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President: Mr. MINTY (South Africa)

Later: Ms. GERVAIS-VIDRICAIRE (Canada)
Mr. BAZOBERRY OTERO (Bolivia)

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¹ GC(50)/21.

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Abbreviations used in this record:

AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARASIA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Arab States in Asia for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARCAL	Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
Assistance Convention	Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency
Basic Safety Standards	International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
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
Early Notification Convention	Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident
EU	European Union
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
HEU	high-enriched uranium
ICT	information and communication technology
ICTP	International Centre for Theoretical Physics (Trieste)
INLEX	International Expert Group on Nuclear Liability
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
IPF	indicative planning figure
IPPAS	International Physical Protection Advisory Service
ITER	International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor

Abbreviations used in this record: (continued)

LEU	low-enriched uranium
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NPCs	national participation costs
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
SESAME	Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East
SIT	sterile insect technique
SQP	small quantities protocol
SSAC	State system of accounting for and control of nuclear material
TACIS	Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
WHO	World Health Organization
WWER	water cooled water moderated reactor (former USSR)

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

1. Mr. ISOUN (Nigeria) welcomed the crucial role the Agency continued to play as a catalyst for the transfer of nuclear technology for socio-economic development, especially in the application of nuclear techniques and radioisotopes to increase food production, for disease control and eradication, water resources management and environmental protection. His country appreciated the decision to award the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize to the Agency and Director General and considered that the 50th anniversary of the organization provided a golden opportunity to strengthen the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. He urged the Agency not to rest on its laurels but to continue to exploit and expand the range of opportunities provided by nuclear technology.

2. Nigeria continued to be concerned about the devastating effects of pests such as tsetse flies and malaria-transmitting mosquitoes on human and livestock development in Africa, as they constituted a major obstacle to poverty alleviation. It appreciated the efforts made by the Agency in the 2005–2006 biennium to support PATTEC using both the TCF and extrabudgetary contributions and was grateful to those countries that had made extrabudgetary contributions. He also thanked the FAO and the WHO for participating in the campaign.

3. Remarkable success had been achieved in the area-wide application of the SIT to create a tsetse-free zone in Africa, and Nigeria welcomed the feasibility study on development of the SIT for the control and eradication of malaria-transmitting mosquitoes. Research and development in that area had already commenced in both the laboratory and the field, and he urged development partners to allocate sufficient financial, technical and material resources to promote the implementation of the study as early as possible.

4. The Nigerian Gamma Irradiation Facility had been licensed to operate and had been opened by the Nigerian President in July 2006. The multi-purpose facility was intended for both industrial and research applications, had an innovative design with significantly enhanced versatility and was thus able irradiate a wide spectrum of products. Its main features included the 340 kilocurie cobalt-60 radiation source (upgradeable to 1000 kilocurie), fully automated operation and adequate laboratories to support comprehensive research and development activities. He called upon the Agency to support the building of the requisite capacity for the effective utilization of the gamma radiation facility, particularly in the application of SIT for eradication of tsetse flies and malaria-transmitting mosquitoes, and invited the Agency to use the facility, which had the capacity to serve the entire African continent and the neighbouring region as a sterile insect breeder. Nigeria welcomed the report of the Agency's April 2006 expert mission to make an initial assessment of the application of the SIT for control of mosquitoes and it would like the Agency to follow up on that mission with greater specificity and focus.

5. The miniature neutron source reactor in Zaria had been operating safely for over two years and was making a valuable contribution to the socio-economic development of Nigeria in areas such as soil fertility studies, geothermal mapping and education and manpower development.

6. Nigeria was committed to exploring the role of nuclear power in its future energy plans, while remaining fully committed to the NPT and the Pelindaba Treaty. His country's President had re-confirmed Nigeria's non-proliferation credentials in July 2006 during the inauguration of the Board of the Nigeria Atomic Energy Commission. On that occasion, the President had requested that the

Commission provide the necessary institutional framework to explore, exploit and harness nuclear energy for peaceful applications for the socio-economic development of Nigeria. It was expected that Nigeria would continue to enjoy the support and cooperation of the Agency and the international community in achieving its development objectives.

