiations to establish a convention on the safety of radioactive waste management. Finally, the Romanian Government was giving its full attention to the expansion of international co-operation to prevent illicit trafficking in nuclear materials and other radiation sources, and to measures to combat such trafficking.

40. In conclusion, he reiterated his delegation's support for the Agency's programmes and activities aimed at promoting the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy and preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

41. Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN (Bangladesh) said that his country was committed both to promoting the utilization of nuclear energy for exclusively peaceful purposes

and to pursuing unequivocally the goal of nuclear disarmament. He hoped that the international community would be able to harness the dividends of the end of the Cold War by establishing an environment in which countries could peacefully co-exist and co-operate to achieve the equitable development of all nations. The vast majority of the global population, particularly in the developing countries, was still deprived of the benefits of science and technology. Since no economic growth, even on a modest scale, was possible without an increase in energy demand, it was surprising that the developing countries had shown but little interest in nuclear power programmes, despite their obvious advantages over the alternatives. He urged the Agency to take the initiative in that area. It was in a good position to convince suppliers and potential donors of the need to increase the share of the nuclear sector in electricity generation, and to persuade all those involved that nuclear power was safe, economic, reliable and environmentally friendly, that it could be used without risk by personnel in developing countries, that technical options for waste management were available, and that such projects were financially viable.

42. His country deeply appreciated the Agency's recent efforts relating to the application of reliable non-destructive nuclear techniques, in particular the use of radioactive tracers to assess groundwater reserves and monitor water quality and moisture content in the soil. A thorough knowledge of groundwater reserves and their depletion and recharging patterns would enable many countries to formulate policies and strategies aimed at ensuring optimum and sustainable utilization of groundwater for the supply of potable water and irrigation. A separate programme of model studies on groundwater in deltaic formations would benefit many countries. Bangladesh, which suffered from acute water shortages, eagerly looked forward to Agency participation in a programme of that kind.

43. Bangladesh was proud to be among the first 25 States which had ratified, accepted or approved the Convention on Nuclear Safety, and it welcomed the fact that the latter would enter into force in October 1996. Nuclear safety activities in Bangladesh had intensified since the enactment in 1993 of the nuclear Safety and Radiation control law. In connection with that law nuclear regulations had been

drafted in line with the Agency's Basic Safety Standards. The authorities were in the process of strengthening the infrastructure and training the necessary staff. Bangladesh looked forward to receiving Agency assistance with the implementation of the Convention.

44. His country was sincerely grateful to the Agency for the support it had given to its various national R&D programmes on the peaceful uses of atomic energy. It was endeavouring to use the results of those programmes in various sectors: application of non-destructive testing techniques in industry, provision of health care through nuclear medicine centres and the Institute of Nuclear Medicine, elementary analyses, maintenance of electronic equipment, environmental monitoring, radiation protection and food preservation. It continued to attach great importance to the Agency's technical assistance programme. The support which the latter had provided over the years was a testimony to the mutual trust that existed between his country and the Agency. He hoped that that assistance would continue to grow and diversify.

45. Bangladesh was actively involved in the various activities which were being conducted under the RCA, in particular the co-ordinated research programmes. Those activities should be strengthened since they offered opportunities for exchange of experience at a regional level. In that regard, he mentioned the projects relating to the application of nuclear techniques in industry, medicine, agriculture and other sectors, and the project on energy and nuclear power. With respect to the latter project, he felt that it should be expanded to help countries participating in the RCA meet the needs of their energy development programmes. His country was making a modest contribution to the Agency's technical co-operation programme by making available its experts and training facilities, in line with the spirit of TCDC.

46. His country had always paid its contributions to the Technical Co-operation Fund in full and had pledged the full amount for 1997. In conclusion, he welcomed the Republic of Moldova as a new member of the Agency, and congratulated the Agency on its fortieth anniversary.

47. Mr. NITENBERG (Estonia), after welcoming the Republic of Moldova as a new member of the Agency, reconfirmed his country's full support for the cause of nuclear disarmament. In the preceding year, during the thirty-ninth session of the Agency's General Conference, several delegations had welcomed the results of the NPT Review and Extension Conference and had deplored the continuation of nuclear weapons testing. During the current session, they were welcoming the broad adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, including that of the five nuclear-weapon States, while deploring the failure to reach consensus at the Conference on Disarmament and at the United Nations General Assembly. Nevertheless, remarkable progress had been made in nuclear disarmament since the preceding session of the General Conference and all were in favour of the early entry into force of the CTBT.

