

General Conference

GC(50)/COM.5/OR.4

Issued: October 2006

General Distribution
Original: English

Fiftieth (2006) Regular Session

Committee of the Whole

Record of the Fourth Meeting

Held at the Austria Center, Vienna, on Wednesday, 20 September 2006, at 3.30 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.

¹ GC(50)/21.

Abbreviations used in this record:

APCs	assessed programme costs
CRP	coordinated research project
G8	Group of Eight
IPSAS	International Public Sector Accounting Standards
Kyoto Protocol	Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
NPCs	national participation costs
RCA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund

16. Strengthening the Agency's technical cooperation activities (GC(50)/INF/4 and Supplement, GC(50)/COM.5/L.6)

1. The representative of MOROCCO, introducing the draft resolution contained in document GC(50)/COM.5/L.6, said that technical cooperation through the Agency should keep up with the needs of developing Member States and that the funding for it should therefore be sufficient, assured and predictable.
2. Referring to preambular paragraph (e), he pointed out that, besides “the transfer of nuclear technology” (mentioned in preambular paragraph (e) of resolution GC(49)/RES/11), it mentioned “nuclear knowledge sharing”.
3. Referring to preambular paragraph (j), he said that it was formulated in stronger terms than preambular paragraph (j) of resolution GC(49)/RES/11.
4. Preambular paragraphs (o) and (p) were expanded versions of preambular paragraphs (o) and (p) of resolution GC(49)/RES/11.
5. Referring to preambular paragraph (ee), he said that it was an updated version of preambular paragraph (ee) of resolution GC(49)/RES/11. Also, it mentioned initiatives of the Department of Technical Cooperation from which a positive impact was expected by the Group of 77 and China.
6. Referring to operative paragraph 9, he said that, although the implementation of IPSAS would bring with it guidance on how to deal with in-kind contributions, the Group of 77 and China would like the Secretariat to seek ways of valuing such contributions.
7. Operative paragraph 20, which underlined “the importance of consultations between the Secretariat and Member States”, was based largely on operative paragraph 17 of resolution GC(49)/RES/11.
8. The representative of BELARUS said that mitigation of the consequences of the Chernobyl accident continued to be the main purpose of technical cooperation between his country and the Agency and that the technical cooperation projects under way in his country were of genuine value to the people living in the areas most affected by the accident.
9. He proposed the inclusion in the draft resolution under consideration of a preambular paragraph reading as follows:

“Noting with satisfaction that the UN General Assembly, in resolution A/RES/60/14 of 14 November 2005 entitled “Strengthening of international cooperation and coordination of efforts to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster”, noted with satisfaction assistance rendered by the International Atomic Energy Agency to the most affected countries on remediation of agricultural and urban environments, cost-effective agricultural counter measures and the monitoring of human exposure in areas affected by the Chernobyl disaster and invited to continue to provide support to the on-going efforts of those countries to mitigate the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster”.

10. He also proposed the inclusion of an operative paragraph reading as follows:

“Requests the Secretariat to continue, within the framework of the Technical Cooperation Programme, to work actively to render assistance to the most affected countries in mitigating the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster and establishing prerequisites for sustainable development of the affected areas”.

11. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION expressed support for the proposal made by the representative of Belarus.

12. The representative of CANADA, noting that preambular paragraph (w) referred to “appropriate equipment supply”, said that there was much variation in the quality standards adopted by equipment manufacturers and that the Secretariat was endeavouring to determine the extent of the compliance of equipment manufacturers with international quality standards. He proposed amending operative paragraph 12 to read “... e.g. training, expertise and supplied equipment which meets established internationally recognized standards, are readily available ...”.

13. The representative of JAPAN recalled that preambular paragraph (l) of resolution GC(49)/RES/11 read “Recognizing that the TCF target should be set at an adequate and realistic level” and called for the insertion of “and realistic” after “adequate” in preambular paragraph (k) of the draft resolution under consideration.

