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President: Mr. RÓNAKY (Hungary)

Contents

Item of the provisional agenda*		Paragraphs
5	Arrangements for the Conference	1–4
	(a) Adoption of the agenda and allocation of items for initial discussion	1–2
	(b) Closing date of the session and opening date of the next session	3–4
–	Restoration of voting rights	5

The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(48)/INF/16/Rev.1

[*] GC(48)/1 and Corr.1 and Add.1.

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Contents (continued)

Item of the provisional agenda*		Paragraphs
7	General debate and annual report for 2003	6–175
	Statements by the delegates of:	
	Bulgaria	6–19
	The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	20–26
	United Kingdom	27–39
	Austria	40–52
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	53–58
	Bolivia	59–64
	Philippines	65–82
	Norway	83–104
	Germany	105–116
	Armenia	117–128
	France	129–153
	Republic of Korea	154–168
	ABACC	169–175

Abbreviations used in this record:

ABACC	Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials
AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARASIA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Arab States in Asia for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARCAL	Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CANDU	Canada deuterium-uranium [reactor]
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
CWC	Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
G-8	Group of Eight
GTRI	Global Threat Reduction Initiative
HEU	high-enriched uranium
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
IPPAS	International Physical Protection Advisory Service
ITER	International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor
Joint Convention	Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management
LEU	low-enriched uranium
MERCOSUR	Southern Cone Common Market
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
PWR	pressurized water reactor
Quadripartite Agreement	Agreement between the Republic of Argentina, the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Application of Safeguards

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

RCA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
TranSAS	Transport Safety Appraisal Service
Transport Regulations	Regulations for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Material
WMD	weapons of mass destruction

5. Arrangements for the Conference

(a) Adoption of the agenda and allocation of items for initial discussion

1. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee had recommended that the agenda for the current session consist of all the items on the provisional agenda set forth in documents GC(48)/1 and Corr.1 and Add.1. With regard to the allocation of items for initial discussion, the Committee had recommended that the items listed in those documents be taken up for initial discussion as indicated there with the exception of item 21, Elections to the Agency's Staff Pension Committee, which should be taken up first in the Committee of the Whole. It had also recommended that the order of items be as proposed in those documents.

2. The General Committee's recommendations were accepted.

(b) Closing date of the session and opening date of the next session

3. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee had recommended that the Conference set Friday, 24 September 2004 as the closing date of the forty-eighth regular session and Monday, 26 September 2005 as the opening date of the forty-ninth regular session, which would be held in Vienna.

4. The Committee's recommendation was accepted.

— Restoration of voting rights

5. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee, which had had before it requests made by Afghanistan, Armenia, Iraq and Kazakhstan for the restoration of their voting rights, had postponed consideration of the requests, and of any other such requests received, until its following meeting.

7. General debate and annual report for 2003

6. Mr. KOVACHEV (Bulgaria), having welcomed the General Conference's approval of Chad, Togo and Mauritania for membership of the Agency, said that his delegation attached great importance to the positions expressed in the statement presented by the delegate of the Netherlands on behalf of the European Union and of — inter alia — the candidate countries, including Bulgaria.

7. Since the beginning of the nuclear age, the risks of nuclear proliferation had changed — and grown. For more than thirty years, the NPT had played a crucial role in deterring nuclear proliferation, and the Agency had remained an independent body indispensable for maintaining the effectiveness of the NPT regime. The importance of the Agency's safeguards system had been underlined in the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 NPT Review Conference.

8. Bulgaria was strongly committed to strengthening the Agency's safeguards system and hence the NPT regime. As a country with operating nuclear power plants, it was cooperating closely with the Agency on issues relating to nuclear security and the physical protection of nuclear material. It had ratified an additional protocol to its NPT safeguards agreement in 2000 and had submitted to the Agency an initial declaration pursuant to the protocol. It would like to see all other States doing the same and welcomed the efforts being made to speed up the conclusion of comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols.

9. Bulgaria considered that minimizing the risk of nuclear terrorism should be a top priority for the international community. It was therefore in favour of multilateral control over the nuclear fuel cycle and of urgent practical measures to strengthen the security and physical protection of nuclear material and facilities. Also, it believed that the trade in nuclear material and equipment for civilian purposes should be subject to strict export control regulations. It commended the efforts being made by many Member States to combat illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive material, and in that regard it welcomed the findings of the Global Threat Reduction Initiative International Partners' Conference.

10. The Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) was extremely important for preventing nuclear proliferation and minimizing the risk of nuclear terrorism, and Bulgaria hoped that the process of amending it would be completed soon.

11. His country's nuclear power reactors were doing much to meet the demand for electricity both within Bulgaria and in nearby countries. Over the past ten years, the Kozloduy nuclear power plant had been accounting for 40–47% of the average annual electricity generation in Bulgaria.

12. In November 2003, the Working Party on Nuclear Safety of the European Council's Atomic Questions Group had reviewed the implementation in Bulgaria of recommendations regarding the Kozloduy nuclear power plant made in 2001 and 2002. It had concluded that Bulgaria's Ministry of Energy and Energy Resources and Nuclear Regulatory Agency and the management of the Kozloduy nuclear power plant had provided sufficient information on the implementation of the recommendations and that all of the recommendations were being adequately addressed by the responsible authorities and implemented according to plan. It did not consider that a further implementation review was necessary.

13. At the end of 2002, the Bulgarian Government had decided that a study should be carried out regarding the feasibility of resuming the construction — at a site near the town of Belene — of a second Bulgarian nuclear power plant. Since then, the feasibility study and an environmental impact assessment had been carried out. After a public discussion in March 2004, it had been concluded that the construction of a second nuclear power plant in Bulgaria had strong support at all levels. In April 2004, the Bulgarian Government had given its approval for the resumption of construction activities at the Belene site. According to the implementation schedule, they would be resumed in 2005 and commercial operation of the first unit of the Belene nuclear power plant would start in 2010.

14. The Agency's technical cooperation programmes were a smoothly functioning mechanism for the transfer of technology to developing Member States, thanks largely to the Secretariat's success in increasing the effectiveness of the programmes and the efficiency with which they were managed.

15. Technical cooperation between Bulgaria and the Agency, especially in the area of nuclear safety, continued to be a matter of high priority for his country, which was particularly grateful to the Department of Technical Cooperation and the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security for providing assistance with the safety upgrading of nuclear facilities, with the development and application of new technologies in the nuclear energy field and with the strengthening of the Bulgarian Nuclear Safety Authority's capabilities.

16. Bulgaria was taking an active part in the Agency's regional technical cooperation programme for Europe, giving high priority to nuclear power and nuclear safety projects.

17. With the Agency's financial support, Bulgarian nuclear specialists had attended international conferences, symposia and seminars and exchanged ideas with colleagues from all over the world. Also, Bulgarian institutes had, through contracts and agreements, taken part in the Agency's coordinated research activities.

18. In addition, Bulgaria was participating in the International Nuclear Information System, the Incident Reporting System and the Power Reactor Information System.

19. In Bulgaria's view, the proposed Regular Budget for 2005 was well-balanced and would ensure full implementation of the Agency's programmes. In spite of financial difficulties, Bulgaria had met in full its obligations in respect of the Regular Budget for 2003 and would be contributing US \$10 000 to the TCF for 2005.

20. Mr. POLOZHANI (The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), having welcomed the approval of Chad, Togo and Mauritania for Agency membership, said that terrorist attacks like those of 11 September 2001 and the recent one in southern Russia had highlighted the global threat of terrorism and the need for cooperation among all States in meeting it. As far as the threat of nuclear terrorism was concerned, his country was placing particular emphasis on preventing the illegal possession of and illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive material. It had installed radiation monitoring equipment at all of its border crossings, but some of the equipment needed upgrading and further training was needed for customs and law enforcement officers.

