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President: Mr. NIEUWENHUYS (Belgium)

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Abbreviations used in this record:

ABACC	Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials
AIDS	acquired immune deficiency syndrome
ARCAL	Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EU	European Union
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
G8	Group of Eight
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
ICTP	International Centre for Theoretical Physics (Trieste)
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
IPF	indicative planning figure
ITER	International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
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
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PATTEC	Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
Quadripartite Agreement	Agreement between the Republic of Argentina, the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Application of Safeguards

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

SCCC	(Argentine-Brazilian) Common System of Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials
SIT	sterile insect technique
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

8. General debate and Annual Report for 2005 (continued) (GC(50)/4)

1. Mr. BUGAT (France) said that the fiftieth regular session of the General Conference was an opportunity to take stock of what had made the Agency a success. The organization's strength lay in the balance between its three main areas of activity: safeguards, technology and verification; and between the right to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the obligation to respect all international non-proliferation commitments. The challenges in the latter area were numerous and the international community had to remain ready to strengthen the non-proliferation regime, of which the NPT was the cornerstone. France therefore supported initiatives by the G8, the European Union and others promoting universal adherence to safeguards, and called upon all States which had not yet done so to sign and ratify an additional protocol to their safeguards agreement. It welcomed the Agency's efforts to improve the effectiveness of the safeguards system, in particular by developing new information management tools and new monitoring techniques.
2. Closer control over transfer of sensitive nuclear technology, equipment and material was equally necessary to prevent proliferation and the Agency had a central role to play in providing assurances that nuclear technology and equipment were only being used for peaceful purposes. In that connection, France hoped that the CTBT would enter into force soon and supported the initiation of negotiations in the United Nations Conference on Disarmament on a fissile material cut-off treaty.
3. France was fully engaged in the efforts to resolve the issues raised by the nuclear programme of Iran. A negotiated solution needed to be found which met the legitimate demands of the international community.
4. The risk of nuclear or radioactive material being used for terrorist acts was a concern which had not diminished. The Agency had a vital role to play in ensuring the security of nuclear material and installations and France supported its activities in that area both financially and technically. It welcomed the efforts to achieve ratification of the amendment to the CPPNM, and the work of AdSec.
5. France strongly supported the Agency's technical cooperation programme, paid its contributions to the TCF in full every year and made extrabudgetary contributions to footnote-a/ projects. He pointed out that the financing of technical cooperation was the joint responsibility of all States. France was also involved in relevant bilateral cooperation projects and had recently signed an agreement with Libya on the production of medical radioisotopes and nuclear desalination technology.
6. His country greatly appreciated the Agency's activities in the field of nuclear safety. It had requested an IRRS mission which should be conducted towards the end of 2006. It likewise appreciated the work of the Commission on Safety Standards and welcomed the adoption of the Fundamental Safety Principles covering all aspects of safety. He called upon all States to ratify the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. France was also continuing its efforts to increase mutual understanding and trust in relation to the safety of maritime transport of nuclear material.
7. A number of new laws relating to nuclear issues had been adopted in France in the preceding year. The first, adopted on 13 June 2006, had established the Nuclear Safety Authority as an independent administrative agency. The second, adopted on 28 June 2006, provided for a national management plan for radioactive material and waste. That plan defined a programme of research and

was based on three main approaches: reduction of the quantity and harmfulness of waste; interim storage; and deep geological disposal of long-lived intermediate- and high-level waste. The rules governing the treatment and storage of waste from other countries had been made more transparent and a legal framework had been introduced for financing the dismantling of nuclear installations.

8. Nuclear power was an integral part of France's ambitious yet responsible energy policy which aimed to ensure security of supply and sustainable development and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The new European pressurized water reactor was due to enter into service around 2011 and a fast prototype neutron reactor was planned for 2020. A new research reactor would also be built, principally for fuel and materials studies.

9. For some time, France had acknowledged that the major emerging economies had to have access to nuclear energy to meet their energy needs for economic development. In that connection, France was working to improve India's access to peaceful nuclear technology and the two countries had announced the beginning of negotiations on a bilateral nuclear energy cooperation agreement in February 2006.

10. International cooperation in the nuclear field was essential. Preparations for the establishment of ITER at Cadarache were well under way. France was also participating actively in the Generation IV International Forum and INPRO. France and five other countries that supplied enrichment services had developed a plan for multilateral assurances of access to nuclear fuel. France welcomed the other suggestions which had been put forward with the same aim, and the special event on that issue which was taking place during the General Conference.

11. In conclusion, he congratulated the Agency and its Director General on the award of the Nobel Peace Prize, which paid tribute to the Agency's vital contribution to the cause of non-proliferation.

12. Mr. POPOVIC (Serbia) congratulated the Director General and the Secretariat for their excellent work which had been recognized by the award of the Nobel Peace Prize.

13. He drew attention to the recent constitutional changes in his country. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia had been transformed into the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro in February 2003. The State Union had represented the interests of the two Member States and had constituted the legal entity in international relations, including membership of the United Nations and the Agency. The recent declaration of independence by Montenegro meant that Serbia was now an independent sovereign State which succeeded to all the rights and obligations of the State Union, including the continuation of its Agency membership. His country remained firmly committed to the peaceful use of nuclear energy and to all the fundamental principles and goals of the Agency.

14. Serbia continued to support the Agency's efforts to strengthen the effectiveness of verification measures and to develop integrated safeguards in accordance with the NPT. He commended the efforts of the Secretariat to negotiate and conclude safeguards agreements and additional protocols. His country intended to sign an additional protocol as soon as it had the technical capabilities and human and administrative resources required to fulfil its obligations. Preparations had already begun and the Agency had provided a great deal of assistance to help the country overcome difficulties from the past.

15. The frequent terrorist attacks all over the world brought the issue of security into focus. Activities under the auspices of the Agency to counter the threat of nuclear terrorism were part of common efforts to prevent terrorists and other non-State actors from acquiring sensitive nuclear material and technologies. In that connection, his country fully supported the Nuclear Security Fund and nuclear security programmes.

16. Serbia was strongly committed to the universal non-proliferation regime and had been active in strengthening mechanisms for combating illicit trafficking, improving physical protection systems and

gaining control over orphan sources. It supported the efforts of the international community and adhered to the provisions of international legal instruments and related conventions, guidelines and other documents, integrating their requirements into its national legal system.

17. In July 2006, Serbia had ratified the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. It had also signed the amendment to the CPPNM and supported other common initiatives such as the Global Threat Reduction Initiative, Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), further strengthening of the Nuclear Safety Fund, IAEA/EU joint action and the incorporation of provisions from the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources into national documents.

18. In view of the potential threat of terrorist attacks and the importance of countering global terrorism, Serbia had always been prepared to cooperate in that area. Our example thereof was the transport of the fresh nuclear fuel from the Vinča Institute of Nuclear Sciences to the Russian Federation in 2002, which had been made possible by the intensive cooperation with the governments of the United States and the Russian Federation, the Nuclear Threat Initiative and the Agency. Cooperation of that nature was essential to resolve outstanding issues such as the removal of the spent nuclear fuel, the management of low- and intermediate-level radioactive waste and the full decommissioning of the nuclear reactor in the Vinča Institute. The tremendous complexity of the operation and budgetary constraints had placed a considerable burden on his country, but his Government was committed to achieving its goal and to protecting his country's capital from the environmental and human health risks.

19. He thanked the Agency for the assistance it provided to countries in reaching a higher level of safety and security and in improving control of the use of nuclear energy. The Agency should continue its efforts in that regard. Activities related to the Vinča nuclear decommissioning programme remained his country's highest priority.