7. His country was mindful that the adoption of nuclear technology had global implications requiring bilateral and multilateral cooperation for a coordinated approach within the framework of the Agency. It therefore was seeking a partnership with the Agency in order to foster ties with other interested Member States with a view to cooperation on the development of a sustainable nuclear energy programme, in order to ensure that the key components of its obligations to the international community in the areas of safety and security, and safeguards, were entrenched in the programme.

8. In a bid to reassure neighbours in Africa and the international community of the peaceful nature of its energy plans, Nigeria had organized an international workshop in June 2006 on the Pelindaba Treaty, which it had been one of the first African countries to sign and ratify. The objective of the workshop had been to raise awareness among African States of the need to bring the Treaty into force 10 years after it had been opened for signature. Representatives from African diplomatic missions in Nigeria, the permanent members of the Security Council, Spain, Portugal and the Agency had all attended.

9. He welcomed the special event on assurance of supply and non-proliferation which was being held during the General Conference. The initiatives in that area seemed to be enjoying growing support among Member States and Nigeria was prepared to join the discussions on the understanding that the legal and technical implications would be explored in a transparent manner.

10. With regard to radiation protection, the Nigerian Nuclear Regulatory Authority had set in motion the process to ratify and accede to the relevant treaties and additional instruments necessary for the implementation of a successful national nuclear power programme, including the Early Notification Convention and the Assistance Convention. It had hosted a technical meeting on the ratification of the outstanding international legislative requirements for a sustainable and successful nuclear power programme in August 2006 which had been attended by all stakeholders. Nigeria had also established an SSAC and submitted annual reports to the Agency.

11. Radiation safety regulations for diagnostic and interventional radiology, industrial radiology, radiotherapy and nuclear medicine in Nigeria had been officially published and efforts intensified to develop an adequate technical framework for a national audit of the radiation safety of selected interventional radiology facilities and nuclear gauges in the manufacturing sector, with a view to the creation of a complete database of all users of ionizing radiation in the country. A good measure of sustainable occupational exposure control had been achieved by accrediting dosimetry service providers within the country, and efforts to promote a culture of radiation protection and safety to strengthen national capacity for the provision of dosimetry services were ongoing. Regulatory guidance for dosimetry service providers was being developed. The scope of the national calibration laboratory was being expanded, for which exercise the Agency was providing expert services for evaluation.

12. The NPT was the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the Agency's safeguards system was an essential instrument for ensuring compliance with the Treaty. Nigeria encouraged all States that had made a non-proliferation commitment to fulfil their legal obligations by concluding the required agreements. It called upon States outside the system to adhere strictly to the nuclear non-proliferation regime and thereby contribute to international peace and security. Nigeria had signed an additional protocol in 2001. With the cooperation of all Member States, the Agency

should continue to do its utmost to maintain public confidence by maintaining the safeguards system and ensuring global peace and security.

13. Turning to the proposed TCF target figure of US \$80 million for the 2007–2008 biennium, he said that, although it represented an increase over the target for 2005–2006 in numerical terms, in real terms it reflected zero real growth, taking into account the increasing needs and requests of Member States for technical assistance. He called on all Member States to reconsider the matter and contribute more resources to the TCF to enable the Agency to carry out its very important activities in that area in the future. Nigeria intended to pledge to the TCF a sum equal to its assessed contribution for the year 2007.

14. Mr. GONZÁLEZ BERMÚDEZ (Cuba) said the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Agency was an appropriate occasion to recognize the Agency's important role in promoting peace and development. The award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Agency and its Director General in 2005 had rightly recognized the Agency's work and, in that connection, he welcomed the establishment of the IAEA Nobel Cancer and Nutrition Fund.