21. In that connection, his country welcomed the fact that, within the framework of the European Union's Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, it had been identified as a potential recipient of European Union support provided through the Agency.

22. With the Agency's assistance, his country had made significant progress towards compliance with international radiation safety standards. A law on protection against ionizing radiation protection had been passed and the establishment of an independent radiation safety directorate was expected to be completed by the end of the year. His country was looking forward to receiving further Agency assistance, with the focus on the drafting of regulations and a code of practice.

23. His country, which was participating very actively in the Agency's regional technical cooperation programme for Europe, was concerned about the future of the regional project relating to national regulatory control and occupational radiation protection programmes, from which it had derived significant benefit. It hoped that the project would continue, in one form or another, as it needed further assistance in strengthening its arrangements for the regulatory control of radioactive sources.

24. His country, which would soon be hosting a training course — for participants from seven countries — on the use of immunoenzymatic and molecular techniques for the diagnosis of brucellosis in cattle, sheep and goats, greatly appreciated the support which the Agency had provided for efforts to combat that zoonotic disease.

25. The new projects being proposed by his country for the next technical cooperation programme cycle related to nuclear medicine, food safety standards and radiation protection. They were in full compliance with the Country Programme Framework signed in December 2003.

26. Despite national budgetary restrictions, his country, which greatly appreciated the assistance provided through the Department of Technical Cooperation, had met its financial obligations vis-à-vis

the Regular Budget and had made several contributions to the Technical Cooperation Extrabudgetary Fund, to which it would be paying US \$100 000 for use in the next technical cooperation programme.

27. Mr. WRIGHT (United Kingdom) said that the Agency was playing an essential role in helping to ensure global nuclear safety and security and that it could continue to count on the United Kingdom's support in all areas of its work. The United Kingdom regularly paid its Regular Budget contributions and TCF target shares in full and on time, and it would like to see all other Member States doing likewise.

28. The events of the past year had again highlighted the increasing risk of nuclear proliferation. In 2003, the United Kingdom had been among those States which had stressed the importance of the Agency being able to meet the growing challenge through safeguards and other means. It was to be hoped that the European Commission would strengthen its links with the Agency in the coming year in the safeguards area.

29. The Agency had done well to meet a growing verification workload within the constraints of its budget. But it could not be expected to continue forever doing more within the same constraints. Serious consideration needed to be given to further strengthening the Department of Safeguards. The Regular Budget increase agreed in 2003 would deliver some of what the Department badly needed, but more could and should be done.

30. The United Kingdom had made a further voluntary contribution in support of the Agency's safeguards activities. In addition to the £560 000 already provided through its Member State Support Programme, it had donated £1.1 million in support of the IAEA Safeguards Information System re-engineering project. That amount would not be enough on its own, however, and his delegation therefore hoped that other Member States would support the project.

31. Additional protocols were essential if the Agency was to discharge its safeguards responsibilities effectively. However, the rate of entry into force of additional protocols was still disappointing. All Member States that had not yet done so should bring an additional protocol into force, as a matter of urgency.

32. The lessons from the discovery of the A.Q. Khan procurement network were beginning to be clear. The Agency was uniquely well placed to combat such international networks, and all Member States should assist it in its efforts. The United Kingdom was already assisting it. In addition to the provision of information to the Agency as called for by its additional protocol, the United Kingdom was maintaining a close informal dialogue with the Agency in order that the Agency might derive practical benefits from its national experience in, for example, the area of export controls; other Member States should do likewise.

33. On 19 December 2003, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had announced that it would dismantle its WMD programmes — the first time a regime had agreed voluntarily to dismantle its WMD programmes under international supervision in a transparent process. The United Kingdom had cooperated closely with Libya, the United States and the Agency to facilitate the removal from Libya of sensitive nuclear-related equipment and material, and at Libya's request it had provided advice and technical assistance throughout the dismantlement process.

34. The United Kingdom congratulated the Agency on its thoroughness in investigating Libya's past non-compliance and commended Libya for the corrective measures it had taken. The case of Libya demonstrated that, where there was genuine transparency and full cooperation, problems of nuclear proliferation could be resolved through diplomacy and negotiation. It was to be hoped that the small number of remaining questions would be quickly answered, so that it would soon be possible to consider closing the file on Libya.

35. As regards the Islamic Republic of Iran, the United Kingdom was pleased that in the Director General's view the Agency was making steady progress towards understanding that country's nuclear programme. However, there were still serious questions outstanding. His delegation regretted the fact that in the Director General's view Iran's cooperation had not been sufficiently proactive. Iran should give the Agency the information and access which it required in a timely manner. That was a matter not of simply meeting legal obligations but also of demonstrating a willingness to enable the Agency to fulfil its task and so provide the international community with the assurances which it needed about the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. It was now over two years since significant doubts had been openly raised about the purpose of Iran's nuclear programme, and the United Kingdom looked forward to being able in November to reach conclusions about its purpose and decide whether any further steps were required.

36. Iran should also ratify the additional protocol to its safeguards agreement without delay. Ratification would contribute to the process of rebuilding the international community's confidence in Iran's nuclear programme — confidence that had been shattered by Iran's conducting, over an extended period, clandestine nuclear activities.

37. The immediate full suspension of all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, including commissioning tests and any other production-related activities at the Esfahan Uranium Conversion Facility, remained of the utmost importance. The United Kingdom was therefore deeply concerned that Iran had never fully suspended all such activities and had instead shown contempt for the Board's opinion by going back on previously announced commitments. International confidence was not something to be turned on and off like a tap.

38. It is not the United Kingdom's intention to limit the right of Member States under the NPT to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as long as the right was exercised in strict compliance with NPT obligations. Nor did the United Kingdom consider that the suspension of activities was among the legal obligations of Iran or of any other Member State, and it was convinced that the resolution adopted by the Board on 18 September 2004 did not contain such an implication. It regarded that resolution as a final call for full, verifiable suspension. If Iran failed to heed the call, there might in November be no option but to seek the political backing of the Security Council.

39. In March 2005, the Agency would be holding the International Conference on Nuclear Security: Global Directions for the Future in London. That event would provide an important opportunity to review the response to the threat of nuclear terrorism and identify future challenges. The United Kingdom hoped that Member States would make the most of that opportunity.

40. Mr. KYRLE (Austria) said that serious challenges to the nuclear non-proliferation regime in recent years had highlighted the importance of the verification of the compliance of States parties to the NPT with their NPT obligations by the Agency, an organization which Vienna was proud to host.

41. One of the key elements of nuclear security was the physical protection of nuclear material and of nuclear facilities. The Agency's guidance documents on physical protection had served their purpose well. However, the only legally binding instrument, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM), was of very limited scope and did not meet current needs. Austria had therefore strongly supported the Director General's initiative in convening experts to consider possible amendments to the CPPNM and welcomed the results of the experts' March 2003 deliberations. In close consultation with a number of like-minded countries, Austria had prepared an amendment proposal which, in its view, should enjoy very broad support. In May 2004, it had, on behalf of 25 States parties to the CPPNM, submitted the proposal to the Director General, requesting him to convene a diplomatic conference pursuant to CPPNM Article 20. His delegation was confident that many States parties would respond positively to the Director General in that respect, so that the

Secretariat would be able to go ahead with making the necessary arrangements for the diplomatic conference.

