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President: Mr. RÓNAKY (Hungary)

Contents

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

[*] GC(48)/25.

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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
APCs	assessed programme costs
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
Bangkok Treaty	Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone
BSS	International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources
Chemical Weapons Convention	Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Early Notification Convention	Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
G8	Group of Eight
HEU	high-enriched uranium
INIS	International Nuclear Information System
INLEX	International Export Group on Nuclear Liability
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
INSServ	International Nuclear Security Advisory Service
INSARR	Integrated Safety Assessment of Research Reactors
Joint Convention	Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management
LEU	low-enriched uranium
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

NPCs	national participation costs
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
OPANAL	Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
R&D	research and development
Rarotonga Treaty	South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty
SSAC	State System of Accounting for and Control of Nuclear Material
TCDC	technical cooperation among developing countries
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
TranSAS	Transport Safety Appraisal Service
Trilateral Initiative	Trilateral Initiative launched by the Minister of the Russian Federation for Atomic Energy, the Secretary of Energy of the United States and the Agency's Director General on 17 September 1996 to consider practical measures for the application of IAEA verification to fissile material originating from nuclear weapons
Wassenaar Arrangement	Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies
WHO	World Health Organization

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

1. Mr. VEJONIS (Latvia) said that the difficulties in terms of knowledge management for countries like his which were experiencing rapid change in many fields were compounded by the fact that young people were tending to seek careers in non-technical areas. In Latvia, the most important nuclear applications were in health care and the natural sciences, but unfortunately the number of graduates in the nuclear field was falling and Latvia had no option but to cooperate with other countries, with the help of the Agency. Preserving and enhancing nuclear knowledge was very important for ensuring the availability of qualified experts, which was vital to the safe and secure utilization of nuclear technologies. Latvia was therefore promoting networking arrangements between establishments and institutions and its experts had participated, and would continue to participate, in international knowledge-building activities.

2. Safety was tightly linked with security of radiation sources and global implementation of an effective system, with an enhanced regulatory framework and supervisory capabilities, should be treated as a top priority. There should be a joint effort by Member States of the Agency to promote the benefits of membership for that would enhance the safety and security of radiation sources, given that in some regions there were many countries that were not involved in joint activities and did not receive support from the Agency.

3. Latvia regarded a universal non-proliferation regime, supported by a strong system of safeguards, as essential for collective security. Unfortunately, however, there were still some 40 States Party to the NPT with no safeguards agreement and only 60 additional protocols were in force. Only a few dozen countries participated in regimes for the control of the import, export and transit of dual-use nuclear items. The CTBT had still not entered into force, and Latvia called upon States that had not yet signed and ratified it to do so at their earliest convenience.

4. Latvia had always paid its full contribution to the Agency's technical cooperation activities, from which it had gained a number of benefits. It had now reached a level where it was confidently able to provide assistance to others. The replacement of APCs by NPCs was entirely acceptable and the new approach should help the Agency to maintain its funding. Latvia hoped that the level of voluntary contributions to the TCF would increase and that consequently the Agency would be able to offer its Member States extra assistance. Latvia appealed to all Member States to pay their contributions in full and on time.

5. Latvia was involved in national and regional technical cooperation projects related to health care and nuclear applications for diagnostics and treatment. It was undertaking feasibility studies for the use of positron emission tomography. Also, it had submitted to the Agency a project for a cyclotron facility to be installed at a research reactor site that was in the early stage of decommissioning, which would greatly contribute to developments in nuclear science and its applications. Latvia was analysing ways of better utilizing national funds and funds from the Agency in the cost-sharing project.

6. Latvia was implementing its first radioactive waste management strategy. One of a number of challenging tasks was the disposal of long-lived radiation sources. With help from the Agency, Latvian experts had undertaken about 15% of the country's decommissioning plan. The environmental impact assessment study had been completed and a study had begun for expansion of the radioactive

waste disposal site to manage all the waste from decommissioning. Unfortunately, there was still no real progress to report on how the spent HEU fuel from its decommissioned research reactors would be dealt with. Pending a resolution of that issue, Latvia was implementing a temporary solution involving the establishment of short-term dry storage in transportable casks.

7. Mr. ZHANTIKIN (Kazakhstan) said the events of the past year had demonstrated the complexity of building confidence in the world. A cornerstone of that process was the NPT and it was essential to ensure the effective implementation of that Treaty and all measures aimed at strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime. He therefore called upon all States Party to the NPT to fulfil their obligations scrupulously.

8. Kazakhstan had voluntarily renounced a substantial nuclear arsenal and ever since independence had worked to promote nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. In February 2004, his Government had signed an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement with the Agency. Kazakhstan had also joined many initiatives designed to reduce the nuclear threat, including the G8 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, the United States Proliferation Security Initiative and the United States Global Threat Reduction Initiative. The Ministry of Energy had undertaken a five-year programme to convert its WWR-K Alma Ata research reactor to low-enriched nuclear fuel and its BN-350 fast-breeder reactor was being safely decommissioned. Efforts were under way to strengthen control of sources of ionizing radiation and to ensure secure management of powerful sources, and his country was grateful for the Agency's support in that regard.

9. The Agency was obliged, under its Statute, to assist Member States in realizing their right to develop nuclear technologies for peaceful purposes. However, a way must be found to resolve recent problematical issues which would not only safeguard States' legitimate rights but also reassure the international community about their peaceful intentions. It would not be an easy task, but the Agency's experience and the firm and principled position taken by its Director General would stand it in good stead.

10. Kazakhstan, a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, abided fully by universally accepted international export controls. It was concerned that some other countries which possessed elements of the nuclear fuel cycle were not doing likewise, thereby opening the way to illegal trafficking in nuclear materials and the illegal transfer of nuclear technologies. Further restrictions on the transfer of nuclear technology should not be introduced, however, without careful consideration since they might create unjustified obstacles to the development of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

11. Mr. SOTIROPOULOS (Greece) said that the Agency's activities in the area of nuclear safety were of paramount importance. Greece had always played an active role in all aspects of nuclear safety, having joined the Incident Reporting System for Research Reactors and having ratified the Convention on Nuclear Safety. Greece supported the drawing up and strengthening of safety standards to cover the whole spectrum of fuel cycle facilities. It attached great importance to the Agency's efforts to establish and maintain a global safety regime through the adoption of action plans, a first step towards the conclusion of codes of conduct.

12. His Government appreciated the adoption by the Board in June 2004 of the International Action Plan on the Decommissioning of Nuclear Facilities. It encouraged the Director General to step up efforts in that regard in close cooperation with other international organizations with a view to achieving implementation of Agency safety standards by all States at the earliest possible time. That was especially important as hundreds of nuclear plants and other facilities had been decommissioned or would be in the foreseeable future.

13. His Government supported the Secretariat's work on occupational radiation protection, the safety and security of radioactive sources, the safe transport of radioactive material, the safety, non-

proliferation and minimization of nuclear wastes, the safety of research reactors and, more generally, the establishment of a global safety regime. It urged the Secretariat and all international organizations to strengthen their cooperation in those areas.

14. Greece attached great importance to nuclear security and had already provided financial and in-kind voluntary contributions to the Agency's Nuclear Security Fund. It had concluded a joint action plan with the Agency to ensure a high level of nuclear security at the 2004 Olympic Games. The action plan had been designed to protect facilities and materials, detect illicit trafficking and malicious use of radioactive materials and provide for effective and efficient emergency response forces. His Government expressed gratitude to the Director General, and to the countries and other organizations which had helped make the action plan a success. Greece supported Agency activities aimed at preventing nuclear terrorism and also the United States new Global Threat Reduction Initiative. In that regard, his country had just taken part in the Global Threat Initiative International Partners' Conference aimed at securing or removing high-risk nuclear and other radioactive materials worldwide that posed a threat to the international community. The work of the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the Agency was an important component of that Initiative.

