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Plenary

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President: Mr. BAZOBERRY (Bolivia)

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The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(49)/INF/10/Rev.1.

¹ GC(49)/20.

Abbreviations used in this record:

AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EU	European Union
GRULAC	Latin American and Caribbean Group
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review and Extension Conference	Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
TACC	Technical Assistance and Cooperation Committee
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund

27. Report on contributions pledged to the Technical Cooperation Fund for 2006

(GC(49)/19/Rev.4)

1. The PRESIDENT said that, by 6 p.m. on 29 September 2005, the contributions pledged by 45 Member States to the TCF had amounted to \$8 685 913, or 11.21% of the target for 2006. That figure was 2.84% higher than the percentage of pledges received at the same point the preceding year.
2. Since then, pledges made by Belarus (\$13 175), Brazil (\$400 000), Burkina Faso (\$1550), China (\$1 535 275), Malaysia (\$151 900), Morocco (\$34 875) and Zimbabwe (\$5425) had brought the total to \$10 828 113, or 13.97% of the 2006 target.
3. He urged those Member States which had not yet done so to make their 2006 pledges, and to pay their contributions in full at the earliest opportunity, so that the Secretariat could submit a proposed 2006 technical cooperation programme to the meeting of the TACC in November 2005 based on reasonably assured resources, and thereafter implement the approved programme without hindrance or uncertainty.

20. Implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement between the Agency and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

(GC(49)/13 and L.9)

4. The PRESIDENT noted that the item had been included in the agenda pursuant to resolution GC(48)/RES/15. The Director General had reported to the Board periodically on the issue during the intervening year and his report contained in document GC(49)/13 summarized developments over that period. He also noted that a draft resolution on the agenda item had been submitted that day in document GC(49)/L.9. He understood that the General Conference wished to take it up immediately and therefore proposed suspension of Rule 63 of the Rules of Procedure in respect of the draft resolution.
5. It was so agreed.
6. Mr. PROUDFOOT (Canada), introducing the draft resolution, said it noted with serious concern the official statement dated 10 February 2005 by the DPRK that it had manufactured nuclear weapons. Also, the draft resolution strongly welcomed the joint statement issued on 19 September 2005 at the conclusion of the fourth round of the six-party talks in Beijing, which constituted the first step towards verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. It called upon the DPRK to cooperate with the Agency in the full and effective implementation of comprehensive Agency safeguards. The draft resolution sent the correct message to the DPRK at a critical juncture, and he hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.
7. The PRESIDENT took it that the Conference was ready to adopt the draft resolution contained in document GC(49)/L.9 without a vote.

8. It was so decided.

9. Mr. WU Hailong (China), noting that his country, as the host State of the six-party talks, had not felt it appropriate to co-sponsor the draft resolution, welcomed the flexibility, cooperation and pragmatism displayed by Member States during the negotiations on the draft resolution. The consensus which had been reached reflected the desire of all the parties concerned for a peaceful resolution of the issue of nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula.

10. Mr. CHO Chang-beom (Republic of Korea) welcomed the DPRK's undertaking, in the joint statement of the fourth round of the six-party talks issued on 19 September 2005 and which he requested be included in the record of the meeting², to abandon all nuclear weapons and to return to the nuclear non-proliferation regime at an early date, including Agency safeguards. The DPRK had also stated that it had the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the other parties had agreed to economic cooperation and energy assistance to the DPRK, including the possible supply of a light water reactor to the DPRK. At the same time, the agreement set out in the statement envisaged the normalization of relations between the DPRK and the relevant parties. All the parties committed themselves to joint efforts for lasting peace and stability in North-East Asia.

11. The agreement reached at the talks was a significant step forward for comprehensive diplomatic resolution of the DPRK nuclear issue. When implemented, it would help to restore international confidence in the DPRK and enhance the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, which had been facing unprecedented challenges. It would serve as a major turning point in creating lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula. The fifth round of talks was scheduled for November 2005. He hoped that, building on the spirit and determination already exhibited, the parties would agree on the detailed follow-up steps necessary for successful implementation of the commitments stipulated in the joint statement.

