

General Conference

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Fiftieth (2006) Regular Session

Committee of the Whole

Record of the First Meeting

Held at the Austria Center, Vienna, on Tuesday, 19 September 2006, at 10.40 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. SHANNON (Australia)

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The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(50)/INF/8/Rev.1.

¹ GC(50)/21.

Abbreviations used in this record:

IRPA	International Radiation Protection Association
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
SQP	small quantities protocol
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund

– Election of Vice-Chairmen and organization of work

1. The CHAIRMAN, having expressed appreciation for the confidence which the General Conference had placed in him, said that, as provided for in Rule 46 of the Rules of Procedure and following group consultations, it had been proposed that Mr. Arévalo Yépes of Colombia and Ms. Martin Zanathy of Hungary serve as Vice-Chairmen of the Committee. He took it that the Committee wished to endorse their nominations.

2. It was so agreed.

3. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to document GC(50)/COM.5/1, which listed the agenda items referred to the Committee of the Whole by the General Conference. He proposed that, in line with past practice, he report orally on the Committee's deliberations at a plenary meeting of the Conference. He took it that the Committee wished the practice of clustering, to the extent practicable, the draft resolutions recommended to the Conference by the Committee for adoption to be continued.

4. It was so agreed.

10. The Agency's Accounts for 2005 (GC(50)/8)

5. The representative of SWITZERLAND, having expressed satisfaction with the accounts for 2005, said that his delegation was grateful to the External Auditor for having drawn attention to the issue of assessed contributions which had been outstanding for over a decade. Such contributions should be collected on the basis of agreements concluded with the debtor Member States individually. In each case, the agreement should provide for the proceeds to be used for technical cooperation, benefiting as far as possible the population of the debtor country through a regional or interregional project.

6. The CHAIRMAN, noting that no other Committee members wished to take the floor, assumed that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the draft resolution on page 'i' of document GC(50)/8.

7. It was so agreed.

11. The Agency's Budget for 2007 (GC(50)/6)

8. The CHAIRMAN, having drawn attention to draft resolutions "A. Regular Budget appropriations for 2007" and "C. The Working Capital Fund in 2007" in the Annex to document GC(50)/6, both recommended by the Board for adoption, said that the Board had, the previous week,

agreed to recommend a TCF target figure of US \$80 million for 2007 and the adoption of draft resolution “B. Technical Cooperation Fund allocation for 2007” in document GC(50)/6/Mod.1.

9. The representative of SWITZERLAND, having expressed satisfaction with the proposed Regular Budget, said that efforts should be made to ensure that all expenses were met from the Regular Budget and that recourse to the use of cash surpluses and extrabudgetary contributions should be reduced and regulated. Following the exceptions made in recent years, particularly in connection with security enhancements, his delegation would like to see any increases in the Regular Budget — and in the TCF — limited to what was necessary in order to compensate for cost-of-living increases.

10. The CHAIRMAN, noting that no further Committee members wished to take the floor, assumed that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it approve a total Regular Budget figure for 2007 of €283 611 000 on the basis of an exchange rate of €1.00 to \$1.00 and, accordingly, that it adopt draft resolution “A. Regular Budget appropriations for 2007” in the Annex to document GC(50)/6.

11. It was so agreed.

12. The CHAIRMAN took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it approve a target for voluntary contributions to the TCF for 2007 of \$80 000 000 and, accordingly, that it adopt draft resolution “B. Technical Cooperation Fund allocation for 2007” in document GC(50)/6/Mod.1.

13. It was so agreed.

14. The CHAIRMAN took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it approve the level of the Working Capital Fund in 2007 at €15 210 000 and, accordingly, that it adopt draft resolution “C. The Working Capital Fund in 2007” in the Annex to document GC(50)/6.

15. It was so agreed.

12. Amendment to Article XIV.A of the Statute (GC(50)/INF/6)

16. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the Secretariat had distributed the text of the decision taken in 2005 by the General Conference on the subject of Article XIV.A (decision GC(49)/DEC/13), an updated version of which the Committee might wish to recommend to the General Conference for adoption at its current session.

17. The representative of AUSTRIA said that, as his country’s delegate had announced in the general debate, she had very recently deposited Austria’s instrument of ratification of the amendment.

