

# General Conference

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# Plenary

## Record of the Fifth Meeting

*Held at the Austria Center Vienna on Wednesday, 22 September 2004, at 10.10 a.m.*

**President:** Mr. RÓNAKY (Hungary)

**Later:** Ms. HALL (Canada)

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**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
AIDS	acquired immune deficiency syndrome
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
CANDU	Canada deuterium-uranium [reactor]
CERN	European Organization for Nuclear Research
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CRP	coordinated research project
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
ICTP	International Centre for Theoretical Physics (Trieste)
INIS	International Nuclear Information System
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
ITER	International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor
Joint Convention	Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
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
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group
OPANAL	Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean

**Abbreviations used in this record: (continued)**

PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PATTEC	Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign
PET	positron emission tomography
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
R&D	research and development
SIT	sterile insect technique
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VIC	Vienna International Centre
WANO	World Association of Nuclear Operators
WHO	World Health Organization

## **7. General debate and Annual Report for 2003 (continued)** (GC(48)/3)

1. Mr. MOYO (Zimbabwe) said that the Agency's important role in the field of international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament should be strengthened. His country appreciated the Agency's efforts to strengthen its safeguards system and, in the light of its verification activities in Libya, the DPRK and the Republic of Korea, felt that it should be given the leeway to continue to demonstrate in an unhindered manner its usefulness as a balanced, experienced, effective and essential mechanism for promoting global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Agency should be allowed to execute its mandate, in accordance with its Statute and the NPT without hindrance, prejudice or unwarranted political limitations. It should also promote development and further the inalienable right of Member States to develop research into, and produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination, and should facilitate the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information between States.
2. Zimbabwe was concerned about nuclear safety. Expansionism by any Member State was a threat to international peace, as was any form of terrorism.
3. He commended the Agency on its application of the SIT to combat tsetse flies, which constituted one of the greatest constraints on socio-economic development in Africa. He also welcomed the Agency's work with PATTEC, the FAO and the WHO to create tsetse-free zones. He further commended the Agency and its development partners on their funding of the laboratory research and development work at Seibersdorf on the possibility of extending use of the SIT to control malaria-transmitting mosquitoes.
4. The Agency's continued support for Zimbabwe's projects in the areas of health, water, non-destructive testing and agriculture was appreciated. The draft CPF currently being elaborated should further enhance implementation of technical cooperation programmes in the country in the period 2005–2010.
5. His country was committed to establishing an appropriate legal framework for peaceful applications of nuclear energy, which should help it achieve milestones 1 and 2, facilitating full implementation of Agency projects. A radiation protection bill had become law on 3 September 2004.
6. Zimbabwe appreciated the Agency's specialist training courses, workshops and seminars. Many of its national experts received regular training from the Agency and, as a result, were in demand in both developing and developed countries.
7. Under Zimbabwe's land reform programme, Agency assistance in the isotope hydrology field was helping improve crop production. The equipment provided by the Agency for the assessment of groundwater aquifers in Matabeleland would help ensure year-round agricultural production. The Government had provided extensive financial resources for that project. Further resources from the Agency and other development partners would be welcome. Zimbabwe was also grateful to the Agency for its continued involvement in the development of bio-fertilizers.
8. The Agency was providing assistance through a regional project with the control and eradication of major diseases affecting livestock within the Southern African Development

Community. His country hoped that that project would succeed and that there would be a reliable and sustainable regional supply of critical diagnostic reagents and kits for combating animal diseases.

9. His country appreciated the assistance provided with the development of isotope-aided molecular techniques for the early detection, treatment and control of cancer in the form of equipment, training and expert visits, and it fully supported the PACT initiative. The direct technical support for cancer therapy provided by the Agency to Zimbabwe's central hospitals had enabled thousands of its citizens to access much-needed palliative and curative treatments.

10. Malnutrition was a major problem in Africa, especially for those suffering from HIV and AIDS. His country welcomed the Agency's project aimed at improving nutrition using isotope techniques to assess nutrition intervention programmes related to HIV/AIDS in Africa. It hoped that such intervention programmes would improve the health of the majority of people living with that disease.

11. He commended the Agency for the various AFRA projects that Zimbabwe was benefiting from, including projects on the maintenance of medical and scientific instruments, strengthening of waste management infrastructure, development of improved crop varieties, improvement of radiotherapy, tumour markers and non-destructive testing.

12. His Government and the Agency continued to work together to prioritize activities in such core areas as agriculture, food and nutrition, water resources, public health and the facilitation of international development assistance.

13. The development of commercial energy sources was a challenge to all regions of the world and inadequate electricity generation had become a major impediment to the development of the African continent, particularly in southern Africa. Africa was still the continent that used nuclear technology least.

14. In conclusion, Zimbabwe was committed to fulfilling its obligations to the Agency and had paid most of its outstanding contributions to the Regular Budget and the TCF.

15. Mr. GRÖNBERG (Finland) said that, over the preceding year, the Agency's verification system had faced an increasing number of new challenges of serious concern to the international community and the non-proliferation regime, including revelations of a nuclear black market network. The Agency was to be commended for the professional, impartial and objective manner in which it had managed those developments. There was an urgent need to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime and it was essential that a positive and universally supported outcome be found at the forthcoming NPT Review Conference. Finland looked forward to the outcome of the work of the high-level group of experts convened to study multilateral nuclear approaches.

16. Universal application of the Model Additional Protocol would help strengthen the non-proliferation regime. Adherence to the additional protocol should be made a condition of supply for nuclear transfers to non-nuclear-weapon States. His country had brought into force its additional protocol and had embarked on its practical implementation. The Finnish support programme carried out exercises in activities related to the additional protocol. A pilot workshop on additional protocol activities had been organized in Finland in April and the first full-scope workshop was scheduled to take place at the end of October.

17. The potential link between terrorism and nuclear power had been given increasing attention in the Agency's work over the preceding three years. Finland fully supported the Agency's nuclear security action plan. It had provided in-kind support for the Agency's activities and he was pleased to announce a new voluntary contribution of €10 000 to the Nuclear Security Fund. Over the preceding ten years, Finland's support for bilateral and multilateral activities, primarily in Russia, Ukraine and the Baltic States, had ranged from €2–3.5 million per year.

18. The threat of nuclear terrorism made the need to upgrade the CPPNM increasingly acute and his country had been one of those that had requested the convening of a diplomatic conference to negotiate amendments to the Convention. It had also expressed its full support for the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

19. With regard to the Agency's programme for 2006–2007 and the Medium Term Strategy for 2006–2011, discussions between Member States and the Secretariat should focus on the content of the programme first, and only then on the required and available resources. The elements of the programme should fall clearly within the Agency's statutory functions and there should be sufficient flexibility with respect to the allocation of resources to new priority activities, even between major programmes. In that connection, he welcomed the package agreement of July 2003 assuring adequate funding for the Agency's core activities.

20. Finland attached great importance to the technical cooperation programme and had always paid its share of the target in full and on time. Technical cooperation projects should fall within the Agency's terms of reference and should be consistent with national development goals laid down in CPFs. Furthermore, coordination with relevant international organizations, such as the WHO and FAO, should be enhanced to ensure that the Agency's nuclear input was technically justified, relevant and produced sustainable results. Funding of technical cooperation activities should be a shared responsibility of donor and recipient countries.