20. The State structure of his country and its statutory systems had caused the Agency some extra efforts. The Secretariat, and in particular the Department of Technical Cooperation, had demonstrated great understanding and patience, despite those complexities and the different needs of the former Serbia and Montenegro. The new single State of Serbia should make cooperation and communication simpler.

21. His country had successfully taken part in several national projects and nearly 20 regional projects reflecting the most important needs of the country. They encompassed various areas, from the Vinča nuclear decommissioning programme, nuclear and radiation safety and security and regulatory infrastructure modernization, to human health and nuclear applications in various fields. Serbia aimed to strengthen cooperation further and it had therefore submitted new national project proposals and had expressed an interest in participating in an even greater number of regional projects. It had hosted an Agency workshop in May–June 2006 with a further workshop planned for October, both in the nuclear decommissioning field.

22. Mr. CRAXI (Italy) said that the Agency was the natural forum for discussion and cooperation with a view to finding ways to reconcile the aims of nuclear non-proliferation and effective verification with the need for growth and development through the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Therefore, Italy supported the activities carried out by the Agency in fulfilment of its statutory functions in all its three main areas of activity.

23. The NPT constituted the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and was an essential basis for nuclear disarmament. The Treaty should be fully implemented and strengthened, especially in view of the widespread dissemination of nuclear knowledge and technical capabilities in the modern world, which increased the risk of nuclear weapon proliferation.

24. Compliance with multilateral regulations and laws was essential and it was vital to be able to verify compliance and detect violations. Additional protocols were an integral part of the safeguards system and he called for universal adherence to that instrument. The entry into force of comprehensive safeguards and additional protocols in the Middle East would make a significant contribution to establishing security and trust in that region. Italy therefore invited all the States concerned to commit themselves to creating a zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in the region.

25. His country recognized the important role played by new international cooperation initiatives such as the Proliferation Security Initiative, the Global Threat Reduction Initiative, the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership and the G8 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction in combating nuclear proliferation and terrorism. The adoption by consensus in 2005 of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism showed the widespread concern and the common need to address that threat with new, appropriate legal instruments.

26. It was also necessary to consider controlling the nuclear fuel cycle and Italy therefore attached great importance to the special event that was being held during the General Conference which could contribute to defining new multilateral approaches to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. It also called for the entry into force of the CTBT and fully supported the implementation of that Treaty through the establishment of the International Monitoring System and the International Data Centre. Furthermore, it attached high priority to the initiation of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament. It was very encouraging that the Conference on Disarmament had received a new impetus in 2006 through focused and structured debate and through the presentation of a draft treaty by the United States. Italy welcomed the participation of Agency representatives in the discussion on the fissile material cut-off treaty and emphasized the important contribution the Agency could make to that process.

27. Each country needed to accord top priority to nuclear safety in its nuclear programme. International cooperation was also essential to achieving the highest and most consistent nuclear safety standards. Italy fully supported the development of a global nuclear safety regime based around the conventions, codes of conduct, and standards prepared by the Agency, and the promotion of an international action plan to strengthen preparedness for and response to nuclear and radiological emergencies. Italy had also been one of the countries most committed to the amendment of the CPPNM.

28. His country fully supported the Agency's technical cooperation activities and had recently passed a bill granting the Government the necessary resources to fund those activities. It hoped that the general public would learn to see the Agency as an institution which not only carried out verification work but also helped less developed countries to achieve better living standards. It had also allocated significant extrabudgetary resources to programmes of particular interest, such as those on optimization of cancer radiotherapy techniques and the use of isotope techniques in connection with nutrition in Africa.

29. Italy's academic and health institutions had long-standing experience of cooperation with the Agency, especially in the field of nuclear medicine, through the organization of scientific visits and fellowships, where the country was making a notable contribution.

30. Through UNESCO, Italy contributed more than 80% of the budget of the ICTP whose activities and programmes aimed at promoting international cooperation among scientists from all countries. It appreciated the Agency's support for the ICTP and felt encouraged thereby to continue and increase its support for the Centre and to enhance the latter's role in closing the North-South technological and scientific divide.

31. Mr. WUERMELING (Germany) said that, over the 50 years of its existence, the Agency had faced and successfully solved a broad range of sometimes extremely complex problems, guided by a spirit of consensus, continuity and objectivity. Its efforts to enhance the international safeguards and non-proliferation regime, to build and strengthen a worldwide framework for safety and security, and to provide scientific and technological support had made it one of the most highly recognized international organizations, which was reflected in its growing membership and the award of the 2005 Nobel peace Prize.

32. Iran's nuclear programme was a matter of deep concern to the international community which, together with the Agency, had spared no efforts to shed light on that country's clandestine nuclear activities. That work had to continue until there was a sufficient guarantee that Iran's nuclear programme was and would remain exclusively for peaceful purposes. Only then could confidence be restored.

33. The Board of Governors had repeatedly called upon Iran to cooperate and to suspend the most sensitive parts of its nuclear programme. United Nations Security Council resolution 1696 (2006) had made such action mandatory. At the same time, the international community had offered Iran considerable support for the development of a safe, proliferation-proof and economically viable nuclear programme, and the prospect of a new dimension of cooperation.

34. The Iranian reaction so far had been ambiguous. Progress seemed to have been made in the recent meeting between EU High Representative, Mr. Solana, and the Iranian chief negotiator, Mr. Larijani, but clear signs were needed to open the way for new negotiations and it was to be hoped that other meetings could be held soon. After three years of intensive talks, Germany had learned to be cautious in its expectations. Iran needed to make a strategic decision between the cooperation offered and increased isolation, and it would have to do so soon. The international community would react to whichever choice Iran made and his country was confident that it would react in a united manner.

35. The universalization of the safeguards system, including the additional protocol, was a matter of highest priority and would make a major contribution to the effectiveness of the Agency's verification activities and thus to global security. The implementation of integrated safeguards on the basis of comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols would significantly enhance the efficiency of verification measures. The comprehensive safeguard agreement together with the additional protocol should be regarded as the Agency's verification standard; yet, one decade after its approval, many Member States had not yet brought an additional protocol into force. Germany called upon those States to do so as soon as possible.

36. He noted the efforts to establish a framework for assurances of supply and non-proliferation. That was a key question not only with respect to the case of Iran but also for the future of nuclear technology. Together with France, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, Germany had submitted a communication to the Board in June containing a concept for assurances for a reliable supply of enrichment services or enriched uranium. The potential misuse of sensitive fuel cycle technologies was a serious challenge to the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Providing reliable access to nuclear fuel services and allowing States to refrain, on a voluntary basis and without undue interference with the market mechanism, from developing indigenous sensitive fuel cycle capabilities could help meet that objective. However, similar endeavours in past decades, as well as recent initiatives and discussions, had shown that many questions remained open. The proposed concept offered a sound basis for further discussions. The preceding day, Germany had proposed the establishment of an independent, multilaterally organized uranium enrichment capability which would be under Agency control and managed by companies from all interested States. The enriched fuel could be released solely by Agency decision to all countries in line with their non-proliferation obligations. The proposal had attracted favourable

comments and his country looked forward to further discussion with the interested parties and welcomed additional ideas.

37. Germany had supported the establishment of the Advisory Committee on Safeguards and Verification within the Framework of the IAEA Statute in 2005 and remained committed to its objective of further strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of the safeguards system.

38. Safety and security constituted one of the most important issues in the nuclear field. The need for a worldwide culture of nuclear safety and security would increase even further in the future, with the ageing of reactors, the closure of research reactors, the multiplication of radiation sources, illicit trafficking and the threat of nuclear terror.