48. As an associated member of the European Union, Estonia supported the statement which had been made by the representative of Ireland on behalf of the Union. The problems in Estonia which came within the Agency's scope of activities were: the presence of military nuclear facilities inherited from the past, inadequate storage and disposal facilities for radioactive waste, uranium ore mining and processing tailings and the resultant contamination of the north-east part of the country.

49. All those problems required Agency intervention at different levels: the drafting of basic legal texts, the provision of expert services to develop technical solutions and, lastly and most importantly, the provision of assistance with the implementation of those solutions. Estonia was grateful to the Agency for the assistance it had provided in the past and looked forward to fruitful co-operation in the future. The Agency's programmes of assistance to States in Central and Eastern Europe which had either been implemented or which were being developed gave grounds for optimism in that regard.

50. Estonia was situated in a region where there was a threat of illicit trafficking in radioactive and nuclear material. For that reason, it had strengthened its border and customs controls. International co-operation on the tightening of such controls was one way of fighting the proliferation of nuclear weapons. His country had participated

in the drafting of the convention on the safety of radioactive waste management, paying special attention to the problems of radioactive waste of military origin and to the suppression of illicit transboundary trafficking in radioactive waste and nuclear material. It hoped that the conclusion of the drafting process would not be delayed by the absence of consensus on those issues.

51. Guaranteeing an environmentally clean Baltic Sea area had been the focus of the working group on nuclear and radiation safety of the Committee of Senior Officials of the Council of the Baltic Sea States. After defuelling the two nuclear submarine reactors in Estonia, his country, in collaboration with eight other Baltic Sea States, had been concentrating on the safety problems posed by operating nuclear power plants.

52. Presenting the goals of Estonia's foreign policy in the nuclear safety area, he noted that the establishment of a reliable global safeguards system was the most important task of the future. Only a reliable safeguards system could eliminate the danger of nuclear terrorism, which had acquired an even greater priority than the risk of global nuclear war. Estonia fully supported Programme 93+2 and was ready to collaborate on the implementation of Part 1 and Part 2 of that Programme.

53. In conclusion, he paid tribute to the competent and devoted work of the Director General and the staff of the Agency.

54. Mr. JUAREZ TOLEDO (Guatemala), after welcoming the Republic of Moldova as a new member of the Agency, said that his country was of the opinion that nuclear energy applications made a valuable contribution to its development and helped extend the benefits of that development more swiftly to its population. When the General Directorate for Nuclear Energy (DGEN) had initiated its first projects to promote nuclear techniques 14 years previously, it had been careful to ensure adequate radiological protection of the population, the environment and occupationally exposed staff. A legal framework for radiation protection was in force to ensure that those objectives were met.

55. Guatemala was demonstrating its commitment to continued development of nuclear techniques by organizing national and regional courses and by receiving

fellowship holders. That co-operation also helped enhance the knowledge, technical assistance, equipment and guidance which had been provided to Guatemala by the Agency and a number of friendly countries.

56. Reaffirming Guatemala's support for the ARCAL programme, he noted that his country had been selected on several occasions to organize regional meetings, and that it had tried to prove itself worthy of that honour by ensuring a high level of organization.

57. With regard to nuclear medicine, the nuclear medicine unit of the San Juan de Dios General Hospital was performing dynamic scintigraphy studies for diagnostic purposes with a view to ensuring that therapy was effective.

58. In the agricultural sector, the DGEN had developed improved plant varieties using biotechnology and radiation-induced mutation. The agricultural research that had been carried out had helped improve the nutritional quality of the bean, which was part of the staple diet of the Guatemalan population, and to produce varieties of wheat that were more resistant to the mechanical effects of wind, thereby yielding better harvests. Varieties of sugar cane with a higher yield had also been produced.