42. In the past twelve months, the Board of Governors had dealt extensively with the nuclear proliferation challenges posed by the DPRK, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. The cases in question had clearly demonstrated that it was of utmost importance for the Agency to be able not only to verify the non-diversion of declared nuclear material, but also to provide assurances regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities.

43. Austria, which had applauded the adoption of the Model Additional Protocol in 1997 and the development of integrated safeguards, believed that, in order to implement integrated safeguards, the Agency needed greater legal authority. Although heartened by the significant increase during 2004 in the number of additional protocols in force, it shared the Director General's view that more needed to be done. Furthermore, 43 countries parties to the NPT had not even concluded comprehensive safeguards agreements with the Agency as required by the NPT.

44. In Austria's view, for non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT, the conclusion of an additional protocol was not optional — it was a legal obligation. His country would therefore like to see all such States that had not yet concluded an additional protocol concluding one without further delay.

45. Nuclear security was a precondition for nuclear cooperation and trade. A State party to the NPT might supply nuclear items to other countries only if it was sure that an appropriate level of nuclear security existed in those countries. Comprehensive Agency safeguards were the first condition. Beyond that, an appropriate system of physical protection for nuclear material and nuclear facilities had to be in place, in combination with a minimum set of measures for combating illicit trafficking. In addition to those internal security arrangements, appropriate export control requirements were needed in order to ensure that supplied nuclear items were not re-exported from the recipient countries without the necessary controls.

46. Many countries with insignificant nuclear activities lacked the experience necessary for devising and implementing national nuclear security system. The Secretariat and Member States with the necessary experience should assist those countries in closing security gaps. The threat of nuclear terrorism could be combated successfully only if adequate nuclear security systems were properly implemented all over the world.

47. It was worrying to learn from the Nuclear Safety Review for the Year 2003 that, despite abundant operating experience, avoidable events continued to occur at nuclear facilities. The Agency should continue to help improve the exchange of operational experience among Member States.

48. Austria greatly appreciated the Agency's efforts in strengthening the global nuclear safety regime. The challenge for the coming years was to accelerate the acceptance of the Agency's safety standards. Since the safety standards should serve as global reference for the protection of people and the environment, their content should be transformed into legally binding rules. While collaboration with the nuclear industry could yield useful results, the safety standards should not be geared to the needs of the nuclear industry, but to the goal of gradually increasing nuclear safety worldwide.

49. Austria welcomed the Board's adoption of the Code of Conduct on the Safety of Research Reactors. It also welcomed the results of the first Review Meeting of Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention, which had underlined the importance of transparency for confidence-building. It hoped that future review meetings would show that further progress had been made as regards transparency.

50. The operation of nuclear power plants in the vicinity of national borders created a risk to the populations of other countries and necessitated the establishment and maintenance of expensive

off-site emergency preparedness infrastructures. Countries which had nuclear power programmes should cooperate closely with nearby countries which did not, particularly by providing necessary data and participating in joint planning for emergencies. The Czech Republic and Austria were already cooperating closely in that respect, and a number of other countries in the region had expressed an interest in joining in their cooperative efforts.

51. Austria, which regarded technical cooperation as an integral part of the Agency's activities, was pleased with the progress made in increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the Agency's technical cooperation programmes. While remaining sceptical about the power applications of nuclear energy, it fully supported the Agency's activities relating to non-power applications.

52. Austria very much appreciated the work done by the Director General and his staff in the past year, in particular the Agency's verification activities. Austria would continue to lend its full support to the Agency.

53. Mr. MATOUQ (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), having thanked the Agency for the technical assistance which his country had received through it in recent years, said that his country had adopted a consistent position on weapons of mass destruction in the United Nations General Assembly, the Agency and the Disarmament Commission, calling for their complete elimination. It had voluntarily abandoned programmes that might have led to the production of internationally prohibited weapons and had acceded to a number of relevant treaties, including the Pelindaba Treaty, the CTBT and the CWC. Since December 2003, it had reported all relevant nuclear activities to the Agency and was cooperating fully in the investigation of those activities by the Agency and a joint United States-United Kingdom team, acting as if the additional protocol signed by it was already in force. As a result, the investigations had been proceeding at a record pace.

54. His country, which stood ready to resolve any further questions that the Agency might raise, would welcome assistance from Member States with advanced nuclear technology in enhancing its capacity to use nuclear energy for peaceful, development-related purposes.

55. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was located in an extremely tense region, and for national security reasons it therefore hoped that the international community — and especially those States which had backed its December 2003 initiative — would do their utmost to bring all nuclear activities in the region under effective international safeguards.

56. At the Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI) International Partners' Conference held on 18 and 19 September 2004, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had presented a working paper in which it had stressed the need for a robust mechanism to counter illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive materials. It stood ready to participate in the development of such a mechanism.

57. Political tensions in the Middle East and the associated danger of the use of weapons of mass destruction were a source of deep concern to most of the international community, as attested by a series of resolutions in which the General Assembly has, since 1974, been calling for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and for all States in the region to accede to the NPT and place all their nuclear activities under Agency safeguards. Israel, which had possessed nuclear weapons for years, refused to accede to the NPT and was pursuing a policy of nuclear intimidation and blackmail on the pretext of maintaining a balance of power. The international community should pressure Israel into abandoning that policy.

58. In his speech on the thirty-fifth anniversary of Libya's September 1969 revolution, Colonel Muammar al-Qadhafi had stressed that it was not enough just for the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to abandon its programmes for the development of weapons of mass destruction. Other States, from the

United States of America to China, should follow its example, because the possession of such weapons constituted a form of terrorism.

59. Mr. BAZOBERRY (Bolivia) praised the way in which the Director General was dealing with various sensitive issues and his commitment to the principles of international peace and security laid down in the Charter of the United Nations. Under his leadership the Agency had won increased international prestige.

60. Events endangering humanity, particularly in the 20th century, had given rise to a collective desire to ensure a future of peace — not destruction. However, barbaric new players on the international stage were seeking to sow destruction everywhere. The Secretary-General of the United Nations had recently stated that the world was facing more threats to peace and security now than ever before. A major threat to peace and security was poverty. In Latin America and the Caribbean, for example, poverty affected 220 million people and one and a half million children died every year owing to shortages of safe water.

61. That was why his country attached great importance to the Agency's support for nuclear applications in medicine, agriculture and — above all — water resources management. At present, Agency technical cooperation projects relating to radiotherapy and pesticide residue monitoring were under way in Bolivia, which had proposed, for the 2005–2006 technical cooperation cycle, projects relating to water resources management in the Cochabamba valley, foot-and-mouth disease diagnosis and the analysis of contamination due to industrial activities. His country was very grateful for the technical assistance provided to it through the Agency.

62. Bolivia, which was currently the ARCAL Vice-President, would in May 2005 host the fourth meeting of the ARCAL Technical Co-ordination Board, which it hoped would lead to the strengthening of ARCAL through the drawing-up of an integrated strategic plan. In October 2004, Bolivia would host a regional seminar on the detection and control of radioactive materials organized by the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security for countries belonging to the Andean Community. The subject of the seminar was very relevant to the efforts under way to combat the threat of international terrorism, and Bolivia attached great importance to the Global Threat Reduction Initiative and other such efforts.

63. The Bolivian Institute of Nuclear Science and Technology was compiling an inventory of all radioactive sources in Bolivia for the purposes of keeping track of such sources and securing those no longer in use.

64. Bolivia had been one of the first countries to write to the Director General expressing its support for the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and its intention to follow the guidance contained in the Code of Conduct.