21. The project to construct a fifth nuclear power reactor in Finland had been approved by the Finnish Parliament after a thorough preparatory process. The contract between the operator and vendor had been signed in December 2003 and implementation of the project was proceeding as planned. The Government was expected to approve the construction licence in early 2005, and the 1600 MW reactor was scheduled to produce electricity in 2009. The safety objectives of the plant were higher than in the current generation of nuclear power plants, and the regulatory work had benefited much from the Agency's safety activities. He encouraged the Agency to continue its work in setting modern standards for nuclear safety. Safety, security and safeguards were becoming increasingly interconnected and had to be taken together if nuclear power was to be used without problems.

22. The continuing use of nuclear power required a robust and reliable solution for the final disposal of high-level and long-lived nuclear waste. While a clear majority of experts agreed that geological disposal was a safe concept, the process leading to the establishment of a final disposal facility needed to be undertaken cautiously and in a measured manner. The Finnish parliament had agreed on a final disposal site for spent fuel in 2001 and the facility, which was intended strictly for national use, should be in operation by 2020.

23. His country hoped that Finland's experience in constructing its final disposal facility would help the Agency when it was developing guides for spent fuel and high-level waste management. He thanked the Secretariat for its cooperation with the Finnish authorities in developing a nuclear safeguards concept for geological disposal and expressed the hope that that cooperation would become even more intense once the building phase had commenced.

24. Mr. KAKODKAR (India) said that India's atomic energy programme had come of age during the fifty years since the Department of Atomic Energy had been founded. The research and development activities led by its scientists had led to commercially viable industrial operations in the fields of heavy-water power reactor technology, the fuel cycle, heavy water, and electronics and instrumentation. The country was poised to translate its R&D attainments into commercial industrial activities related to fast power reactors and thorium reactors, as work continued to expand rapidly the national nuclear power capacity based on thermal reactors. That was in line with India's long-standing three-stage nuclear power programme designed to meet its emerging large-scale energy needs. The

golden jubilee year had been used to take stock of the Department's achievements, and to prepare a road map and identify a collective vision for the future, which exercise had involved nearly 1500 young scientists and their mentors. A study had been conducted on the growth of electrical energy in India over the coming 50 years and the role nuclear power could be expected to play. Since all estimates for an appropriate energy mix for sustainable development over the coming decades included a significant proportion of nuclear power, India was determined to build on its accumulated national capabilities. The recent rise in oil prices had reconfirmed that nuclear power was cost-effective. However, the prevailing low interest rates also favoured investments in nuclear power.

25. India's future programme would aim to: shift to a large-scale construction programme for fast reactors and their associated fuel cycles as soon as possible; develop fuel cycles with a short doubling time; demonstrate technologies for large-scale thorium utilization; develop technologies to support faster growth of thorium systems; develop technologies for the co-generation of electricity, hydrogen and water; and work on fusion technologies. It also envisaged a strong emphasis on linkage between domestic education, research and technology and special emphasis on nuclear energy and radiation.

26. The construction of the first 500 MW(e) nuclear power plant in India based on a fast breeder reactor had been launched at Kalpakkam. The unique mixed plutonium-uranium carbide fuel in the fast breeder test reactor had reached a burnup of around 125 000 MW·d/t. That reactor's fuel cycle had been closed with the successful reprocessing of the spent fuel. The first 1000-second steady-state tokamak with superconducting toroidal and poloidal magnetic fields, which could be used for a number of physics investigations of relevance to ITER, was currently preparing for magnet cooldown and first-phase commissioning tests.

27. The expansion of nuclear power to meet the energy needs of India's growing economy, using its modest uranium and abundant thorium resources, was only possible through a closed nuclear fuel cycle involving fuel reprocessing and refabrication supporting fast and thorium reactors. Sufficient industrial-scale experience had been gained in plutonium recycling in both thermal and fast reactors to ensure that the objectives were met.

28. There was an ever increasing need for safer and cleaner energy sources, and nuclear energy had great potential in that regard. However, the future of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy was being jeopardized by the irresponsible actions of a few States. All those with a stake in its future needed to devise policies and technological solutions based on the principle that international commitments had to be respected. India would collaborate with like-minded countries to achieve that.

29. An active supporter of the Agency's nuclear security programmes, India had organized an international training course on the physical protection of nuclear installations with the Agency in the preceding year, which would be repeated in the current year. It had also been an active partner in Agency programmes on the safety and security of radioactive sources. In the long run, the strain on resources caused by the funding of security programmes could be alleviated by deploying technologies and implementing policies that reduced inequality and promoted sustainable development. The Agency's INPRO programme with its focus on safety, economics, waste management, sustainability and proliferation resistance was of crucial importance in that regard. Innovative technologies would have an increasingly important role to play in meeting the energy needs of developing countries and high priority should therefore be assigned to activities in that field. He welcomed the fact that INPRO was being partly funded from the Regular Budget in 2004. However, that important programme merited greater financial support from that source. The international conference organized by the Agency in Obninsk to celebrate 50 years of electricity production through nuclear power had also highlighted the importance of meeting current challenges through technological innovation.



30. He praised the Agency's work on nuclear knowledge management. India had been conducting a sustained and comprehensive programme on knowledge management in the nuclear field for over four decades. Recent Agency initiatives such as the international conference on nuclear knowledge management held at Saclay were timely and should be further strengthened. India's experts were working in close cooperation with the Agency in that area.

31. India's strength was its human resources and it had perhaps the largest pool of young talent. In the field of nuclear science and technology, that pool was fully competent and self-sustaining, and capable of supporting a growing programme by creating additional capacities and developing new technologies. However, his country recognized the value of international collaboration and had been active in WANO, in programmes at CERN and the Brookhaven National Laboratory in the United States, as well as in Agency technical cooperation programmes.

32. It hoped that conditions would soon become favourable for India to ratify the Convention on Nuclear Safety. However, currently there was a contradiction between that Convention's objective of achieving and maintaining a high level of nuclear safety worldwide through the enhancement of measures and international cooperation including, where appropriate, safety-related technical cooperation, and restrictive practices in trade even for safety equipment. India had adopted a consistent, responsible approach to developing its self-reliant atomic energy programme and would continue to do so, and its export control framework stood the test of time.

33. As an active supporter of Agency development programmes, India had always paid its TCF contributions in full and on time and would do so again in the current year.

34. In addressing the problems faced by humanity, it was important to be proactive rather than reactive and to strike at the root causes rather than the symptoms. Technology was the key to success and strategies had to be found that facilitated its free transfer without compromising safety and security.

35. Mr. FRANK (Israel) said that, in view of the challenges and dangerous revelations of recent years, the Agency should strengthen its capabilities for safeguarding nuclear material and facilities. Israel was appreciative of the Agency's initiatives to address the threats of proliferation and terrorism and had shown its support for the Nuclear Security Fund by making a further voluntary contribution. It was also in the process of implementing the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, had ratified the CPPNM in 2002 and had actively participated in the expert group that had prepared a draft amendment to that Convention. He welcomed the launching of the Global Threat Reduction Initiative. Furthermore, a new Israeli export control order had entered into force in July 2004 which fully incorporated the NSG trigger list and the list of nuclear-related dual-use equipment, materials, software and related technology. The Israeli legislation went beyond the NSG lists and included a 'catch-all' clause. His country also supported the United States' proposal that Member States should not participate in decisions by the Board relating to their own cases should they come under investigation for non-technical non-proliferation and safeguards violations.