15. In recent years, the nuclear non-proliferation regime had come under pressure for a number of reasons, including the lack of substantive progress on disarmament, the threat of nuclear terrorism and regional instability. Urgent steps must be taken to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

16. The case of the DPRK remained unresolved although it had been referred to the Security Council for reasons of non-compliance more than 12 years previously. In Iraq, the Agency had long been preoccupied with the relevant Security Council resolutions and had now resumed its inspection activities to perform a physical inventory verification. Greece recognized the efforts of the Islamic Republic of Iran to cooperate with the Agency and its signing of an additional protocol. It expected full cooperation from the Iranian authorities in all areas, including the suspension of enrichment and other related activities. Greece was pleased at the decision by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to eliminate all materials, equipment and programmes leading to the production of internationally proscribed weapons, including nuclear weapons. Iran and Libya had provided the Agency with an unprecedented opportunity for investigating illegal supply routes for the transfer of nuclear materials, equipment and technology and Greece appreciated the ongoing efforts to that end. One of the main ways of attaining the goal of a lasting peace in the Middle East would be to focus on making it a region free of weapons of mass destruction. His country urged the Director General to continue his work on that issue. It welcomed the idea of holding a technical forum in Vienna; the participation of all countries of the Middle East region would be key to its success.

17. Greece reiterated its strong commitment to the Agency's verification role within a universal non-proliferation regime. Reliable verification was of paramount importance in curbing the spread of nuclear weapons. The universal application of safeguards and the additional protocol remained one of the basic components of international nuclear security because it would reduce the chances of success of nuclear terrorism and restore faith in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In that context, Greece supported the objectives of the Proliferation Security Initiative and welcomed Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

18. A universally applied system of export controls, the conclusion of an additional protocol as a condition for supply, measures to combat illicit trafficking in nuclear material and the CPPNM were essential to preventing nuclear terrorism. The time had come to finalize amendment of the CPPNM and convene a diplomatic conference on the subject.

19. Nuclear energy, and sensitive technology in particular, should be developed for peaceful purposes only and not for reasons of national prestige or for military expansion carried out on the

pretext of regional instability. Mutual understanding, dialogue and diplomacy were the only solutions. Greece endorsed the Director General's decision to establish a group of experts to study ways of achieving multilateral control over sensitive nuclear technologies so as to prevent their spread.

20. Greece had paid its voluntary share of the TCF target for 2002 and 2003 in full and would do so again for 2004 and 2005. It also assisted the Agency by providing training laboratories, making experts available, and hosting and supporting events under the technical cooperation programme. His country would support every initiative to incorporate technical cooperation programmes into the Agency's assistance-related scientific programmes with a view to achieving better management and efficiency.

21. Mr. SRIWIDJAJA (Indonesia) expressed appreciation for the valuable support received through the Agency's technical cooperation activities. Noting with satisfaction that 87 CPFs — used as planning tools to design projects within the context of national priorities — were now in place, he said that his country had just submitted a revised CPF. Indonesia welcomed the Agency's efforts to expand and intensify the application of nuclear science and technology with a view to promoting quality of life, particularly in the developing countries.

22. Nuclear technology could have a significant impact in Indonesia, especially in the areas of food irradiation, river basin management, groundwater management and to control communicable diseases. Indonesia had abundant geothermal resources and was planning to utilize nuclear techniques in exploring and exploiting them. In December 2003, Indonesia had commissioned a domestically produced low-energy electron beam machine for accelerator technology research and applications, and had recently signed an agreement with a domestic power supply company for the installation of a modular demonstration electron beam machine for flue gas treatment in a coal-fired power plant. Indonesia had also developed high yielding rice and soybean varieties, and would be continuing to disseminate nuclear techniques to improve animal reproduction, animal health and feed supplement technology. In the field of human health, Indonesia was continuing to develop and produce radioisotopes and radiopharmaceuticals for domestic use and for export. It was also drawing up a programme to design and manufacture nuclear medical instruments for radiodiagnostics and radiotherapy. In Indonesia's national energy policy for 2004–2020, nuclear energy was regarded as a component of the long-term energy mix. Indonesia was grateful to the Agency and to the Republic of Korea for their close cooperation in the three-party project for a joint feasibility study of a nuclear desalination plant. In anticipation of the introduction of a nuclear power plant, Indonesia's national regulatory body had embarked on a comprehensive programme to develop the necessary infrastructure and was counting on not only assistance from the Agency but also bilateral and multilateral cooperation with developed countries.

23. The Agency had dispatched a number of expert missions to help Indonesia in nuclear security matters, in the light of increasing terrorist threats that might involve nuclear and radiation facilities, as well as illicit trafficking and/or the use of nuclear materials, radioactive sources and radioactive waste. Coastal States had concerns regarding nuclear transport safety and security, particularly the increasing danger of accidents caused by nature, human error or criminal acts. Indonesia commended the Agency for establishing the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security to facilitate an effective and integrated approach towards nuclear security. The Agency had also provided assistance in the form of expert missions for the regulatory control of nuclear safety and radiation protection, particularly at Indonesia's hospitals and industrial plants, as well as help in improving the safety of Indonesia's research reactors.

24. Indonesia was proud to be among the first three countries to have reached the stage of integrated safeguards and encouraged those non-nuclear-weapon States which had not yet done so to conclude an additional protocol with the Agency. At the same time, Indonesia urged the nuclear-weapon States to

take their NPT obligations seriously, in particular their commitments to nuclear disarmament and the total abolition of nuclear weapons. With regard to strengthening the third pillar of the NPT, namely the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, Indonesia invited all Member States, in particular the donor countries, and the Secretariat seriously to consider a special incentive for developing Member States which had signed an additional protocol, for example by providing them with more technical cooperation programmes.

25. Mr. SAHİNBAŞ (Turkey) said that world energy demand was set to grow, particularly in the developing countries. As Turkey's conventional resources could not meet its needs in a secure and sustainable way, it planned to include nuclear energy in its future energy mix. Turkey recognized the crucial role the Agency played in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. However, a significant increase in nuclear power could be achieved only if progress was made in developing innovative and evolutionary technology to address concerns about waste, proliferation, safety and security. In 2004, the Turkish Parliament had ratified bilateral agreements with the United States of America and France on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

26. The preservation of nuclear knowledge was also crucial to ensuring safety and security, encouraging innovation and assuring the future availability of the benefits of nuclear technologies. Turkey supported the Agency's efforts to seek creative methods and approaches in education and training to ensure that the knowledge, skills and abilities of the current generation of nuclear professionals were transferred effectively to their successors.

27. Turkey recognized the importance of ongoing national and international efforts to promote innovation in nuclear reactors and fuel cycles to meet future needs in terms of economics, safety, environmental impact, proliferation resistance and public acceptance. It appreciated the progress achieved in the Agency's INPRO project over the previous few years. The Agency should remain committed and continue its activities in that important field, using the synergies between INPRO and the Generation IV International Forum, and encouraging cooperation between Member States.

28. Turkey had always supported the Agency's efforts to strengthen the non-proliferation regime and considered that universal adoption and implementation of comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols were essential for an effective and credible verification system. Turkey, which had already ratified an additional protocol, called on Member States that had not yet done so to follow suit without delay.

29. Concerned that the Agency remained unable to draw any conclusions regarding the DPRK's nuclear activities and by its announced withdrawal from the NPT, Turkey supported the Director General's efforts to negotiate with the DPRK requirements and modalities for compliance with its NPT safeguards agreement. Turkey welcomed the Agency's steady progress in understanding the nuclear programme in the Islamic Republic of Iran and in resolving questions concerning its uranium conversion and enrichment activities. Iran had continued to act as though its additional protocol was in place and had given the Agency access to all requested locations, but there was still a need for complete and unconditional cooperation in order to resolve all outstanding issues promptly. Turkey expected that Iran would move rapidly towards bringing its additional protocol into force and regarded that step as an important sign of Iran's commitment to non-proliferation. The Director General's efforts concerning the implementation of full-scope safeguards for all nuclear activities in the Middle East were welcome, including the idea of convening a forum on experience of possible relevance to the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region.