59. In the industrial sector, the DGEN had established a nuclear analysis laboratory, a non-destructive testing laboratory and a gamma spectrometry laboratory. The nuclear analysis laboratory was capable of performing fast qualitative and quantitative multi-element analyses for the metallurgical, mining, food and petroleum industries. The non-destructive testing laboratory, which offered techniques for the monitoring of metallic parts and structures, was currently working on a quality control programme for propane gas bottles. The gamma spectrometry laboratory was implementing radiological monitoring programmes in the country by taking soil, water and food samples with a view to detecting any radioactive discharges from nuclear power plants in neighbouring countries. In addition, it was responsible for certifying that foodstuffs from countries where nuclear accidents had occurred were not radioactively contaminated.

60. With regard to the environment, the use of traditional chemical techniques and the development of techniques such as those employing radioactive tracers had made possible studies of contamination and eutrophication in various bodies of water in the country. In particular, liquid waste discharged in the north and south of Guatemala City and the quality of water supplies to the city had been characterized in order to determine to what extent they were contaminated by the cholera morbus bacillus and to perform studies of small-scale treatment of waste water using irradiation.

61. In the field of radiation protection, the Guatemalan Government had promulgated the nuclear law and regulations on licensing, and it was in the process of issuing regulations on radioactive waste, radiation protection and the transport of radioactive material. The Government intended to use that legislation to strengthen radiation safety programmes in order to meet the country's needs in that area. With regard to radioactive waste, the construction of a management and storage centre was nearing completion and it was expected that it would enter into service in 1997. That centre would collect all radioactive material which was no longer being used and which had already been located and recorded. In addition, the licensing process had been initiated for radiodiagnostic facilities in the public hospital network, which were one of the main sources of exposure for the public.

62. The collaboration of the Agency had contributed substantially to the development of nuclear applications in Guatemala. Consequently, it was the wish of the Guatemalan Government that a balance should be maintained in the distribution of the Agency's resources so that the maximum number of requests for assistance could be met. Moreover, it was committed to supporting technical assistance projects in order to ensure that the planned objectives were achieved.

63. In conclusion, on behalf of the Guatemalan Government and people, he thanked the Agency sincerely for its assistance and commended the Director General and his staff on their efforts and the results they had achieved during the preceding year.

64. Mr. CIBILS (Uruguay) thanked the Director General for his clear and comprehensive report and commended the Secretariat on the unremitting efforts it was

making to enable the General Conference to proceed with its usual success. He also welcomed the Republic of Moldova to the Agency.

65. Uruguay was particularly pleased that the Convention on Nuclear Safety would enter into force the following month. The various provisions and obligations foreseen under the Convention would help increase public confidence in nuclear energy.

66. With regard to safeguards, the necessary complement to nuclear safety, the Secretariat's efforts to move ahead with Programme 93+2 were especially commendable. That Programme represented a challenge that Member States should take up in order to increase the effectiveness of an activity that all deemed to be vital to the maintenance of world peace. His delegation wholeheartedly supported what had already been said by other delegations regarding the importance of the universality and transparency of safeguards. It also reiterated its concern about the possible impact of the costs of implementing Programme 93+2 on the resources earmarked for the transfer of technology to developing countries.

67. His delegation had been pleased to learn that the nuclear-weapons States were negotiating with the Agency ways of exercising greater control over their fissile material. It hoped that those initiatives would help achieve the objective of total nuclear disarmament. In that regard, it welcomed the fact that the CTBTO Secretariat would have its seat in Vienna.

68. With regard to the amendment of Article VI of the Statute, his delegation would support any solution which did not mean a reduction in the representation of the developing countries, particularly of those in Latin America, and it supported, in principle, the view that the number of members of the Board should correspond to approximately one third of the number of Agency Member States. He took the opportunity to reiterate that it was unacceptable to differentiate between the opinions of States on the basis of their economic capability or their level of nuclear development. Account should continue to be taken of other criteria which had been shown to be equally valid.

69. With regard to technical co-operation, he said that his country considered itself a privileged beneficiary of the various services offered by the Agency. Uruguay thanked the Departments of the Agency, particularly the Department of Technical Co-operation and the Department of Research and Isotopes, the Departments with which it maintained the closest contacts. It also appreciated the devotion and competence demonstrated by the Agency's staff in carrying out their functions.

70. He was grateful to all those countries which paid voluntary contributions to the Technical Co-operation Fund and underlined in particular the efforts made by countries with modest economic resources. His Government would do its best to pay the contributions pledged by Uruguay as soon as possible.