36. While important, all the aforementioned initiatives were still insufficient in view of the most acute challenges to the non-proliferation regime, namely the attempts by some signatories to the NPT to develop nuclear weapons, the growing availability of nuclear technologies and material, mainly through illicit supply networks, the increasing interest of non-State actors in weapons of mass destruction and radiological weapons, and the policy of certain regimes that both sought weapons capabilities and supported terrorism. Thus it was not surprising that the Director General had indicated that a framework more suited to the threats and realities of the 21st century needed to be defined.

37. All four fundamental stages of the safeguards process — detection, reporting, judgement and enforcement — had shortcomings. While detection of non-compliance had improved vastly under the

additional protocol, it still required much bolstering. Detection of undeclared activities would always be critically dependent on intelligence provided by States, particularly where there were illicit trafficking networks. Much also depended on the adoption by the Agency of a 'no trust' and problem-oriented culture to focus on inconsistencies under adverse conditions. The reporting of findings relevant to non-compliance had shown certain shortcomings, especially where non-technical judgement was involved. Agency reports should also appropriately reflect the fact that safeguards only covered part of the obligations under the NPT. The formidable political difficulties of the last two stages, judgement and enforcement, had been amply demonstrated at recent Board meetings. Those problems assumed even greater significance in view of Member States' right to withdraw from the NPT at relatively short notice while retaining fuel cycle capacities acquired under the Treaty. New and enhanced tools were required to address the new challenges.

38. The problem of global warming and the enhanced safety and reliability of nuclear power made that energy source the most attractive source for the future. However, to realize that vision, a new synergy would need to be developed between safe, reliable nuclear power generation, overcoming proliferation concerns and environmentally sound waste disposal requirements. The expected massive expansion and global dissemination of a nuclear infrastructure to meet growing energy demands made that challenge especially pressing. The issue of new norms to diminish the proliferation risks associated with nuclear fuel cycle facilities should be discussed with an open mind. The suggested options included new norms designed to create better tools for facing proliferation crises when they occurred, and approaches to avoid the emergence of such problems by limiting the spread of fuel cycle facilities. Israel supported the United States initiative in that regard and commended the G8 decision on a moratorium on the dissemination of fuel cycle facilities until a new norm was formulated. In parallel, access to power reactors could be facilitated while fuel supply by recognized existing vendors was guaranteed. That arrangement could free countries from the economic burden of building and managing national nuclear fuel cycle facilities, and from the environmental burden of spent fuel storage. It would also ensure that those sensitive facilities were managed more safely and securely, thereby ensuring that the proliferation risk did not increase in proportion to the number of power reactors. He also commended the Director General's decision to convene an expert group to explore multilateral approaches to limit the global spread of fuel cycle facilities while providing assurances of competitively priced fuel supplies, and called on all Member States to develop new tools to enable the Agency and other institutions to confront the new proliferation challenges while meeting growing energy demands, instead of spending time and resources on less relevant issues.

39. In that connection, he noted that the Conference had before it two draft resolutions concerning the Middle East which stood out as extraneous to the Agency's Statute and mission. Israel supported the principle of making the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, once the political and security conditions necessary for its negotiation had ripened. That was not yet the case, as some States in the region did not even recognize Israel's right to exist and were even calling for its elimination while supporting terrorist groups' operations and ideologies. Israel also could not ignore the alarming attitude of some of those States to their international commitments in the nuclear domain, as reflected in recent Agency findings. It had made no secret of its fundamental reservations regarding the language and relevance of the preceding year's resolution on the application of safeguards in the Middle East and had formally distanced itself from the modalities of that resolution. However, it had shown itself willing to join the consensus on the resolution, while recognizing that there was no substitute for reconciliation leading to direct negotiations and freely reached agreements among States in the region. During the Director General's recent visit to Israel, discussions had been held on a forum on nuclear-weapon-free zones.

40. Equally, with regard to the agenda item on Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat, there had been many alarming proliferation developments in the Middle East and other regions in recent years but

none of them had involved his country, though many directly challenged its security. Therefore, the draft resolution on that issue was unfounded and an instance of cynical use of the Conference for political purposes, like the reservations expressed by some States regarding his country's credentials. That cast serious doubt on the sincerity of its sponsors and their willingness to make any real progress towards cooperative security in the Middle East. He therefore called on all Member States to reject such a proposal outright. If any action were taken on that agenda item, his country would not be in a position to support the resolution on the application of safeguards in the Middle East.

41. Finally, he commended the Agency for its contribution to cancer radiotherapy through its technical cooperation programme and expressed support for the launching of the PACT initiative which aimed to address the alarming cancer rates in developing countries. Israel was ready to share its knowledge and experience in cancer therapy, providing interested parties with practical training in radiotherapy, radiation techniques, quality assurance and dosimetry at leading Israeli medical centres.

42. Mr. CAMPOS (Brazil) said that his country's intensive work with the Agency since its founding was based on its firm support for the Agency's mandate and had been fruitful for the development of nuclear energy in Brazil, resulting in the establishment of partnerships in the field of technical cooperation, the adoption of a national regulatory system and of safety standards recognized internationally for their excellence.

43. Brazil was an example of how the quest for scientific and technological development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes was entirely compatible with non-proliferation objectives and full compliance with commitments undertaken in that area.

44. His country had been developing its complete nuclear fuel cycle capacity since 1987. The peaceful purpose of those efforts was demonstrated by the fact that all of Brazil's nuclear facilities had been subject to Agency comprehensive safeguards since 1994 when the Quadripartite Agreement had entered into force. Thus, four years before its adherence to the NPT, Brazil had already subjected all its facilities to international supervision and control. Moreover, its nuclear facilities were also subject to the safeguards established under the bilateral agreement that created ABACC.

45. Scientific research, applied technology and innovation were indispensable for socio-economic development, income generation and job creation in his country, and as a means to meet the population's social, educational, commercial and environmental needs. In today's 'knowledge economy', scientific and technological development constituted the basis for economic growth and development that was socially sustainable, politically democratic and economically viable in terms of the preservation of natural resources. His Government was at a stage where it needed to take decisive action to generate knowledge and technologies in areas of vital importance to the country's development. That would have to be done in accordance with the industrial, scientific, technological and foreign trade policies of the Brazilian Government, and in full compliance with its international obligations in all areas, including in the nuclear field.

46. Brazil's economic recovery would require a considerable expansion of its national infrastructure, which had deteriorated over preceding decades as a consequence of insufficient new investment. The electricity generation sector was in a particularly critical situation, since economic expansion was accompanied by an increased demand for electricity. His country relied heavily on hydroelectric power which was a finite resource and had almost reached its maximum potential. Therefore, diversification was essential and the Government was promoting several programmes to promote economically and environmentally viable alternative energy sources such as biodiesel. Nuclear energy played an important role and its share in the country's energy mix could be increased.