39. The adoption of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and the associated Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources was an important initiative in that regard. Germany had been one of the first States to incorporate those guidelines into national law. A national catalogue of sealed radioactive sources and devices was already in place. Germany was ready to cooperate with interested countries on developing detailed guidelines and instructions for the implementation of the Guidance.

40. It greatly appreciated the outcome of the second review meeting under the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, which had taken place in May and at which considerable progress had been made. Nevertheless, there was still a need for further action in many areas.

41. The fight against nuclear terrorism and illicit trafficking required greater international cooperation. Germany welcomed and supported the work of the Secretariat in that field. The project to develop and implement radiological security measures for the World Cup 2006 in Germany, carried out jointly with the Agency, had been a good example in that regard. Germany also supported the work of the European Commission on a European standard for radiation monitoring at border crossings. With its experience, the Agency could make a valuable contribution to that project.

42. Mr. BOYKO (Ukraine) recalled that his country, a founder member of the Agency, had voluntarily given up the third most powerful nuclear arsenal in the world and considered the peaceful use of nuclear energy to be a defining component in the sustainable development of its national economy. The role of nuclear energy in Ukraine could hardly be overestimated. Nuclear power would play a major role in assuring the country's energy supply in the medium and long term. In future years, the significance of nuclear power would grow even further, which was reflected in Ukraine's energy strategy for the period up to 2030, passed by his Government at the beginning of 2006. Given the increased competition for possession of hydrocarbons caused by limited stocks and delivery routes, and the exacerbation of environmental problems caused by the use of fossil fuel, including climate change issues, the importance of nuclear energy would grow steadily. A number of States, including Ukraine, were adopting programmes that assigned a major role to nuclear power, which proved that confidence in it was gradually being restored.

43. The Agency's activities in the field of research into meeting energy demands was especially important, in particular its work to support and develop the analytical potential of Member States for carrying out energy research using Agency tools. Those activities should be continued and expanded, including through the technical cooperation programme.

44. Ensuring the reliability and safety of nuclear reactors and management of spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste were some of the main priorities of Ukraine's State bodies and the operating organization. Those priorities corresponded exactly to the Agency's Medium Term Strategy. Ukraine valued highly the Agency's work on the nuclear fuel cycle and new, safe reactors. It fully supported

the conclusions of the International Symposium on Uranium Production and Raw Materials for the Nuclear Fuel Cycle concerning the adequacy of uranium resources for the anticipated use of nuclear energy. The availability of sufficient, economically viable uranium resources was one of the factors leading Ukraine's energy sector towards the expanded use of atomic energy. Moreover, the confirmed uranium resources in Ukraine were sufficient to meet not only its own long-term requirements but also the demands of other countries, and Ukraine was open to international cooperation in that field. In the context of the development of nuclear fuel cycle technology, Ukraine valued the Agency's work on the elaboration of guidelines and recommendations which formed a basis for the elaboration of national standards.

45. As a country with considerable scientific potential in nuclear technology and with long-term plans for the development of nuclear energy, Ukraine supported the Agency's work in the field of innovative and advanced nuclear technologies and reactor designs. In 2005, it had joined INPRO and it also supported the Agency's activities within the framework of the Generation IV International Forum.

46. As regards nuclear knowledge management and preservation in order to ensure the availability of human resources for national nuclear energy development programmes, Ukraine appreciated the Agency's efforts to create databases and nuclear information systems. Bearing in mind that nuclear energy development programmes had been frozen for a number of years, and taking into account the growth of competitive markets for technical professions, maintaining the required level of knowledge in the nuclear technology field was an exceptionally pressing task. Utilization of expert potential and the training base of the Agency and Member States could be an effective means of solving a number of problems in that area.

47. As a State that had experienced the consequences of a major man-made disaster, Ukraine recognized the importance of the Agency's work on ensuring the necessary levels of nuclear safety. That was a priority for Ukraine, which had 15 nuclear power plant units in operation, as well as research reactors, and observed strictly its obligations under the Convention on Nuclear Safety. The safety level of those nuclear power plant units conformed to the requirements of the relevant national and international standards and the country was implementing a large-scale programme to improve nuclear safety, which involved improving legislation and strengthening the institutional capabilities of its national regulatory body. International cooperation in that field was expanding and nuclear safety issues were an important part of the cooperation agreement between the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and Euratom and the Memorandum of Understanding on energy cooperation between Ukraine and the European Union signed on 1 December 2005. The conclusions and recommendations of the third review meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety had provided a basis for applying best practices in the field. The Agency's OSART missions were an effective tool for increasing the safety levels of nuclear facilities in operation. In 2006, a mission had been sent to the Zaporozhe nuclear power plant and another was planned to the South Ukraine nuclear power plant in October. The Agency's work to develop nuclear safety guides within the framework of the Nuclear Safety Standards Committee was exceptionally important. Ukraine thanked all donor countries and international financial organizations that provided support for programmes to improve nuclear safety.

48. Another important area of the Agency's work related to radiation safety and radioactive waste management. Ukraine's national report on its compliance with its obligations under the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, and the discussion thereof, had again shown the appropriateness of the approaches it had adopted. Ukraine was demonstrating clearly its intentions to achieve a high level of safety in the management of spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste in order to protect the public and the environment against ionizing radiation. The adoption of a law and the creation of mechanisms to fund the decommissioning of nuclear facilities had been an important step in solving problems related to

radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel management. Ukraine's national strategy on radioactive waste management included modern approaches to the following: evaluating the safety of radioactive waste management, including waste generated by the Chernobyl accident; waste management in the uranium mining and reprocessing industry; management of waste generated by the operator; and temporary storage of radioactive waste on site. Another exceptionally important and complex task was the management of radioactive waste generated by the decommissioning of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant and the transformation of the Shelter facility into an environmentally safe system. That goal could not be met without international support. There were still problems and delays caused by contractors not fulfilling their contractual obligations, and affecting mainly radioactive waste processing capacity, the spent nuclear fuel storage facility and construction of the new safe confinement. He called on the governments of Member States that donated to the relevant funds to make additional efforts to resolve the existing problems.

49. For Ukraine, the problems of dealing with the consequences of the Chernobyl accident remained extremely significant, as had been confirmed by the conclusions of the international conference held to mark the twentieth anniversary of the accident in Kiev on 24–26 April 2006. The Agency's involvement in the preparation and holding of the conference was appreciated. Cleaning up the consequences of the accident and decommissioning the Chernobyl nuclear power plant took up a considerable portion of the State budget. Although the mandate of the United Nations Chernobyl Forum had ended, the Agency should not reduce its efforts in that area and should continue to cooperate with Ukraine to solve the outstanding problems.

50. Ukraine was concerned at the newly emerging threats posed by nuclear terrorism. It saw a need for broad international cooperation to reduce the global threat of nuclear and radioactive material being used for terrorist purposes. It welcomed the G8 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, the Global Threat Reduction Initiative and other international and regional programmes. It also valued the Agency's work in support of international initiatives to increase the security of nuclear and radioactive material and prevent illicit trafficking therein, and was in favour of strengthening the regime for the physical protection of nuclear material. Ukraine was implementing a set of measures to strengthen the security of radioactive sources in accordance with the basic principles of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. A State system for the registration, accounting and control of sources was in force and legislative changes had been introduced aimed at strengthening export and import controls and requirements for the physical protection of ionizing radiation sources. The results of international projects implemented in Ukraine in that field were highly valued. No effort to improve the physical protection of nuclear facilities and material could be considered superfluous. With regard also to the project to build a new safe confinement over the destroyed Unit 4 of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant site, both Ukraine and the Agency should assign the highest priority to securing nuclear and radioactive material and implementing safeguards.

