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## Forty-Eighth (2004) Regular Session

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# Plenary

## Record of the Eighth Meeting

*Held at the Austria Center Vienna on Thursday, 23 September 2004, at 3.05 p.m.*

**President:** Mr. RÓNAKY (Hungary)

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

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**Abbreviations used in this record:**

AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement 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
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
GRULAC	Latin American and Caribbean Group
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
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (earlier CSCE)
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PATTEC	Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign
RCA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
SIT	sterile insect technique
Tacis	Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean



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

1. Mr. MÁRQUEZ MARÍN (Venezuela) said that his country attached great importance to the activities of the Agency, which was the appropriate channel for promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and implementing any programme to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons with a view to ensuring peace and stability in the world. The signature and ratification by Venezuela of the NPT, the Tlatelolco Treaty and the CTBT showed its commitment to nuclear disarmament and the rule of international law.

2. The Nuclear Affairs Directorate of the Ministry of Energy and Mines in Venezuela was being strengthened to enhance its capacity to respond both to the increased use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in Venezuela and to the growing need to regulate and control those uses to ensure optimum and safe use of nuclear applications. Technological development and innovation were important factors not only for sustainable social and economic development but also in the fight against poverty and social exclusion. The Agency had an important role to play in promoting the transfer of nuclear technology through bilateral and regional projects based on common needs and interests, making use of existing integration mechanisms such as the Association of Caribbean States and the Andean Community. Venezuela stood ready to work with the Agency and ARCAL to promote such socially and economically beneficial cooperation in the region.

3. Venezuela attached great importance to technical cooperation and highly appreciated the projects it was implementing with the Agency. However, it hoped to make much greater progress in the application of nuclear science and technology through the implementation of a comprehensive plan designed to improve medical care, environmental protection, industry and agriculture. The plan would prioritize technical training and the building of the infrastructure required for the proper exercise of the State's regulatory functions. His country hoped that the Agency would continue to support the strengthening of its nuclear regulatory and planning capacity. Only a coherent nuclear development strategy incorporated in the national development plan would bring optimum results in the transfer and dissemination of nuclear technology. Venezuela was grateful to the Agency for the steady progress achieved in the development of new projects for the 2005–2006 biennium. It particularly appreciated the positive results obtained in the application of nuclear technology for the protection of dams and inventorying of water resources. It attached particular importance to the inclusion in the national technical cooperation programme of the project to monitor the stability of the terrace where the city of Valera was located, and seismic microzoning in that area, as part of the programme on disaster prevention and civil protection. It hoped that the number of new projects and training of human resources would increase.

4. His Government was eager to design and implement a comprehensive plan aimed at establishing a national nuclear safety system which would ensure both security and safety and prevent illicit trafficking in radioactive material. To ascertain the current status in Venezuela in that regard, Agency experts had carried out a complete evaluation which was in the process of being validated by the national authorities. Once that phase was complete, an appropriate plan would be elaborated which should help improve nuclear safety considerably and which Venezuela hoped the Agency and donor countries would support.

5. Particular areas of interest were radioactive waste management, strengthening regulatory capacity, upgrading and updating national radiological equipment, developing the radiological

emergency system and improving the records of radioactive material. His country supported the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and the guidelines for its application and had been one of the first countries to adhere to it.

6. The Agency played a fundamental role in the verification of disarmament and non-proliferation agreements and Venezuela supported its efforts to prevent any diversion of nuclear technology from peaceful uses. His country would support any initiative that contributed to nuclear disarmament and the use of nuclear energy solely for peaceful purposes and absolutely rejected terrorism in any form and on whatever grounds.

7. His country shared the international community's desire for a secure world and felt that international cooperation aimed at establishing a reliable safety and security system for nuclear facilities should be conducted within the framework of the Agency. It was therefore essential to strengthen the Agency with a view to further increasing and improving its technical cooperation, safeguards and nuclear safety programmes.