47. Brazil was a peaceful country whose objective was socially inclusive development. It also had the necessary technical and human resources and an adequate control, licensing and research infrastructure for peaceful nuclear applications.

48. The NPT was the centrepiece of the international non-proliferation and disarmament regime and dealt with three issues which could not be separated: disarmament, non-proliferation and the right to develop the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. His country had demonstrated its commitment to fulfilling the Treaty's objectives when it nominated Ambassador de Queiroz Duarte to chair the 2005 NPT Review Conference. The unanimous support he had received was an unequivocal recognition of the professional and personal qualities of one of Brazil's most experienced diplomats, whose career had centred around issues dealt with in the Agency. It was also a sign of confidence in Brazil, whose tireless efforts to advance the cause of nuclear disarmament dated back to the launch of the Tlatelolco Treaty. His country had proscribed any use of nuclear energy other than for exclusively peaceful purposes and, in the Legislative Decree approving the text of the NPT, its National Congress had included an interpretative clause underlining its attachment to nuclear disarmament.

49. The success of the 2005 NPT Review Conference depended upon all States party to the Treaty. As far as disarmament and non-proliferation objectives were concerned, a balanced result was needed which preserved the political gains that had been made in 1995 and 2000. At regional level, his country was proud of the contribution Latin America and the Caribbean had made to disarmament and non-proliferation through the establishment of the world's first nuclear-weapon-free zone.

50. The nuclear-weapon States could make an exemplary contribution to the successful conclusion of the forthcoming NPT Review Conference by acceding to the request of the member States of OPANAL that they withdraw their reservations to Protocol II of the Tlatelolco Treaty, and by extending unconditional negative security assurances to Latin American and Caribbean countries and to all member States of nuclear-weapon-free zones. As a member of the New Agenda Coalition, Brazil participated actively in efforts to bring home to the nuclear-weapon States the importance of fulfilling the disarmament commitments undertaken at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. The regional and political diversity of the members of the New Agenda Coalition confirmed the widespread nature of the concerns regarding the threat to international peace and security from the continued existence of nuclear weapons.

51. Brazil supported the Agency's activities and recognized its prominent work in the areas of nuclear verification, technical cooperation and nuclear safety. Those activities contributed to nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the use of nuclear energy for sustainable development. His Government supported international efforts to combat all forms of terrorism, including possible malicious acts involving nuclear material. His country had adequate legislation and efficient control systems in that area. It also fully shared concerns about the risk of nuclear weapons falling into the hands of non-State actors. Such a threat only reinforced the need to work towards the objective of nuclear disarmament. On the other hand, the discussion of measures relating to the possible use of nuclear weapons by terrorists did not justify the indefinite retention of such weapons, nor should the need to adopt measures to prevent terrorism have a detrimental effect on the rights of States to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. In particular, no initiative in the enrichment and reprocessing field should undermine that right.

52. His country assigned great importance to the Agency's technical cooperation programme and was fully involved in it, both as a donor and as a recipient. Brazilian nuclear energy institutions had received 41 foreign students and trainees funded by the Agency in 2003. Brazil ranked among the top ten countries in terms of the number of Agency-funded researchers it received. In the same year, 91 Brazilian experts had worked as specialists for the Agency and 5 training courses had been held in the country with Agency support. The technical cooperation programme should continue to give

priority to radioisotope and radiation applications, particularly in the areas of medicine, health, industry, agriculture and water resource management. Member States' interests and needs should continue to be the key factor in the approval of technical cooperation projects and activities and the elaboration of the Agency's regular programme. ARCAL had also made a strong contribution to nuclear scientific and technical exchange among countries in the region.

53. He commended the progress achieved in the cooperation between ABACC and the Agency on the application of safeguards under the Quadripartite Agreement following the implementation of common data auditing at relevant nuclear facilities and the elaboration of manuals for joint safeguards activities and shared use of equipment. Brazil attached the utmost importance to cooperation between ABACC and the Agency and urged both to continue working together in order to avoid any unnecessary duplication of effort, improve cost efficiency and minimize potential disruptions to the operation of nuclear facilities in Brazil and Argentina.

54. Mr. BUTT (Pakistan) said that his country strongly believed in the peaceful use of nuclear energy to promote socio-economic development and was firmly committed to its application in a wide variety of fields. Its experience in that area dated back to the 1960s and it looked forward to further progress and continued Agency cooperation.

55. Work had commenced on the second 300 MW nuclear power plant unit at the Chashma site, CHASNUPP 2. Pakistan was grateful to China for having supplied that power plant in a significant example of South-South cooperation. The plant would be under Agency safeguards and an application had already been made in that connection. When operational, it would join the two other safeguarded plants: CHASNUPP 1, which was operating satisfactorily, and KANUPP, the Karachi nuclear power plant, which had undergone extensive refurbishing and upgrading during a 14-month relicensing outage. Notable activities had included the replacement of the plant control systems and most of the related instrumentation. All those activities had been indigenous except for coolant tube inspection, for which assistance had been received from Canada. Following licensing by the Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority, the plant was back in operation at about 50% of its rated power. During the coming year, his country planned to upgrade some more safety systems, after which the plant should operate well at higher power levels for the next 15 years. The planned safety upgrades included the installation of additional redundancy in the emergency coolant injection system and another external and independent coolant injection system in case of a loss of coolant accident. With those changes, the plant would meet almost all the modern safety requirements for a CANDU plant.

56. Owing to increasing concerns about global warming and oil price increases, there was renewed interest in nuclear power worldwide particularly, in the region stretching from Pakistan to Japan where more nuclear power plants were under construction than anywhere else. Although significant coal reserves had been found in his country, recent studies based on the accelerated national economic growth of the preceding four years predicted that more nuclear power plants might be needed than previously planned. Unpredictable rainfall owing to global weather pattern changes also made hydroelectricity less dependable.

57. With its long experience of generating nuclear electricity, Pakistan fully recognized its responsibility to the rest of the world and the need to maintain the safety and security of its plants. Therefore, it had ratified the Convention on Nuclear Safety. However, while the developed countries did offer theoretical help to his country with the improvement of plant safety, they refused to supply the equipment and materials needed to attain that safety level, so it had to rely on indigenous development which was not always cost-effective. He therefore urged Western countries not to restrict the supply of such parts and technology.

58. Nuclear power plant operators were aware of the high standards set by the Agency's nuclear safety standards, requirements and guides, but the latter were often implemented differently from country to country. Pakistan looked forward to the Agency helping countries which did not have an extensive indigenous nuclear power plant capability to develop a practical approach to improve that situation.

59. He noted with interest the increasing activities in the areas of nuclear desalination, small and medium-sized reactors and proliferation-free innovative power plants as envisaged under INPRO. His country was keen to play an increasingly active role in those programmes, within the limits of its resources. However, those programmes were long-term and, to meet the urgent power needs of countries like his own, the international community should consider setting up 'nuclear power parks' as joint ventures at specially designated sites and subject to appropriate safeguards.