30. He reiterated Turkey's firm commitment to contribute to international efforts to combat all forms of terrorism, including malicious acts involving nuclear and radioactive materials. The recent Global Threat Reduction Initiative Partners' Conference in Vienna had been one such effort and his

country supported its findings. National and regional training courses and a regional awareness seminar on nuclear security had been conducted in Turkey during the previous year and the Turkish authorities were cooperating closely with the Agency to improve their national nuclear security measures. In that connection, Turkey had expressed its readiness to bring into effect the guidance contained in the Agency's Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. It continued to support the Agency's ongoing efforts to promote nuclear safety and to strengthen safety standards. In particular, it welcomed the progress made in the field of the safe transport of nuclear and radioactive materials as envisaged in resolution GC(47)/RES/7 and also the publication of the TranSAS report for Turkey.

31. He commended the Agency's technical cooperation activities, which were an essential part of the sustainable development process. The current shortfall in resources for the TCF was worrying. Although contributions to that fund were voluntary, they should be considered a political commitment for all Member States with payment of the target shares in full and on time demonstrating the priority they attached to supporting all the Agency's activities in an equitable and balanced manner.

32. Mr. SHANGULA (Namibia) said that his Government, having taken note of the Board's recommendations concerning the establishment of a national regulatory structure, was pleased to report that the drafting of its national legislation had reached an advanced stage. His delegation was hopeful that the Agency would support Namibia's recently submitted project proposals on the strengthening of national infrastructures for radiation protection and he reiterated Namibia's commitment to expediting the process of establishing a regulatory framework in compliance with the BSS.

33. Namibia had established a National Committee on Nuclear Safety and was confident that, in partnership with the Agency and other stakeholders, it would be better able to respond to incidents involving nuclear security. Referring to the regional training workshop on the security of radioactive sources recently held in Namibia, his delegation urged the Agency to continue to support such collaborative efforts so as to improve nuclear security in both Namibia and Africa as a whole. Namibia fully subscribed to the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

34. With regard to technical cooperation programmes, his Government highly valued the Agency's support in expanding the diagnostic capacity of its Central Veterinary Laboratory to Northern Namibia. Also, it greatly appreciated the Agency's assistance with technology transfer enabling his country better to exploit its groundwater resources for the provision of clean and safe water to its citizens.

35. The technical cooperation programmes would not be successful unless human resource skills and capabilities were improved and strengthened. Namibia was therefore grateful to the Agency for its role in the transfer of the scientific and technical knowledge. Human resources development required concerted efforts if Namibia was to achieve the objectives of its national development programmes. He called for proactive partnership by the Agency to assist national institutions in meeting their human resource needs. In particular, his delegation hoped that the Agency would cooperate with the University of Namibia on a national project to develop nuclear science teaching capability so as to supply national institutions with scientific knowledge and technical skills.

36. Project proposals currently under consideration by the Agency included the expansion of nuclear medicine services to Northern Namibia where accessibility and affordability were a problem for a large part of the population. His Government had committed itself to the project in order to reach out to the needy and help provide health care for all, but the Agency's partnership was crucial to its success.

37. Another proposed project was to increase crop productivity and resource use efficiency in Northern Namibia. Namibians whose livelihoods depended largely on agriculture continued to be hard hit by periodic droughts, which occurred one year in ten and undermined not only the subsistence of a large proportion of the population but also agricultural productivity in general. The droughts had an adverse impact on food security country-wide. Nuclear technology available through the Agency had an important role to play in addressing that problem by improving crop productivity, particularly in Northern Namibia. He hoped that the anticipated Agency technical cooperation would contribute towards the overall national objective of enhancing the food security of smallholders in the northern communal areas.

38. Of similar importance to food security were the effects of harmful algal blooms, or red tides, on the country's marine and fishery resources. The regional project on algal blooms which the Agency had recently initiated had finally begun to bear fruit, and he was confident that the Agency's technical assistance to counterparts in Namibia, Angola and South Africa would enhance effective monitoring and management of harmful algal blooms.

39. Finally, he commended the Agency for its efforts in collaborating with other United Nations agencies in combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic through the use of isotope techniques to assess nutrition intervention programmes to mitigate the disease's impact and called upon it to increase its budgetary resources for that important undertaking.

40. Monsignor BOCCARDI (Holy See), said that continued threats to peace and stability due to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as humanitarian and environmental emergencies, called for firm and far-reaching responses. The response of the international community must combine security, solidarity and the defence of human life. There had been warnings from various quarters that nuclear proliferation was on the increase and that there were countries interested in the illicit acquisition of weapons of mass destruction. There was also a risk that terrorists would gain access to such materials and technology. It was necessary to agree on measures to ensure that nuclear 'business as usual' could not continue. The international community had to work harder to diminish the risks of nuclear proliferation, exerting better control over the export of nuclear material and universalizing the export control system. There was a need to give more authority to inspectors, as the recent discovery of an illicit market for nuclear material and equipment had made clear.

41. His delegation shared concerns about the growing signs of rising insecurity in the Middle East as evidenced by the war in Iraq and its security implications for the region as well as the unresolved conflict in the Holy Land. Respect for the legitimate aspirations of both sides, a return to the negotiating table and the concrete engagement of the international community could lead to a solution that was acceptable to all, but for that it was desirable that all the countries of the region and the international community initiate a serious dialogue to create a Middle East region free of weapons of mass destruction. That, together with limitations on conventional armaments and appropriate security and confidence-building measures, could contribute to establishing peace in the region.

42. The Agency's technical cooperation programme could contribute to a peaceful solution of the serious problems facing mankind. The Agency, together with WHO, had recently drawn attention to the dramatic rise in the number of patients suffering from cancer, especially in the developing countries. Almost 13% of all deaths worldwide were caused by cancer — more than those due to tuberculosis, malaria and AIDS put together. Cancer rates were expected to increase substantially over the next decade. The Holy See expressed its appreciation for the work of the Agency and its partners in planning and furthering cancer control programmes.

43. The considerable efforts made by the Agency to enhance nuclear and radiation safety, to indicate ways of using radioactive sources safely and to help retrieve abandoned sources had made a

significant contribution to minimizing dangers and preventing harm to the public. The Agency was actively engaged in fostering a safety culture in the application of nuclear techniques and ionizing radiation, and work still needed to be done in upgrading radiation protection infrastructures in many regions. The task of enhancing the security of nuclear material remained daunting and required efficient and intense cooperation between international organizations and individual States.

44. Finally, he urged the Agency not to rest on its laurels but to strive constantly in pursuit of its goals.

45. Mr. STRITAR (Slovenia) said the Agency's verification activities, aimed at providing credible assurances that States were complying with their obligations under their safeguards agreements, were of the utmost importance. Slovenia had signed both a safeguards agreement and an additional protocol, and urged all Member States to follow suit. Now that it had acceded to the European Union, it was preparing to move over to the Euratom safeguards regime.

46. The security of nuclear materials was another essential area of work for the Agency. Its training courses and evaluation missions on SSACs and its review and updating of Member States' design basis threat methodology were of paramount importance for the effective physical protection of nuclear materials and installations. Slovenia supported the proposal to convene a diplomatic conference to consider amendments to the CPPNM. Recent terrorist action and threats and other illegal activities made it essential to reinforce international cooperation. For its part, in 2002, Slovenia had made a voluntary contribution to the Agency's activities to protect against nuclear terrorism.