71. Uruguay firmly supported the regional efforts undertaken since 1984, when the ARCAL programme had been created, and was looking forward to the meetings to consider the future of that programme. The strong impetus that ARCAL had given to regional co-operation could only strengthen the capability of Latin America and the Caribbean, help promote other bilateral initiatives and even encourage subregional initiatives.

72. He also took the opportunity to express Uruguay's gratitude for the considerable support it had received from foreign companies and organizations over the past year, particularly ENRESA (the Spanish National Radioactive Waste Company), the Spanish Nuclear Safety Council and the French Commissariat à l'énergie atomique.

73. Uruguay was undertaking various measures to strengthen all aspects of radiation safety. A draft law to establish an appropriate legal framework in that area was being examined by the Uruguayan Parliament. Uruguay was also at an advanced stage in implementation of a programme to find a definitive solution to the problem of radioactive waste, which, although the quantities involved were small, was of great public concern. With valuable co-operation from the Agency, it was in the process of resolving various radiation protection problems and anticipated completing that task in the coming year.

74. Uruguay was training its staff and building up its technical equipment in a number of fields of the application of nuclear techniques through various national and regional projects. Uruguayan technicians had gained a well-earned regional and international reputation and were ready to provide their services to any country which needed them.

75. In conclusion, he reaffirmed that his country was proud to be a member of the Agency, an organization which throughout the forty years of its existence had shown that it was capable of making major contributions to the well-being of humanity through a technology which, because it seemed mysterious to the common man, gave rise to negative discussions and campaigns which should be fought. Uruguay undertook to carry on contributing to the Agency's outstanding work.

76. Mr. KAYSER (Luxembourg), fully endorsing the statement made by Ireland on behalf of the European Union and associated countries, said that Luxembourg, as a non-nuclear country but with an extremely large nuclear power plant right at its border, was very interested in the Agency's activities in the fields of nuclear safety and liability for nuclear damage.

77. Luxembourg had therefore taken an active part in the elaboration of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, which it had signed in 1994 and which would enter into force on 24 October 1996. One of the main elements of that Convention was periodic review of national reports on the safety of nuclear power plants in order to verify compliance by all the Contracting Parties with its provisions. The preparatory meeting, which would have to be held in the course of the following seven months, would inter alia establish the modalities for reviewing national reports at the meetings of the Contracting Parties. Those meetings should ensure both in-depth and effective review and transparency. Luxembourg also felt it was important that its experts had the right to participate in the review of the national reports of countries of the region and, in general, of countries of its choice.

78. As to liability for nuclear damage, and in particular the draft Protocol amending the Vienna Convention and the draft convention on supplementary funding, the

Standing Committee had indeed made some progress, but a number of key problems had not yet been resolved satisfactorily. His delegation could not subscribe to certain tendencies whereby nuclear damage requiring compensation was defined differently in the two above-mentioned legal instruments and definitions even diverged within the same instrument, namely the draft convention on supplementary funding, depending on whether national or international funds were to be distributed. It hoped that good sense would prevail and that inspiration would be drawn from recent international conventions with respect to the definition of damage to be compensated.

79. With regard to the strengthening of the safeguards system, and particularly Part 2 of Programme 93+2, the problem was to give the Agency the necessary means to detect clandestine nuclear activities. In order to do so - and as confirmed by international experience - States had to provide the Agency with additional information on their nuclear activities and their exports and imports, and the Agency should be granted additional powers to carry out, if necessary, inspections at both undeclared and nuclear sites.

80. His delegation therefore appealed to all States, including the nuclear-weapon States, to take an active part in that strengthened regime in the future, because it was only on the basis of such a universal and just regime that the international community could attain the goal it had set itself. Such an international regime also required that States themselves controlled the nuclear or dual-use material and equipment that it exported or which was in transit in their territory. Luxembourg had established the necessary legislation and structures to carry out that type of control.

81. In conclusion, Luxembourg was convinced that implementation of international and national non-proliferation measures as a whole would help contribute effectively to peace and security.