60. Pakistan had applied nuclear energy peacefully in such areas as health, agriculture, water resource management, industry, environment and various R&D activities. That year it had completed its thirteenth nuclear medicine centre. More than one third of a million patients were treated in such centres annually. Work was currently under way to set up five more to cover all areas of Pakistan, and to ensure that they were accessible to nearly all of the population within a few hours' travel by road. There were also plans to establish the country's first PET diagnostic facility. In agriculture, Pakistan's centres continued to develop new crop varieties and had set up five demonstration farms to help farmers use land affected by salinity. The country now needed eco-friendly biocontrol technology for insect pests to reduce excessive dependence on chemical pesticides. It looked forward to receiving Agency assistance with the setting up of the first SIT facility. It was also requesting help with uranium prospecting, as it viewed uranium as the oil of the future and hoped to meet its uranium needs indigenously.

61. As it attached great importance to the Agency's technical cooperation programme, Pakistan had been concerned by the financial uncertainties of the preceding year. It remained strongly committed to the package proposal approved by the Board in 2003 and urged all Member States to pay their financial contributions in full and on time.

62. Pakistan currently had 30 operational CRPs through which it maintained active cooperation with the Agency. Unfortunately, it had only been awarded 26 out of the 55 CRPs it had requested the preceding year. Those programmes promoted exchange of information among scientists and engineers from developing and developed Member States and should be encouraged.

63. Finally, in order to combat terrorism, his country had significantly augmented the already strong physical protection measures at its nuclear installations. It remained deeply committed to non-proliferation. A few days previously, it had passed legislation to control the export of goods, technologies, material and the equipment related to nuclear and biological weapons and their delivery systems. It also planned to educate and train its scientists and engineers and other officials to enforce those controls and had taken strict action against an illicit network dealing in nuclear material and technology.

**Ms. Hall (Canada), Vice-President, took the chair.**

64. Mr. CARRERA DORAL (Cuba) said that his country had always complied fully with its obligations, as could be seen from its commitment to non-proliferation. His Government held the position that no State should have the right to develop, manufacture, possess, use or improve nuclear weapons and that the NPT was therefore inadequate and discriminatory. Nevertheless, as a gesture of political goodwill and its commitment to multilateralism, Cuba had ratified the Tlatelolco Treaty, acceded to the NPT and signed a safeguards agreement and additional protocol, both of which instruments had been in force since June 2004.

65. The declaration adopted at the eighteenth session of the OPANAL General Conference held in Havana in November 2003 reaffirmed that the consolidation of the nuclear-weapon-free zone embodied in the treaty of Tlatelolco was an important contribution of the region to international peace, security and international stability, and was a clear demonstration of the firm commitment of Latin America and the Caribbean to the cause of comprehensive and verifiable nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, in accordance with the goals and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The declaration also appealed to all States possessing nuclear weapons to provide full guarantees to States that were members of nuclear-weapon-free zones that they would not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons. In that context, Cuba was concerned that the power with the most nuclear weapons, and the only one to have used them for military purposes, was assigning extensive funding to the improvement and development of such weapons and subscribed to the theory of preventive nuclear strikes, in flagrant violation of the NPT.

66. A recent package of initiatives purported to reduce the risks of proliferation and nuclear terrorism. Cuba shared concerns about the possibility of terrorists acquiring nuclear weapons and fully supported all legitimate international efforts to prevent that. However, the only way to attack the problem at its roots was the total, unconditional elimination of nuclear weapons, an approach which those initiatives unfortunately did not adopt. Rather, they demonstrated a worrying tendency to restrict the peaceful use of nuclear energy in the majority of countries while in others vertical proliferation increased, leading to double standards, discrimination and further arms build-up. The implementation of any initiative or proposal within the framework of the Agency should be the result of analysis and transparent discussion involving all Member States, and should be strictly in line with the Statute.

67. Turning to the implementation of safeguards agreements in certain States, he endorsed the Non-Aligned Movement's praise for the Agency's progress in solving the outstanding issues raised in recent reports by the Director General to the Board of Governors. Every State had an inalienable sovereign right to the unrestricted use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes as long as there was no evidence that it had breached its NPT obligations. Only the Agency had the mandate to verify or draw conclusions on any State's nuclear programme, on the basis of objective information. Nobody had the right to prejudge a country's nuclear programme or to politicize the issue. There should be a clear distinction between States' legal obligations and political commitments made as a demonstration of goodwill. Cuba hoped that technical issues relating to nuclear verification would not become a political issue leading to another international crisis. Furthermore, it strongly supported political and diplomatic efforts to reach settlements that were acceptable to all parties, that remained within the framework of the Agency and that respected the sovereignty of all States and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

68. His country supported all measures taken by the Agency to strengthen international cooperation in nuclear and radiation safety. It therefore welcomed the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources to which it attached great importance, as evidenced by the fact that it had been one of the first States to notify the Director General of its intention to follow the Code. However, none of the aforementioned measures should be used to justify unilateral actions involving pressure or political blackmail in connection with trade in radioactive material, or deliberate, unjustified obstruction of the development of applications of nuclear techniques in any country.

69. The use of nuclear technology had had a tangible impact on Cuba's priority development programmes. Cuba attached great importance to the Agency's technical cooperation activities and felt they should be adequately funded. It also believed in the importance of maintaining the balance between technical cooperation and safety and verification activities. It had systematically honoured its financial commitments to the Agency in spite of its economic difficulties and had continued to increase the efficiency of its programme management and its support for other countries, mainly through the provision of experts.

70. The Cuban Government had continued to support ARCAL, which it considered an important tool for the promotion of cooperation and exchanges among developing countries and for channelling technical cooperation resources in the region. Cuba had recently assumed the presidency of ARCAL. It was grateful for the Agency's support for that programme and felt sure that it would increase in the future. There was a need for a broader, more effective technical cooperation programme which met the growing needs of developing countries, with more real commitment from all parties and adequate, secure and predictable financial resources. While the TCF had not increased as much as his country had hoped, the target of US \$77.5 million set for 2005–2006 was a step in the right direction and Cuba hoped to see an increase to over \$78.5 million in future financial years.

71. Finally, he expressed the hope that seventh NPT Review Conference would provide an opportunity to develop a collective security system based on cooperation.

72. Mr. OTHMAN (Syrian Arab Republic) drew attention to the global repercussions of the worsening security situation in the Middle East. It was no secret that the peace process in the Middle East had run aground because of Israel's refusal to comply with General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, and because of the application of double standards by some powers which supported Israel despite its occupation of part of the territory of neighbouring Arab countries since 4 June 1967.

73. The responsibility for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East lay to a large extent with the great powers which had a duty to address the issue of Israel's sole possession of such weapons. International moves to eliminate Israeli nuclear weapons should begin with the adoption of corresponding resolutions by the General Conference and other international fora. Unfortunately, as indicated in his report on the matter, the Director General had been unable to fulfil the mandate assigned to him by the preceding General Conference to facilitate the application of comprehensive Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities in the Middle East region. Israel, the only party that threatened the region's security through its possession of nuclear weapons, refused to discuss the idea of a nuclear-weapon-free zone until a peace agreement had been signed. However, its policy of indifference to a just and comprehensive peace in the region was a major obstacle to any progress towards that goal. The establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone depended primarily on Israeli compliance with Security Council resolution 487(1981), which called on it to accede to the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards. It should be noted that all Arab countries were already parties to the NPT.