18. The representative of TUNISIA said that his country would be depositing its instrument of ratification shortly.

19. The CHAIRMAN, having welcomed the statements made by the representatives of Austria and Tunisia, took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt an updated version of the draft decision text which had been distributed by the Secretariat.

20. It was so agreed.

13. Scale of assessment of members' contributions towards the Regular Budget (GC(50)/16)

21. The CHAIRMAN, noting that no Committee members wished to take the floor, assumed that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the draft resolution in document GC(50)/16.
22. It was so agreed.

14. Measures to strengthen international cooperation in nuclear, radiation and transport safety and waste management (GC(50)/INF/2, GC(50)/3, GC(50)/COM.5/L.2 and L.2/Corr.1)

23. The representative of AUSTRALIA, introducing the draft resolution contained in document GC(50)/COM.5/L.2 (with the corrigendum contained in document GC(50)/COM.5/L.2/Corr.1), said that his delegation was grateful to the delegations of Norway and Morocco for their contributions on emergency preparedness and response and education and training respectively.
24. The draft resolution, which underlined the need for Member States to give very high priority to safety in order to continue benefiting from the peaceful applications of nuclear energy, and also in any expansion of the use of nuclear power, highlighted recent initiatives such as the establishment of the Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS).
25. The representative of MOROCCO suggested the addition of “strengthen and” in operative paragraph 48 of the draft resolution, so that it would read “... calls upon the Secretariat to strengthen and expand this programme ...”
26. The representative of ARGENTINA said that his delegation was grateful to the delegations of Australia, Morocco and Norway for preparing the draft resolution, which was very sound technically and could serve as a model for other draft resolutions.
27. Referring to operative paragraph 35, he said that his Government attached great importance to the forthcoming XIIth Congress of the International Radiation Protection Association (IRPA), on “Strengthening Radiation Protection Worldwide”, and hoped that it would benefit from strong support on the part of the Secretariat so that the proceedings could be issued expeditiously. His Government also hoped that developing countries would be well represented at IRPA’s XIIth Congress.
28. As regards section 7, “Education and Training in Nuclear, Radiation, Transport and Waste Safety”, his country had recently hosted an education and training appraisal mission and had already begun implementing the action plan proposed in the mission report. It was currently, inter alia, working on the conclusion with the Secretariat — pursuant to operative paragraph 2 of General Conference resolution GC(45)/RES/10.C — of a long-term formal agreement under which its regional centre for education and training would continue making available to other Spanish-speaking countries the benefits of its more than 25 years of experience in the fields of radiation protection and nuclear safety.

29. The representative of INDIA endorsed the comments made by the representative of Argentina with regard to IRPA's XIIth Congress.
30. He proposed amending operative paragraph 29 to read "Acknowledges the Secretariat's current assistance to Member States in nuclear power plant design safety review efforts...".
31. With regard to operative paragraph 66, he expressed misgivings about the phrase "the evaluation of progress made by States towards implementing the provisions of the Code of Conduct...".
32. The representative of YEMEN, having thanked the delegation of Australia for the draft resolution, proposed that operative paragraph 33 be amended to read "to use the regional approach with emphasis on the sub-regional country groupings".
33. The SECRETARY, summarizing the amendment proposals made thus far, said he understood that there was a wish to add "and support the participation of developing countries" at the end of operative paragraph 35.
34. The representative of COLOMBIA, having thanked the delegation of Australia for the draft resolution, said that education and training were of particular importance to developing countries such as Colombia and that his delegation would like to see the Secretariat doing more to conclude, pursuant to operative paragraph 52, long-term agreements with the regional centres organizing regional postgraduate training courses.
35. The representative of EGYPT, recalling the conclusion of the Chairman of the Board regarding Annex 2 to document GC(50)/3, proposed amending the second part of operative paragraph 66 along the following lines: "... welcomes the Board's endorsement of the proposal for a formalized process for a periodic exchange of information and lessons learned, with account taken of the concerns expressed by Member States, during the implementation of the Code of Conduct ... and requests the Secretariat to commence consultations with Member States on the administrative, legal and financial aspects of the organization of the envisaged periodic meetings, subject to the availability of adequate resources".
36. The representative of MOROCCO expressed support for the proposed amendment to operative paragraph 35 mentioned by the Secretary of the Committee.
37. With regard to operative paragraph 66, he proposed simply adding " , taking into consideration concerns expressed by Member States on the legal and financial aspects" at the end of it.
38. The representative of the UNITED KINGDOM said that her delegation, which had no problem with the amendment proposals made so far, would like the word "voluntary" to be added before "periodic exchange" in operative paragraph 66.
39. The representative of ARGENTINA, having welcomed the proposed amendment to operative paragraph 35, said, with regard to operative paragraph 66, that it was important to emphasize the voluntary nature of implementation of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.
40. Recalling the process of establishment of the Code of Conduct, he said that Argentina had hoped for the establishment of a convention but a small number of Member States had strongly opposed that idea. Clearly, implementation of the Code of Conduct was not obligatory, and he therefore did not welcome the phrase "the evaluation of progress made by the States towards implementing the provisions of the Code of Conduct..." in operative paragraph 66.
41. The representative of EGYPT, recalling that in his conclusion regarding Annex 2 to document GC(50)/3 the Chairman of the Board had the previous week referred to "further consultations with