82. Mr. MAZI (Albania), having welcomed the Republic of Moldova to the Agency, recalled that Albania had been benefiting from the Agency's co-operation and assistance for 20 years. Although a founding member of the Agency, it had not really participated in the Agency's programmes until the mid-1970's. That situation was by

no means the fault of the Agency, but attributable to Albania's total voluntary isolation. In 1973-74 Albania had taken the first steps to carry out a tiny project in the field of nuclear medicine and had started sending Albanian specialists on training courses. In the 1980s technical assistance officers had opened the way to various projects: utilization of nuclear techniques in agriculture, nuclear analytical techniques, measurement of environmental radioactivity, radiation protection and training of local experts in related fields. By the end of the 1980s, exchanges with the Agency had increased considerably. The Institute of Nuclear Physics at the Academy of Sciences in Tirana, the national focal point for the transfer of nuclear know-how, had - through its very close and effective co-operation with the Agency and local research establishments - enabled Albania inter alia to gain expertise in isotope methods to study water and mineral resources, to set up a nuclear medicine service at the Central University Hospital in the capital, to use irradiation to improve polymer quality, and to apply radiobiological techniques. It was currently extending the application and improving the treatment of radiopharmaceuticals, creating an effective network for environmental monitoring and the control of radioactivity in foodstuffs for import and export, and carrying out sedimentology studies.

83. In addition, Albania was one of the first countries where a Model Project concept had been implemented. The commitment of both the Agency and the Albanian Government to the success of the Model Project on radiation protection infrastructure strengthening had ensured considerable progress, which augured well for the future.

84. Albania considered regional co-operation to be a very positive development, particularly with regard to regional projects, which - it went without saying - were extremely useful. He thanked the Department of Technical Co-operation for the tremendous efforts it had made to bring that co-operation up to a satisfactory level, although the interests of the different countries could and should be given more consideration and be better harmonized within the framework of that co-operation.

85. Albania was grateful to the Agency for the technical assistance it had provided in the transfer of technology, information and training of specialists in fields of

particular interest for the utilization of national resources. While much had been done with regard to the training of specialists by or through the Agency, more remained to be done. Sometimes progress was smooth, but sometimes it was seriously hampered, even by some very close and friendly countries which confronted Albanian experts with administrative obstacles, even when the necessary documents had been provided by the Agency. Albania hoped that that situation could be remedied.

86. Albania currently had no nuclear programme or nuclear reactors. Nevertheless, it followed closely and supported the Agency's very diversified activities, which, despite major difficulties that sometimes arose were very fruitful. It would continue to support those activities, convinced that the Agency was making an enormous contribution to the peaceful use of the atom.

87. While supporting the Agency's activities in general, Albania was particularly appreciative of the work of the working group on Article VI of the Statute. It believed that it was time that the Board properly reflected the Agency's membership and for specific steps to be taken in that direction. For that reason Albania had co-sponsored the draft resolution presented by Morocco.

88. For basically technical reasons, and because of the wide-ranging reforms it had had to make to its national legislation over the past four years, Albania had not been able to sign many of the conventions in Agency-related fields of activity. It was not, however, in any way opposed to those conventions. The problem was in no way attributable to political motivations, but was simply a bureaucratic one which the Government planned to deal with as soon as the elaboration of its internal legislation allowed it. The Agency would be regularly informed of progress in that regard.

89. In conclusion, his delegation shared the Director General's concerns about contributions. Albania had not paid its contributions in full but, in spite of its economic difficulties, had taken steps to pay part of its arrears. He assured the Director General and the General Conference that his country would continue to attach particular importance to that matter and would in due course make every effort to meet its

commitments. In the meantime, Albania would continue to play as active a role as possible in the Agency's activities and to lend them its full support.

90. Mr. de MENDONÇA E MOURA (Portugal) welcomed the Republic of Moldova as a new member of the Agency and fully associated himself with the statement made by the representative of Ireland on behalf of the European Union.

91. Having supported the indefinite extension of the NPT, the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation regime, Portugal was pleased to note that the number of nuclear-weapon-free zones was increasing. It welcomed the signature by France and the United Kingdom of the Protocols to the Rarotonga Treaty, as well as the conclusion of the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, the consolidation of the Tlatelolco Treaty and, above all, the signature of the Pelindaba Treaty, which was of relevance to a continent with which Portugal had special ties of friendship and solidarity. He hoped that those developments would continue and that the Director General would maintain his efforts in that direction.