51. His country supported the Agency's efforts to increase the effectiveness of the safeguards system and saw the NPT as a vital instrument in the prevention of nuclear proliferation. To strengthen the non-proliferation regime, it was important for States to implement additional protocols. Ukraine had ratified its additional protocol on 16 November 2005 and was grateful to the Agency for the practical assistance it had provided with the preparation of the initial declaration. He called on all Member States to make maximum efforts to provide guarantees of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the non-diversion of nuclear technologies for military purposes.

52. Ukraine valued the Agency's technical cooperation programme, the results of which showed that the organization could respond appropriately and swiftly to the needs of Member States. Participation in the technical cooperation programme was very important to Ukraine, since it gave the country the opportunity to benefit from the best international experience and to share its own

experience with other interested Member States. His country appreciated and supported fully the areas identified as priorities under the technical cooperation programme, namely: management of equipment lifetime and extension of the operating life of nuclear power plants; preservation of knowledge and experience in the nuclear power sector; nuclear safety and improving the capacities of regulatory bodies; and physical protection and radioactive waste management. It also supported the Agency's work to strengthen cooperation in the field of nuclear science, in particular where it related to radiation medicine and biology.

53. Mr. WESEKA (Kenya), having congratulated the Agency and the Director General on the award of the Nobel Peace Prize and on the fiftieth anniversary of the organization, said that the Agency had been established to realize two aspirations of the international community: the total elimination of nuclear weapons and the development of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Its fiftieth anniversary provided an occasion to reflect on progress in those areas.

54. On the one hand, it was deeply disappointing that so little progress had been made in terms of non-proliferation; on the other, there had been significant developments in nuclear technology transfer, particularly to developing countries. However, 50 years should have been sufficient to achieve total disarmament and the failure of the recent NPT Review Conference, as well as the failure to reach consensus on a single paragraph in the declaration of the World Summit during the 60th session of the United Nations General Assembly, was not encouraging. He urged all nuclear-weapon States to make a greater effort to fulfil their treaty obligations, and all those wishing to develop or test nuclear weapons to refrain from doing so.

55. His country's principled position on the NPT corresponded with that of the NAM, which was in accordance with the Article IV of the NPT which guaranteed the right of all Member States to develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Kenya was also a signatory of the Pelindaba Treaty establishing an African nuclear-weapon-free zone and hoped that such zones would be established all over the world.

56. Kenya appreciated Agency activities aimed at promoting global nuclear safety and security, and the assistance provided to Member States to help strengthen national nuclear safety and security infrastructures. In that connection, it had continued to develop appropriate infrastructure for the safety and security of radioactive sources, setting aside 10 acres of land to expand services for the processing and storage of radioactive waste and illicit radiation sources. The sum of US \$150 000 had been allocated by the Government for a central radioactive waste processing facility which should be functional in the near future. Agency assistance in that regard would be welcome. The University of Nairobi continued to train local personnel in nuclear techniques and radiation safety and the competent authority had been carrying out research into medical exposure through established Agency regional projects on radiation protection. The results of the research had proved useful in applying dose reduction methods for patients. Renewal of the regional projects in question would therefore be appreciated.

57. Furthermore, his country had increased the budget for radiation protection regulatory activities by 40% in order to facilitate capacity building, employ eight scientists and open two additional regional offices before the end of the year, bringing the total number of regional regulatory offices to three and thereby enhancing the safety and security of radiation sources. To counter illicit trafficking in radioactive and nuclear material, scanners had been installed at international ports of entry into Kenya and specialist agencies had been created.

58. With regard to the recent amendment of the CPPNM, he had already signed the Cabinet memorandum seeking approval for Kenya to complete the ratification process. Similarly, his country's

comprehensive safeguards agreement and additional protocol would also be before the Cabinet for conclusion in the near future.

59. The Radiation Protection Board had also continued to foster positive collaboration with other institutions regarding the security of radioactive sources. In August 2006, in conjunction with the Agency it had conducted a successful one-week national training course on the detection of illicit radiation sources for customs, police and other Government officials. The Agency had also donated basic radiation safety instruments to officials working at border points with neighbouring countries and at major international ports of entry. Kenya had hosted a similar Agency course for the Africa region in December 2005. Furthermore, the Governor had created a database on radioactive material in use in the country and put in place the necessary security measures for such material.

60. Through the National Council for Science and Technology, his country had taken the initiative to form a Society for the Promotion of Peaceful Applications of Nuclear Science and Technology (SPANS-K) and had held the first national seminar on public awareness of the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology in cooperation with the Agency in 2005.

61. Nuclear energy was becoming increasingly important in meeting the serious world energy deficit, particularly in developing countries. It was clear that there could be no development without energy and Kenya would therefore be seeking further cooperation and technical assistance in the development of nuclear energy.

62. With regard to capacity building in nuclear technology, the Institute of Nuclear Sciences and Technology at the University of Nairobi offered a masters programme in nuclear science technology and its programmes were also open to other countries. The Agency and the Kenyan Government had continuously supported the Institute by providing equipment and fellowships. However, owing to emerging environmental challenges there was now a need to upgrade the equipment and introduce new nuclear-related techniques.

63. Technical cooperation activities in Kenya covered many sectors of socio-economic development. The priority areas identified in Kenya's CPF for 2004–2009 included human health, agriculture production and livestock development, radiation protection, energy and water resources development.

64. In the agricultural sector, the application of nuclear and biotechnology techniques in crop improvement and management had progressed so well that the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute was recognized as a national centre of competence in plant breeding. Further plans were under way to develop a curriculum on mutation breeding and related biotechnology at Moi University in Eldoret with Agency support, as part of a project to promote university teaching of nuclear applications for development.

65. He highlighted the importance of nuclear techniques for the sustainable management of the soil-plant-water system in order to improve food production. In that regard, Kenya took a keen interest in implementing programmes which used nuclear techniques to address concerns about soil degradation, and water and nutrient management practices to prevent land degradation and desertification. It was also implementing a project on combating desertification through the use of nuclear techniques and on the use of isotope hydrology techniques in water resources management. In October 2005, it had hosted a joint FAO/IAEA technical meeting on combating soil degradation to enhance food security in Africa. It was thus firmly committed to embracing nuclear technology to address environmental issues.

66. The transmission of trypanosomiasis by the tsetse fly in humans and domestic animals posed a serious threat to lives and livelihoods and was an obstacle to livestock and crop production. Kenya

was addressing tsetse-related problems in collaboration with other countries in the region. A mass rearing facility had been established at the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute Trypanosomiasis Research Centre with Agency collaboration. The unit focused on meeting the rapidly growing need for tsetse flies for use in a SIT-based eradication campaign which was being spearheaded by PATTEC and was being executed in Kenya by the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries Development. The aim was to remove the trypanosomiasis constraint by eliminating tsetse from a surface area of approximately 92 000 square kilometres, which would in turn increase livestock productivity and alleviate poverty. In order to carry out that aim, a gamma source irradiator had been acquired with Agency support and installed in a purpose-built radioisotope facility funded by the Kenyan Government. Quality assurance procedures for the tsetse flies produced in the colony had been developed and standard operating procedures were at an advanced stage of preparation.

67. The use of nuclear techniques was also playing a significant role in the management of major diseases in Kenya. Malaria and tuberculosis were among the most prevalent diseases for which proper diagnosis and treatment were crucial. The Kenya Medical Research Institute had made significant progress in the field of the molecular genetics involved in resistance to front-line antimalarial and anti-tuberculosis drugs through the implementation of a project on the detection of drug-resistant malaria and tuberculosis.