74. The Syrian Arab Republic had submitted a draft resolution to the Security Council in April 2003 on behalf of the Arab group aimed at making the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, and had announced to the international community that it would work together with other Arab States and all peace-loving nations with a view to realizing that goal. However, the international situation at the time had not been conducive to the success of the initiative. Therefore, his country had submitted the draft resolution again in December 2003 and it was still before the Security Council awaiting more propitious international circumstances.

75. The Syrian Arab Republic had always been in the forefront of the fight against terrorism. In 1986 it had been the first to call for a United Nations conference to discuss the subject and define the meaning of the term. A distinction had to be made between terrorism and the struggle of peoples against foreign occupation. His country had made the same proposal in 1991 but to no avail, because some States, for political reasons, applied double standards in dealing with the issues of terrorism and the right of peoples to defend their land and freedom.

76. The Israeli Government pursued a policy of terrorism vis-à-vis the people of occupied Palestine and the Golan Heights through the destruction of homes, making women and children homeless, and



through arbitrary detention and assassinations, flouting international opinion and United Nations resolutions. Furthermore, nuclear reactors in Israel, which were not subject to international inspection, could cause a major environmental disaster. He called on the General Conference, when it discussed the agenda item on Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat, to bear in mind the fact that all Arab States wanted peace, security and stability and were working tirelessly to achieve that goal in the United Nations, at Arab and Islamic summit meetings and within the relevant geographic groups. He also called on the international community to show understanding for the region's legitimate concern about Israel's nuclear weapons capability.

77. With regard to the Director General's proposal to convene a forum to discuss the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, the Syrian Arab Republic agreed in principle to participate if Israel acceded to the NPT and placed all its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards.

78. One of the Agency's most important tasks was the transfer of nuclear knowledge to Member States, especially developing countries. In that connection, he expressed appreciation for its work on the development of databases, the publication of technical documents and the training of human resources in the peaceful applications of nuclear energy. The Agency should encourage developed Member States to provide more training opportunities for nationals of developing countries.

79. The Syrian Atomic Energy Commission played a role in disseminating nuclear knowledge, especially in Arabic. It had recently undertaken to translate the Agency's INIS multilingual dictionary of nuclear terms into Arabic free of charge, drawing on the services of a team of outstanding Syrian academics. The Commission also translated the *IAEA Bulletin* into Arabic. For the fifth year running, it had hosted an Arabic-language course leading to a diploma in radiation protection and the safety of radiation sources in cooperation with the Agency. Over a hundred students had already completed the course. It also arranged specialized training courses each year for fellowship holders and scientific visitors from Arab States. Moreover, it provided experts in various fields free of charge under the Agency's technical cooperation programme.

80. The control of radioactive sources was a national responsibility to be addressed on the basis of internationally agreed safety standards and guidelines, and the strengthening of regulatory infrastructures in Agency Member States and non-member States should enhance national and regional capacities in that regard. The Syrian Arab Republic had assisted with the development of a computer program for radiation sources and with the training of inspectors from a number of national regulatory bodies in using that program. It complied with the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources adopted by the Agency the preceding year and had worked with the group of experts that had drafted the Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources.

81. Thanking the Agency for the technical assistance it provided under national and regional projects, he noted that two joint projects were being implemented under the ARASIA agreement: one on comparative assessment of electricity generation options and the other on strengthening regional training and certification capability in non-destructive testing. He urged the Agency to continue supporting ARASIA.

82. Unfortunately, despite the Agency's efforts to ensure the timely implementation of all technical cooperation projects, difficulties in respect of some training programmes and fellowships and the purchase of medical equipment had led to delays in the implementation of some national projects.

83. He cautioned against allowing current international tensions to influence the ongoing need to facilitate the transfer of nuclear technology to developing countries for use in such areas as health care, industry and scientific research. The countries that provided such assistance should honour the commitments they had made on many various occasions.

84. A shortfall in the TCF during the preceding year owing to the failure of many countries to pay their contributions on time had led to a major decline in the rate of attainment in 2003. The developing countries had agreed to the deshielding package and had accepted a departure from the principle of zero real growth in the budget in return for more effective arrangements to fund the TCF, yet no agreement had been reached to date on a mechanism that would make the Fund's resources more reliable and predictable. He expressed the hope that the Secretariat would give more attention to the matter and put forward workable proposals as soon as possible.

85. Mr. DIATTA (Senegal) said that scientific and technical cooperation between his country and the Agency had been conducted partially through the programmes of the ICTP in Trieste, and through bilateral cooperation with Agency Member States and special programmes such as AFRA. It had brought success in a number of areas, including agriculture, biology, chemistry, geology, hydrology, medicine and physics.

86. His country had received help in the radiation protection area in the form of investment, equipment, and assistance with legislation, the establishment of regulatory infrastructure, the elaboration of a national programme for the application of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and the signature of the major agreements relating to the use of nuclear energy. Thanks to its new institutional and regulatory framework, it had been able to adopt a law on radiation protection elaborated in cooperation with the Agency, to set up a national scientific research centre and to extend its research activities nationwide. Currently, a science park was being established which should further promote research, and thought was being given to an African science agency which would facilitate inter-African cooperation.

87. His country was grateful to the Agency for the opportunity to have a data centre installed which would permit geological and seismographic monitoring covering several African countries. The establishment of the national scientific research centre would strengthen groups performing research in atomic physics, nuclear and molecular biology and physics.

88. He welcomed the Agency's efforts to decentralize training programmes and coordinate R&D programmes in Africa. There should be enhanced coordination between national programmes and AFRA programmes.

89. Climatic anomalies, such as desertification and drought cycles, were a matter of global concern and all nations should work together to solve the catastrophic consequences of human behaviour.

90. Senegal would spare no effort to strengthen its current technical cooperation programmes with the Agency. It welcomed the development of cooperation between the Agency and the African continent based on local initiatives, research and development, and existing or planned infrastructure.

91. Furthermore, it supported unreservedly the AFRA programme and would spare no effort to integrate that programme in NEPAD.

92. Mr. SYCHOV (Belarus), extending his condolences to the Russian Federation for the recent unprecedented series of terrorist acts, said that the latest incident had emphasized the need for the world community to consolidate its efforts to combat international terrorism, including the possible malicious use of nuclear material and radioactive sources. In that connection, the Agency had an increased responsibility for maintaining international stability and security. Agency Member States and the Secretariat had worked together successfully in many fields: improving and strengthening physical protection of facilities containing nuclear material and radiation sources, developing and introducing guidelines for the management of nuclear material, and ensuring the safe storage of material that could be used to produce a radiological dispersal device. Belarus attached special

importance to strengthening the physical protection of nuclear material. Central to that were the efforts to amend the CPPNM.

93. His country was concerned that the unresolved crisis in the DPRK was undermining the NPT. Though the six-party talks had not yet resulted in any substantial achievement, it was to be hoped that the constructive interaction of all participants would lead to a compromise solution that would help relieve tension in the Asia and Pacific region.

94. He commended the efforts of both the Secretariat and Iran to resolve outstanding safeguards questions in that country. Belarus was confident that Iran would work with the Agency in a spirit of cooperation and transparency.

95. The future of the safeguards system as a whole depended on how effectively the Agency dealt with the current crises. It should remain objective, basing its arguments on established facts, and should play a more active role in the search for a solution, holding consultations with the governments of the countries concerned.