8. The global threat from nuclear arsenals and the proliferation of nuclear weapons had to be countered. The Agency, as the guardian of the NPT, had a fundamental role to play in that regard. The early entry into force of the CTBT was equally important and he urged countries that had yet to do so to sign or ratify that Treaty, especially those whose adherence was required for the Treaty's entry into force and those with large nuclear weapons arsenals. His country rejected unilateral, selective and discriminatory approaches to dealing with the nuclear threat and favoured strengthening international law, multilateralism and international cooperation with a view to achieving total global disarmament. The right of all countries to develop the peaceful uses of nuclear energy should also be respected without extra conditions which went beyond those imposed by international law.

9. Mr. IBRAHIM (Iraq) said he wished to present an optimistic picture of Iraq and its science policies, which were designed to benefit his country's society and people and to compensate for the time that had been wasted in misguided scientific pursuits under the preceding regime. The policies of that regime had hampered progress and isolated Iraq from the international community.

10. Iraq had now put the past behind it and was seeking to forge solid relations with the rest of the world aimed at scientific cooperation and promoting mutual understanding. As the cradle of civilization, it hoped to recover its scientific and cultural status by working for international peace and security and a world free of weapons of mass destruction.

11. The international community had welcomed the formation of the new Iraqi Government, which had committed itself to full compliance with all Iraq's international treaties, in particular the NPT and its safeguards agreement with the Agency. Iraq supported the efforts to rid the Middle East of weapons of mass destruction. All States, and in particular nuclear-weapon States, should help to further that goal by urging parties in the region that had not yet done so to accede to the NPT and other instruments pertaining to weapons of mass destruction, thereby contributing to the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the region and promoting the universality of the instruments concerned.

12. His country intended to participate as an observer in the meetings of bodies related to instruments to which it had not yet acceded and would voluntarily comply with the provisions of those instruments until such time as it was in a position to accede to them.

13. Two existing institutions had been reformed: the Iraqi Institute for the Control of Radioactive Sources and the Iraqi Agency for the Prevention of the Proliferation of Weapons, a body that supervised and retrained scientists and engineers who had formerly worked on weapons of mass destruction.

14. Priority was being given to investment of Iraqi scientific expertise in the process of reconstruction, in particular in the peaceful use of nuclear energy in medicine, agriculture, industry and the environment. The country hoped for Agency assistance in those endeavours and, at the same time, believed that the experience of Iraqi scientists could be turned to account in promoting the aims for which the Agency was established.

15. During a visit by the Iraqi Minister of Science and Technology to the Agency in July 2004, agreement had been reached on arrangements for the payment of Iraq's debts to the Agency. On the same occasion it had been agreed that Iraq would again participate in elections to the Board of Governors and that the Agency would assist Iraq in developing a special remedial programme. The programme would focus on decontamination of destroyed sites to protect both people and the environment, selection of waste repository sites, promotion of safe transport of contaminated materials, provision of equipment and materials for controlling the transport of radioactive sources, and support for joint research projects in health, agriculture, water resources, engineering and the environment.

16. Mr. SHEIN (Myanmar) said that the Annual Report highlighted the Agency's growing role in building a global nuclear safety culture and helping countries achieve national development goals by promoting nuclear science and technology.

17. The Agency had continued its efforts to implement a strengthened safeguards system in 2003. The number of States yet to bring into force comprehensive safeguards agreements in accordance with their obligations under the NPT had decreased from 48 at the end of 2002 to 45 and the end of 2003. That positive trend was welcome.

18. A number of world events had posed significant challenges for the Agency over the preceding year. In the nuclear non-proliferation area, the Agency had been at the centre of world attention and had demonstrated its ability to perform effective and credible inspections. It was also to be commended on its successful efforts to ensure that the benefits of nuclear technology were shared globally for economic and social development.

19. He expressed appreciation for the Agency's promotion of international cooperation on nuclear safety and safeguards. All Agency safeguards and verification measures should be applied in a non-discriminatory manner and in conformity with the relevant provisions of the NPT.

20. The Agency's technical cooperation activities played an important role in promoting sustainable development in many countries and had contributed to Myanmar's national development in such areas as food, agriculture, health and human resources development. Thanks to Agency assistance in the form of equipment, experts and training, Myanmar had gained access to nuclear medicine, radiotherapy and nuclear diagnostic methods and nuclear techniques for medical research. The increased use of radioisotopes in industry reflected the industrial progress that Myanmar had achieved.