47. Slovenia fully endorsed the Agency's efforts to increase the safety and security of radioactive sources, as set down in resolution GC(47)/RES/7.B and was working towards following the guidance contained in the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. He welcomed the Agency's activities in education, training and the preparation of safety standards. Nuclear and radiation emergency preparedness was also of great importance. Slovenia had participated in the work of the National Competent Authorities' Coordinating Group and in the CONVEX nuclear emergency response exercises in 2003 and 2004. The Action Plan for the Safety of Transport of Radioactive Material would contribute significantly to nuclear safety and the International Action Plan for Strengthening the International Preparedness and Response System for Nuclear and Radiological Emergencies would facilitate the sustainable development of international nuclear and radiological emergency preparedness and the preparation of tools and documents for notification, communication and assistance.

48. Slovenia attached great importance to operational safety in its nuclear facilities. The report of the third OSART mission to the Krško nuclear power plant in early 2003 had commended the priority accorded to nuclear safety at all levels, the staff's in-depth technical knowledge and experience in nuclear plant operation, and the effective use of computer technology. The Team had reported that the plant had a strong safety culture, driven from the top. The challenges which had been identified were ageing of the plant, the preservation of knowledge and increasing economic pressure in a competitive energy market.

49. Slovenia had already submitted its third national report under the Convention on Nuclear Safety, which he hoped would demonstrate the progress the country had made following the recommendations of the second Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention in 2002. The third Review Meeting, due in April 2005, would provide a further opportunity to share ideas and learn new ways of fulfilling the obligations under the Convention. He hoped that the initiative, which his country had raised at the first Review Meeting of the Joint Convention in November 2003, for a regional repository for high level radioactive waste would be kept under discussion. He invited comments on the proposal from other Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention.

50. He commended the work of the Europe Section in the Department of Technical Cooperation and also the commitment of the countries of the region through their contributions to the TCF. Slovenia had pledged its full target share to the TCF for 2005, and had already paid its Regular Budget and TCF contributions for 2004. His delegation expressed doubts about the proposed NPCs, which it would like to discuss further with the Secretariat.

51. Mr. NGANDAJINA (Angola) said that in the two years or so since the end of the war in his country the Government had been making enormous efforts to consolidate the democratic system, work for the eradication of poverty and achieve sustainable development. Angola was grateful to the Agency for the support it had received in the promotion of nuclear science and technologies, particularly in the areas of agriculture, health and the environment. In the radiological protection area it had received significant impetus in terms of equipment and the training of personnel, creating the conditions necessary to begin monitoring occupational exposure and to conduct inspections of facilities using ionizing radiation sources.

52. Angola was in the initial stages of acquiring nuclear technology, but the Government was making efforts to accelerate the process of acceding to conventions. The Angolan parliament had already approved the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Regional Supplementary Agreement concerning the provision of technical assistance by the IAEA (RSA), AFRA and the Early Notification Convention, and the relevant instruments would be deposited shortly. The Government of Angola acknowledged the role of nuclear technologies in sustainable development, and therefore gave special importance to the activities of the Agency. However, it had to be admitted that some institutional factors had led to a certain delay in the approval of legal instruments.

53. The manufacture of nuclear weapons and terrorism were a threat for mankind and, for that reason, Angola had on many occasions urged those who undertook such programmes and engaged in such activities to cease doing so. Angola reiterated its call to all Member States of the United Nations to respect the Charter of the United Nations and to ensure that courageous measures were taken in the framework of the Security Council for the preservation of world peace.

54. Ms. KELLY (Argentina) said that the work of the Agency had become increasingly complex during the previous year particularly as regards the delicate balance between its promotional and verification roles. Many issues dealt with by the Agency would receive due attention at the NPT Review Conference in 2005, including the need to maintain the foundations of the Treaty. It was in the interests of all States Party to comply with the Treaty's provisions and with the commitments made at previous Review Conferences. Argentina firmly supported the NPT and other relevant instruments for international non-proliferation.

55. She highlighted the importance of ensuring the high technical quality and credibility of the Agency's verification system, which was the only mechanism for providing the international community with assurances regarding the peaceful nature of national nuclear programmes. Argentina made an additional contribution to safeguards through ABACC and hoped that still closer links could be established between ABACC and the Agency. While acknowledging the great differences in the various regions, ABACC was willing to share its experience and achievements with others provided an appropriate forum for that purpose, as proposed by the Director General, was established. Argentina, concerned by the increasing expenditure on safeguards, urged the Agency to ensure more efficient implementation. Also, account should be taken of the difficulties encountered by developing countries like Argentina in paying their assessed contributions and their burden should be reduced.

56. In the safety area, Argentina had continued to develop its role as a regional centre for training in radiation protection and nuclear safety through the postgraduate course which it had run for over two decades. The International Conference on the Safety of Transport of Radioactive Material, held in

Vienna in July 2003, and the approval in 2004 of the related Action Plan had marked good progress in the transport field. Strict compliance with the Agency's safety standards and reliable information on shipments for coastal states were critical. She drew attention to the contribution that INLEX, in which Argentina participated, could also make in that area. Another topic of special interest for Argentina was the implementation of the Action Plan for the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, which would help to coordinate national and international measures and which it would be following closely.

57. Argentine experts had participated in the recent Global Threat Reduction Initiative International Partners' Conference, an international cooperative effort to improve physical protection. There reference had been made to Argentina's experience in reducing the enrichment level of uranium used in specific activities and its cooperation with third countries in similar areas under programmes coordinated by the Agency. Also, Argentina had contributed to the application of effective export controls to sensitive technologies by chairing the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and the Wassenaar Arrangement.

58. Argentina was participating in two international projects on the development of new generation reactors and fuel cycles, which provided better operational safety, substantially reduced radioactive waste generation and prevented proliferation risks. The Agency had an important role as catalyst for such initiatives — one example of which was INPRO — and should consider incorporating those activities under its Regular Budget. The Director General had recently formed an expert group on the nuclear fuel cycle and her delegation was confident that it would draw useful conclusions which took into account both non-proliferation aspects and the right of States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

59. In terms of developments in the Argentine nuclear sector since the previous General Conference, the Government made a political decision to finish construction of the Atucha-2 nuclear power plant, which had been delayed for a decade for financial reasons. It would make a significant contribution to energy supply in the face of the country's increased demand. Additionally, the National Atomic Energy Commission had been designated a fabricator of high-density fuel based on uranium silicide for research reactors. The excellent results obtained during post-irradiation tests had confirmed that international quality standards would be met. Thus Argentina would now be able to supply third countries. Argentina remained ready to develop bilateral cooperation and had cooperation agreements with 31 countries on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

60. Finally, Argentina was satisfied with its technical cooperation links with the Agency, including ARCAL. In particular, Argentina remained interested in acting as a supplier of equipment for the implementation of projects. Argentina sponsored courses, workshops and scientific meetings, trained many fellows and foreign scientific visitors, and made experts and lecturers available to the Agency, contributions which it hoped the Secretariat would quantify and record as contributions in kind to the TCF.

61. Ms. DRÁBOVÁ (Czech Republic) said that it was in the common interest to maximize the benefits and minimize the risks stemming from the use of nuclear energy. The Agency had a crucial role to play in that regard, and the Czech Republic pledged its continued support for its efforts.

62. The fulfilment of obligations under the NPT was one of her country's highest priorities. The Czech Republic had consistently met all its international commitments under its safeguards agreement and the additional protocol, as confirmed by the Agency safeguards inspection activities and verification of the initial declaration submitted in accordance with the additional protocol. Recognizing the importance of Member States' support programmes, the Czech Republic had broadened the scope of its activities to further enhance the safeguards system. That included intensified cooperation with the Network of Analytical Laboratories for safeguards, safeguards

implementation at geological repositories, and training of Agency safeguards inspectors at Czech nuclear installations and uranium mining and milling facilities.