96. Belarus participated actively in the Agency's technical cooperation programme and appreciated the results that had been achieved in recent years. Proactive transmission of nuclear technologies to Member States and assistance with acute medical, social and economic problems had helped expand the contribution that nuclear science made to sustainable development in Belarus. The CPF signed in March 2003 provided a solid foundation for crucial further development of technical cooperation between Belarus and the Agency in the medium term.

97. Technical cooperation between the Agency and Belarus was largely related to overcoming the consequences of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident. The last in a series of rapeseed projects had been successfully completed in 2001 and a plant had been set up which was producing ecologically clean products in the contaminated areas. Belarus was successfully implementing a Model Project on the rehabilitation of the Chernobyl-affected territories in which the key factors were sustainable economic development and the establishment of industries that allowed clean goods to be produced from local feedstock.

98. His country attached special importance to the implementation of a regional project on long-term countermeasure strategies and monitoring of human exposure in rural areas affected by the Chernobyl accident. The project aimed at solving the practical tasks of dose exposure monitoring and developing a long-term strategy to overcome the consequences of the catastrophe.

99. The progress made by the Chernobyl Forum was pleasing. Strict adherence to its schedule and sustainable funding of its activities should allow it to complete its work by 2005. Belarus highly appreciated the active role played by the Director General, the Deputy Director General for Technical Cooperation and the staff of the Department of Technical Cooperation in addressing the long-term consequences of the Chernobyl accident. Funding of national and regional programmes related to the accident should be preserved at the existing level.

100. Staff training was a crucial to strengthening the effectiveness of the regulatory infrastructure for the safety and security of radioactive and nuclear material. The Agency's efforts to implement a strategic approach to education and training in the field of radiation and waste safety were welcome. Belarus had made a substantial contribution to those activities over many years by hosting Agency training and consultative events, a recent example being the third postgraduate training course on radiation safety and the safety of radiation sources held at the International Sakharov Ecological University. It was interested in continuing its cooperation with the Agency on the basis of long-term plans and agreements.

101. Equally, it was also interested in further improvement of technical cooperation in the field of nuclear safety. His country's considerable experience in that sphere might be of interest to other countries, in particular its work on illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive material. With Agency assistance, two pilot checkpoints had been equipped to monitor material crossing the border. On the basis of that project, it was planned to establish a national automated system to account for and control transfers of nuclear and radioactive material.

102. Another priority issue was the safe management of nuclear fuel and radioactive waste, which would only be possible with the participation of all States party to the Joint Convention. He therefore encouraged those States that had not yet done so to ratify that Convention. Radioactive waste management was often connected in Belarus with other important tasks, such as the identification and rehabilitation of orphan sources. Some twenty sites had been identified where orphan sources might be located. The examination of two of those sites had confirmed that they posed a radiation risk. Resources were being sought to pursue that work and to develop a model project to remove the sources.

103. In conclusion, Belarus regularly paid its contributions to the TCF in full and called upon Member States to take the necessary measures to provide the TCF with sufficient financial resources for the full-scale implementation of the technical cooperation programme.

104. Mr. BACCINI (Italy) said that his Government supported all the activities performed by the Agency in fulfilment of its statutory obligations and looked favourably on its efforts to promote sustainable energy development, develop innovative and proliferation-resistant technology and preserve knowledge. It also supported the Agency's activities to combat nuclear terrorism and welcomed the Global Threat Reduction Initiative.

105. It was essential to uphold and strengthen the global non-proliferation regime. The Agency had a crucial role to play in the field of verification and in all activities related to the implementation of the NPT. Reviewing and strengthening the Treaty, which constituted the cornerstone of the regime for non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, should be seen as fundamental to peace and stability.

106. Italy therefore supported the strong verification regime provided by additional protocols, which enabled the Agency both to provide credible assurances of the non-diversion of nuclear material and to detect clandestine material and activities. Italy had ratified its additional protocol and urged all countries that had not yet done so to follow suit. His country also fully supported the re-examination of nuclear fuel cycle issues, as suggested by the Director General, and looked forward to the findings of the recently established expert group. Italy was committed to preventing any possible diversion of material through strict controls on sensitive exports, including transfer controls on nuclear and nuclear-related material, provided that such controls did not hinder international cooperation related to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It also supported the Agency's efforts to improve further the illicit trafficking database in the interests of combating illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive material. In view of the widespread concern about the risks from illicit trafficking, his country looked forward to the early implementation of the guidance on the import and export of high-risk radiation sources.

107. His country would continue its efforts to maintain the authority and integrity of the NPT. It therefore endorsed the view that the CTBT should enter into force and that negotiations on an internationally verifiable fissile material cut-off treaty should begin as soon as possible.

108. Nuclear safety had to be given the highest priority at every stage of a country's nuclear programme. In that connection, the Convention on Nuclear Safety was an essential tool for spreading a common safety culture to ensure that an internationally accepted standard was maintained at all nuclear power plants.

109. Italy was also committed to completing the ratification of the Joint Convention, which was essential for achieving and maintaining a high level of safety worldwide.

110. It appreciated the increased international attention which was being given to the decommissioning of nuclear facilities and stood ready to contribute to the proposed Agency action plans on decommissioning and on strengthening the international preparedness and response system for nuclear and radiological emergencies. Particular attention should be paid to so-called non-technological factors in the implementation of decommissioning projects, such as the involvement of local communities, site re-developers and unions.

111. His country fully supported the Agency's initiative in convening the recent International Conference on Nuclear Knowledge Management held in France. The continuity of nuclear knowledge was a matter of growing concern for all, including Italy, where fewer young people were studying nuclear science and engineering at university.

112. It also supported the Agency's technical cooperation initiatives and, recognizing their increasing importance as an instrument of progress and stability, hoped that the general public would learn to see the Agency as an institution which not only carried out verification work but also helped less developed countries to achieve better living standards. The Agency should aim to develop a technical cooperation programme with fewer but better quality projects. The effective coordination between the Agency's own technical cooperation activities and those of other organizations was welcome, particularly the coordination with the World Bank and the WHO.

113. Italy's academic and health institutions had long-standing experience of cooperation with the Agency, especially in the field of nuclear medicine, thanks to the organization of training courses, scientific visits and fellowships. His country would like to see those scientific programmes strengthened and possibly also included within a national framework to be agreed upon with the Agency. In that connection, the Agency had an important role to play in providing assistance and cooperation to help combat the increased incidence of cancer in developing countries.

114. Through UNESCO, Italy contributed more than 80 % of the budget of the ICTP which carried out activities and programmes aimed at promoting international cooperation among scientists around the world. The Agency's support for the ICTP was deeply appreciated and had encouraged Italy to continue to strengthen the centre and enhance its role of bridging the scientific and technological gap between North and South.

115. To ensure cost-effectiveness, precise priorities should be identified when starting new Agency activities. The results-based approach provided indications of possible deviations in programme implementation and opportunities to take advantage of the lessons learned from past experiences. The use of performance indicators to improve assessments was welcome. Special attention should be paid to the formulation of activities in cross-cutting areas such as knowledge management and environmental quality assurance. Furthermore, the Secretariat should base its staff recruitment policy on scientific and technical competence in order to maintain a high level of expertise in the Agency.