65. Mr. GARCIA (Philippines), having congratulated Chad, Mauritania and Togo on their being approved for membership of the Agency, said that his delegation had participated in the GTRI International Partners' Conference held on 18 and 19 September 2004, the purpose of which had been to build international support for national programmes for dealing with high-risk nuclear and other radioactive materials that posed a potential threat to the international community, and it would like to see close coordination between the GTRI and the relevant Agency programmes.

66. His delegation would also like to see the Agency continuing, together with the GTRI partners, to promote the use of civilian research reactors in developing countries in order that such countries might benefit more from peaceful uses of the atom.

67. The Philippines welcomed the Agency's efforts to increase the safety and security of radioactive sources. The Philippine Nuclear Research Institute (PNRI), guided by the Code of Conduct on the

Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, had developed an action plan for the safety and security of radioactive materials that was being implemented as part of the country's efforts to combat security threats due to weapons of mass destruction. Also, the PNRI, together with a task force for the security of critical infrastructure, with national security agencies and with the Office of Civil Defence, was revising the National Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan (RADPLAN) in the light of the threat of terrorist activities.

68. Under the radiological threat reduction programme of the United States Department of Energy, the security of the PNRI's critical radiation facilities and of category 1 and 2 sources in 23 hospitals was being upgraded.

69. In 2003, the Philippines had benefited from an IPPAS mission and from Agency assistance with the management of disused radiotherapy sources from hospitals.

70. As an archipelagic State, the Philippines was very concerned about safety in the maritime transport of radioactive material and very interested in advancing the dialogue between shipping States and coastal States like itself. It welcomed the Board's approval of the Action Plan for the Safety of Transport of Radioactive Material and was supporting the implementation of the Action Plan.

71. His country, which had incorporated the requirements of the Agency's Transport Regulations into its relevant national legislation, would like the Secretariat to give high priority to training courses on the safe transport of radioactive material for persons from developing archipelagic States.

72. The Philippines would like to see the DPRK reversing its decision to withdraw from the NPT and resuming cooperation with the Agency. A strong advocate of a diplomatic solution to the DPRK nuclear issue, it was following with interest the Six-Party Talks process. At the same time, as a member of ASEAN, it believed that the Chairmen of the ASEAN Regional Forum and the ASEAN Standing Committee could play a useful role in the dialogue with the DPRK.

73. Recalling with approval the statement made the previous week in the Board by the Governor from Malaysia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement regarding the implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement of the Islamic Republic of Iran, he said that, in his delegation's view, Iran had been actively responding to the international community's requests — made through the Agency — for information about its nuclear programme. At the same time, it would like to see Iran further intensifying its cooperation with the Agency, so that all remaining issues might be resolved, and immediately ratifying the additional protocol to its NPT safeguards agreement.

74. The Philippines, which, as a State party to the NPT, attached great importance to the inalienable right of States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, including the production of electric power, believed that the question of Iran's nuclear programme should continue to be addressed within the framework of the Agency, as the Agency was not yet in a position to draw definitive conclusions regarding — in particular — the source of the HEU and LEU contamination found in Iran and Iran's activities relating to P-2 centrifuges. In that connection, it greatly appreciated the professionalism and impartiality with which the Director General and his colleagues were carrying out their responsibilities. For the present, it was extremely important that Iran continue to implement voluntary confidence-building measures as called for by the Board in the resolutions which it had adopted on 18 June and 18 September 2004.

75. For developing countries like the Philippines, technical cooperation was a key aspect of membership of the Agency, which should further strengthen the focus on developing Member States' needs and priorities.

76. Recalling that the Board had the previous week approved a proposal made by himself and the Ambassador of Mexico, as co-chairs of a working group established by the Chairman of the Board,

regarding the TCF target for each of the years 2005 and 2006 (\$77.5 million), he said that his country, which attached great importance to the Agency's technical cooperation activities receiving adequate political and financial support, would, despite the severe austerity measures which it was having to take, do its best to pay its share of the TCF target for 2005 soon.

77. His country, which welcomed the Agency's increasingly active role in promoting the use of nuclear technology in cancer therapy, had in 2003 hosted — in partnership with the Agency — a meeting on the management of liver cancer, at the first hospital in south-east Asia to have a positron emission tomography (PET) facility. It was very interested in the ideas regarding the establishment of centres of excellence for cancer radiotherapy outlined in the Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy and looked forward to working with the Secretariat on the formulation of plans for the establishment of such centres.

78. A law providing for widespread neonatal screening had recently been passed in the Philippines, which was grateful to the Agency for the support provided by it, which had facilitated that important legislative step.

79. The results of a number of regional and national projects on air quality management had been drawn upon by his country's Department of Environment and Natural Resources in preparing a national air quality status report for use in the drafting of a national clean air act.

80. Through participation in an RCA project on access to clean drinking water, the Philippines was gaining a better understanding of the processes whereby its aquifer systems were recharged and increasing its ability to use isotopic and chemical techniques in groundwater flow modelling. It hoped to receive assistance during the 2005-2006 technical cooperation cycle in using isotopic techniques to improve water resources management and protection.

81. The PNRI was planning to establish a national environmental isotope laboratory that would — inter alia — enhance the country's self-reliance in the field of isotope hydrology. The main piece of equipment at the laboratory would be an isotope ratio mass spectrometer, and it was hoped that the Agency would share — with the Philippine Government — the cost of acquiring it.

82. The Philippines, which had over the years benefited greatly from technical cooperation with the Agency, was confident that the Agency would rise to the challenges of the future.

83. Mr. EIKAAS (Norway) said that in recent years the challenges to the nuclear non-proliferation regime had underscored the importance of full compliance with the NPT and the need to work actively towards universal adherence to it. The response must be to continue strengthening the NPT, its verification instruments and other non-proliferation mechanisms.

84. His country welcomed United Nations Security Council resolution 1540, in which all States were called upon to take more effective measures to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Full implementation of the resolution was of paramount importance. All States must do everything in their power to prevent non-State actors from acquiring such weapons. Norway appreciated the readiness of the Secretariat to assist the Agency's Member States in implementing resolution 1540.

85. Norway would like to see the 42 States parties to the NPT which had not yet done so concluding comprehensive safeguards agreements with the Agency. It was concerned that only 83 States had concluded additional protocols and that no more than 60 of those were in force. It expected that the 2005 NPT Review Conference would make additional protocols mandatory under Article III of the NPT. Some States parties might need guidance in concluding and implementing additional protocols. The Secretariat was to be commended for offering such guidance.

86. The next step should be to implement integrated safeguards widely. In 2002, Norway had become one of just a handful of countries where they were being implemented. It hoped that States with more complex fuel cycles than Norway's would follow suit, and was pleased that integrated safeguards were now in place in Japan.

87. Norway continued to be of the view that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) was bound by its NPT obligations. The DPRK should completely dismantle its nuclear weapons programme promptly and in a verifiable and irreversible manner and comply with all those obligations. A solution must be found through dialogue, full account being taken of the Agency's verification mandate.

88. Norway was pleased that the Agency was making steady progress towards fully understanding the nature and extent of the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran. It appreciated that Iran, since signing an additional protocol in December 2003, had been acting as if the protocol was in force, but it would like to see Iran ratifying the additional protocol without delay.

89. Iran should continue to accelerate its cooperation and pursue a policy of maximum transparency and confidence-building, so that the outstanding issues could be resolved soon. It should heed the resolution adopted by the Board of Governors on 18 September 2004 and, in particular, completely suspend all of its enrichment-related activities.

90. The recent developments in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya were promising, and the international community should continue encouraging Libya to persist with its new, positive course and — inter alia — to ratify the additional protocol to its safeguards agreement with the Agency.