12. The Agency should play a central role in the verification work required and was expected to continue providing valuable advice based on its verification expertise to facilitate the six-party talks.

13. He welcomed the balanced, constructive resolution which had just been adopted, and called upon the international community to continue its valuable support for the six-party talks process.

14. Mr. AMANO (Japan) also welcomed the joint statement of 19 September. The agreement reached was an important first step towards the peaceful resolution of the DPRK nuclear issue. His country greatly appreciated the efforts made by the States concerned, particularly China, which had chaired the six-party talks.

15. The DPRK nuclear programmes and nuclear weapons were a direct threat to peace and stability in North-East Asia and posed a serious challenge to the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. Japan took seriously the DPRK's commitment to abandoning all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes and returning, at an early date, to the NPT and to Agency safeguards. That commitment provided a basis for achieving verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

16. All the concerned parties should now endeavour to implement the principles laid down in the joint statement by agreeing on the specific details of verification measures and procedures for verifiable dismantling. In that regard, he stressed the key verification role of the Agency. Japan hoped that the DPRK would comply with all the international agreements related to nuclear issues, including the NPT, and implement its comprehensive safeguards agreement with the Agency. Japan would continue to contribute to all diplomatic efforts aimed at a peaceful solution.

² See Annex for full text.

17. Mr. SCHULTE (United States of America), having expressed his country's appreciation for China's leadership in chairing and hosting the six-party talks, joined the previous speakers in welcoming the DPRK's commitment to abandoning all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes and to returning at an early date to the NPT and Agency safeguards. All elements of its past and present nuclear programmes and all nuclear weapons would be comprehensively declared and completely, verifiably and irreversibly eliminated. It was imperative to move to a swift agreement on ways of implementing the goals laid down in the joint statement.

18. Ms. QUINTERO CORREA (Colombia) and Mr. OLMOS (Bolivia) asked to be included as sponsors of the resolution.

21. Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East (GC(49)/18, L.1 and L.1/Add.1)

19. The PRESIDENT, introducing the agenda item, said that it had been included pursuant to resolution GC(48)/RES/16. Pursuant to operative paragraph 9 of that resolution the Director General had submitted the report contained in document GC(49)/18, which had been considered the previous week by the Board of Governors.

20. Mr. FAWZY (Egypt), introducing the draft resolution contained in document GC(49)/L.1 and Add.1, said that Egypt had consistently called for the application of full-scope Agency safeguards in the Middle East as a goal set out in multilateral treaties, especially the NPT, and in General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. The international community should be aware that failure to subject all nuclear installations in the Middle East to full-scope Agency safeguards undermined the Agency's credibility in terms of the goal of universality of the NPT, and made it impossible to build the confidence needed among the countries of the region to achieve tangible progress towards stability, security and peace through the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East.

21. For the past 30 years Egypt had been engaged in multilateral efforts, especially through the General Assembly, the Agency and the NPT Review Conference, to achieve that goal, unfortunately with very little success to date. He stressed that the NWFZ was an objective of such urgency that it could not await the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

22. Egypt welcomed the Director General's untiring efforts to achieve an NWFZ and to convene a forum in which participants could learn from the expertise of other regions. Egypt would support such a forum provided that it focused on practical ways of achieving an NWFZ in the Middle East instead of merely engaging in a theoretical discussion of the advantages of and justifications for such a project.

23. The draft resolution before the General Conference was essentially identical to that submitted at the forty-eighth session. He hoped that the consensus achieved regarding the text would be translated into action to implement its provisions.

24. The PRESIDENT took it that the Conference wished to adopt the draft resolution contained in document GC(49)/L.1 and Add.1 without a vote.