68. With regard to HIV/AIDS, Kenya was actively implementing a project on initiatives in HIV-1 molecular epidemiology and immunology and appreciated the equipment and training support that had been provided to the Kenya AIDS Vaccine Initiative laboratories by the Agency. His country was also actively participating in implementing a project on the use of isotope techniques to assess nutrition intervention programmes related to HIV/AIDS.

69. In the field of radiotherapy, a new gamma camera supplied as part of a project to improve nuclear medicine services had been installed and commissioned at Kenyatta National Hospital and was operational. A project concept submitted to the Agency for the technical cooperation programme for 2007-2008 aimed to strengthen radiotherapy services at the Kenyatta National Hospital and to expand those services to two other provincial hospitals. His country also supported Agency activities under the PACT programme

70. His country was also pleased that the Agency had already accepted six project concepts for the next technical cooperation programme cycle and it hoped that the proposals would receive the necessary support.

71. In conclusion, Kenya was committed to meeting its financial contributions to the Agency. His own Ministry had also recommended to the cabinet that it facilitate the ratification of the amendment to Article XIV.A of the Agency's Statute.

72. Mr. EL-EISSAWI (Iraq), having congratulated the Agency and its Director General on being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and on the fiftieth anniversary of the organization, said it was a great honour to address the General Conference as a representative of the first Iraqi Government to be elected under the Constitution approved by the people of Iraq. The Government represented all strata and every component of Iraqi society, the aim being to create a State based on the rule of law and human rights. The Government was determined to surmount current difficulties, especially in terms of security, and to begin implementing its programme, which had been agreed upon by all the country's political actors. He urged all countries to assist in ensuring its success, particularly the national reconciliation plan announced by the Prime Minister. Iraq had been a member of the Agency since 1959. The present Government intended to compensate for the previous regime's reckless and misguided policies by building a new Iraq on peaceful foundations and pursuing integrated development as a respected and trusted member of the international community.

73. The Agency had responded to Iraq's request for assistance in dealing with the contamination of its facilities and environment and it was to be hoped that the positive outcome of the meeting held at the Agency's Headquarters from 21 to 23 February 2006 and attended by a number of Member States would lead to the effective implementation of that project. With a view to retraining Iraq's specialized technical staff, the Agency had organized a course in conjunction with the Australian Government from 19 to 23 June 2006 on the implementation of safeguards and on nuclear material accounting and control. A workshop on border controls to prevent illicit trafficking in radioactive sources and material, organized by the Agency in conjunction with the United States Department of Energy from 11 to 15 June 2006, had been attended by 30 Iraqi officials from ministries and other relevant bodies.

74. However, Iraq required further Agency assistance and emergency support since it was no easy matter to deal with the enormous damage and destruction that the country had sustained. Iraq's share of technical assistance should be increased to compensate for the sanctions imposed on it from 1990 so that it could rebuild its institutions and retrain its staff, and make full use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in agriculture, health, the environment and power generation. The country hoped for a positive response from the Agency and its Member States, particularly with a view to accelerating the decontamination of destroyed nuclear sites and facilities, developing a strategy and policy for radioactive waste management, selecting sites for the burial of radioactive waste, drafting legislation and regulations on decontamination, ensuring the safe transport of contaminated radioactive material, supporting joint research projects in the areas of health, water resources, the environment and radiation protection, and increasing training opportunities and scientific visits for specialized staff.

75. The Agency's comprehensive safeguards regime played a vital role in maintaining international peace and security and was the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime. Iraq was concerned about the risk of proliferation of nuclear weapons in the Middle East and stressed the importance of establishing a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, in the region. He urged all countries to accede to international treaties aimed at preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in particular the NPT. The Agency's comprehensive safeguards regime should be applied throughout the Middle East. It was therefore of the utmost importance to enjoin Israel to accede to the NPT and to place its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards as a confidence-building measure and as a step towards achieving a just and lasting peace in the region.

76. With regard to the Iranian nuclear issue, while Iraq affirmed the inalienable right of States under the NPT to possess and use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, it called on the Agency's senior officials and Iran to engage in a serious dialogue on the application of the Agency's resolutions concerning Iran's nuclear programme in order to spare the region further tensions and create a climate in which States could focus on development.

77. The Agency's Annual Report for 2005 contained a section on verification in Iraq pursuant to United Nations Security Council resolutions. He pointed out that present-day Iraq, whose Government he represented, had no connection with the period prior to 9 April 2003 in terms of its policies and its vision of Iraq's future. He called on the Agency to send a special team to Iraq to verify that it was free from all prohibited nuclear activities and programmes. The continuation of the current improper state of affairs would have an adverse impact on the people of Iraq and would exhaust the country's financial resources.

78. Having learned from bitter experience, and in the interests of its national security, Iraq had announced its commitment to respect international treaties pertaining to weapons of mass destruction and non-proliferation and had enshrined that commitment in its Constitution. The country was currently looking into the possibility of signing and ratifying an additional protocol with the Agency.

A high-level committee had been established for that purpose and was about to submit its recommendations.

79. In conclusion, he reaffirmed Iraq's intention to become a force for stability at regional and international level. His country had nothing to conceal and its Government's overriding goal was to rebuild the country on the basis of international law and human rights.

80. Mr. GVALADZE (Georgia) said that his country remained committed to supporting the Agency's efforts to strengthen the non-proliferation regime and verification mechanisms. The Georgian parliament had ratified the Agreement between the Republic of Georgia and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Application of Safeguards in Connection with the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the protocol additional thereto in 2003. With regard to the related issue of illicit trafficking, most Georgian border crossings had been equipped with radiation detection systems as part of an ongoing joint project with the United States.

81. Global terrorism was an issue of special concern, especially the interest among terrorist groups and organizations in nuclear, radioactive and other hazardous materials. The issue of Georgian territorial integrity remained unresolved and separatist enclaves continued to serve as shelters for terrorists and criminals. The danger of illicit trafficking in nuclear material was particularly acute in the Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions where there was no central Government control, which in turn increased the danger of illegal movement of nuclear and radioactive material throughout the Caucasus region.

82. Despite those difficulties, Georgia had conducted several projects, including the Agency-supported survey of orphan sources which had commenced in 2002 and had achieved significant results. A draft plan on national emergency preparedness and response to nuclear and radiation emergencies would be submitted to the Georgian parliament in autumn 2006. The Agency had provided expert assistance with the preparation of the plan.

83. One of the most important areas of cooperation between the Agency and Georgia was human health. Regional and national technical cooperation projects relating to cancer management and X-ray and computer tomography optimization had first priority. Georgia firmly supported international standards for the radiological protection of patients and medical staff.

84. Thanks to the assistance provided by the Agency and the United States Department of Energy, radioactive sources were being temporarily stored in accordance with international standards.

85. His country was interested in the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership announced by the United States. Energy independence and energy source diversification were strategic components of Georgian policy.

86. Georgia relied on support from the Agency to conduct activities related to peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to implement the Agency's objectives in general, and it was grateful for the assistance it received.

87. Despite serious financial difficulties, his Government remained committed to fulfilling its financial obligations to the Agency. Georgia had officially requested the conclusion of a ten-year payment plan agreement starting in 2007 to pay off its arrears to the Regular Budget, as well as a three-year payment plan agreement to settle its assessed programme cost arrears.

88. Mr. VALLIM GUERREIRO (Brazil) said that, as a founding member of the Agency, Brazil had worked intensively for the past fifty years to advance the Agency's dual mission to assist the development of atomic energy for peaceful purposes and to apply the safeguards established by disarmament and non-proliferation treaties. The Brazilian nuclear programme had always been based

on an unequivocal commitment to safety and peaceful use. Thus, his country had adhered to and implemented pertinent international instruments and the Agency's voluntary directives and guidelines. Most recently, an agreement had been concluded with the Agency on a safeguards approach for the enrichment facility in Resende and Brazil had expressed its commitment to the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and the associated Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources.