91. Over the years, a number of important instruments relevant to nuclear safety and security had evolved within the Agency framework, and it was up to Member States to strengthen them and to put them to good use. A case in point was the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM), which needed to be adjusted in order to make it more effective against nuclear terrorism. Norway had long been calling for universalization of the CPPNM, and it was among those countries which had proposed the convening of a diplomatic conference in accordance with CPPNM Article 20.

92. The adoption of the revised Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources had been an important landmark, and Norway would like to see all Agency Member States implementing it.

93. There was an obvious need to explore ways of tightening the controls over the most proliferation-sensitive parts of the nuclear fuel cycle, and therefore Norway welcomed the establishment of an expert group to consider possible multinational approaches to the front and back ends of the nuclear fuel cycle.

94. Norway had on a number of occasions expressed its support for the European Union's Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. Invaluable as they were, the international instruments developed within the Agency framework could benefit from being complemented by important regional non-proliferation initiatives.

95. Norway had been the first country not belonging to the G-8 to contribute to the G-8 Global Partnership. Its focus was on the safe handling and storage of spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste in north-western Russia.

96. The Proliferation Security Initiative was another very useful response to new proliferation challenges. Norway was taking an active part in it and was also a partner in the Global Threat Reduction Initiative recently launched by the United States Secretary of Energy.

97. However, while international instruments and programmes were essential in combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, efforts by individual countries were decisive. The development of an adequate regulatory infrastructure in every State was crucial. The Agency should continue its important support for the establishment of regulatory authorities with the necessary powers in those Member States which still lacked them.

98. The safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste was critical from an environmental perspective as well as from a safety perspective. Norway would therefore like to see many more Member States acceding to the Joint Convention and doing so in time to participate in the second Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

99. His country, which considered the establishment of international safety standards to be essential for the safe operation of nuclear installations, believed that it would be useful if the Secretariat produced — before the end of 2004 — a report showing which Agency safety standards had been changed and how.

100. In 2003, an International Physical Protection Advisory Service (IPPAS) team had visited Norway and reviewed its nuclear security legislation and the security arrangements at its nuclear research facilities. The mission had been very useful, and Norway believed that many Member States could benefit from IPPAS.

101. Norway had played a leading role in efforts to improve cooperation in nuclear and radiological emergencies and had agreed to chair the National Competent Authorities' Coordinating Group (NCACG). It intended to provide resources for implementation of the International Action Plan for Strengthening the International Preparedness and Response System for Nuclear and Radiological Emergencies that had been approved by the Board of Governors in June 2004. In that connection, it was concerned about the Secretariat's heavy dependence on extrabudgetary funding for activities aimed at improving international cooperation in the area of emergency preparedness and response. In its view, greater consideration should be given to those activities in the regular programme and budget formulation process.

102. Norway would like to see further efforts being made to improve the international regulations relating to the maritime transport of radioactive material and believed that, to that end, there must be a dialogue between shipping States and coastal States. It welcomed the Board's approval in March of the International Action Plan for the Safety of Transport of Radioactive Material and the work done so far by the International Expert Group on Nuclear Liability (INLEX).

103. Norway also welcomed the initiatives taken by the Agency to promote radiotherapy and other medical uses of ionizing radiation in developing countries, such as the Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT).

104. Today, millions of people depended on the benefits of nuclear technology in order to improve their quality of life. All countries had a responsibility to ensure that the present generation and future generations enjoyed those benefits, safely and securely. The Agency had a crucial role to play in that regard, and it could count on Norway's continued support.

105. Mr. ADAMOWITSCH (Germany) said that the past year had once again demonstrated the importance of the Agency as an essential partner in the international non-proliferation discussion. The Director General had mastered a difficult period in a circumspect manner, and the Agency had thereby strengthened its worldwide reputation as a cornerstone of global peace and stability.

106. His country welcomed the renunciation by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya of its clandestine nuclear programme. The Agency was to be commended on its continuing efforts to verify Libya's intentions and the dismantling of equipment in Libya.

107. Germany was continuing to support the verification efforts of the Agency in Iraq, including its efforts to complete its assessment of Iraq's pre-war nuclear activities.

108. The DPRK should live up to its non-proliferation commitments. Germany hoped that the Six-Party Talks would lead to a diplomatic solution enabling the Agency to resume its verification activities in the DPRK.

109. As for the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the resolution adopted by the Board on 18 September 2004 provided the framework for the weeks ahead, and Germany expected Iran to comply with that resolution in all its aspects. It was of crucial importance that Iran make use of the time until the next session of the Board to actively cooperate with the Agency in clarifying all outstanding issues and to fulfil all requests made by the Board. An unequivocal commitment by Iran to suspend all its enrichment-related and reprocessing activities was of key importance. Full suspension was indispensable for building confidence, and confidence-building by Iran was decisive in the current Agency-centred process. It was equally indispensable for the diplomatic process regarding Iran which had been started by Germany, France and the United Kingdom.

110. Germany welcomed the current deliberations regarding further strengthening of the international non-proliferation regime, and it considered the reform ideas outlined in recent months by the President of the United States of America and that country's Secretary of Energy and by the Director General to have been important contributions. The recent establishment by the Director General of an International Expert Group on Multilateral Approaches to the Nuclear Fuel Cycle had been a very significant measure.

111. Germany was of the opinion that additional protocols should become the new international non-proliferation standard and that the Nuclear Suppliers Group's guidelines should be tightened up accordingly. While open to further strengthening of the international non-proliferation regime, it believed that, rather than a further comprehensive international agreement, it might be more productive to consider specific, focussed solutions to the problems that were currently being faced.

112. The process of additional protocol ratification was still too slow, and Germany welcomed all efforts to speed it up. The Model Additional Protocol had been unanimously approved by the Board and the General Conference, and it should therefore be a matter of self-respect for every Member State to bring an additional protocol into force as soon as possible. In that context, it was of great importance that further progress be made with regard to the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and in the negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

113. One of the most important developments of recent months in the field of nuclear safety had been the adoption of the Action Plan for the Development and Application of IAEA Safety Standards and of the Code of Conduct on the Safety of Research Reactors. In that context, Germany particularly welcomed the fact that in future the Agency's safety guides would not only represent international good practice but also — and increasingly — reflect best practice.

114. In many countries — and not only in those which were phasing out nuclear power generation — the preservation of nuclear knowledge had become a crucial issue, and Germany appreciated the Agency's efforts to help preserve it. The Agency databases in the fields of nuclear safety, radioactive waste management, and nuclear power plant ageing and long-term operation were essential, and the recently established World Nuclear University would no doubt also be useful.

115. Technical cooperation was one of the main pillars of the Agency and an important part of a stable international nuclear framework. In that context, nuclear applications relating to food quality and safety, insect pest control and human health continued to be of great importance, and Germany

very much welcomed the fact that the Agency was planning to hold a conference at which the issue of de-mining would be addressed.

116. Germany was pleased with the progress made by the Agency in implementing its nuclear security programme and the initiative taken by the Director General regarding amendments to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) and the convening of a diplomatic conference to amend the CPPNM. Also, it welcomed the fact that close links had been established between the Agency's activities directed against the threat of nuclear terrorism and international initiatives such as the European Union's Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and the G-8 Global Partnership. It would continue to make the services of technical experts available in support of those Agency activities.

117. Mr. TABIBIAN (Armenia) said that his country would continue to support the work being done by the Agency in combating nuclear terrorism and promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, work which called for fairness, diligence, objectivity and solidarity.