21. Myanmar had embarked upon a programme for the promotion and development of nuclear applications for which it would need an adequate radiation protection and waste safety infrastructure. The elaboration of regulations for the safe use of radiation and atomic energy was nearing completion. The assistance provided by the Agency under the interregional Model Project on radiation protection and radiation and waste safety infrastructure was appreciated.

22. All developing countries deserved Agency assistance and priority should be given to technical assistance programmes in less developed Member States. Myanmar had two active projects in the science and technology sector, two projects in the health sector and two projects in the agriculture, livestock and fisheries sector. It had proposed several projects in those areas for the 2005–2006 cycle and sincerely hoped that the Agency would continue to provide assistance.

23. The Agency's activities in 2003 clearly demonstrated that the scope of its work had continued to expand and that its agenda remained very full. It had responded appropriately to all the challenges that had arisen, guided by the principle that progress could only be achieved in combating poverty, maintaining and enhancing peace and security and protecting the environment through international cooperation and mutual accommodation. He expressed the hope that the Agency's activities would continue to contribute to global peace, health and prosperity.

24. Mr. YLLI (Albania) said that his country was committed to meeting all of its obligations under international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and attached special importance to implementing all resolutions adopted by the Agency, particularly those that ensured an effective and efficient international safeguards system. In that connection, his Government had decided to sign an additional protocol and would be making every effort to ensure that it was signed and ready for ratification by the end of the year.

25. Albania highly valued the effective technical cooperation provided under the Agency's technical cooperation programme, particularly in the fields of human health, radiation protection and safety, radioactive waste management and environmental management. It hoped that the Agency would continue to provide such assistance, which had a positive impact on people's lives. For that reason, it always paid its contributions to the Agency in full and he urged all Member States to do the same.

26. Albania's current technical cooperation programme comprised six active national projects and nineteen regional projects covering a broad range of nuclear applications. The infrastructure established during the current cycle included a radiological emergency centre, a secondary standards dosimetry laboratory and a new cobalt-60 machine at the Mother Teresa Hospital in Tirana.

27. The Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources had become an important guide for Albanian institutions to improve the country's radiation safety regulatory infrastructure.

28. His country strongly supported the Global Threat Reduction Initiative and Albanian institutions had made enormous efforts under the radiological threat reduction programme and in combating illicit trafficking in nuclear material and radiation sources.

29. His Government's main priority in the next technical cooperation cycle would be to upgrade the country's health sector, particularly radiotherapy and nuclear medicine services. A cancer management programme had been launched and the decision taken to focus on upgrading the Mother Teresa Hospital in Tirana.

30. In conclusion, he expressed special appreciation to the Director General and to the staff of the Europe Section in the Department of Technical Cooperation for their valuable assistance in implementing various projects in Albania.

31. Albania was strongly convinced that the Agency would continue to play an important role in promoting the safe use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

32. Mr. CABELLO (Paraguay) said that, in the current international climate, the Agency had an essential role to play in fostering peace and international security and in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for the social and economic wellbeing of mankind.

33. As a country that requested technical assistance from the Agency, Paraguay was concerned that the balance that had always existed in the distribution of budgetary resources and in the Agency's main activities might be lost. It trusted that a satisfactory solution would be found to maintain levels of international cooperation.



34. Despite the difficulties his country faced, it was making every effort to bring its contributions up to date over a clearly defined time period.

35. Paraguay had always supported every effort to put an end to nuclear proliferation and reduce existing arsenals. To that end, it had signed and ratified an additional protocol to its NPT safeguards agreement with the Agency. He called upon all States that had not yet done so to do likewise in the interests of international security.

36. His country was applying the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and hoped that its provisions would be strictly applied by all States. The Code helped maintain security without hindering access to sources for essential applications. Full compliance should also strengthen the close link that should exist between exporters and importers, thus preventing illicit trafficking and use.

37. He welcomed the expanding activities of the Agency's Office of Nuclear Security and the growing contributions to the Nuclear Security Fund. Paraguay had contributed to the Fund in the preceding year and hoped to receive assistance to promote its national security.