63. With regard to the growing risk of misuse of nuclear materials and other radioactive sources, the Czech Republic fully supported the findings of the Global Threat Reduction Initiative. In that connection, her Government had already started negotiations, under the Trilateral Initiative, on the repatriation of HEU from Czech research reactors to the country of origin.

64. The strengthening of nuclear non-proliferation efforts and an active approach to nuclear security were the best ways of eliminating the global threat posed by nuclear terrorism. The security of nuclear materials was based on effective safeguards, verification and physical protection of nuclear materials and comprehensive and strengthened exports control. Comprehensive and universal implementation of those activities was the best prevention against the diversion of nuclear materials and nuclear technologies for non-peaceful uses, illicit trafficking in nuclear materials and nuclear terrorism. To support those efforts, the Czech Republic had contributed about $75 000 to the Agency's Nuclear Security Fund in 2004.

65. Her delegation assured the Board that all the nuclear facilities in the Czech Republic were operating safely. The ongoing process of further enhancing nuclear safety and establishing the highest safety standards constituted the main pillar of national policy in that field. A well-developed safety culture together with a properly managed nuclear knowledge framework were the two basic prerequisites for enhancing nuclear safety. For countries the size of the Czech Republic, nuclear knowledge preservation could be better ensured in a wider cooperation framework. Hence its decision to make that objective one of the main themes of its collaboration with the Agency in the near future. The first proposed project would focus primarily on training the younger generation to ensure the sustainability of nuclear institutions and knowledge.

66. The Czech Republic recognized the importance of TCDC and had always paid its voluntary contribution to the TCF in full and on time. A number of Czech organizations and experts had taken an active part in the Agency's technical cooperation programme and other of its activities. Her Government had also provided extrabudgetary resources to support various Agency activities in 2004. The Czech Republic would contribute about $250 000 in 2004 to projects in the countries of the former Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia. The planned projects ranged from nuclear power plant safety to radiation protection in medical applications. In the year that had elapsed, her country had held Agency training courses and workshops, as a result of which nearly 50 experts from around the world had received training in nuclear medicine, radiation protection and radioactive waste management.

67. Mr. DAUD MOHAMAD (Malaysia), speaking on behalf of NAM, drew attention to certain points of relevance to the Agency and its work contained in the final document of the XIV Ministerial Conference of NAM, held in Durban, South Africa, in August 2004, and to the Durban Declaration on Multilateralism issued by that Conference. In the Durban Declaration, the NAM Ministers had expressed strong concern at the growing resort to unilateralism and unilaterally imposed methods, and had reaffirmed the Movement's commitment to advancing multilateralism. Concerning nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, they had welcomed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 58/44 on the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, and had again emphasized the importance of efforts aiming at non-proliferation being parallel to simultaneous efforts aiming at nuclear disarmament. The Ministers had further reaffirmed the inalienable right of developing countries to engage in research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination, and had continued to note with concern that undue restrictions on exports to developing countries of material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes persisted. In that regard, the Ministerial Conference had expressed strong rejection of attempts by any Member

State to use the Agency's technical cooperation programme as a tool for political purposes in violation of the Agency's Statute.

68. The Ministers of the NAM States Party to the NPT, emphasizing that the aforementioned inalienable right constituted one of the Treaty's fundamental objectives, had confirmed that each country's choices and decisions in the field of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be respected. National policies or international cooperation agreements and arrangements regarding the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the fuel cycle should not be jeopardized. The Ministerial Conference had further expressed concern at the use by some countries inside international organizations of coercive methods, including financial influence, in the pursuit of unilateralist interests. The Ministers had also expressed their concern at the impact such unilateral acts could have on the independence of international organizations and of the multilateral system as a whole.

69. The NAM Chapter in Vienna had worked in good faith to enhance the text of the resolution on implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran, contained in document GOV/2004/79, adopted at the meeting of the Board of Governors the previous week with a view to achieving consensus. NAM had recalled the findings of the Director General that there had been no evidence of diversion of the Iranian nuclear programme for military purposes, had noted that the report by the Board had welcomed the additional information provided recently by the Islamic Republic of Iran in response to the Agency's requests, and had noted with satisfaction that the Islamic Republic of Iran had granted six complementary accesses since the meeting of the Board in June 2004. NAM had noted that, as reported to the Board, the Agency had continued to make steady progress in understanding the Iranian nuclear programme, and so NAM expected that that progressive development would assist the Agency in drawing definitive conclusions and confirming the correctness and completeness of Iran's declarations related to all aspects of its nuclear programme.

70. With respect to two of those aspects — laser enrichment activities and the Islamic Republic of Iran's declared uranium conversion experiments — NAM had noted that investigations had reached a point where further follow-up would be carried out as a routine safeguards implementation matter. NAM had noted with satisfaction that progress had been made towards identifying the origin of the uranium contamination found at various locations in the Islamic Republic of Iran including the source of HEU contamination found. Also, NAM had been gratified to note that from the Agency's analysis it had appeared plausible that the HEU contamination found might not have resulted from enrichment of uranium by the Islamic Republic of Iran. NAM had continued to support the Agency's efforts to resolve the remaining issue of LEU contamination, and had welcomed the cooperation of other States in that regard. On the issue of the extent of the Islamic Republic of Iran's efforts to import, manufacture and use P-1 and P-2 centrifuges, NAM had noted that the Agency had gained a better understanding of the Islamic Republic of Iran's efforts relevant to both designs.

71. NAM had appreciated that the Agency had been able to verify the Islamic Republic of Iran's suspension of enrichment related activities at specific facilities and sites and to confirm that it had not observed to date any activity at those locations inconsistent with the Islamic Republic of Iran's voluntary decision to suspend those activities. NAM had reiterated the basic and inalienable right of all Member States to develop atomic energy for peaceful purposes and had recognized that Iran's voluntary decision was a confidence-building and temporary measure, intended only to facilitate a prompt closure of the agenda item. NAM looked forward to the Director General's next report to the Board and believed that the issues should be resolved on technical grounds. To that end, NAM attached paramount importance to reaching Board decisions through consensus to bring the issue to a prompt closure, remove it from future Board agendas and achieve normalcy.

72. It should be made very clear that even though NAM had serious concerns regarding many paragraphs of the Board resolution the previous week, contained in document GOV/2004/79, it had

still compromised and sought consensus. With regard to operative paragraph 9 of the resolution, NAM had sought to separate the issues so that matters relating to confidence-building measures were not transformed into legal safeguards obligations. That was also in line with what the Director General had said in his introductory statement, namely that the two, although interrelated, were distinct sets of issues. NAM therefore interpreted the paragraphs related to the issues in that context. With regard to voluntary actions towards confidence-building measures, NAM was of the view that they should have a definite time frame and be stopped when appropriate requirements were met. For the record, if that Board resolution had been put to a vote as a whole, NAM would have abstained.

73. As regards implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, NAM shared the Director General's assessment and fully supported him in continuing to report developments as part of the periodic reporting of the Agency's verification activities, unless circumstances warranted otherwise. NAM believed that the agenda item should have been brought to a closure at the previous meeting of the Board, removed from the agenda of the next, and be dealt with in future in a normal manner pursuant to the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya's relevant safeguards agreements.

74. Turning to the Director General's statement to the General Conference, the Malaysian delegation had been pleased to note the record number of 111 Member States participating in national, regional and interregional projects under the Agency's technical cooperation programme, but expressed concern at the shortfall in the current level of payments received for the 2004 Regular Budget estimates. Malaysia had consistently fulfilled its financial obligations to the Agency, including to the TCF and APCs, in full and on time, and urged all Member States to do the same.