25. It was so decided.

26. Mr. OTHMAN (Syrian Arab Republic) commended the efforts undertaken by the Director General during his visits to the Middle East. Unfortunately, as reported in document GC(49)/18, he

had made no progress in securing implementation of resolution GC(48)/RES/16 since Israel had still not acceded to the NPT or placed all its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards. It continued to link the Israeli nuclear issue and the question of regional security with progress in the peace process, although the only reason that the peace negotiations referred to in the preceding year's General Conference resolution had been at a standstill for several years was Israel's continued refusal to resume the talks from the point at which they had been halted.

27. The Syrian Arab Republic had reservations regarding the reference in operative paragraph 4 of the resolution to the activities of the multilateral working group, which had been unable to promote mutual confidence and security in the Middle East. Paragraph 10 of the Director General's report stated clearly that Israel would not discuss the signing of a comprehensive safeguards agreement or regional security issues in isolation from the regional peace process. Indeed, it viewed them as part of phase II of the road map.

28. The resolution did not mention Israel explicitly or urge it to take serious steps to accede to the NPT and place its nuclear installations, immediately and unconditionally, under Agency safeguards. Operative paragraph 7 on confidence-building measures aimed at establishing an NWFZ in the Middle East should have referred to the need for such action by Israel as a gesture of goodwill. How could one speak of confidence-building while Israel continued to occupy the territory of several of the countries in the region and its Government continued to violate the human rights of the Arab people on a daily basis?

29. His country had hoped that the international community would refrain from applying double standards and give serious attention to the legitimate concerns of the countries of the Middle East region in the face of Israel's military nuclear capabilities and its violation of all international resolutions on the subject.

30. Although the Syrian Arab Republic totally disagreed with certain paragraphs of the resolution, it had joined the consensus as in previous years so as not to disrupt the proceedings of the Conference.

31. Mr. BAHRAN (Yemen) said that although Yemen had sponsored the resolution just adopted, it was not entirely satisfied with its wording. Its support was merely intended to demonstrate the importance it attached to the topic it addressed and his country's desire to keep that topic on the agenda until such time as it was possible to agree on a more robust text that would subsequently lead to the application of safeguards to all countries in the Middle East, turning it into an NWFZ. The Middle East would never be free of weapons of mass destruction until Israel joined the NPT and signed a safeguards agreement and an additional protocol with the Agency.

32. Mr. EL-MISLATTI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) stressed the importance of working towards the universality of the Agency's full-scope safeguards regime. The nuclear activities of all countries, without discrimination, should be subject to comprehensive and effective verification inasmuch as the proliferation of nuclear weapons, especially in tension-fraught regions, was one of the greatest threats currently facing the world.

33. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was extremely worried at the prospect of the introduction of weapons of mass destruction into the Middle East. That concern had prompted the countries of the region to support all General Assembly resolutions since 1974 that urged the parties concerned to take practical steps to create an NWFZ in the Middle East, to abide by the NPT and to refrain from acquiring the means to produce weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons. His own country's undertaking to work for an NWFZ in the Middle East was reflected in the Security Council statement entitled "Decision of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to abandon its weapons of mass destruction programme" (S/PV.4949).

34. He called on all countries in the region to follow suit. Israel, in particular, which had a large nuclear arsenal, should accede to the NPT and sign a full-scope safeguards agreement with the Agency. The resources of the region could then be channelled into economic development and promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in accordance with the Statute.

35. Mr. KODAH (Jordan) said that his Government also attached great importance to the creation of an NWFZ in the Middle East. Jordan was a party to the NPT and had signed a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol with the Agency. Israel was the only country in the region that had not acceded to the NPT or placed its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards. The resolution that had just been adopted would therefore fail to achieve its objectives of protecting against nuclear dangers, universalizing the non-proliferation regime and achieving peace in the Middle East. It furthermore gave the impression that double standards were being used in dealing with countries whose nuclear programmes served non-peaceful purposes.