116. As the sixth largest contributor to the Agency's Regular Budget, Italy had always honoured its commitment to pay its contributions and had regularly paid its voluntary contribution to the TCF, thus contributing to the high rate of attainment achieved in the current year. The Secretariat should reflect that commitment in its recruitment of Italian nationals.

117. Mr. HASSANE YARI (Niger) said that his country was fully committed to the Agency's objectives and would spare no effort to promote the peaceful use of nuclear technology and strengthen the non-proliferation regime. It would also work with the international community towards ensuring

global peace, security and prosperity. In that context, the President of the Republic had recently promulgated laws to ratify Niger's safeguards agreement and authorize its accession to the CPPNM.

118. Niger fully supported the Agency's efforts to strengthen the safety and security of radioactive sources. It was working towards implementing the guidelines contained in the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and urged other countries to do the same.

119. His country appreciated the Agency's efforts to promote sustainable development through peaceful applications of nuclear technology in the fields of radiation protection, human and animal health, the environment, nutrition and agriculture.

120. It was particularly grateful for the implementation of technical cooperation programmes in the fields of radiological safety and radioactive waste safety, human health, animal health and production, nuclear sciences and other nuclear applications, which had promoted human resources development in Niger and the use of nuclear medicine. The country now had a radioimmunoassay laboratory and a gamma camera for the diagnosis of cancerous tumours.

121. Under Niger's new CPF for 2003–2007, cooperation activities would be implemented in harmony with the national anti-poverty strategy, whose main focus was on education, health, water and sanitation, population policy and capacity building. The project requests the country had submitted to the Agency at the end of 2003 related to the establishment of a radiotherapy centre, study of nitrate pollution and groundwater recharge, training in radiation metrology and radiation protection, monitoring of occupational and public exposure and control of medical exposure, radioactive waste management, training of a team to maintain laboratory equipment, establishment of a molecular biology laboratory and a laboratory for monitoring products of animal origin at the Niamey Central Laboratory for Livestock, and promotion of the production and consumption of roots and tubers rich in micronutrients. It hoped that many of them would be approved for the 2005–2006 biennium.

122. The proposed radiotherapy project was particularly important to treat the growing number of cancer patients. Currently, patients had to be referred to hospitals abroad, causing the country further financial difficulties. A radiotherapy centre in Niger could provide curative and palliative treatment to two thirds of those patients. His Government had undertaken to build the premises for the radiotherapy centre, recruit the staff, allocate an operating budget that would ensure the regular replacement of the cobalt source and provide the necessary consumables and radiopharmaceuticals. He appealed to all donor countries and organizations to provide the substantial assistance required for the construction of the centre, which would cost around \$1.6 million, and for the development of in vitro and in vivo nuclear medicine services at Niamey.

123. Like many African countries, Niger suffered from a cruel lack of renewable water resources. However, thanks to the Agency's ongoing projects and its constant willingness to assist developing countries, it hoped that solutions would be found to those problems. It was grateful for the considerable assistance the Agency provided for sustainable development, particularly under regional and subregional programmes for water management and desertification, and the training it provided in nuclear-related subjects.

124. Mr. HOFFMANN (Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization) said that the CTBT was becoming increasingly universal in its status, having been signed by 172 States and ratified by 116. The ratifiers included 32 of the 44 States whose ratification was required for the Treaty to enter into force. President Kabila of the Democratic Republic of the Congo was also expected to present his instrument of ratification to the United Nations Secretary-General in the coming few days.

125. The Treaty provided for the establishment of a unique global verification regime consisting of an international monitoring system, a consultation and clarification process, on-site inspections and confidence-building measures. Data from monitoring system stations around the world were processed and analysed by the International Data Centre in Vienna. All data and International Data Centre products were made available to Member States which had the final responsibility for analysing the data.

126. The Preparatory Commission and its Provisional Technical Secretariat had made significant progress in preparing the effective implementation of the CTBT. Site surveys had been completed for 322 of the 337 international monitoring system facilities. Altogether, 190 facilities had been installed or upgraded.

127. The International Data Centre supported the verification of the Treaty and provided for the civil and scientific interests of Member States by providing products and services needed for effective global monitoring through the establishment and testing of facilities that received, collected, processed, analysed, reported on and archived data received from monitoring system stations. To date, about 105 stations had been included in the Centre's operations.

128. The international monitoring system data and the products of the International Data Centre were useful not only for international security but also for civil and scientific purposes, such as rapid notification of the location and size of potentially damaging earthquakes, scientific studies of the earth including its oceans and atmosphere, early detection of exploding volcanoes and warnings to the aviation industry of volcanic ash in the atmosphere. About 80 secure signatory accounts had been established, with over 600 users authorized to access data and products and to receive technical support from the Centre.

129. The global communications infrastructure transferred monitoring system data to the Centre and disseminated the data and products to signatory States. The Provisional Technical Secretariat operated the global communications infrastructure as a worldwide closed and secure satellite communications network. Once it was fully operational, the network was expected to carry some 11 gigabytes of data daily.

130. As the development of the international monitoring system became more advanced, the Provisional Technical Secretariat became increasingly more engaged in the operation and maintenance of the system. Significant resources had been dedicated to the planning, execution and analysis of the first progressive system-wide performance test. Work had been carried out to develop several tools for monitoring and reporting on the operation and maintenance network and to support the physical infrastructure.

131. The Provisional Technical Secretariat had organized joint training courses for international monitoring system operators and National Data Centre staff in 2004. A technical training programme in radionuclide technology had been hosted by the Austrian Research Centers Seibersdorf. Joint regional training courses for monitoring system station operators and National Data Centre technical staff had been held in Obninsk and Caracas. Detailed preparations were continuing for the Provisional Technical Secretariat to hold an operation and maintenance workshop in Baden in October, and regional training courses for National Data Centre technical staff in Dakar in October and in Jakarta in December.

132. The Provisional Technical Secretariat had conducted the preparatory phase of its first system-wide performance test in May and June 2004. In total, 130 monitoring system stations and 4 radionuclide laboratories (about 40 % of the network) had taken part. Continuous evaluation was an important element of preparing and planning for that test. Implementation of the preparatory phase of the first test involved monitoring the coordination and participation of key players in the exercise

and the functioning of various system components and reporting tools. The feedback received and the results of the baseline assessment and implementation scenarios would provide the basis for the main phase in 2005.

133. Work had continued on the draft on-site inspection operational manual, the development of a provisional list of inspection equipment and equipment specifications for testing and training purposes, the development and implementation of the equipment testing programme, and the definition of activities such as field experiments, equipment demonstrations, workshops, tabletop exercises and experimental advanced courses.

134. The measurement of the radioactive noble gases xenon and argon-37 was important for on-site inspections conducted under the Treaty. However, the measurement equipment required was unique and would need to be specially designed and developed. The Provisional Technical Secretariat had two separate ongoing projects on those gases with a view to obtaining the relevant measurement equipment for testing and training purposes.

135. Currently, the Provisional Technical Secretariat had about 270 staff members from 70 countries, some 175 of them in the Professional category. It was committed to a policy of equal employment opportunities and the representation of women in Professional positions was about 27% of the staff. It continued to cooperate with other VIC-based international organizations on the provision and management of joint services.

**The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.**