Member States”, said that it was not appropriate to request the Secretariat to organize periodic meetings. That was why he had proposed amending operative paragraph to read “... requests the Secretariat to commence consultations with Member States...”.

42. The representative of AUSTRALIA recalled, with regard to operative paragraph 66, that in operative paragraph 59 of resolution GC(49)/RES/9.A the General Conference had spoken of establishing “a formalized process for a periodic exchange of information and lessons learned and for the evaluation of progress made by States towards implementing the provisions of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources”.

43. The representative of BRAZIL said that her delegation would also like the word “voluntary” to be added before “periodic exchange” in operative paragraph 66.

44. Given concerns expressed at the Board’s recent meetings, her delegation believed that “welcomes” in operative paragraph 66 should be replaced by “takes note of”.

45. The CHAIRMAN proposed suspending the meeting so as to allow the representatives of Australia, Morocco and other interested Member States to agree on amendments to operative paragraph 66.

46. It was so agreed.

The meeting was suspended at 11.55 am and resumed at 12.05 p.m.

47. The representative of AUSTRALIA said that, in consultations on operative paragraph 66, agreement had been reached on replacing “welcomes” by “takes note of”, inserting “voluntary,” before “periodic exchange”, inserting “non-legally-binding” before “Code of Conduct”, adding the phrase “taking into consideration concerns expressed by Member States on the legal and financial aspects” after “document GC(50)/3” and deleting the rest of the paragraph.

48. The DIRECTOR OF THE DIVISION OF RADIATION, TRANSPORT AND WASTE SAFETY proposed that, if the Secretariat was to be encouraged in operative paragraph 35 to support the participation of developing countries in IRPA’s XIIth Congress, the phrase “subject to the availability of resources” be added at the end of that paragraph.

49. The representative of CHINA requested more time to consider the draft resolution contained in document GC(50)/COM.5/L.2.

18. Strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of the safeguards system and application of the Model Additional Protocol

(GC(50)/2, GC(50)/COM.5/L.1)

50. The representative of FINLAND said that as in previous years the European Union had submitted a draft resolution on “Strengthening the Effectiveness and Improving the Efficiency of the Safeguards System Including Implementation of Additional Protocols”. The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, and also Australia and Canada, had joined the European Union as sponsors of the draft resolution contained in document GC(50)/COM.5/L.1.

51. She expressed the hope that the draft resolution would be co-sponsored by a large number of Member States.

52. The representative of AUSTRIA, introducing the draft resolution contained in document GC(50)/COM.5/L.1, said that the title — with “Including Implementation of Additional Protocols” rather than “and application of the Model Additional Protocol” — was meant to reflect the fact that additional protocols were now being implemented as one means of strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of the safeguards system.

53. Drawing attention to preambular paragraph (f), she said that it represented the first occasion on which a draft resolution gave the number of States which had agreed to amend their SQPs.

54. She pointed out that preambular paragraph (k) differed somewhat from preambular paragraph (k) of resolution GC(49)/RES/13.

55. Operative paragraph 15 was an amended version of operative paragraph 15 of resolution GC(49)/RES/13, while operative paragraph 16 was closely linked to it.

56. Operative paragraphs 19, 20 and 21 replaced operative paragraph 18 of resolution GC(49)/RES/13.

57. The CHAIRMAN said that in his view the draft resolution should be considered first in a working group. He proposed that the Committee establish a working group under the chairmanship of Mr. Lundby of the Norwegian delegation for that purpose.

58. It was so agreed.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.