89. Strengthening of the Agency's technical cooperation activities was crucial to maintaining a balance between the three pillars of the organization's activities and to reinforcing its legitimacy. The substantial increase in the resources allocated to verification and safety activities had exacerbated the imbalance between the three pillars. His country continued to support efforts to strengthen implementation of the Agency's technical cooperation programmes, in which Brazil participated as both donor and recipient. He congratulated the Resident Representatives of Sri Lanka and Norway on their excellent work which had resulted in a consensus on financing of the TCF for 2007–2008 and on IPFs for 2009–2011.

90. With regard to safety and security, Brazil relied on a consistent national regulatory and supervisory structure capable of ensuring the physical protection of nuclear and radioactive material in use, storage and transport. The main responsibility for ensuring the safety and physical protection of nuclear facilities lay with States, which should therefore be the primary actors in international efforts to strengthen pertinent instruments. That effort often required technical and financial cooperation at international level to strengthen institutions and train human resources. The Brazilian National Nuclear Energy Commission had developed programmes and procedures with that aim in mind. Brazil maintained an extensive cooperation programme in coordination with the Agency, within the framework of ARCAL, and was ready to share its experience with other countries in the region.

91. Developing a safety culture was of crucial importance for the definition by regulatory bodies of norms and procedures for the handling of nuclear and radioactive sources; it was also vital to all processes related to the operation of nuclear facilities and the handling, storage or transport of nuclear and radioactive sources. He drew attention to the Ibero-American Forum of Nuclear Regulators, one of whose main objectives was to establish the Ibero-American Radiation Safety Network, which was a useful instrument for sharing of knowledge and expertise on safety standards, licensing procedures, control of radioactive sources, protection of patients and education and training.

92. In November 2005, Brazil and Argentina had signed a Memorandum of Understanding under the bilateral agreement on nuclear cooperation to facilitate the harmonization of legislation and procedures concerning radioactive sources. He expressed the hope that other countries in the region might benefit from that experience.

93. The efforts made to strengthen the international regime on safety and physical protection of nuclear and radioactive sources, and the introduction of new international instruments to protect against nuclear terrorism, while praiseworthy, were insufficient. There was a need to reinforce systems for monitoring illicit transactions involving nuclear and radioactive material, including the control and verification of atypical financial flows. United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) had been a positive development in that regard. The Brazilian Government had established the National Sensitive Products Programme (PRONABENS), which aimed at keeping actors in the nuclear sector informed about the obligations undertaken by the country and about proliferation risks. The programme also aimed at fostering confidence to encourage those actors to keep the Government informed about potential clients and future commercial transactions. International cooperation could play an important role in that area. As a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, Brazil had conveyed to the committee established under resolution 1540 its readiness to share experience with interested countries on technology, material and dual-use transfer controls.

94. The balance between the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, verification and disarmament lay at the core of the NPT, which remained the cornerstone of the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime. In order to reinforce the NPT, the international community should strive for progress with respect to all three pillars of the Treaty, which were mutually reinforcing. States' inalienable right to develop and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes should not be restricted and compliance with Article IV of the Treaty was vital. The non-proliferation pillar of the Treaty was of paramount importance and Brazil acknowledged the professionalism of the Agency in applying the safeguards foreseen by Article III of the Treaty. Proliferation concerns had become more acute in recent years, in particular with respect to the risk that weapons of mass destruction or radioactive material might fall in the hands of non-State actors. However, the challenges with regard to weapons of mass destruction were not limited to contemporary proliferation trends. Traditional challenges remained, and it became increasingly clear that disregard for the provisions of Article VI of the NPT could negatively affect the Treaty's implementation.

95. The possession of weapons of mass destruction by a few States continued to be a matter of grave concern for all mankind. Disarmament and non-proliferation were interrelated and mutually reinforcing. Implementation of a sustainable and long-term strategy depended on the simultaneous adoption of measures in the fields of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Balanced implementation of all three pillars of the NPT was essential for the achievement of its objectives. The NPT had reached a decisive moment in its history. In view of the threats to international peace and security posed by the possession of nuclear weapons and their potential proliferation, the international community could not afford further failures in addressing the issues that jeopardized full implementation of the Treaty.

96. Serious efforts also needed to be made to achieve the entry into force of the CTBT, which was a centrepiece of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Brazil also looked forward to the early initiation of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty at the Conference on Disarmament.

97. A proposal had been put forward for a mechanism to assure supplies of nuclear fuel in the context of a possible new framework for the nuclear fuel cycle. Given the commercial, economic and strategic implications of that proposal, it should be examined carefully, both in the context of the Agency and the NPT Review Conference. Any analysis should take account of the need to preserve the right of States to develop nuclear technology for peaceful uses, including the fuel cycle, as well as corresponding progress in the field of disarmament and arms control on the part of nuclear-weapon States. The special event on the fuel cycle which was being held during the General Conference could provide useful technical input for the thorough consideration of the issue in the appropriate fora.

98. Any proposals made by the Advisory Committee on Safeguards and Verification within the Framework of the IAEA Statute should be strictly in conformity with the legal framework of the Statute and the three different types of safeguards agreements. The Committee should focus primarily on measures that might enhance the efficiency of safeguards implementation, bearing in mind the need to avoid additional financial obligations for developing countries.

99. There was a clear trend towards the dissemination of nuclear technologies and increased use of nuclear power in civil activities. Nuclear power had established itself as an economically competitive and environmentally sound alternative to meet the growing demand for electricity. No country could therefore renounce the use of those technologies, which were particularly important for sustainable development. In that connection, he commended the Secretariat for its initiatives in the area of capacity building and nuclear knowledge management and preservation.

100. Brazil attached the utmost importance to the cooperation between the ABACC and the Agency in the application of safeguards under the Quadripartite Agreement. The two agencies should continue to

work in a coordinated manner to avoid duplication of effort, improve cost efficiency and minimize possible disruptions to the operation of nuclear facilities in Brazil and Argentina.

101. Speaking on behalf of the delegations of Brazil and Argentina, he recalled that 2006 marked the fifteenth anniversary of ABACC, which had been established to uphold safeguards in respect of Brazilian and Argentine nuclear activities and to provide assurances to the international community of the peaceful nature of those activities. Since its inception, ABACC had carried out over 1000 inspections in nuclear facilities in Argentina and Brazil, had participated in the global debate on nuclear safeguards and had issued over 60 technical publications relating to its activities. The relationship between ABACC and the Agency enshrined in the Quadripartite Agreement was crucial to the conduct of joint safeguards activities and to improving pertinent work carried out by ABACC. ABACC had become a key player in the global non-proliferation system and had enabled Brazil and Argentina to produce material evidence of their commitment to the peaceful use of nuclear energy and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

102. Ms. MELIN (Sweden) said that the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Agency and its Director General in 2005 had been a well-deserved and timely recognition of the Agency's contribution to making the world safer both from nuclear proliferation and from nuclear accidents. It was also a recognition of the clear voice of its Director General in his efforts to move the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda forward. That was particularly important at the present time, when the multilateral system was under attack.

103. Looking back over the five decades of the Agency's history, certain events stood out: the bold vision of an organization for Atoms for Peace; the NPT and the Agency's role in that Treaty; and the experiences in the early 1990s which had led to efforts to sharpen the safeguards system and at the same time create tools to improve nuclear safety worldwide.