36. Jordan, as Israel's closest neighbour, was more exposed than others to the risk of nuclear radiation from Israeli reactors that had not been placed under Agency safeguards and therefore represented an environmental hazard.

37. He called on the Director General and influential countries to do their utmost to persuade Israel to accede to the international safeguards regime and to endeavour at least to implement the content of the resolution just adopted.

38. Jordan had not opposed the resolution so as not to break the consensus.

39. Mr. AKHONZADEH (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his country attached great importance to the creation of an NWFZ in the Middle East. The international community should urge Israel to accede to the NPT and conclude a safeguards agreement without delay and without preconditions. Furthermore, the Agency should be more proactive in its efforts to promote the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East.

40. Mr. FRANK (Israel) said that his delegation had joined the consensus on the resolution in the belief that an NWFZ would complement efforts to increase peace and security in the Middle East. However, he wished to dissociate himself from the language used in the resolution and the modalities suggested for achieving that goal.

41. Experience from other regions had shown that the impetus for the creation of an NWFZ must come from within the region concerned and could not be imposed from outside.

42. Israel's aim was increased peace and security throughout the Middle East region, rather than arms control as an end in itself. It was essential to address the threats perceived by each State and maintain each one's margin of security. All States in the region, without exception, must participate in any security measures adopted.

43. A practical, step-by-step approach was required, beginning with confidence-building measures such as Israel's recent disengagement from Gaza. He hoped that all parties would make use of the opportunity accorded by Israel's actions to improve reconciliation, peace and security in the Middle East.

22. Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat (GC(49)/10, 21 and 25)

44. The PRESIDENT said that it had been agreed in consultations that he should read out the following statement for endorsement by the Conference:

“The General Conference recalls the statement by the President of the 36th session in 1992 concerning the agenda item “Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat”. That statement considered it desirable not to consider that agenda item at the 37th session. “The General Conference also recalls the statement by the President of the 43rd session in 1999 concerning the same agenda item. At the 44th, 45th, 46th, 47th, 48th and 49th sessions, this item was, at the request of certain Member States, re-inscribed on the agenda. The item was discussed.

“Several Member States requested that this item be included in the provisional agenda of the 50th regular session of the General Conference”.

45. The Conference endorsed the Presidential statement.

46. Mr. AL-RIYAMI (Oman)³, speaking on behalf of the Arab Group, said that the outcome of the recently held NPT Review Conference had fallen short of expectations, especially its failure to adopt a final document reaffirming the need for universality of the non-proliferation regime, which was being undermined by selectivity and double standards as well as the non-compliance of the nuclear weapon States with their obligations. The United Nations Millennium Review Summit had also proved disappointing in that regard.

47. The meetings of the Board of Governors the previous week had been characterized by politicization of the Agency’s work. The Agency had taken steps to refer a State to the Security Council despite its voluntary undertakings and commitment to continue negotiations that had produced positive results, while ignoring a State with nuclear capabilities that threatened security and peace in the Middle East, a State that had not committed itself to any treaty or legal regime pertaining to nuclear disarmament and whose nuclear facilities were not subject to international verification.

48. The 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference had agreed to extend the validity of the Treaty indefinitely and decided to work for its universalization, to adopt principles and objectives in respect of its application and to establish a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, in the Middle East. Was it reasonable in those circumstances that all States in the region had now acceded to the NPT and were applying safeguards agreements, except one, namely Israel, which continued to refuse to accede and insisted on remaining outside the scope of any nuclear disarmament regime? How could the international community continue to accept such a phenomenon?

49. The possession of such weapons had created a security imbalance in the region and prevented the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace, as did States’ tolerance of Israel’s violations of resolutions adopted by the international community. The Group of Arab States, which had voluntarily renounced nuclear weapons, attached great importance to nuclear disarmament because such weapons constituted a major threat to international peace and security. It based its position on the 1996

³ Speaking under Rule 30 of the Rules of Procedure.

Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice to the effect that there existed an obligation to pursue in good faith, and to bring to a conclusion, negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all of its aspects under strict and effective international control, on General Assembly resolutions aimed at achieving universality of the NPT and on Security Council resolutions 487 (1981) and 687 (1991) that urged all parties, including Israel, to consider taking practical steps to establish an NWFZ in the Middle East, to accede to the NPT and to place all their nuclear installations and activities under Agency safeguards. In view of the concern of the Arab States and peoples at the dangers posed by Israel's military nuclear capabilities, the Arab Group called on the international community, especially those with special responsibility for preserving international peace and security, to deploy all the resources at their command to achieve universality of the NPT.

50. With a view to achieving consensus at the current session and ensuring the success of the General Conference, the Arab Group had agreed to a Presidential statement on the item under discussion. It wished to stress, however, that the statement raised the question of double standards in addressing agenda items. The Conference had failed to deal seriously with the item despite the flexibility and balance of the text submitted by the Arab States and their aspiration to promote peace and security in the Middle East.

51. The Arab Group reaffirmed its confidence in the Agency and commended its efforts to develop the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to verify the safety and security of radioactive sources and nuclear installations. It called on the Director General to pursue his efforts to persuade the State that was preventing the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East to demonstrate its goodwill and comply with the relevant Security Council, General Assembly and other international resolutions calling for the establishment of such a zone. The continuation of the existing situation would undermine the Agency's credibility and the aim of universality of the NPT.

52. The Arab Group requested that the item entitled "Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat" be included in the agenda of the fiftieth regular session of the General Conference.

53. Mr. OTHMAN (Syrian Arab Republic) said he was deeply concerned at the lack of attention given to the threat posed by Israel's military nuclear capabilities, which were incompatible with the NPT and which it continued to develop in disregard of the resolutions adopted by the international community, the first being Security Council resolution 487 (1981) and the most recent General Assembly resolution 59/106 entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East", which mentioned Israel explicitly and reaffirmed the importance of its accession to the NPT and placement of all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards. Unfortunately, however, the international community had hitherto failed to exert the kind of pressure on Israel to comply with those resolutions that it exerted on other States in the Middle East.

54. The Israeli nuclear arsenal was the greatest threat to the security of a region that was one of the most volatile in the world. His delegation had hoped that the Conference would adopt a resolution that would draw the attention of the international community to Israel's continued high-handed policies and its failure to respect any international resolutions, upsetting the balance of power in the region through its possession of all kinds of weapons of mass destruction. Moreover, Israel's unsupervised nuclear reactors could cause an environmental disaster in the Middle East.

55. Unfortunately, the current session of the Conference had failed to respond adequately to the concern of the countries of the region regarding Israel's nuclear capabilities and its ongoing occupation of Syrian and Palestinian territory. He called on the international community to put strong pressure on Israel to accede to the NPT and place its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards as a step towards creating an NWFZ in the Middle East, and to adopt a balanced policy that respected all peoples and their sovereignty and avoided the application of double standards.

56. Mr. KHALIL (Egypt) expressed regret and frustration that an item concerning Israel's nuclear capabilities and threat was placed on the Conference agenda year after year but the international community still failed to live up to its responsibilities in respect of the dangerous situation in the Middle East. The 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference had adopted a resolution that referred to the situation and called on Israel to accede to the NPT and place its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards, and the 2000 NPT Review Conference had adopted a resolution calling for universal ratification of the NPT in the Middle East. Moreover, the General Assembly adopted a similar resolution every year. All countries in the region, except Israel, were now parties to the NPT and had placed their programmes under the safeguards regime. Some had also signed an additional protocol and others had entered into voluntary verification and cooperation arrangements with the Agency. And yet they were the ones who were being urged to do more and some were even being reproached with tardiness in honouring voluntary obligations.