92. Portugal was also extremely pleased to welcome the entry into force of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, which it had signed in October 1994 and which was being ratified. That Convention signalled major progress towards the establishment of a global nuclear safety system which, he hoped, would soon be supplemented by other similar international instruments such as the convention on the safety of radioactive waste management, the text of which was being drawn up by specialists who had met on a number of occasions. The spirit of co-operation between Agency members should lead to satisfactory solutions which, without underestimating the complex technical and financial problems that needed to be overcome, would help respond to the legitimate concerns of the general public. Aspects relating to military waste and the management of spent fuel should also be reviewed and resolved in the same spirit of conciliation.

93. Portugal had benefited from the Agency's co-operation, which had helped it develop its technical capabilities with regard to the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy. While it supported the Agency's activities in that field and welcomed, in

particular, the establishment of the Standing Advisory Group on Technical Assistance and Co-operation and the introduction of model projects, it also hoped that criteria enabling prior evaluation of technical co-operation projects would be clearly defined in order to find a balance between the needs of beneficiary countries and the priorities of the Agency's technical co-operation programme. Portugal was ready to support the Agency in its promotional activities, particularly through the organization of fellowships and by making its experts available for training activities.

94. He drew particular attention to the programme to combat the Mediterranean fruitfly using the sterile insect technique, which was about to be implemented on Madeira. The experience thus gained in Portugal could be applied by the Agency in many other countries.

95. Portugal was participating actively in the work of the International Consultative Group on Food Irradiation, established within the framework of Agency and FAO joint activities. It was soon to host two meetings of experts on that topic; it was an area of activity which raised great hopes and which could have an important economic impact. Finally, his delegation drew attention to the problem of the lack of potable water which was becoming more and more acute in the entire world. Desertification was on the increase, aggravating the economic and social problems of the countries affected. Portugal was therefore following with great interest Agency activities relating to the production of potable water and intensive use of isotope hydrology in the management of water resources.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS (GC(40)/7 and 24)

96. The PRESIDENT recalled that in 1989 the General Conference had approved a procedure whereby, when there was agreement regarding the candidate or candidates from a particular area, no secret ballot was held. That procedure considerably facilitated the efficient use of the General Conference's time. He therefore proposed that Rule 79 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, which provided that elections to the Board should be by secret ballot, be suspended in respect of those areas for which there was agreement.

97. He was happy to report that Member States had reached agreement for all the areas, which would contribute to the smooth functioning of the General Conference and help gain time. Drawing attention to document GC(40)/7, containing a list of the Agency Member States which the Board of Governors had designated to serve on the Board from the end of the present session until the end of the 1997 session, he recalled that, under Rule 83 of the Rules of Procedure, he had to indicate to the General Conference those elective places on the Board which had to be filled. Having drawn attention to document GC(40)/24 he noted that paragraph 2 of that document indicated the number of Member States to be elected for each area so as to ensure that the Board was constituted in accordance with Article VI.A of the Statute and pointed out that the so-called "floating" seat would now be filled by a Member State from South East Asia and the Pacific. Paragraph 3 gave a list of the 24 Member States which had either been designated by the Board of Governors in June pursuant to Article VI.A.1 of the Statute or elected by the General Conference in 1995 in accordance with Article VI.A.2 and would therefore be serving on the Board in 1996-97. In order to facilitate the elections, delegates had been furnished with a note giving the results - as far as they were known - of consultations among the geographical groups. He stressed that the note was informal and purely for information purposes.

98. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Argentina, Cuba and Colombia to the three vacant seats for Latin America.

99. Argentina, Cuba and Colombia were duly elected.

100. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Belgium and Portugal to the two vacant seats for Western Europe.

101. Belgium and Portugal were duly elected.

102. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect the Czech Republic to the vacant seat for Eastern Europe.

103. The Czech Republic was duly elected.

104. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Namibia and Tunisia to the two vacant seats for Africa.

105. Namibia and Tunisia were duly elected.

106. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect the United Arab Emirates to the vacant seat for the Middle East and South East Asia.

107. The United Arab Emirates was duly elected.

108. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Malaysia to the vacant seat for South East Asia and the Pacific.

109. Malaysia was duly elected.

110. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect New Zealand to the "floating" seat for South East Asia and the Pacific.

111. New Zealand was duly elected.

112. The PRESIDENT congratulated the 11 Member States which had just been elected to the Board of Governors. Under Article VI.D of the Statue they would hold office from the end of the current session of the General Conference to the end of the second regular session after next - in other words, to the end of the forty-second regular session in 1998.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.