104. Sweden had enjoyed decades of excellent cooperation with the Agency and had profited greatly from the Agency's work in nuclear and radiation safety and verification. Sweden had also had the great honour of providing the Agency with two of its Directors General, Dr. Sigvard Eklund and Dr. Hans Blix.

105. The creation of the Agency, through the adoption of its Statute in October 1956, had marked the end of unsuccessful efforts to control nuclear energy. Failure to reach agreement during the early years after the Second World War had resulted in an impasse that had been broken by President Eisenhower's Atoms for Peace speech before the United Nations General Assembly on 8 December 1953.

106. The concept of a nuclear material bank managed by the Agency had been a central issue of Atoms for Peace since the beginning. Even at that time it had been stated that such a bank would have to be absolutely secure from theft or attack, which was in effect the first mention of what was much later to become known as nuclear terrorism. Those requirements had been followed up later in the CPPNM and the Agency's nuclear security programme.

107. The idea of a nuclear material bank had been discussed time and again at the Agency, be it in the Committee on Assurances of Supply in the 1980s or as the theme of the special event that was being held during the current session of the General Conference. As a nuclear power nation with no national enrichment capacity, Sweden stressed the need for reliable access to nuclear fuel. If that could be achieved without expensive investment in enrichment facilities, so much the better. Sweden remained prepared to take a positive look at the various proposals for multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle which were under discussion. It was open to proposals which aimed to minimize the proliferation risks connected with enrichment and reprocessing technologies. Moreover, the Agency should be used as a forum for exploring various ways to reduce such risks.

108. The entry into force of the NPT in 1970 had been one of the most important events in the history of disarmament and non-proliferation. The NPT remained the cornerstone of the multilateral nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. As the body responsible for implementing non-proliferation obligations pursuant to the NPT, the Agency was the sole international authority for nuclear verification.

109. Comprehensive safeguards agreements had turned out to be less comprehensive than originally envisioned, as events in Iraq after the first Gulf War had shown. The ensuing efforts to strengthen the Agency's safeguards system had eventually resulted in the creation of the additional protocol. During that process, Sweden had provided opportunities for field trials relating to certain draft provisions of the protocol. Those trials, aimed as they were at reassuring critics of the practical feasibility of those provisions, had successfully contributed to the significant achievement of establishing the Model Additional Protocol.

110. On a more political note, Sweden agreed with the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission which stressed the importance of the additional protocol in enhancing the effectiveness of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Comprehensive safeguards agreements together with additional protocols constituted the current Agency verification standard.

111. The terrorist attacks five years ago had been the starting point for the rapid development of the Agency's efforts to strengthen nuclear security worldwide. The Nuclear Security Fund had been established with voluntary contributions from both Member States and non-governmental organizations to finance measures to prevent nuclear terrorism. The Agency's nuclear security programme had undergone a significant transition in terms of both quantity and quality. Furthermore, Member States had taken steps relevant to their nuclear activities to prevent nuclear terrorism. Sweden was no exception: legally binding revised regulations would come into force by 1 January 2007 requiring virtually every nuclear licensee to strengthen the physical protection of their facilities.

112. As a reaction to the tragic Chernobyl accident in 1986, extensive efforts to improve nuclear safety worldwide had been initiated. As a result, the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management had been established and both had received widespread recognition. In Sweden they formed, together with the Agency's safety standards, the basis for revised regulations on nuclear safety and nuclear waste management.

113. The Swedish nuclear power programme had been established in the 1960s. Since that time, regulations had evolved from focusing solely on technical issues to include human factors related to the management of nuclear facilities. The recently approved nuclear safety standards were of high quality and served as a good platform for issuing national regulations. The announcement by the Swedish industry that it intended to extend operation of its nuclear reactors had prompted extensive work on retrofitting regulations based on the Agency's safety standards.

114. The incident in the Forsmark nuclear power plant on 25 July 2006, where the emergency power system had partly failed, had highlighted the need for international cooperation in such areas as interdependency of reactor emergency power systems, arrangements for experience feedback and the complexity of introducing new technology in existing plants. Sweden was prepared to share its experience with the rest of the international community and intended to host an international conference to address those issues.

115. Two of the three pillars of the Agency, safety and verification, were explicitly mentioned as functions in the Statute. The third pillar, technical cooperation, had also been established at an early point and was already well in place by 1960. The technical cooperation programme had developed into

a well functioning mechanism to solicit and respond to Member States' needs through the implementation of projects with the full support of governments.

116. Sweden fully appreciated the need for predictable funding of the technical cooperation programme and had therefore consistently contributed its share to the TCF. It had pledged its full share to the TCF for 2007.

117. The end of the Cold War had resulted, among other things, in a number of potential nuclear-weapon States abandoning weapons development programmes and becoming non-nuclear-weapon States. The non-proliferation significance of those events could not be overemphasized. Nor could it be overemphasized that those developments were not enough. The entire non-proliferation and disarmament regime was under stress. The DPRK had announced its withdrawal from the NPT and had declared that it possessed nuclear weapons. Serious concerns remained about Iran's nuclear programme. The risk that terrorists could acquire weapons of mass destruction was another threat to collective security. The limited progress towards nuclear disarmament also undermined multilateral agreements. The US-Indian civil nuclear cooperation initiative, although understandable from the perspective of India's energy needs, posed serious problems from the point of view of the multilateral non-proliferation system.

118. Those challenges had to be tackled collectively and multilaterally. No one country could face them alone. There had to be a combination of measures, decisions and agreements. The Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission had put forward a wide range of recommendations which deserved serious consideration. The Commission had also highlighted the role of the Agency with respect both to verification and the nuclear fuel cycle. The Director General, in his Nobel lecture, had identified three concrete steps: protect material and strengthen verification; control the fuel cycle; accelerate disarmament efforts. For the non-proliferation part of those steps, the Agency remained indispensable. Looking to the next 50 years, the Agency would certainly be an even more important force in ensuring that nuclear energy was used solely for peaceful purposes. Judging from its history, the Agency's activities would be as keen as ever, and would probably reach out to interesting new fields in combination with ingenious new methodologies.

119. Mr. KUANYSHEV (Kazakhstan) stressed the importance of ensuring the effectiveness of the NPT and of promoting international efforts to strengthen the non-proliferation regime. Compliance with the obligations entered into by parties to the NPT was unconditional.

120. Kazakhstan was participating actively in the G8 Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, the Proliferation Security Initiative and the United States Global Threat Reduction Initiative. It supported the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism announced by the Russian Federation and the United States and had signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

121. His country had taken measures to strengthen radiation monitoring at its borders and to upgrade its system for combating illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive material and it firmly supported United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2006).

122. Kazakhstan's export control policy was in keeping with all generally accepted norms. As a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, it had taken effective measures to meet its obligations in the area of strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Its system for combating illegal transfers of nuclear material and technologies was in place and was being continuously improved.

123. His country was very concerned that a number of countries possessing elements of a nuclear fuel cycle had still not joined international regimes for the control of nuclear transfers, thereby leaving open the possibility of illicit trafficking in nuclear material and illegal transfer of technologies. On the

other hand, careful consideration was needed before implementing new restrictions on transfers of nuclear technologies so as to avoid creating unreasonable obstacles to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

124. Aware of the potential hazards of highly enriched material, the Kazakhstan Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources had adopted a five-year programme to convert a research reactor to operate on low-enriched nuclear fuel. Work was continuing on the safe decommissioning of the BN-350 fast breeder reactor in Aktau and on the downblending of highly enriched uranium at the Ulba Metallurgical Plant in Ust-Kamenogorsk.