14. Given the fact that preambular paragraph (l) of the draft resolution read “... from 2005 onwards the TCF targets shall be negotiated, ... based on ... the price adjustment factor in the corresponding years”, his delegation would like the phrase “and also the progressive decrease of the real value of the TCF due to the inflation” in preambular paragraph (k) to be deleted.

15. As the number of countries requesting Agency technical assistance was increasing, his delegation would like wording on the following lines to be added at the end of operative paragraph 7: “and requests the Secretariat to set technical cooperation programme priorities in accordance with the needs of Member States in order to ensure effective and efficient programme implementation”.

16. His delegation would also like a paragraph on the following lines to be added after operative paragraph 7: “Requests the Secretariat to report on technical cooperation programme achievements in a concrete manner and to give priority to projects likely to produce positive results, taking account of Member States’ payment records as regards the TCF, NPCs and APCs”.

17. He proposed amending operative paragraph 1 to read: “Requests the Secretariat to continue to facilitate the transfer of nuclear technology and know-how among Member States for the peaceful utilization of atomic energy as provided for in Article III of the Statute, given that the objective of the Agency’s technical cooperation programmes is to help enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world”.

18. Regarding operative paragraph 2, he said that Japan, which was in favour of zero nominal budgetary growth in all international organizations, could not accept the idea of funding the TCF through the Regular Budget.

19. As there were still Member States with APC arrears, his delegation would like a reference to the obligation to pay off such arrears to be included in operative paragraph 6.

20. In operative paragraph 9, his delegation would like to see a reference to the possibility of charging NPCs in the case of regional technical cooperation projects.

21. As regards operative paragraph 13, his delegation believed that urging Member States “to show more flexibility in the use of their extrabudgetary contributions” might deter some countries from making extrabudgetary contributions.
22. The representative of AUSTRALIA said that his country was the tenth largest contributor to the TCF and always paid its TCF contribution in a timely manner, that it supported the Agency's technical cooperation programmes through the provision of experts' services and that it funded technical cooperation projects within the RCA framework.
23. With its demonstrated commitment to technical cooperation, Australia, aware of the competing demands for resources, believed that there was a need for a process for setting priorities and ensuring that technical cooperation projects had the greatest long-term impact possible. The draft resolution did not place much emphasis on that need.
24. Although his country saw merit in the idea of using the Regular Budget to support technical cooperation projects, using it for that purpose would mean that fewer financial resources were available for other high-priority programme areas. His delegation therefore believed that the phrase “, including the possibility of funding the TCF through the Regular Budget,” in operative paragraph 2 should be deleted.
25. Expressing support for the call by the representative of Japan for the insertion of “and realistic” after “adequate” in preambular paragraph (k), he suggested the addition of the phrase “necessitating the identification of priorities” at the end of that paragraph.
26. In operative paragraph 7, he suggested replacing “areas of concern” by “areas of identified priority”.
27. With regard to operative paragraph 14, he suggested that it be amended to read “... through the development of effective programmes that are aimed at ... capabilities of TC-recipient Member States and that give due emphasis to the need to achieve sustainability, account being taken of ...”.
28. With regard to operative paragraph 22, he said that his delegation preferred the wording of operative paragraph 19 of resolution GC(49)/RES/11, which included the words “within available resources”.
29. The representative of FINLAND expressed support for the insertion of “and realistic” after “adequate” in preambular paragraph (k).
30. With regard to preambular paragraph (s), he expressed a preference for the wording of preambular paragraph (s) of resolution GC(49)/RES/11: “Recognizing in this context the necessity for the Secretariat strictly to apply the due account mechanism to Member States”.
31. The representative of GERMANY also expressed support for the insertion of “and realistic” after “adequate” in preambular paragraph (k).
32. With regard to operative paragraph 2, calling for the deletion of the words “including the possibility of funding the TCF through the Regular Budget”, he said that their retention would open a Pandora's box.
33. The representative of AUSTRIA said that preambular paragraph (g) would be more realistic if the word “great” before “potential of nuclear power” were deleted and the phrase “as well as its associated risks” were added after “in a number of countries”.