118. Armenia was receiving from other Member States and from the Agency technical and financial assistance that was critical for ensuring the safe and efficient operation of its Metzamor nuclear power plant. Recognizing the benefits of its membership of the Agency, it had concluded with the Secretariat an agreement regarding a payment plan for the elimination of arrears in the payment of contributions towards the Regular Budget. It was meeting its payment plan obligations and was therefore looking forward to the restoration of its right to vote in the General Conference.

119. Since the restart of unit 2 of the Metzamor nuclear power plant, in 1995, Armenia had hosted several safety missions and had been making constant safety improvements at the plant, and it intended to improve safety there still further.

120. In November 2003, a review of the design safety of the Metzamor nuclear power plant had led to the conclusion that the condition of the plant was consistent with the requirements specified in IAEA-TECDOC-640 and that the progress being made in strengthening the safety features of the plant was satisfactory.

121. His Government had concluded with the Department of Technical Cooperation an agreement regarding a country programme framework that pinpointed Armenia's needs in areas such as physical protection, radioactive waste management, nuclear energy legislation and regulation, and nuclear applications in medicine.

122. The Agency had provided valuable support for an energy and nuclear power planning study for Armenia whose results, published in IAEA-TECDOC-1404, would no doubt facilitate further planning in Armenia's energy sector. His Government hoped that the Agency would follow up the study by examining the long-term feasibility of the nuclear option for Armenia, which was very concerned about the question of energy independence given its precarious energy supply situation and its geopolitical situation: it lacked domestic oil and gas reserves, and its hydropower resources were under great strain; and its borders were subject to a blockade, and the transit routes on which it had to rely were vulnerable. Armenia could not afford to ignore the continuing potential of nuclear power generation.

123. Not every country saw things Armenia's way. There were countries which thought globally and wanted to minimize global risks through the elimination of nuclear power plants which they considered potentially dangerous. No doubt their intentions were good, but small countries like Armenia could not always think globally, even if committed to minimizing global risks. Armenia was receiving energy-related assistance from a number of those countries, some of which wanted it to

renounce nuclear power generation and were offering it inducements to do so. However, expecting Armenia to do so was neither reasonable nor fair.

124. Then there were countries, most of them near to Armenia, which were concerned about issues such as accidents that might affect them and hence about regional emergency planning and management. Armenia was not indifferent to those issues, particularly given its small geographic size and its relatively small population. It was therefore continuously striving to improve safety at the Metzamor nuclear power plant and cooperating with others wherever possible. In addition, it remained fully committed to seeking alternative sources of energy.

125. Finally, there was a neighbouring country which was portraying Armenia's energy-related activities as posing security threats connected with nuclear terrorism, illicit trafficking in nuclear material and radioactive waste disposal. The tone and volume of that country's propaganda varied from season to season, but his delegation was encouraged by the fact that recently the Agency had not been used by that country as a forum for disputes over bilateral problems.

126. Armenia, which remained committed to the NPT, had on 28 July 2004 ratified the additional protocol to its NPT safeguards agreement with the Agency.

127. Since 11 September 2001, Armenia had, in order to ensure adequate physical protection of the Metzamor nuclear power plant, amended its relevant legislation and tightened up its nuclear regulatory regime. It hoped to participate in activities financed from the Nuclear Security Fund. It intended to follow the guidance contained in the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, and it had informed the Director General of its intention.

128. Armenia, which would welcome a visit by the Director General, needed help in consolidating and preserving the technical skills which it had acquired through the Agency. Those skills should not be wasted.

129. Mr. BUGAT (France), having congratulated Chad, Togo and Mauritania on their having been approved for membership of the Agency, said that the international community was facing major challenges in connection with the honouring of non-proliferation commitments. Also, in the face of terrorism risks it was having to mobilize in order to ensure the security of nuclear and other radioactive material and of sensitive nuclear facilities. As regards non-proliferation commitments, the international community needed to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime, of which the NPT should remain the cornerstone. NPT commitments should be honoured, with no diversion for non-peaceful purposes of nuclear material and equipment supplied for peaceful purposes pursuant to NPT Article IV. The inalienable right — enshrined in Article IV — of States parties to the NPT to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy was not questioned by France, which recognized their contribution to development, but that right should not be allowed to result in such diversion.

130. In order to prevent nuclear proliferation, there needed to be stricter control of the transfer of the most sensitive nuclear material and equipment, with universal application of the relevant regulations, while those States which honoured their commitments should enjoy greater access to non-sensitive nuclear technologies and material and the associated services. Also, the international community should acquire the means to react effectively when non-proliferation commitments were not honoured and should ensure that the procedure for withdrawing from the NPT was not abused by States wishing to free themselves from their international obligations.

131. In the months ahead, the international community would, particularly within the framework of the forthcoming review of the functioning of the NPT, have to demonstrate its ability to adapt to the current challenges to international security while upholding the principles on which the NPT was based. France hoped that the 2005 NPT Review Conference would result in strengthening of the NPT

and in progress towards full implementation of all its provisions, and it had formulated some proposals to that end.

132. In that context, France would follow with interest the work of the International Expert Group on Multilateral Approaches to the Nuclear Fuel Cycle established by the Director General.

133. Two years after the clandestine nuclear activities of the Islamic Republic of Iran had been revealed, the nuclear programme of that country remained a cause for concern. International cooperation had resulted in progress: after the Tehran declaration by the Iranian Government and the Foreign Ministers of Germany, the United Kingdom and France, the Iranian Government had announced that it had decided to adopt a policy of full transparency and full cooperation with the Agency; it had signed an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement with the Agency and started to implement it provisionally; and it had announced that it would suspend all its enrichment-related and reprocessing activities. However, the cooperation on the part of the Iranian authorities had been far from complete. Important questions relating to past and present activities in Iran remained unanswered. Iran had still not ratified the additional protocol, and it had several times reneged on commitments, particularly with regard to the extent of the suspension of its enrichment-related activities. With the attitude displayed by it, Iran had failed to restore the international community's confidence in the reliability of its commitment to non-proliferation. In order to restore that confidence, Iran should meet the repeated demands of the Board without reservation or delay, particularly by ratifying its additional protocol and fully suspending its enrichment-related and reprocessing activities.

134. The situation regarding the DPRK was also continuing to give cause for serious concern. France, which deplored the actions taken by the DPRK that were seriously challenging the non-proliferation regime, welcomed the efforts to arrive at a peaceful resolution of the DPRK nuclear issue being made within the Six-Party Talks framework. It hoped that the fourth round of Six-Party Talks, which had been planned for the end of September, would take place soon.

135. Fortunately, the situation regarding the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was more satisfactory. Having pursued programmes for the development of weapons of mass destruction for some years, the Libyan authorities had decided to terminate them and had adopted a policy of full transparency and active cooperation. That had been a positive development, which could pave the way towards the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East at some time in the future. It appeared, however, that Libya's nuclear programme had benefited from an international network of illicit traffickers in proliferation-sensitive technology, and that was a new cause for concern which the international community must address.

136. Over and above the verification obligations which it had pursuant to its safeguards agreement with Iraq, the Agency still had a role in ensuring the implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions relating to that country. France would like the Agency's mandate to be re-examined, as provided for in resolutions 1483 and 1546, so that the role of the Agency might be confirmed.