57. Israel, on the other hand, continued to develop its nuclear programmes, possessed the means to deliver nuclear warheads and was trying to develop a second strike capability. It was completely free to handle nuclear materials and technology without any restraint or inspection. It refused to accede to the NPT or to accept any disarmament obligations. Moreover, it refused to comply with the resolutions of the General Conference and the General Assembly regarding the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East. Instead, it engaged in empty political arguments about the need for peace and confidence-building in the region and viewed itself as a 'responsible' nuclear power that applied the nuclear suppliers' standards. At the same time, it was engaged in unsafe nuclear waste disposal practices and its ageing nuclear reactors were liable to cause an international environmental disaster.

58. The international community as well as participants in the General Conference who had spoken in defence of the non-proliferation regime, had called for the application of comprehensive safeguards and universalization of the additional protocol, and had developed criteria for the codification of nuclear technology transfers should take action to ensure the implementation of General Conference and General Assembly resolutions concerning the dangers of Israeli nuclear weapons and the need to rid the Middle East region of weapons of mass destruction. Preservation of the non-proliferation regime required equitable treatment of all States without exception. Egypt furthermore called on Israel to accede to the NPT, to place its nuclear installations under Agency safeguards and to start cooperating with others to create an NWFZ in the Middle East. Otherwise the persistence of double standards would lead to an escalation of the current crisis in the non-proliferation regime and would undermine the Agency's credibility. The Member States of the Agency had a responsibility to preserve that regime, in accordance with their nuclear capabilities and their political and economic resources. Such action would achieve the objective of the agenda item concerning Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat, which should remain on the agenda of the General Conference.

59. Mr. AKHONZADEH (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the Israeli nuclear capability was a serious concern in the Middle East. Besides the many atrocities committed by the Israeli regime against the innocent civilians of Palestine, its nuclear arsenal and activities were a threat to peace and stability in the region as a whole. All countries in the Middle East were members of the NPT except Israel. Israel's refusal to join the NPT and its extensive nuclear activities outside the Agency's safeguards regime were the only obstacle to the realization of an NWFZ in the Middle East. It was a matter of regret that all such illegal activities took place with the collaboration and support of certain nuclear weapon States.

60. In 1974, Iran had proposed the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East and had been pursuing that goal actively ever since. Iran repeated its request that the Agency intensify its efforts in that regard. Iran expected the international community to strongly urge Israel to give up its resistance to the collective objective of the other countries in the region and join the NPT and Agency safeguards without any delay or precondition.

61. Mr. EL-MISLATTI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that his country viewed disarmament and the eradication of weapons of mass destruction as a prerequisite for confidence-building in the interests of international peace and security. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had taken practical steps to implement the initiative it had announced in 2003, namely its renunciation of any programme or equipment that might lead to the production of internationally prohibited weapons. It was also party to all international treaties relating to weapons of mass destruction.

62. Some States, however, still espoused nuclear weapons as a strategic option. Israel had possessed such weapons for years and continued to develop them, refusing to accede to the NPT. He underlined the threat that Israel's nuclear weapons constituted for security and stability in the Middle East and the world as a whole. It was time to rid the Middle East of all weapons of mass destruction and the international community had a duty to put pressure on Israel, which was the stumbling block impeding achievement of that aim.

63. Lastly, he urged all the parties concerned to channel their resources into economic development of the region and the promotion of organizations that supported peaceful uses of nuclear energy in accordance with the Statute.

64. Mr. ELAMIN (Sudan), speaking on behalf of AFRA, said that the countries of Africa had decided to rid the continent of nuclear weapons. Consequently, 49 of the continent's 53 States had signed the Pelindaba Treaty. Nuclear weapons constituted a fearsome threat wherever they were located and regardless of the political context. Israel's nuclear capabilities posed just such a threat to a considerable number of African and Arab countries, including Sudan, and could provoke an arms race in the region. It was wrong to turn a blind eye to the existence of such weapons, since it could set a precedent for other States to follow. Furthermore, their existence undermined AFRA's efforts to establish an NWFZ in Africa.