38. He commended the Governments of the United States of America and the Russian Federation on the launching of the Global Threat Reduction Initiative which should provide new resources to fight nuclear terrorism, the threat of which was more real than ever, particularly in the light of the discovery of an illicit supply market.

39. Paraguay welcomed the Agency's efforts to ensure the equitable representation of Member States in the Agency's staff.

40. His country was endeavouring to strengthen its institutional infrastructure through the establishment of a single regulatory authority. A group of technicians and legal advisers were revising current legislation and an executive decree had recently been signed for the establishment of a centralized authority.

41. Effective controls were being put in place in the interests of nuclear and radiological safety to ensure the sustainable development of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The objective was to establish a mechanism to identify and ensure the traceability of all radiation sources, monitor their safe and effective use, advise operators, ensure physical protection of disused sources and radioactive waste, and implement effective border controls. He trusted that the Agency and the Global Threat Reduction Initiative would cooperate effectively to provide the competent authority with the training and infrastructure it required.

42. Finally, nuclear applications in the fields of health, agriculture and the environment were essential to the wellbeing of the population of Paraguay and were areas where his country hoped to increase its cooperation with the Agency.

43. Mr MOREJÓN-ALMEIDA (Ecuador) said that security was one of the most pressing items on the international agenda and there was a clear recognition of the Agency's responsibility to monitor nuclear material and radioactive sources, given the potential consequences of their accidental or malicious use, and to promote the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes for development. Ecuador therefore attached great importance to the Global Threat Reduction Initiative International Partners' Conference held in Vienna on 18–19 September 2004, and to the joint responsibility of the international community to control and manage in a responsible way nuclear and radioactive material. It had offered to host a Pan-American conference on nuclear and radiation safety in Quito in 2005.

44. The preceding twelve months had seen several Member States, including Spain, Russia and Indonesia, become the target of blind violence and terrorism. Such events should not be allowed to occur again. It was everyone's responsibility to ensure that people lived together peacefully and multilateralism was the only way of achieving balance in international relations.

45. His country was fully committed to security but also recognized that security and development were linked. The alleviation of poverty, sustainable development, fighting disease, promoting health, agriculture, energy, nutrition and environmental protection were all pressing matters on the international agenda and ones where the Agency made a significant contribution and had an important role to play.

46. With regard to the Agency's programme and budget, the budgetary exercise in 2003 had laid the necessary foundation to ensure that the Agency was able to provide what the international community expected of it, i.e. a credible verification system contributing to security, and a strengthened technical cooperation programme. Ecuador had made an unprecedented effort in the current year by contributing a significant sum equivalent to almost four times its annual share. It had also made an extra-budgetary contribution to support ARCAL fellowships and training activities. Such gestures demonstrated Ecuador's unequivocal support for and commitment to all Agency activities, like many other countries struggling to meet their financial obligations despite difficult economic situations. Such efforts should qualify a country to be a direct recipient of technical cooperation funds. Contributions by national counterparts should also be taken into account when developing technical cooperation programmes.

47. Ecuador was in favour of an international regime for the safe transport of radioactive material which covered liability for damage to human health and the environment, and for economic losses incurred in the event of an accident or incident. Good communication between States prior to any maritime transport of radioactive material was also important. The Agency had an essential role to play in that area.

48. He expressed appreciation to the Agency for the projects it was implementing in Ecuador which were contributing to sustainable social growth. His country hoped to expand cooperation in radiation safety, nuclear medicine, provision of equipment and training. To that end, it had strengthened its competent authority, the Ecuadorian Atomic Energy Commission, which was working hard to comply with legislation regulating the manufacture, use, transfer and transport of equipment generating ionizing radiation and radiation sources. It also identified areas for the scientific and peaceful use of nuclear energy and trained new professionals.

49. As another example of its desire to participate more actively in the work of the Agency, Ecuador had stood for election to the Board of Governors for 2004–2006 on behalf of GRULAC.