125. Kazakhstan had begun implementation of the provisions of the revised Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. Projects had been successfully implemented to strengthen the control of ionizing radiation sources and ensure the safe and secure management of strong sources. A national register of sources of ionizing radiation had been established and an inventory taken of radioactive sources in the country. He thanked the Agency and the countries participating in those projects for the assistance they had provided.

126. With the support of the Government of Kazakhstan, a joint stock company had recently been registered in Kurchatov which it was expected would serve as a base for developing peaceful applications of nuclear energy in Kazakhstan, including nuclear power. The Government was also supporting a number of large-scale projects, including the construction of a heavy ion accelerator in Astana, due to be commissioned imminently, and the construction of a materials research tokamak in Kurchatov. A major nuclear medicine centre was being planned in Almaty.

127. His country had played an active part in the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. The Treaty establishing the zone had been signed on 8 September by Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and his own country. The zone had a number of unique features: it included a State (Kazakhstan) which in the past had had the world's fourth largest nuclear arsenal; it was the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in the northern hemisphere; it was the first multilateral security agreement bringing together all five Central Asian countries; and it was the first time that a nuclear-weapon-free zone had been established in a region that bordered upon two nuclear States. The Treaty, which banned the development, manufacture, stockpiling, acquisition or possession of nuclear explosive devices within the zone, would strengthen the security of Central Asia and promote regional confidence-building and cooperation. It was also an effective contribution to combating serious threats to peace and security and preventing fissile material from falling into the hands of terrorist groups. The Russian Federation and China had already welcomed the Treaty.

128. Every country had the right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful uses in accordance with the Agency's Statute and the Agency should provide all necessary assistance to that end. It was important to find ways of resolving conflict situations that had recently arisen and of rebuilding the confidence of the international community in the nuclear activities of countries, without restricting their right to technological development or their access to knowledge.

129. In his statement at the G8 Summit in July 2006, the President of Kazakhstan had noted that, in order to ensure global security, it was vital to move forward towards full nuclear disarmament, since nuclear weapons, like all weapons of mass destruction, were a direct threat to humanity. The time had come to give thought to alternative energy sources and to global energy security. Like other countries that had or were planning to build nuclear power plants, Iran should be given the opportunity to conduct scientific and technical research, improve the safety of its nuclear power plants and deal with problems of nuclear fuel and waste. Those activities should be transparent and the international community should be able to monitor them.

130. It was important to prevent fissile material from being used for military purposes. To that end, it would be useful to consider establishing a body under Agency auspices to assure supplies of fuel for nuclear power plants and manage storage and waste processing. That would help control any diversion of the raw materials needed for the production of nuclear devices for military use.

131. Mr. AL OWAIS (United Arab Emirates) said that his country was committed to the establishment of an international order based on the principles of solidarity, peace, justice and equality and had therefore participated actively in all the Agency's activities and programmes, giving high priority to cooperation in the development of science and technology and to support for the peaceful use of nuclear technology in a variety of sectors.

132. The Agency's many technical and operational achievements since its foundation 50 years ago had laid a solid basis for Member States' confidence in its ability to perform effectively the functions assigned to it under its Statute in an evolving international environment.

133. In particular, he praised the Agency's efforts to consolidate international cooperation in support of peaceful and safe uses of nuclear energy in the areas of development, the economy and human health. He also commended its continuous efforts to maintain international security and to free the world from nuclear weapons, as well as the excellent cooperation between the United Arab Emirates and the Agency on the funding of a number of technical cooperation projects under the national, regional and interregional cooperation programmes. Training opportunities had enabled a large number of national specialists to enhance their expertise in many different areas. His country trusted that the Agency would continue to provide that kind of support so that it could establish an advanced technological infrastructure for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It also hoped that the Agency would support the technical cooperation projects submitted by the United Arab Emirates for 2007 and 2008.

134. His country had hosted a number of scientific workshops and regional meetings in recent years under the auspices of the Agency and had made available human and scientific resources for training purposes. He thanked the Agency's Department of Technical Cooperation for its assistance in organizing the courses and meetings concerned. The United Arab Emirates demonstrated its support for the Agency's development programmes by punctually paying its contributions.

135. His country supported the Agency's efforts to apply safeguards to all nuclear activities in the Middle East as a necessary step towards the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in general and nuclear weapons in particular. He expressed concern about the international community's failure to respond to Arab initiatives aimed at the application of the safeguards system to all nuclear activities in the region.

136. Mr. OLIVEIRA (ABACC) said that, in the fifteen years since its creation, ABACC had been successfully applying the Common System of Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (SCCC), that had been created by the related Agreement between the Republic of Argentina and the Federative Republic of Brazil that had entered into force in December 1991. The Quadripartite Agreement, which was the legal instrument that regulated the relationship between ABACC and the Agency and defined the cooperation activities that should be implemented in relation to nuclear safeguards, had been signed in the same month. That Agreement was based on the SCCC and aimed at avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort.

137. Fifteen years after its creation, ABACC could demonstrate to the world the significant experience it had gained in carrying out its mandate. During that time, it had become a highly credible bi-national safeguards implementation organization that contributed to the international non-proliferation regime. Thus it was able to assert with certainty that both countries had carried out their nuclear activities in compliance with all their safeguards and non-proliferation obligations. However,

that did not mean that ABACC's mission had drawn to an end. Rather, safeguarding the nuclear installations of both countries was an ongoing and challenging task. Both countries supported that work by providing human and financial resources and the required scientific and technical infrastructure.

138. One of the greatest challenges facing ABACC had been to maintain the quality of its work and the technical competency of its technical personnel and inspectors. Thus, ABACC had been developing an intensive training programme since its conception, in line with constantly changing technology and safeguards concepts. That training programme had also been opened to Agency inspectors, thus facilitating the use of common procedures for auditing accounting records, operating equipment and carrying out inspections. Argentina and Brazil had on various occasions emphasized the importance of continually improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the work of ABACC and the Agency to avoid duplication of inspection efforts.

139. During the preceding session of the General Conference, ABACC had highlighted the work being done by ABACC, the Agency and the National Nuclear Energy Commission of Brazil to develop a safeguards approach for the first commercial uranium enrichment plant in Brazil under the Quadripartite Agreement. On 23 March 2006, that safeguards approach had been approved and the basis for the implementation of the inspection regime agreed upon. Since that time, ABACC had provided the elements needed to complete the installation of the surveillance system, which had been validated and verified by the Agency. ABACC, together with the Agency and the National Nuclear Energy Commission of Brazil, had organized the first training course on inspection procedures for the enrichment plant, allowing the entry into force of the unannounced inspection regime for that installation. That showed what could be achieved through open and constructive dialogue.

140. With regard to future activities, ABACC would be holding a meeting of its technical subcommittee on 26 and 27 September 2006, with the participation of the Agency and the national authorities of Argentina and Brazil. Since the Agency was hoping to implement its new safeguards approach based on short-notice random inspections as of January 2007, it was hoped that meeting would facilitate a fruitful discussion with the national authorities on the relevant points of the new approach, so as to make progress on its implementation. That meeting would also be an appropriate forum to exchange views on other safeguards-related issues, such as the remote transmission of the operational status of modern surveillance systems. As surveillance systems with those and other remote capabilities had been installed at the Embalse nuclear power plant in Argentina and the commercial uranium enrichment plant in Brazil, it was hoped that the next meeting would establish the appropriate conditions for testing remote transmission in order to facilitate the implementation of that capability in the near future. ABACC hoped that the subcommittee meeting would give rise to initiatives and clear guidelines which would facilitate the continued efficient and effective regional implementation of safeguards. Flexible communication between both agencies was essential in that regard.

141. In conclusion, he recognized the contribution of Dr. Jorge Antonio Coll, the first Secretary of ABACC, who had passed away in the course of the year.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.