137. France remained committed to helping to bring about the entry into force of the CTBT and a start of negotiations in the Disarmament Conference on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

138. As regards verification of the fulfilment of NPT obligations, France believed that strengthened and integrated Agency safeguards, which depended on a State concluding both a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol, should become the standard, not only for ensuring maximum credibility of verification but also for demonstrating the commitment to the NPT of States parties. Accordingly, it had, in cooperation with various partners and in close consultation with the Agency, for several years been engaged in diplomatic activities designed to bring about the universal conclusion of comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols. Specifically, it had been undertaking diplomatic initiatives in francophone countries in Africa and the Indian Ocean region, and

it welcomed the fact that several African States had recently brought into force or signed comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols. France's own additional protocol had entered into force on 30 April 2004, at the same time as those of its European partners.

139. Given the risk that nuclear or other radioactive materials could be used for terrorist purposes, the international community had taken steps, wherever necessary, to increase the already substantial protection accorded to nuclear activities. While States bore the primary responsibility for the protection of such activities, they needed to be able to cooperate effectively with one another. The Agency had an important role to play — pursuant to its Statute — in helping to ensure the security of nuclear materials and facilities, and France was supporting the implementation of the nuclear security action plan approved by the Board of Governors in 2002. It was providing both financial and technical support, particularly through activities conducted in cooperation with the Agency.

140. On the basis of the work of a technical and legal expert group convened by the Director General, Austria had — with the support of 24 countries, including France — submitted to the Director General a proposal for amending the CPPNM. France would like all States party to the CPPNM to write to the Director General requesting the convening of a diplomatic conference to examine the amendment proposal.

141. France, which intended to support the Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI) launched by the United States and Russia, welcomed the success of the GTRI International Partners' Conference held on 18 and 19 September 2004.

142. International action aimed at increasing the safety and security of radioactive sources had received considerable impetus from the International Conference on Security of Radioactive Sources held in Vienna in March 2003 (the Hofburg Conference) and the G-8's Evian Summit, as reflected particularly in the Agency's programmes for strengthening controls over radioactive sources and promoting implementation of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. In 2003, France's Atomic Energy Commission had, at the request of the authorities of Côte d'Ivoire and within the framework of an Agency technical cooperation project, removed the radioactive sources contained in an irradiation facility in Abidjan. It intended to carry out such activities elsewhere.

143. France was engaged in preparations for the International Conference on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources due to be held in Bordeaux in 2005 under the auspices of the G-8.

144. The importance of the Agency's verification and nuclear safety and security activities should not overshadow the uses of nuclear techniques in fields such as human health, food and agriculture, water resources management and environmental protection within a context of sustainable development — fields where the Agency had an essential role to play in responding to the legitimate peaceful needs of Member States. France had consistently supported the Agency's technical cooperation programmes, providing the services of experts, accepting Agency fellows for training, especially in radiation protection, undertaking numerous activities within the framework of AFRA and ARCAL, and financing many footnote-a/ projects.

145. France was aware of the difficulties encountered in the financing of technical cooperation projects and considered it vital that the resources of the TCF be assured in the most predictable manner possible. It had consistently paid its full TCF target share and would like to see all other Member States doing the same.

146. The Convention on Nuclear Safety had led to progress in many areas, and France would like to see all those States with nuclear facilities which were not yet parties to the Convention ratifying it as

soon as possible. France had already submitted its national report for consideration at the third Review Meeting of Contracting Parties to the Convention, which it would try to help make a success.

147. France, which was pleased that the first Review Meeting of Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention had gone well, believed that only very wide accession to the Joint Convention would lead to general confidence in the quality of the management of the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle.

148. Following the International Conference on the Safety of Transport of Radioactive Material, which had drawn attention to the high level of safety achieved in radioactive material transport, France was supporting the implementation of the Action Plan for the Safety of Transport of Radioactive Material. In doing so, however, it was concerned that basic security considerations should be borne in mind and that the provisions of the law of the sea should not be questioned. In the interests of transparency, France had requested a TransSAS mission which had taken place from 22 March to 2 April 2004. The conclusions had been very positive, the TransSAS team identifying 12 good practices which could serve as models.

149. As regards the international transport of radioactive material, France and its partners had embarked upon a dialogue designed to ensure maximum transparency, providing countries with all the assurances which they requested and also with specific information of use to them. Again in the interests of transparency, the report on the aforementioned TransSAS mission to France had been made public by the Agency at the request of the French authorities.

150. Nuclear power generation was clearly continuing to experience a revival of support in countries which had opted for it as an electricity supply source that would ensure the sustainable development of their economies. The recognized advantages of nuclear power generation were that: it ensured greater energy supply security and provided protection from the effects of abrupt variations in the prices of fossil fuels; it helped to limit greenhouse gas emissions; and, where it was competitive, it promoted sustainable development and helped to raise living standards. Against that background, the Director General and the French authorities had proposed the holding of a ministerial-level international conference on nuclear power for the 21st century; the conference would be held in Paris in April 2005.

151. For over thirty years, France had been pursuing a diversified energy supply policy which was based largely on nuclear power generation and through which it had achieved a high level of energy independence. In 2003, 58 power reactors had accounted for almost 78% of the electricity production in France. The policy, decided upon soon after the 1973 oil shock, had three basic objectives: the long-term security of energy supplies; competitive prices; and sustainable development in the energy sector. Those objectives had been reviewed in 2003 during a large-scale national energy debate organized by the Government. The review had resulted in a consensus that France's high level of energy independence should be maintained and in agreement on the other principles which should guide France's energy policy: competitiveness; respect for the environment; the right to energy; and international coordination. Also, it had led recently to the adoption of an energy law whose priorities were: energy conservation; the development of renewable energy sources; nuclear power; and research into new energy technologies. That law provided for a broad energy palette in which nuclear power's place was acknowledged. Accordingly, the French authorities had authorized the construction of a demonstration European Pressurized Reactor — a reactor which would be cheap to build and would produce 15–30% less radioactive waste. In the light of the experience gained with the demonstration model, a decision would be taken during the period 2015–2020 on whether a series of such reactors should be built.

152. In the present global situation, which favoured nuclear power, international cooperation — particularly within the Agency framework — was essential. The development, through international cooperation, of innovative nuclear technologies was an area to which great importance was attached

by France, which was participating in the Generation-IV International Forum and in INPRO. France also attached great importance to the long-term preservation of nuclear knowledge and skills, and the French Atomic Energy Commission had been pleased to host — earlier that month — the Agency-organized International Conference on Nuclear Knowledge Management: Strategies, Information Management and Human Resource Development. Looking still further ahead, France was a strong supporter of the ITER project, for which the European Union was proposing a site at Cadarache, where there was an ideal scientific and technical environment.

153. Fifty years after the Atoms for Peace initiative, nuclear power offered a way of generating electricity that made for sustainable development and was protective of humankind and the planet generally. In that context, the Agency had an important role to play. It could count on France's continuing support.

154. Mr CHO Chang-beom (Republic of Korea), having welcomed the General Conference's approval of Chad, Mauritania and Togo for Agency membership, expressed appreciation of the Agency's efforts to prevent malicious acts directed against nuclear installations and the use of nuclear and other radioactive materials for malicious purposes.

155. The Global Threat Reduction Initiative was important for protecting the international community, and his country was grateful to the Governments of the United States and Russia for launching it.

156. As part of its response to the threat of nuclear terrorism, the Republic of Korea had stepped up its efforts to ensure the physical protection of nuclear facilities and radioactive sources. As a first step, the legal system had been streamlined, in accordance with the guidance contained in Agency document INFCIRC/225/Rev.4. Off-site emergency management centres would be established for all of his country's domestic nuclear power plants. His country, which was making every effort to fully implement the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, was developing a radiation safety information system and a system for the real-time tracking of radiation sources using a satellite-based global positioning system.