50. Mr. UMAR (Nigeria) said that nuclear techniques and applications provided a way out of poverty, deprivation and suffering for people in developing countries. They were used to increase food production, fight disease, manage water resources and monitor the environment. The Agency should continue to expand the opportunities which nuclear technology offered for sustaining and improving human life.

51. As a Party to the NPT, Nigeria expected all other State Parties to respect the Agency's mandate to verify compliance with the Treaty. The objective of the NPT was, first and foremost, to rid the world of the nuclear threat. The approach adopted, namely limiting the number of nuclear-weapon States, appeared not to be working. Thus, the only solution was to eliminate nuclear weapons altogether. The NPT Review Conference in 2005 would give nuclear-weapon States the opportunity to review their nuclear policies with a view to genuinely pursuing nuclear disarmament, as they had undertaken to do under Article IV of the Treaty.

52. He welcomed Chad, Mauritania and Togo as new members of the Agency. African countries now made up around one quarter of the membership. The Agency should continue to help Africa eliminate the many insect pests which posed a major threat to its people and its economic development. The SIT was already being used to fight the tsetse fly. It could also be used to control malaria-transmitting mosquitoes and locusts. The tsetse fly eradication campaign enjoyed political support at the highest level: the African Union had set up a coordinating office for PATTEC in Addis Ababa and was preparing a budget for the eradication campaign. Malaria caused two million deaths every year, 90% of them in Africa, and there were 500 million clinical cases that put able-bodied adults out of work. R&D on mass rearing of mosquitoes, radiation sterilization and the development of genetic sexing strains would begin soon. African research institutions, such as the Sheda Science and Technology Complex in Nigeria, should be involved in that work.

53. He commended the Agency for initiating PACT, which was a timely move in view of the impending cancer crisis in the developing world. The provision of radiotherapy services within the technical cooperation programme was a success story of which the Agency could be proud. All Member States should support PACT in cash and in kind.

54. Nigeria was one of the initiators of NEPAD and had identified water and human health as its priority areas. It had invited the Agency to assist with the development of an isotope hydrology laboratory which would serve not only Nigeria but the rest of the West African subregion as well. The Federal Ministry of Water Resources had submitted a technical cooperation proposal for the next programme cycle. The Government had resolved to provide potable water for 70% of the population by 2007 and therefore planned to make a substantial contribution to the project.

55. The fact that Nigeria, with over 100 000 radiation workers, had fewer than 30 trained radiation protection experts was a major challenge for radiation safety in the country. The Nigerian nuclear regulatory authority had submitted a technical cooperation proposal for a national postgraduate training centre in radiation protection. That authority had been established in May 2001 and had started receiving technical assistance immediately through the Model Project on upgrading radiation protection infrastructure. Twelve staff members had taken training courses over the preceding year. The Nigerian Government hoped that the Model Project would be maintained for a further biennium. A number of other events had taken place in Nigeria under that Model Project: a regional training course on radiation protection and management of radioactive waste in the oil and gas industry; a national seminar on the duties and responsibilities of managers and practitioners in medical applications of ionizing radiation; and a workshop on the duties and responsibilities of managers and executives involved in the use of radioactive sources in the petroleum industry. One major outcome of those events was a proposal to link Agency assistance with that provided under NEPAD. The Nigerian Minister of Health had also suggested collaboration with the Agency on the production of a national framework for sustainable development of medical applications of ionizing radiation in the country. Following an Agency peer review mission in 2003, the Government had issued the Nigerian Basic Ionizing Radiation Regulations which laid the basis for the enforcement of the Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection Act 1995.

56. The final stage of the installation of Nigeria's miniature neutron source reactor had begun in December 2003 with the delivery of the first batch of nuclear fuel from China. The reactor had achieved criticality in February 2004.

57. In February 2003, two neutron sources had been reported lost by a Nigerian well-logging company. It transpired that they had been shipped to Germany in a container full of scrap metal: the port authority did not have the necessary equipment to detect radiation. The sources had been sent to the United States by the American owners of the shipping company. The Nigerian Government had taken a number of steps to prevent such an incident occurring again. It had undertaken an investigation

and had banned the export of scrap metal. In addition, new regulations for the safety and security of radioactive sources and nuclear material were being developed based on the Agency's Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. An International Nuclear Security Advisory Service mission had visited Nigeria at the Government's request in May 2004.