15. The Annual Report for 2005 highlighted the growing expectations of nuclear power worldwide. Cuba supported all actions, including those relating to public information and popularization, designed to ensure that nuclear energy played a decisive role in global energy development.

16. A greater effort should be made to counteract the negative image of the Agency in the media as a 'nuclear watchdog', which distorted its verification and safeguards mandate and obscured its work to promote the peaceful applications of nuclear energy.

17. The resurgence of interest in nuclear power was linked to the issue of assurances of supply of nuclear fuel, which should not be allowed to become the monopoly of the few. His country recognized the Secretariat's efforts to analyse that complex and delicate issue. It was important that all interested Member States take an active and transparent part in that analysis. Any decision should be taken by consensus and win the approval of the Agency's Policy-Making Organs.

18. Cuba was particularly interested in nuclear techniques and their applications in such areas as health, food and agriculture, industry, hydrology and environmental protection. His Government was trying to revitalize those areas and had invested significantly in diagnostic and therapeutic equipment for hospitals in the country. It attached great importance to the PACT programme and stressed the need to provide adequate funding for it.

19. It was important to maintain a balance between the Agency's statutory activities. In that context, he emphasized the importance of technical cooperation for developing countries. Cuba gave a high priority to technical cooperation, as demonstrated by its full and timely compliance with its commitments to the TCF, the full payment of its NPCs, the 87% implementation rate for its national projects, and its provision of more than 300 experts over 10 years for technical missions to other countries, despite the unjust and destructive economic, commercial and financial sanctions imposed upon it by the United States which made acquiring equipment difficult and hindered the participation of Cuban experts in Agency events. He thanked the Secretariat for their tireless efforts in seeking solutions to those problems. Cuba attached special importance to cooperation between developing countries and therefore supported ARCAL. It hoped that the restructuring of the Department of Technical Cooperation would help strengthen and increase efficiency in that area.

20. His country was committed to the complete, unconditional and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons. Many countries that shared that goal had placed their hopes in the NPT. Cuba had always considered the NPT to be insufficient and discriminatory. However, as a sign of its commitment to multilateralism, it had adhered to the Treaty and had ratified the Tlatelolco Treaty. It complied strictly

with its commitments under those Treaties and its comprehensive safeguards agreement and additional protocol.

21. Cuba shared the frustration of a large number of countries regarding the lack of progress with respect to disarmament and the prevailing tendency to focus efforts on non-proliferation. Disarmament and non-proliferation had received special attention at the recent 14th summit of Heads of State or Government of the NAM held in Havana. The documents from that meeting would be distributed shortly but he wished to highlight some of the views expressed on disarmament and the Agency. The NAM Heads of State or Government had reaffirmed their positions of principle on nuclear disarmament, which continued to be NAM's highest priority, and the related issue of nuclear non-proliferation. They had emphasized their concern regarding the threat to humanity posed by the existence of nuclear weapons, their possible use, or the threat of their use. They had expressed profound concern over the slow progress towards nuclear disarmament and the lack of progress by the nuclear-weapon States toward eliminating their arsenals. They had reaffirmed the inalienable right of developing countries to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and had expressed concern over continuing excessive restrictions on the export of material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes to developing countries. They had emphasized that proliferation concerns would be better met through multilateral, universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory agreements, that non-proliferation agreements should be transparent and open to all States, and that no restriction should be imposed on access to material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes required by developing countries to further their development. They had rejected the attempts of any Member State to use the Agency's technical cooperation programme as a political tool in violation of the Agency's Statute. They had emphasized the positive role played by NAM members in the Agency and had noted the need for all members to respect the Statute. They had stressed that the Agency's activities should not be subjected to any pressure or improper interference, especially in the area of verification, that could jeopardize the organization's efficiency and credibility. They had recognized that the Agency was the only competent authority to verify compliance with obligations entered into under safeguards agreements and had reaffirmed the need to make a clear distinction between such legal obligations and voluntary commitments. Finally they had congratulated the Agency and its Director General on receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005 and had expressed their full confidence in the impartiality and professionalism of the Agency. Following the summit, Cuba was taking over the presidency of NAM for the coming 3 years and, consequently, would be coordinating the work of the Vienna Chapter. He thanked Malaysia for its leadership of NAM in recent years.