157. With the increasing demand for primary energy and the growing concern about the greenhouse effect, nuclear power had become recognized again as a clean and CO₂-free energy source. As had been stated at the International Conference on Fifty Years of Nuclear Power — the Next Fifty Years, held in Russia, the future of nuclear power hinged upon the development of nuclear hydrogen technology, of innovative power reactors, of proliferation-resistant fuel cycles and of safe management technologies for spent fuel and radioactive waste. His country believed that the Agency would play an important role in their development.

158. The Republic of Korea had 19 nuclear power plants in operation. Unit 5 of the Ulchin nuclear power plant had started commercial operation in June 2004. Construction work was soon to start, at Shin-Kori, on a 1400-MW advanced pressurized water reactor that would go into commercial operation around 2011.

159. In the Republic of Korea, work was continuing on the development of a system-integrated modular advanced (SMART) reactor for desalination and power generation and his country would like to see the Agency encouraging exchanges of information on multipurpose small reactors among Member States through its technical cooperation programmes.

160. The Republic of Korea, which was participating very actively in INPRO, had carried out a case study to assess the proliferation-resistance of the direct use of spent PWR fuel in CANDU reactors.

161. Recognizing the importance of Agency technical cooperation activities, the Republic of Korea had increased its contribution by 18 per cent, to \$1 million, in an effort to help overcome the financial

difficulties that the Agency faced in providing technical assistance. Also, it had made \$500 000 available as support for the Regional Cooperation Agreement Regional Office (RCARO) each year since its establishment, in 2002. It hoped that, through the RCARO, Member States covered by the RCA would increase their cooperation. It is also hoped that, with the support of the Agency, cooperative relationships would be established with AFRA, ARASIA and ARCAL.

162. The Republic of Korea welcomed the launching of the Asian Network for Higher Education in Nuclear Technology (ANENT) and looked forward to its implementation through a regional technical cooperation project. It was very actively participating in the Asian Nuclear Safety Network (ANSN).

163. In 1999, the General Conference had approved an amendment to Article VI of the Statute providing for an increase in the number of members of the Board of Governors from 35 to 43. The amendment had been the result of almost 20 years of laborious negotiations, and his country regretted the fact that, five years later, only 35 of the Agency's 137 Member States had ratified it. His country would like to see all Member States that had not yet done so ratifying the amendment as soon as possible.

164. The Republic of Korea, which had long been committed to strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the Agency's safeguards system, would like to see all Member States accepting strengthened safeguards supported by an additional protocol. Demonstrating its commitment, it had — on 19 February 2004 — ratified the additional protocol to its safeguards agreement with the Agency. It was the only country active in the field of nuclear power generation to have a firm policy of voluntarily renouncing enrichment and reprocessing facilities, despite a high demand for nuclear fuel.

165. In 2003, his Government had contributed to the cause of nuclear non-proliferation as Chairman of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, one of the pillars of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. During its chairmanship, it had helped to make the Group a more effective — although more broadly-based — international export control mechanism by enlarging its qualified membership and conducting an extensive outreach dialogue.

166. For decades, the Republic of Korea had set an example as a nation making good use of the possibilities offered by nuclear energy while fully honouring its obligation to use nuclear energy solely for peaceful purposes. In that context, it was very unfortunate that incidents involving nuclear-related experiments carried out by some Korean scientists in the past had recently been brought to the attention of the international community in a disproportionate manner. The experiments in question had been conducted without the knowledge of the Government and performed on a laboratory scale, exclusively for research purposes and involving only about a milligram of nuclear material. As soon as those incidents had come to the attention of the Government, it had notified the Agency on its own initiative, submitting all the relevant information acquired by it. In line with its steadfast commitment to transparency, the Republic of Korea had extended full, proactive cooperation to the Agency, and it would continue to do so, facilitating thorough verification by the Agency's inspectors, in whose professionalism and competence it had full confidence.

167. On 18 September 2004, the Standing Committee of the Korean National Security Council had made a statement in response to various misinterpretations and unwarranted suspicions relating to the incidents he had referred to. The statement underlined, among other things, the following:

- the Government of the Republic of Korea did not intend to develop or possess nuclear weapons and had not planned or pursued any nuclear programmes intended for military purposes, and there would be no change in its policy in the future;

- the Government of the Republic of Korea would uphold its principle of nuclear transparency and strengthen its cooperation with the international community to that end, faithfully implementing its safeguards agreement with the Agency, the additional protocol thereto and other international non-proliferation agreements to which it was party, in the expectation that the Agency's verification activities concerning the nuclear-related experiments in the Republic of Korea would be professional and impartial, and cooperating fully in order to gain the complete confidence and understanding of the international community;
- the Government of the Republic of Korea would faithfully abide by the NPT and the 1992 Joint North-South Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, taking all domestic measures necessary in order to strengthen its control over nuclear materials, and would participate in international efforts to that end, in the hope that the international community would extend its full support so that all pending issues concerning the Republic of Korea might be dealt with in an impartial manner based on the facts; and
- with the confidence of the international community, the Government of the Republic of Korea would expand the country's peaceful utilization of nuclear energy, on which the country was very dependent.

168. The Republic of Korea, as a founding member of the Agency, had been very active in all major fields of Agency work — safeguards, technical cooperation, and safety and security. As one of the leading States in the area of nuclear power generation, the Republic of Korea would spare no effort in helping the Agency to achieve all of its goals, which were of paramount importance for the lives of all human beings. In so doing, it would continue to cooperate closely with the Secretariat and with other Member States, since only through coordinated efforts could progress be made towards a world free of the nuclear threat.

169. Mr. PALACIOS (ABACC) said that during the past year ABACC had, in the context of strengthening the MERCOSUR, ensured that the nuclear activities of both Argentina and Brazil had remained exclusively peaceful, providing a basis for still closer economic, political, technological and cultural ties between the two countries. ABACC was proud to be contributing to peace and prosperity in South America.

170. In applying the common system for nuclear material accounting and control to the 76 nuclear facilities in Argentina and Brazil, ABACC had in 2003 conducted 110 inspections — an effort involving over 400 inspector-days.

171. The success of ABACC in applying that system had been possible only thanks to the support which both countries had given to the ABACC Secretariat by providing funds and inspectors and by making the best consultants and specialized laboratories available.

172. During the current year, despite various difficulties, it had been possible to build on past achievements, increasing the cooperation between the Agency and ABACC in various areas. For example, the two organizations had completed a series of activities which would enable them to apply full safeguards at the Atucha nuclear power plant. Their task had been facilitated by the cooperation received from Argentina's National Atomic Energy Commission and the operator of the plant.

173. ABACC hoped for still further cooperation with the Agency after the finalization, in the near future, of guidelines for joint inspections at all relevant facilities in Argentina and Brazil — guidelines which were also a prerequisite for the adoption by ABACC and the Agency of procedures of the 'New Partnership Approach' type. In that connection, it was important to strengthen communications between both organizations.

174. The imminent start-up of a commercial uranium enrichment plant in the region covered by it presented ABACC with a new safeguards challenge. The ABACC Secretariat had developed a safeguards approach, based on perimeter control, for the plant's first two cascades which would ensure that safeguards were applied efficiently and effectively and that the operator was able to maintain commercial and technological confidentiality during the first phase. ABACC's approach had been negotiated with the Brazilian authorities and was ready for implementation.

175. It was, however, important that the Agency, ABACC and Brazil's Nuclear Energy Commission arrive at a suitable overall approach for that plant, within the framework of the Quadripartite Agreement. Following a technical meeting which had been held the previous week, he was confident that the resumption of an open and constructive dialogue would soon result in an approach which satisfied all parties.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.