58. Finally, he announced that Nigeria was pledging an amount to the TCF for 2005 equal to its assessed contribution.

59. Mr. BALZAN (Malta) said that his country subscribed to the need for a strong system of international safeguards to promote collective security. Therefore, his Government had signed an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement and the ratification thereof was at an advanced stage. He encouraged all States that had not already done so to conclude safeguards agreements and additional protocols.

60. The role of the Agency to promote nuclear safety was even more important at a time when the international community was intensifying its efforts to combat terrorism. In that context, misuse of nuclear material could pose a serious global threat. His Government was confident that, with the support, cooperation and goodwill of Member States, the Agency would continue to make a valid contribution to international peace and security. The Maltese Government had enacted legislation on radiation protection and nuclear safety and had established a nuclear regulatory authority in September 2003.

61. The development of non-power applications related to human health, agriculture and the environment, and efforts to increase the efficiency of the technical cooperation programme were of particular interest to countries like Malta which did not use nuclear power. His country was grateful for the assistance it received from the Agency in such areas as medical uses of radiation, strengthening of national regulatory capabilities and national preparedness in the event of a radiological accident. Malta was participating in a number of national and regional projects which provided excellent opportunities for staff to take part in relevant training courses and international conferences. It welcomed the Agency's efforts to improve the effectiveness of the technical cooperation programme through greater dialogue with Member States and higher quality projects. Increased cooperation with other institutions would also make the programme more effective. In March 2004, his country had proposed an initiative aimed at assisting Member States to coordinate at regional level national activities relating to the assessment of radionuclides in the marine environment, application of tracer techniques to assess environmental pollution, preservation of cultural heritage and strengthening of national capabilities in radiation, waste and transport safety in the Mediterranean region.

62. Ms. SHAIMERGENOVA (Kyrgyzstan) said that, since her country became independent, the Government's policy on nuclear safety and nuclear energy had always been in line with the Agency's fundamental principles. Thus it had signed an NPT safeguards agreement with the Agency which had entered into force in February 2004, and the Government was preparing to sign an additional protocol and accede to the CPPNM.

63. On more than one occasion, her country had drawn attention to the grave environmental problems it had been facing in recent years which threatened at any moment to develop into a catastrophe of global proportions. During Soviet times, Kyrgyzstan had been one of the principal mining and processing areas for several heavy metals and uranium ore. Those activities had lasted several decades, ending in 1970, and had left behind numerous tailings dumps containing vast quantities of radioactive waste. There were some 40 such tailings dumps in Kyrgyzstan, the largest and most hazardous of which lay in the southern regions that formed part of the Fergana valley. Approximately 6500 hectares of land were radioactively contaminated and the volume of waste was as much as 145 million tonnes.

64. Owing to the absence of monitoring as a result of a lack of financial resources, and the impact of natural phenomena such as mud flows, landslides and underground tremors, the tailings dump dykes had suffered extensive damage and were in a hazardous condition. In the event of a major natural disaster such as an earthquake, the poorly maintained tailings dumps might burst, releasing deadly waste into rivers and waterways throughout the Fergana valley, which was the most densely populated valley in the world. Moreover, there was a real risk that radiation sources could fall into the hands of international terrorists. The problem extended beyond the borders of Kyrgyzstan and posed a real environmental threat to neighbouring countries as well. Kyrgyzstan was unable to meet that challenge alone. The only way her country could overcome the problem was through cooperation with the Agency and its Member States and, as a full member of the Agency, it counted on the Agency's expertise, support and assistance.

65. The Government of Kyrgyzstan was taking its own measures to eliminate the threat of nuclear waste. It had established the necessary regulatory framework for the rehabilitation of the tailings dumps and mining waste dumps, had collected together the design, technical and operational documentation, studied the disposal arrangements, drawn up maps showing the potential environmental risk, and carried out regular emergency restoration work.