75. Malaysia was continuously improving its national delivery system for the Agency's technical cooperation programme, and in July 2004 the Malaysian Institute for Nuclear Technology Research (MINT) had received an international quality accreditation for its management of the programme. Malaysia would be pleased to share its acquired expertise with other developing Member States. Malaysia had been sharing the cost for the implementation of some of its technical cooperation projects with the Agency, thereby contributing to a wider dissemination of their benefits within the country. In addition to the nine fields of activities under the Agency's technical cooperation programme, Malaysia was interested in the potential use of nuclear technology in other national research and development priority areas, particularly in biotechnology and tropical medicine, advanced materials such as nanomaterials, and other new areas of industrial development, as well as the role of information and communications technology in promoting and facilitating the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. Although Malaysia had no plans to embark on a nuclear power programme and its participation in the Agency's technical cooperation programme had been mainly in the area of non-power applications of nuclear technology, it had participated in various of the Agency's cooperative activities contributing to the safe and peaceful uses of nuclear power within the region.

76. In the area of nuclear safety and security, Malaysia had in June 2004 received an Agency sponsored INSServ mission, and was currently studying its recommendations. Malaysia had decided to accede to the CPPNM once the prerequisite amendment to the relevant national laws to criminalize the offences under the Convention had been approved by parliament.

77. Finally, in the area of nuclear weapons non-proliferation safeguards, Malaysia welcomed the Agency's investigation into the illicit multinational supply network for nuclear items, and in that regard had been extending its full and prompt cooperation to the Agency.

78. Mr. ALOWAIS (United Arab Emirates) said that nuclear energy was a topic that attracted intensive media coverage around the world. Warnings of the dangers inherent in the use of nuclear energy should be heeded and more stringent controls introduced in order to prevent flaws that might

prove detrimental to the environment and public health. New legislation should be enacted or existing legislation updated under Agency supervision.

79. The achievements of scientific research on nuclear radiation had been one of the glories of modern civilization over the past century. Those achievements had coincided with an increasingly urgent need to address the shortage of resources available for sustainable development. Nuclear energy was now being used in medicine to relieve suffering and in agriculture to ensure food security. He therefore urged all Member States of the Agency to increase the resources available for sustainable development and to accede to international treaties and bilateral agreements under the Agency's auspices aimed at supporting the peaceful applications of nuclear energy.

80. Since joining the Agency in 1976 his country had endeavoured to pursue an exemplary nuclear energy policy. With the Agency's support it had enacted the law on the regulation and control of the use of radioactive sources and radiological protection as well as legislation establishing a Radiation Control and Protection Department in the Ministry of Electricity and Water to act as the country's regulatory authority. A Radiation Protection Commission with representatives from various ministries and other State bodies as well as local authorities had also been set up. The regulatory authority, with the Agency's assistance, had published basic regulations to ensure protection against ionizing radiation, rules governing radioactive waste management and the safe transport of radioactive waste, as well as a plan for dealing with nuclear emergencies. National expertise was being enhanced through participation in training courses, workshops, scientific visits, seminars and conferences.

81. The United Arab Emirates had stepped up its collaboration with the Agency through regional and international groups, exchanges of experience, regional projects and training courses under the Agency's technical cooperation programme. He hoped that the Agency would continue to support ARASIA as well as the model regional projects in West Asia with a view to promoting the transfer and exchange of knowledge aimed at strengthening control over radioactive sources.

82. The Agency's technical cooperation programme played a key role in training national experts, thereby encouraging future generations to become involved in meeting basic sustainable development needs through the peaceful applications of nuclear energy. He trusted that the Agency would support his country's proposed national projects so that it could guarantee radiation protection for all employees in the nuclear sector and ensure the safety of radioactive sources.

83. The United Arab Emirates believed that nuclear energy had the potential to meet growing energy needs during the twenty-first century, especially in developing countries. Nuclear power reactors could be used for electricity generation and water desalination at a cost that was acceptable in comparison to other options. He therefore urged governments and international bodies to provide strong support for the peaceful applications of nuclear energy and to counter its use for harmful purposes.

84. Mr. KAMANDA WA KAMANDA (Democratic Republic of the Congo) stressed his country's unswerving commitment to universal respect for the non-proliferation regime. The very possession of nuclear weapons by a State or group of States placed a burden on other States and increased their sense of insecurity, and thus was inconsistent with the principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter. Accordingly, the Democratic Republic of the Congo would make every effort to strengthen nuclear security and the non-proliferation regime, thereby contributing to the legitimate struggle of peoples against nuclear terror and the production, possession and use of nuclear weapons.

85. On 16 October 2002, his Government had approved act No. 017/2002 on protection against the dangers of ionizing radiation and on the physical protection of nuclear material and facilities. On 9 April 2003, it had signed an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement and had acceded to the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Atomic Energy Agency. In

July 2004, the National Assembly had passed legislation ratifying the CTBT and the instrument of ratification would be deposited shortly with the United Nations Secretary-General. During the current session, the Democratic Republic of the Congo had deposited the instrument of accession to the CPPNM and his Government planned, in the coming weeks, to submit to the National Assembly bills on the ratification of the Pelindaba Treaty and another on the Chemical Weapons Convention. All those actions showed that his country was fulfilling its international obligations and working to improve international security and stability, thereby creating a climate favourable to applications of nuclear energy for peace, health care, economic development and prosperity. To the same end, his Government encouraged the initiative of the countries of the Middle East to make their territories a nuclear-weapon-free zone and called on the international community to encourage that effort.

86. The Agency's technical cooperation programme gave considerable support to the activities of AFRA. He expressed concern about the planned reduction in the portion of that budget allocated to regional projects in Africa for the 2005–2006 cycle compared with 2003–2004 (from 53.4 to 34%). In that context, the budgetary allocation specifically for AFRA had decreased from 20.6 to 14.7%. That might seriously compromise not only the balance between national programmes and the AFRA programme but also the sustainability of projects launched under AFRA. He hoped that a better compromise could be found before the Board formally approved the budget for the 2005–2006 biennium.

87. His country was in the process of finalizing its CPF so as to maximize the impact of Agency technical cooperation projects. The key sectors concerned were agriculture, health, food, water, electricity, transport infrastructures and mining. The national priorities — dictated by the national poverty reduction strategy — were agriculture and food security, water resources, health and nutrition, the mining and metallurgy industry, the environment, education and human resources development. The Agency's assistance would also help strengthen the national infrastructure for radiation protection, nuclear safety and security, and national capacities for the repair and maintenance of medical and scientific instrumentation.

88. As the peace process progressed and the political and economic situation stabilized after the long war, the Democratic Republic of the Congo reaffirmed its commitment to cooperate with the Agency to achieve the important objectives for which it had been created.

89. Mr. MTESA (Zambia) said that INIS activities had been very beneficial to his country because they had simplified the acquisition and dissemination of information. Contributions having been a matter of concern in the past, his delegation commended INIS on the input increase of more than 20% into the database.

90. The measures taken by the Agency to strengthen technical cooperation activities were critical to the development process of Member States. In that connection, the TC-Pride project management system had facilitated Zambia's access to information. Also, he commended the Agency for its initiatives to strengthen technical cooperation in nuclear radiation and waste safety management in many countries. Those areas were crucial in ensuring that the application of nuclear technologies did not have disastrous results. Improved radiation safety infrastructures and appropriate legal reform were needed for maximum safety at all levels. He reiterated Zambia's support of the Agency's technical cooperation activities within the framework of AFRA and commended the AFRA field management committee for enhancing technical cooperation among the Member States of the region.

91. Zambia was determined to combat illegal trafficking of nuclear materials and radioactive sources. However, to facilitate the effective implementation of those activities it needed assistance to train personnel and acquire equipment.

92. His delegation acknowledged the Agency's efforts to preserve nuclear knowledge management and was pleased that it had recently organized an international conference on the subject in Saclay, France. Zambia urged all Member States to support the initiative to establish the World Nuclear University. It considered that universities, particularly in developing countries, should be encouraged to embark on programmes in nuclear sciences in order to train the human resources needed in the sector.