34. In preambular paragraph (k), he proposed replacing “requiring” with “requesting”; it was possible to assess whether territories and countries required technical support only after they had requested it.

35. He proposed deleting the word “sustainable” before “development in TC-recipient Member States” in preambular paragraph (aa) and before “energy mix” in operative paragraph 14.

36. With regard to operative paragraph 1, his delegation did not see the point of the amendment proposal made by the representative of Japan.

37. The representative of MOROCCO, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the proposal made by the representative of Belarus for the addition of a preambular paragraph and an operative paragraph relating to the consequences of the Chernobyl accident was acceptable.

38. With regard to operative paragraph 2, he said that requesting the Secretariat to explore — inter alia — the possibility of funding the TCF through the Regular Budget would not prejudice the Secretariat’s conclusions regarding that possibility.

39. The appeal for more flexibility in operative paragraph 13 had been included because of the problems which the Secretariat had had in using extrabudgetary resources to finance footnote-a/ projects.

40. He asked for clarification of the proposal made by the representative of Austria for the deletion of “sustainable” in preambular paragraph (aa) and operative paragraph 14.

41. He did not see the point of the request that the Secretariat set “technical cooperation programme priorities” which the delegation of Japan wished to see added to operative paragraph 7. All technical cooperation projects should be considered equally eligible if they complied with the Central Criterion and the potential recipient countries had committed themselves to paying the associated NPCs.

42. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN expressed support for the comment of the representative of Morocco regarding operative paragraph 7.

43. The representative of BOLIVIA said that she too did not understand why the representative of Austria wished the word “sustainable” in preambular paragraph (aa) and operative paragraph 14 to be deleted.

44. The representative of MALAYSIA, responding to a question asked by the representative of Australia regarding preambular paragraph (w), said that “human capital planning” meant the same as “human resources planning”.

45. The representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, having expressed support for the amendments proposed by the representatives of Japan and Australia, suggested that preambular paragraph (i) be amended to read “... with Agency and Member State support ...”.

46. Referring to preambular paragraph (m), he said that it would have been technically more correct if it had read “... the decision of the Board of Governors to recommend a target for voluntary contributions to the TCF ... and that the actual targets for those years will be negotiated in 2008”.

47. He suggested that the last part of operative paragraph 12 be amended to read “... readily available, subject to the availability of resources, to Member States requesting them”.

48. The representative of MOROCCO said that he was opposed to the addition of the phrase “subject to the availability of resources” in paragraph 12. If projects had been approved, they should be implemented without caveats.

49. The representative of AUSTRIA, explaining his proposal that the word “sustainable” in preambular paragraph (aa) and operative paragraph 14 be deleted, said that nuclear power was not considered by his country to be a sustainable form of energy production.
50. The representative of the UNITED KINGDOM said that her delegation shared the concerns of the delegations of Japan and the United States of America.
51. She suggested that preambular paragraph (k) be amended to read “... at an adequate level, balancing the supply of available funds against the requests of Member States and also ...” and that operative paragraph 9 be amended to read “... the possibility of paying NPCs in kind, where practicable, and find efficient ways ...”.
52. Also, she suggested that in preambular paragraph (p) the phrase “noting with satisfaction” be replaced by “noting with appreciation” — a phrase used in preambular paragraph (o).
53. The representative of the NETHERLANDS suggested the addition, after preambular paragraph (r), of a paragraph reading “Expressing concern that in 2005 the due account mechanism did not function properly”.
54. He also suggested the addition of an operative paragraph reading “Requests the Secretariat to release estimated implementation rates between technical cooperation reports”.
55. The representative of MOROCCO, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, accepted the proposed replacement of “needing” by “requesting” in operative paragraph 12.
56. As to the idea of the Secretariat’s setting technical cooperation programme priorities, implied by one of the suggestions made by the representative of Japan, the Group did not believe that the Secretariat should prioritize approved technical cooperation projects.
57. Referring to one of the suggestions made by the representative of the Netherlands, he said that it was by no means certain that the due account mechanism had not functioned properly in 2005.
58. The HEAD OF THE CONCEPTS AND PLANNING SECTION, DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION, said that the Secretariat was investigating possible changes in practice and would report to the Board in the next annual Technical Cooperation Report on the application of the due account mechanism.

