

# General Conference

**GC(50)/COM.5/OR.2**

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**Fiftieth (2006) Regular Session**

## Committee of the Whole

### Record of the Second Meeting

*Held at the Austria Center, Vienna, on Tuesday, 19 September 2006, at 4.35 p.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.

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<sup>1</sup> GC(50)/21.



## **17. Strengthening the Agency's activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications**

(GC(50)/14 plus Corr.1 and Corr.2, GC(50)/INF/3 and Add.1, GC(50)/COM.5/L.3)

1. The representative of FRANCE, introducing the draft resolution entitled “Strengthening the Agency’s activities in nuclear science and technology relevant to nuclear energy” and contained in document GC(50)/COM.5/L.3, said that, although nuclear power lay at the heart of the Agency’s mission, it had thus far not been the subject of a separate General Conference resolution. The draft resolution now before the Committee was meant to address that paradox.
2. Following extensive consultations, it had been decided to deal with nuclear power applications and non-power nuclear applications in two separate texts. The draft resolution contained in document GC(50)/COM.5/L.3, which had been prepared in cooperation with the Group of 77 and China, took account of — in particular — the rising expectations regarding the role of nuclear power, expectations that had been highlighted at the International Ministerial Conference on “Nuclear Power for the 21st Century” held in Paris in 2005.
3. Of the 28 power reactors currently being built, 16 were located in developing countries, and the Secretariat had been receiving more and more requests for assistance from countries wishing to embark on nuclear power programmes. Assisting those countries in the development of safe, secure and proliferation-resistant programmes would be a key Secretariat task. It was hoped that the draft resolution under consideration would help to ensure that the Secretariat carried out that task effectively.
4. Highlighting certain elements of the draft resolution, he drew attention to preambular paragraphs (f) and (g), which emphasized the need for energy source diversity while reaffirming the sovereign right of each country to define its own energy policy.
5. It was important for the General Conference to send out a strong and clear message with regard to nuclear power, which must receive broad support.
6. The representative of IRELAND said that, although his country had not opted for nuclear power, it fully recognized other countries’ sovereign right to do so. Regrettably, his delegation had not been consulted prior to the submission of the draft resolution under consideration — a draft resolution that represented a departure from the practice of addressing the issues of nuclear energy applications in what his delegation considered to be a more balanced fashion.
7. Ireland could not support the draft resolution in its present form.
8. The representative of MOROCCO, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, thanked the delegation of France for its part in the preparation of the draft resolution and informed the Committee that the Group would, under the present agenda item, be submitting a draft resolution that dealt with non-power nuclear applications. He proposed the establishment of a working group to consider how the draft resolutions submitted under the present agenda item might be clustered.
9. The representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA said that his country strongly supported the safe, secure and proliferation-resistant use of nuclear power by all countries that fulfilled

their non-proliferation obligations, which was why his delegation had decided to be a sponsor of the draft resolution under consideration.

10. The draft resolution took account of the growing interest in nuclear power worldwide and of the Agency's key role in providing assistance and information to countries considering the nuclear power option, and his delegation hoped that it would receive wide support.

11. The representative of NEW ZEALAND, supported by the representative of AUSTRIA, said that her delegation shared the views expressed by the representative of Ireland.

12. Resolution GC(49)/RES/12.A, adopted in 2005, had been the result of extensive consultations, but the delegation of New Zealand and the delegations of like-minded countries had not been consulted on the draft resolution now under consideration. However, her delegation stood ready to work constructively with its sponsors in an effort to arrive at a text acceptable to all.

13. The representative of DENMARK said that her delegation also was unable to support the draft resolution in its present form.

14. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION said that his delegation was one of the sponsors of the draft resolution because it believed that there was a need for a separate resolution on nuclear power applications of nuclear energy as nuclear power was crucial to ensuring global energy security.

15. The representative of CANADA, endorsing the views expressed by the representatives of France, the United States of America and the Russian Federation, said that a separate resolution on nuclear power applications could prove useful.

16. As a country that had opted for nuclear power, Canada considered the General Conference's fiftieth regular session a welcome opportunity to express support for the Agency's role in promoting the use of nuclear energy in power generation.

17. The content of the draft resolution would not affect the right of individual countries to choose whether or not to opt for nuclear power.

18. The representative of CHINA, pointing out that his delegation was one of the sponsors of the draft resolution, recalled that the Director General had in his statement the previous day spoken about — inter alia — “rising expectations regarding the role of nuclear power”. One aim of the draft resolution was to encourage a more proactive Agency role in the nuclear power area.

19. In addition to supporting such a more proactive role, China would continue to support the Agency's role with regard to non-power applications of nuclear energy.

20. The representative of INDIA, also pointing out that his delegation was one of the sponsors of the draft resolution, said that a number of suggestions made by the Group of 77 and China were reflected in the text.

21. Nuclear power was important for sustainable development, but the text reaffirmed the right of each State to decide on its own energy policy, thus recognizing that some countries might not wish to opt for nuclear power.

22. The representative of COLOMBIA said that the draft resolution addressed issues of concern to developing countries and that his delegation therefore welcomed it.

23. The representative of MEXICO, expressing support for the draft resolution, said that his Government was currently considering expanding Mexico's nuclear power programme.

24. The representative of JAPAN, pointing out that his delegation was among the sponsors of the draft resolution, said that Japan had been operating nuclear power plants for nearly 30 years.

25. Currently, there was increasing global support for nuclear power, together with an awareness that safety, security and non-proliferation must be key considerations when nuclear power was being promoted. That fact was taken into account in the draft resolution, which addressed several highly relevant issues.

26. The representative of AUSTRALIA, expressing support for the draft resolution, said that nuclear power was increasingly being considered part of a future solution to the global energy demand problem and that the Secretariat was increasingly being requested by Member States to assist them in establishing the infrastructures required for the safe introduction of nuclear power.

27. The representatives of ARGENTINA and BRAZIL said that their delegations welcomed the draft resolution but would like to see it amended in a number of respects. They would be putting forward some amendment proposals in due course either in the Committee or in informal consultations.

**The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.**