93. His Government thanked the Secretariat for its participation in the development and finalization of Zambia's CPF for 2005–2009. The document provided a roadmap for cooperation with the Agency in the areas of health care, agriculture and water resources management.

94. Since the 47th General Conference, there had been several important developments in Zambia. Construction had begun on a cancer treatment centre, due to be completed in early 2005. Training of personnel for the centre was under way. The induced mutation breeding programme had been strengthened through both the training of technicians and the provision of more equipment for improved facilities. His Government thanked the Agency and OPEC for supporting those programmes. In addition, Zambia continued to benefit from the Agency's support of projects in such fields as the production of radiation sterilization tissue grafts, the detection of drug resistant tuberculosis and malaria, and the diagnosis and control of diarrhoeal diseases. The lessons learned from those projects would be used in various initiatives.

95. In conclusion, he said that Zambia pledged its full share of assessed voluntary contribution to the TCF for 2005.

96. Mr. MUTALEMWA (United Republic of Tanzania) noted that despite limited financial resources the Agency had made considerable achievements in the past year, particularly in the areas of technical cooperation, nuclear safety, safeguards and security. He thanked the Agency for the technical cooperation programmes and projects being implemented for the benefit of his country and appealed for that cooperation to be continued and, as far as possible, strengthened. The successes achieved and the contribution towards poverty reduction had greatly increased people's awareness of the benefits of nuclear technologies. His country badly and urgently needed such support and assistance for the acquisition, adoption, adaptation and use of appropriate nuclear technologies to act as a catalyst for economic development and to contribute to reducing poverty. Tanzania was a participant in AFRA and derived immense benefits from projects under that agreement in the areas of agriculture, health, non-destructive testing, nuclear instrumentation and waste management.

97. In 2003, Tanzania had promulgated an atomic energy act, establishing a firm foundation and framework for the peaceful and safe utilization of nuclear technology for social and economic development and poverty reduction. The emphasis and spirit of the legislation, which had been drawn up with the support and cooperation of the Agency, focused on efficient and effective frameworks and infrastructure for radiation protection, safety and security, as well as the acquisition of nuclear techniques for the peaceful utilization of atomic energy for poverty reduction. The legislation had also been motivated by the urgent need to have better control over the use of nuclear technology in an economy that was rapidly becoming a free and privately run market economy. Tanzania's CPF was being reviewed so as to improve technical cooperation with the Agency and to take into account the goals of the new legislation. The intention was to finalize the new CPF before the beginning of the 2005–2006 project cycle, and Tanzania invited the Agency to assist in that endeavour.

98. His country appreciated the growing attention being given to cancer therapy in developing countries, where deficits in equipment and expertise often prevented patients from receiving appropriate radiotherapy. Tanzania therefore welcomed the Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT) and, since one of the major obstacles to efficient treatment was poor early diagnosis, would

welcome parallel programmes for early cancer diagnosis during implementation of the PACT. Tanzania was also very grateful for Agency assistance in the area of tsetse eradication, enabling it to collect baseline information in two sites as the starting point for eradication initiatives.

99. It was unfortunate that the TCF was experiencing disbursement problems because contributions had not been timely, predictable or assured. Tanzania had cleared all its arrears to both the Regular Budget and the TCF and would do all it could to meet its obligations for 2005 in full and on time despite extreme economic hardship.

100. Recognizing the need for new and stronger measures to guard against nuclear weapons proliferation and the threat of global nuclear terrorism, Tanzania welcomed the new Global Threat Reduction Initiative of the United States of America. His delegation wished to express its appreciation to the United States Government and the Agency for the assistance given to Tanzania in addressing the threat of nuclear terrorism, particularly the bilateral assistance from the United States in making security upgrades in facilities with significant radiation sources.

101. On the other hand, Tanzania was deeply worried that the new challenges of nuclear terrorism and nuclear proliferation were threatening to divert the attention and resources of the international community away from support for poverty reduction efforts by developing countries in general, and least developed countries in particular. Tanzania appealed to all nations, particularly Member States of the Agency, to face the challenges of terrorism and nuclear weapons proliferation and combat them in ways that were as cost-effective as possible so that significant resources could still be spared to continue fighting poverty, which, in his delegation's opinion, was one of the root causes of terrorism.

102. Strengthening of the Agency's safeguards system and the additional protocol were vital for reinforcing the NPT, and Tanzania would be signing an additional protocol during the current session of the General Conference. Tanzania commended the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for its decision voluntarily to abandon its nuclear weapons programme and to comply with its safeguards agreement with the Agency.

103. Mr. ZEWERI (Afghanistan), noting that his country had been part of the pioneer group of Member States that had joined the Agency in 1957, reviewed events in Afghanistan's recent past. He stressed that his Government, notwithstanding the problems currently facing it, was committed to its international obligations and responsibilities. It was in that spirit that it had signed a payment plan in August 2004 for settling its arrears with the Agency and had paid the first instalment that same month. He expressed the hope that those developments and Afghanistan's determination to pay its contributions on time in the future would pave the way to restoring the country's voting rights in Agency bodies, including the General Conference. His Government's request in that regard had been circulated in document GC(48)/INF/12.

104. The Agency's technical cooperation relating to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and its practical applications would substantially contribute to Afghanistan's reconstruction and improve the lives of the Afghan people. The transfer of nuclear technology would help achieve higher agricultural productivity and better health care services and ensure the supply of drinking water to both the urban and rural population, thereby promoting sustainable socio-economic development in the post-conflict period. In that connection, he noted that an Afghan delegation had been invited to come to Agency headquarters at the end of October to discuss with the relevant departments the scope and modalities of the Agency's technical cooperation and formulate a comprehensive technical assistance programme. Afghanistan was very interested in the Agency's training calendar and its capacity-building programme. Applications for training in a number of areas had been submitted to the Agency for consideration.

105. The Agency had an important role to play in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. His Government was confident that technical cooperation would promote peace and prosperity in the country and help ensure security in the region.

106. Ms. BIJOU (Haiti) said that the transition government in place for the past six months was working tirelessly to build democracy, promote respect for human rights and create a society at peace. But peace was not possible without sustainable development, which her country was having enormous difficulties in achieving. New technologies held out the prospect of helping Haiti attain its development goals. More attention must be given to the least developed countries to help them bridge the nuclear knowledge gap and make the most of the peaceful applications of nuclear energy.

107. For nearly three years, her country had been cooperating actively with the Agency in the areas of radiation protection, energy planning and groundwater management. A solid foundation was being laid to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. For 2005-2006, her Government planned to employ nuclear techniques in agriculture through projects to improve soil fertility and crop yield. Particular attention would be given to human resources training and management in radiation therapy, nuclear medicine, isotope hydrology, energy planning and environmental protection, as well as to developing a policy of nuclear knowledge management.

108. Her Government, which attached great importance to the Agency's efforts to encourage the use of nuclear techniques in Haiti, felt that the international community should be made more aware of nuclear technology's enormous potential through a public information campaign to promote nuclear energy and help overcome prejudices against its use.

109. She stressed the vital nature of the Agency's cooperation programme in Haiti which, if was carried through, would enable the country to cope with many obstacles to sustainable development. Haiti was facing extremely serious energy, environmental and healthcare problems, and it appealed to the international community for support in overcoming them. To benefit from the programme, the Ministry of Public Health and Population, of which she was the head, was cooperating with the Agency on introducing the necessary legal and physical infrastructures for radiation protection and nuclear security. Haiti would soon publish a decree establishing its national radiological security authority and work on the dosimetry laboratory was nearing completion. Thus, everything would be in place so that Haiti could make the most of the cooperation offered by the Agency.

110. In the past five years cancer, especially among women, had reached alarming proportions, affecting both the better-off segments of society and those that could not afford treatment abroad. In January 2005, an Agency radiotherapy project for cancer treatment would commence in Haiti. The project was a matter of high priority for women's health and she urged other countries to provide financial assistance to ensure its success. In that context, she noted that Haiti was obliged to contribute more than $5 million for the construction of a centre for cancer diagnosis and treatment.