The meeting was suspended at 4.55 p.m. and resumed at 5.25 p.m.

17. Strengthening the Agency’s activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications (resumed) (GC(50)/COM.5/L.4/Rev.3)

59. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, introducing the draft resolution contained in document GC(50)/COM.5/L.4/Rev.3, said that it took account of most of the comments made on the draft resolution contained in document GC(50)/COM.5/L.4/Rev.2 both in the Committee and outside.
60. He pointed out that: in operative paragraph 3 “new modes of financing” had been replaced by “the mobilization of unconventional resources” and the phrase “, including CRPs and joint initiatives,” had been inserted after “possible collaborative projects”; in operative paragraph 4 the word

“interested” had been inserted before “Member States” and the word “world” before “economic development” had been deleted; in operative paragraph 5 the phrase “the developing areas of the world” had been replaced by the phrase “the developing States that choose the nuclear option”; in operative paragraph 5(b) the phrase “, in line with national circumstances,” had been inserted between “the need to establish” and “common user requirements”; in operative paragraph 6 the words “advanced fast reactors” had been amended to “advanced reactors” so as to cover additional advanced reactor types; and in operative paragraph 8 the phrase “, including enabling technologies,” had been added after “the development of innovative nuclear technology”.

61. The representative of JAPAN suggested that in operative paragraph 3 the word “financial” be added before “resources” in the phrase “the mobilization of unconventional resources”.

62. The representative of DENMARK, having expressed appreciation for the flexibility shown by the delegation of the Russian Federation, suggested the insertion of “inter alia” after the phrase “contribute to economic development” in operative paragraph 4.

63. She requested clarification from the representative of Japan as to the meaning of the phrase “unconventional financial resources”.

64. The representative of IRELAND said that he would also welcome such clarification.

65. The representative of JAPAN said, to him, the phrase meant — for example — financial resources made available pursuant to the Kyoto Protocol.

66. The representative of AUSTRIA expressed support for the suggested insertion of “inter alia” in operative paragraph 4.

67. He suggested that in operative paragraph 2 “interested” be inserted before “Member States”.

68. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION pointed out that the wording of operative paragraph 2 was exactly the same as that of operative paragraph 2 of resolution GC(49)/RES/11.F. However, his delegation could go along with the addition of “interested” before “Member States”.

69. The representative of GERMANY, referring to preambular paragraph (d), proposed that the words “that the development of innovative nuclear power systems is considered ... development, which also acknowledged the efforts ...” be replaced by “that those G8 countries which have, or are considering the development of, innovative nuclear power systems recognized that these systems constitute an important element for efficient and safe nuclear energy development, acknowledging the efforts ...”.

70. The representatives of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION and INDIA said that her proposal was acceptable.

71. The CHAIRMAN took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the draft resolution contained in document GC(50)/COM.5/L.4/Rev.3 with the amendment to preambular paragraph (d) proposed by the representative of Germany and with the insertion of “interested” in operative paragraph 2, of “financial” in operative paragraph 3 and of “inter alia” in operative paragraph 4.

72. It was so agreed.

73. The CHAIRMAN said it was his understanding that there was a widespread wish to cluster all the draft resolutions recommended by the Committee for adoption under agenda item 17 into a single document. He suggested that interested delegations consult with one another — within the framework of a working group chaired by Mr. Beven of the Australian delegation — on the structure of that document and on the content of the draft resolution contained in document GC(50)/COM.5/L.3.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.