66. She thanked the World Bank, the European Union, the Tacis programme, the OSCE, and the Governments of the Russian Federation, the United States of America, the Czech Republic, Japan and other countries for the financial and technical assistance they had provided. To date, US \$12 580 000 had been spent on the rehabilitation of the tailings dumps, of which \$1 910 000 had been provided by the Government of Kyrgyzstan. However, a total of \$50–70 million would be needed to deal with the problem. She appealed to the Agency, Member States and other international organizations to lend further assistance.

67. In the light of the heightened concern over global security, Kyrgyzstan was eager to play its part in strengthening the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. Thus it was actively engaged in efforts to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia to strengthen peace and stability in the region, to establish an effective mechanism for cooperation on regional security, to reduce the risk of nuclear war and to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Central Asian region faced complex political, economic, military, environmental and transport-related problems which, combined with other threats such as international terrorism and religious extremism, posed a real threat. The creation of a regional nuclear-weapon-free zone should also help strengthen bilateral relations between countries in the region.

68. A consultative meeting of the Central Asian countries, the nuclear-weapon States and the United Nations had been held in Bishkek in July 1998 to consider that initiative. The key to success was the support of the international community. Her country greatly appreciated the efforts of the United Nations and the Agency in furthering the initiative which was currently at the implementation stage.

69. Mr. AHMAD (Sudan) commended the Agency's efforts to ensure full implementation of the NPT. To support those efforts, Sudan intended to enact legislation to prevent movements of material that might be used for non-peaceful purposes, and to sign an additional protocol. His country had also ratified the CTBT in June 2004.

70. Sudan was deeply committed to the goal of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East through the conclusion of a comprehensive treaty that would be binding on all parties concerned. Israel's nuclear capability was an ongoing source of concern to all countries in the region because Israel was the only entity in the Middle East that possessed nuclear weapons. His country had repeatedly warned of the danger of a nuclear disaster in the region. It was high time for the

international community to compel Israel to sign and ratify the relevant Agency instruments. Sudan also hoped that the international community would continue to work for a just settlement of the Middle East question.

71. He praised the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for reassuring the international community about its peaceful nuclear programme and expressed strong support for that country's right to obtain assistance from the Agency in implementing that programme. It was a right enshrined in the NPT and the Islamic Republic of Iran was a peace-loving nation.

72. Malaria was a major obstacle to Sudan's development. He thanked the Agency for its assistance in that regard and pledged his country's support for projects aimed at controlling the disease. His country also welcomed assistance under the technical cooperation programme to enhance food security.

73. The tsetse fly was one of the main impediments to development in Africa and the Agency's efforts to eradicate the pest using the SIT were greatly appreciated. He thanked the Agency for sponsoring the bilateral agreement on tsetse fly eradication between Sudan and Ethiopia. Now that a lasting peace was within reach in the south of the country, Sudan hoped that the Agency would extend its technical support for eradication of that pest to the whole of southern Sudan.

74. Water scarcity was a major challenge, especially in arid regions of the world. It was therefore essential to promote rational management of water resources, especially of groundwater aquifers. The Nubian groundwater basin was a strategic water resource and Sudan hoped that the efforts of the Agency and the countries of the basin would result in its rational exploitation.

75. The African countries that were party to AFRA had benefited greatly from human resource development projects, the utilization of existing expertise in the region and the establishment of centres of excellence in Africa. However, the downward trend in AFRA's budget for the coming two years would impede the implementation of proposed projects, which would in turn have an adverse impact on development projects using nuclear technology. He therefore called on the Agency to take further steps to secure the necessary funding for AFRA projects.

76. Sudan's development programme continued to be adversely affected by the brain drain. To address the problem, the Ministry of Science and Technology had established the Sudanese Academy of Sciences which was pursuing ambitious programmes in areas such as food security, health and water resources. As the use of nuclear technology in those areas had proved highly successful, Sudan hoped for Agency support for the Academy's programmes.

77. He also called for support for closer cooperation among States party to the Convention on Nuclear Safety and for continued harmonization of regulations and legislation in the area of radiation protection.

78. Mr. WOLDE (Ethiopia) said that his country was pursuing an agricultural development-led industrialization policy which focused mainly on poverty reduction and sustainable economic development for the benefit of the Ethiopian people. His Government therefore attached great importance to its cooperation with the Agency on the peaceful uses of nuclear techniques in such areas as agriculture, water resources management and human health care.