65. Mr. BELAOURA (Algeria) said that, for several years, the General Conference had been unable to adopt a consistent position regarding the continuing threat from Israel's nuclear capabilities and deliver the message needed. The topic was a particularly difficult one, which endangered peace and security in the sensitive region of the Middle East.

66. The international community had to face up to its responsibilities and not allow double standards to be applied in the field of non-proliferation such that Israel continued to benefit from special treatment. Israel refused to join the NPT or submit its installations to the Agency's safeguards regime.

67. Following the failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference, and despite the relevant General Assembly resolutions, the decision of the 1995 NPT Review Conference and Security Council resolutions 487 and 687, the lack of any progress in establishing an NWFZ in the Middle East was a matter of serious concern. Israel's persistence in maintaining its military nuclear capabilities not only undermined the integrity of the non-proliferation regime and universalization of the NPT, but also posed a threat to international peace and security. The decisions adopted at the current session of the General Conference failed completely to respond to either the legitimate attempts being made by the peoples of the region or their aspirations for peace and security.

68. In the face of increasing global challenges and threats, the international community must exert the necessary pressure on Israel to conform. Algeria urged the General Conference and the Director General to increase their efforts in that regard and requested that the item of Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat to be included on the agenda of the fiftieth General Conference.

69. Ms. HUSSAIN (Malaysia), supporting the position taken by the Arab Member States, said that her country was in favour of the early establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in

the Middle East, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 487 (1981) and 687 (1991) and the relevant General Assembly resolutions adopted by consensus.

70. Pending the establishment of such a zone, Malaysia called on Israel, the only country in the region not to have joined the NPT or declared its intention to do so, to renounce possession of its nuclear weapons and accede to the NPT without delay. Malaysia also urged Israel promptly to place all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards and to conduct its nuclear-related activities in conformity with the non-proliferation regime.

71. In its capacity as Chairman of NAM and Chairman of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, Malaysia re-emphasized the need for an NWFZ in the Middle East. She recalled the declaration made by the NAM Heads of Government or State at the NAM Summit in Kuala Lumpur in February 2003, reiterating their support for the establishment of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction, expressing their concern about the acquisition of nuclear capability by Israel, which posed a serious and continuing threat to the security of neighbouring and other States, and condemning Israel for continuing to develop and stockpile nuclear arsenals. They believed that stability could not be achieved in a region where massive imbalances in military capabilities were maintained, particularly through the possession of nuclear weapons which allowed one party to threaten its neighbours and the region.

72. Malaysia called on all the parties concerned to take urgent and practical steps towards the creation of an NWFZ in the Middle East, and called on Israel to abide by the relevant Security Council resolutions without delay.

73. Finally, Malaysia joined previous speakers in asking for the item to be included in the agenda of the fiftieth session of the General Conference.

— Closing of the session

74. The PRESIDENT noted that 48 ministerial-level delegations had attended the General Conference and there had been 103 speakers in the general debate, which was an indication of the importance which Member States attached to the Agency's work.

75. Mr. KOBLINGER (Hungary), speaking on behalf of Mr. Rónaky, the President of the preceding General Conference, congratulated the President on the work that he had done. His excellent leadership of the discussions and his skills in balancing critical and sensitive issues had made it possible to bring the session to a successful conclusion.

76. Mr. ANDREWS (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the EU, congratulated the President for the exemplary manner in which he had conducted the business of the Conference. The EU was grateful to the President for his efforts in guiding the Conference through its work and to the Agency Secretariat for its unstinting support.

77. Mr. CHIKANDA (Zimbabwe) thanked the President for the professional manner in which he had handled the proceedings of the General Conference.

78. Mr. PEÑA HALLER (Mexico), speaking on behalf of GRULAC, congratulated the President and thanked him for the work he had done in leading the General Conference with such skill.

79. Mr. FERRER (Philippines), speaking on behalf of the Asian Group, thanked the President for the exemplary manner in which he had led the discussions and congratulated him wholeheartedly.