111. Technical cooperation among countries was of growing importance and was an excellent addition to North-South cooperation. One of the most successful technical cooperation experiences was in connection with ARCAL. Haiti, which had joined that agreement two years previously, recognized its enormous value and hoped that the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean would continue to use it to intensify TCDC.

112. Her Government condemned all attempts to use nuclear technology for non-peaceful or terrorist purposes. It stressed the importance of the Agency's initiatives to combat nuclear and radiological terrorism. To contribute in that regard, Haiti had already ratified its safeguards agreement and an additional protocol, as well as ARCAL. All three texts would be published shortly in the official gazette so that they could enter into force.

113. Haiti had been making every effort to fulfil its financial obligations to the Agency, and above all to pay its contributions to the TCF. To reduce its arrears more rapidly, it was in favour of setting up a five-year payment plan. Although Haiti did not have considerable resources at its disposal, it was aware of the importance of paying its contributions regularly so that the Agency could function normally. Similarly, the voluntary contributions to ARCAL would enable her country to benefit enormously from its excellent work.

114. In closing, she drew the Director General's attention to waste management at the National Oncological Institute. Despite the Agency's financial support for the packaging, removal and transport of two radioactive cobalt sources, the containers were still there; that was a matter of great concern to persons in the immediate vicinity. Haiti hoped that all the necessary steps would be taken without delay to deal with that problem.

115. Mr. NGUYEN TRUONG GIANG (Vietnam) said that, in the current challenging international environment, the existence of nuclear weapons constituted a major threat to peace, security, stability and development. While reaffirming the right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, Vietnam supported non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

116. Through its cooperation with the Agency and other partners, Vietnam had made progress in a number of areas involving the peaceful applications of nuclear energy. The Agency's technical cooperation projects had been making significant contributions to enhancing R&D activities and the application of nuclear techniques in a number of areas in Vietnam. His Government urged the Agency to continue to strengthen the technical cooperation programme to help ensure that developing Member States could make safe and peaceful use of nuclear energy for their socio-economic development.

117. Since being renovated and restarted 20 years earlier, the Dalat Research Reactor had been used for isotope production, activation analysis and research and training. To date, it had produced 2200 Ci and analysed about 45 000 samples, and it regularly supplied more than 20 radioisotopes and radiopharmaceuticals to 25 hospitals in the country.

118. In agriculture, the country's R&D capabilities in the application of in vitro induced mutations and molecular marker techniques for food crop breeding, in the production of plant promoters with the help of radiation technology, and in the use of tracer techniques in soil erosion studies had been enhanced. Eight new rice and four soybean mutant varieties had been released and certified as regional and national varieties. Also, nuclear applications had contributed to programmes on national food security, rice export and poverty alleviation.

119. Nuclear techniques, including non-destructive testing, nucleonic control systems and tracer techniques, had also been widely applied in the coal, oil and gas industries, transport and construction.

120. In the field of health care, the Agency had assisted Vietnam in starting a quality control programme for radiation facilities in hospitals, in drawing up national regulations on radiation protection and the supervision of X-ray and cobalt-60 radiotherapy equipment and in training staff. Two tissue banks had been set up in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City with improved quality standards; their products had been used to treat thousands of patients in more than 40 hospitals. Following successful technical cooperation projects with the Agency, his Government was considering two projects on the establishment of positron emission tomography cyclotron centres in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.

121. Vietnam had also been promoting irradiation technology. Assisted by an Agency technical cooperation project, an industrial cobalt-60 irradiation facility had been operating effectively at the Ho

Chi Minh City Centre for Research and Development of Radiation Technology. It sterilized 1 000 m^3 of medical products and processed 5 000 tons of food items annually.

122. A sedimentology laboratory and two isotope hydrology laboratories set up with Agency support had been conducting studies to identify pollution sources so as to prevent further degradation of groundwater resources and to improve the quality of drinking water in urban and industrial areas.

123. In the field of radiation protection and nuclear regulation, hundreds of specialists and more than 2000 radiation workers had been trained in radiation safety, regulation, licensing and inspection. A nationwide personnel dosimetry service had been in operation for workers exposed to radiation. An inventory of major spent radioactive sources had been completed and radioactive waste conditioning and storage facilities had been improved.

124. His Government supported the efforts of the international community to enhance cooperation in nuclear, radiation and transport safety and waste management. Vietnam had provided the resources needed to strengthen its national regulatory structure, including the elaboration of atomic energy legislation. His Government thanked the Secretariat and Member States for their assistance in that area.

125. Finally, turning to nuclear power, he said his delegation was encouraged by the progress made in developing innovative nuclear technology through the INPRO project and the Generation IV International Forum. The Agency should continue to focus its attention on nuclear power activities and assist Member States which planned to develop them.

126. Mr. VARGAS (Secretary General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean) said that OPANAL had originated from the 1967 Tlatelolco Treaty establishing the world's first inhabited nuclear-weapon-free zone. All 33 Latin American and Caribbean countries were Contracting Parties to the Treaty and had made a commitment to use their nuclear material and facilities for exclusively peaceful purposes and to prohibit and prevent in their respective territories the testing, use, manufacture, production or acquisition by any means whatsoever of any nuclear weapons, directly or indirectly, and also the receipt, storage, installation, deployment and any form of possession of any nuclear weapon.

127. The Tlatelolco Treaty had two additional protocols. The first aimed to ensure the status of denuclearization in territories in the Latin American zone covered by the Treaty which, de jure or de facto, were under the control of foreign powers, namely France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The aim of the second was for the nuclear powers — China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States of America — not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the Contracting Parties of the Treaty, which provided an important assurance of nuclear security that was fundamental for disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean. Still more progress could be made however if, as proposed by OPANAL, the nuclear powers were to retract or modify some parts of the interpretative declarations drawn up some decades previously which affected the status of denuclearization of the zone established in the Treaty.

128. The Tlatelolco Treaty had prevented a dangerous arms race in Latin America and the Caribbean and had contributed to global non-proliferation, setting an example to other parts of the world. Taken together with the Rarotonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba Treaties, it meant that more than half of the world's States were now within nuclear-weapon-free zones. It seemed likely that a fifth zone would soon be established in Central Asia that there would be further progress in the negotiations on setting up a zone in the Middle East and South Asia. OPANAL was willing to contribute its experience to the forum the Director General proposed to hold on that subject.

129. There was a need for the nuclear-weapon-free zones to establish a common policy vis-à-vis the nuclear powers, the General Assembly, the various disarmament forums and the Agency. It would thus be appropriate to convene an international conference of the States party to nuclear-weapon-free zones, in which the Agency would be an important participant.

130. The aims of the Tlatelolco Treaty would be in vain if they were not backed up by an effective control, safeguards and verification system. While acknowledging the inalienable right of all States to research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, he said it was important to underline the Agency's crucial role in verifying compliance with the global nuclear safeguards regime as envisaged in the Tlatelolco Treaty and the NPT. He emphasized efforts to strengthen that regime, and in particular the importance of the additional protocol as a suitable instrument for ensuring that the Agency's safeguards system functioned more efficiently and effectively. Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay had all signed additional protocols with the Agency and over half of those had been ratified. OPANAL sought closer links with the Agency, with which it had had a cooperation agreement since 1972, and would provide support so that the control and safeguards system could function as well as possible, safeguarding both nuclear security and regional interests.

131. The Agency's technical cooperation programme played an important role in such areas as human health, food and environmental conservation, particularly in developing countries and he urged Member States to give their financial support to those activities.

132. Finally, OPANAL actively supported the Agency's initiatives to prevent nuclear weapons from falling into the wrong hands. The best way of ensuring that was complete nuclear disarmament.

The meeting rose at 7.05 p.m.