79. The biggest Agency technical cooperation project in Ethiopia was aimed at eradicating the tsetse fly from one of the country's most fertile agricultural areas. The Southern Rift Valley tsetse eradication project was a ten-year programme initiated in 1997 and its long-term objectives were to establish and develop a sustainable agricultural production system in areas currently infested by the tsetse fly. Its potential contribution to the national strategy of poverty reduction and food self-sufficiency was immense.

80. The project, which was expected to benefit some ten million people, was designed to address tsetse-transmitted trypanosomosis in an area roughly 25 000 km<sup>2</sup> in size, employing an area-wide integrated pest management approach with community participation. Its two principal components were the establishment of a centrally operated sterile insect production plant and the actual field operations. The Agency's support for the project, which had made it such a success, was not limited to nuclear techniques but also included other non-nuclear inputs and had encouraged his Government to commit more resources to it. He appealed for continued and enhanced support from the Agency and Member States.

81. One of the priority areas in which Ethiopia collaborated with the Agency was in human health care, including radiotherapy and nuclear medicine. His Government thanked the Agency for its ongoing technical support for the building of basic infrastructure and manpower capabilities, particularly in radiotherapy services. Encouraged by the Agency's assistance, Ethiopia had made an extrabudgetary contribution of \$150 000 to share the costs of purchasing a new cobalt-60 unit for the radiotherapy centre at Addis Ababa University under the technical cooperation project to upgrade the centre.

82. The establishment of a national isotope hydrology laboratory at Addis Ababa University and the setting up of the national groundwater database had been the major achievements under the 2003–2004 technical cooperation programme. Those outputs were vital to the planned Ethiopian groundwater resources assessment programme, which had been included in the country's 15-year water sector development programme. Ethiopia was grateful to the Agency and its technical staff for their support in building those capacities.

83. His country recognized the Agency's outstanding role in safeguarding the world from the threat of nuclear proliferation and it endorsed the adoption and implementation of safeguards agreements and additional protocols by Member States.

84. Regional cooperation agreements such as AFRA needed to be encouraged and supported on the basis of a thorough assessment of their contribution to promoting the peaceful application of nuclear techniques and enhancing collaboration among participating countries.

85. Finally, Ethiopia was ready to pay its annual budgetary and TCF contributions in full and on time, as it had done for the last several years.

86. Mr. ENKHTAIVAN (Mongolia) said that his country remained fully committed to the NPT and the CTBT which constituted the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. As one of the first States to ratify the CTBT, Mongolia attached great importance to its early entry into force. It was committed to strengthening the international safeguards system and had ratified an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement in the preceding year.

87. Much had been achieved in the application of nuclear science and technology and further developments should be aimed at improving the quality of human life. Mongolia sought new opportunities for the development of energy sources and was confident that the Agency's professional expertise and technical assistance would make a major contribution to addressing the critical energy situation in the country.

88. The Agency's technical cooperation activities in Mongolia continued to help promote social and economic development, covering fields such as human resources development and nuclear technology support, integrated energy demand and supply, and livestock production and human health. He welcomed the fact that the Agency was increasing funding for activities in Mongolia over the forthcoming two years. Further expansion of the technical assistance programme into new areas such

as environmental impact assessment of uranium mining, transboundary animal diseases, isotope hydrology and soil and plant studies would be appreciated.

89. His country attached particular importance to the Model Projects on upgrading radiation protection and waste safety infrastructure. As a result of the activities in that area, a legal framework for radiation protection and safety had been established in Mongolia and the independent nuclear regulatory authority had been strengthened. Mongolia continued to participate in the RCA, which helped promote nuclear technology transfer among countries in the region.

90. In spite of the country's current economic and financial difficulties, it had made payments of \$200 000 to the TCF in the preceding two years. It was committed to paying in full its assessed contributions to the Regular Budget and to settling its arrears to the TCF.

91. Lastly, he commended the Agency's work on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. The Agency's involvement in confirming Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status was another avenue for cooperation.

**The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.**