80. Ms. MOHAMMED (Ethiopia), speaking on behalf of the African Group, thanked the President for his intelligent chairmanship.

81. Ms. MARTIN ZANATHY (Hungary), speaking on behalf of the Eastern European Group, commended and thanked the President for the excellent way in which he had conducted the Conference. His highly professional leadership had contributed greatly to the success of the session.

82. The PRESIDENT thanked the preceding speakers for their kind words. It had been an honour and a privilege to serve as President of the General Conference at its forty-ninth session. He expressed his gratitude to all the delegates for their cooperation and assistance, which had helped to overcome a number of problems during the conduct of the Conference's business.

83. On behalf of the Conference, he thanked the Austrian authorities and the City of Vienna for their customary hospitality. He also thanked the Director General and his able and dedicated staff for their valuable support which had enabled the General Conference to complete its business successfully.

84. Finally, in accordance with Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure, he invited the Conference to observe one minute of silence dedicated to prayer or meditation.

All present rose and observed one minute of silence.

85. The PRESIDENT declared the forty-ninth regular session of the General Conference closed.

The meeting rose at 6.55 p.m.

Joint Statement of the Fourth Round of the Six-Party Talks

Beijing, 19 September 2005

The Fourth Round of the Six-Party Talks was held in Beijing, China among the People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America from July 26th to August 7th, and from September 13th to 19th, 2005.

Mr. Wu Dawei, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the PRC, Mr. Kim Gye Gwan, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the DPRK; Mr. Kenichiro Sasae, Director-General for Asian and Oceanian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan; Mr. Song Min-soon, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the ROK; Mr. Alekseyev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation; and Mr. Christopher Hill, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs of the United States attended the talks as heads of their respective delegations.

Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei chaired the talks.

For the cause of peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia at large, the Six Parties held, in the spirit of mutual respect and equality, serious and practical talks concerning the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula on the basis of the common understanding of the previous three rounds of talks, and agreed, in this context, to the following:

1. The Six Parties unanimously reaffirmed that the goal of the Six-Party Talks is the verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner.

The DPRK committed to abandoning all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs and returning, at an early date, to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to IAEA safeguards.

The United States affirmed that it has no nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula and has no intention to attack or invade the DPRK with nuclear or conventional weapons.

The ROK reaffirmed its commitment not to receive or deploy nuclear weapons in accordance with the 1992 Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, while affirming that there exist no nuclear weapons within its territory.

The 1992 Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula should be observed and implemented.

The DPRK stated that it has the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The other parties expressed their respect and agreed to discuss, at an appropriate time, the subject of the provision of light water reactor to the DPRK.

2. The Six Parties undertook, in their relations, to abide by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and recognized norms of international relations.

The DPRK and the United States undertook to respect each other's sovereignty, exist peacefully together, and take steps to normalize their relations subject to their respective bilateral policies.

The DPRK and Japan undertook to take steps to normalize their relations in accordance with the Pyongyang Declaration, on the basis of the settlement of unfortunate past and the outstanding issues of concern.

3. The Six Parties undertook to promote economic cooperation in the fields of energy, trade and investment, bilaterally and/or multilaterally.

China, Japan, ROK, Russia and the US stated their willingness to provide energy assistance to the DPRK.

The ROK reaffirmed its proposal of July 12th 2005 concerning the provision of 2 million kilowatts of electric power to the DPRK.

4. The Six Parties committed to joint efforts for lasting peace and stability in Northeast Asia.

The directly related parties will negotiate a permanent peace regime on the Korean Peninsula at an appropriate separate forum.

The Six Parties agreed to explore ways and means for promoting security cooperation in Northeast Asia.

5. The Six Parties agreed to take coordinated steps to implement the afore-mentioned consensus in a phased manner in line with the principle of "commitment for commitment, action for action".

6. The Six Parties agreed to hold the Fifth Round of the Six-Party Talks in Beijing in early November 2005 at a date to be determined through consultations.