22. Mr. KADIMAN (Indonesia) said that, over the past 50 years, the Agency had contributed greatly to the advancement of humanity through nuclear applications, promoting socio-economic development, maintaining world peace and security and promoting the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. He thanked and congratulated the Director General, Agency staff and Member States for contributing effectively to the success of the Agency's programmes, which had been recognized by the award of the Nobel Peace Prize 2005.

23. Like other developing countries, Indonesia attached particular importance to technical cooperation with the Agency, which was the basic instrument for promoting peaceful uses of atomic energy for sustainable socio-economic development in Member States. In that connection, his country welcomed the agreement reached on the level of the TCF for 2007–2008 and the IPFs for 2009–2011. The consensus figures confirmed the commitment of Member States to the Agency's technical cooperation activities. Any decrease in the support for the TCF would be detrimental to developing Member States and would undermine technical cooperation activities, leading to a serious imbalance in the Agency's main functions. The Agency should be provided with sufficient, assured and predictable resources for those activities. Thanking all countries that had made their contributions

regularly to the TCF in full and on time, he noted that Indonesia had consistently met its financial obligations to the Fund and would continue to do so.

24. Decisions on TCF targets and IPFs should take account of the importance of maintaining a balance between the Agency's various statutory activities and the need to promote technical cooperation. Efforts to make TCF resources more predictable and assured should aim at strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of the Agency's technical cooperation activities and should not impose an additional financial burden on Member States, especially developing countries.

25. Certain emerging issues, including funding for the PACT programme, had financial implications. Bearing in mind the crucial importance of fighting cancer, Indonesia supported the proposal that the Board should authorize the use of part of the 2004 Regular Budget surplus to cover the costs of PACT in 2006 and 2007. His country looked forward to an early agreement on the funding of the programme.

26. The Agency had embarked on a new approach to improve CPFs. His country welcomed the publication of the CPF operational guidelines as a tool to develop a systematic process that could lead to a specific and detailed plan of action for a technical cooperation project concept. However, the experience and difficulties in developing the Programme Cycle Management Framework should be taken into account to facilitate the successful implementation of the new approach.

27. Since its inception, the Agency had witnessed population growth and rising demands for energy to improve living standards. Nuclear technology played an important and often unique role in many aspects of human life, both as regards its potential for meeting global energy demands and through non-energy applications. Experience had shown that traditional energy sources were inadequate to meet demand.

28. Against that backdrop, Indonesia was developing its nuclear energy programme and was building nuclear power plants due to become operational in 2016. Government regulations on the licensing of nuclear reactors would be signed by the President shortly. Presidential Decree No. 7 on the national energy policy relating to nuclear power plants had been enacted early in 2006. His country appreciated the support the Agency was giving through three technical cooperation projects and hoped that that assistance would be further strengthened with a view to enhancing the capability of Indonesia's regulatory authority to develop standard specifications and train qualified staff to supervise and operate nuclear power plants. Intensive bilateral and multilateral cooperation with countries with greater experience in the field was also crucial.

29. Agency technical cooperation had contributed considerably to increasing Member States' capacities in the field of nuclear applications, which had improved quality of life especially in developing countries. His country welcomed the Agency's efforts in that regard and appreciated in particular its support for radiation-induced breeding of new varieties of plants. The cultivation of biofuel plants was in line with Indonesia's recently formulated Green Energy Action Plan, which aimed at developing alternative energy sources, especially for transportation and electricity. Over 25 new and improved varieties of staple food crops had been released in 2005. Indonesia had planted high-quality mutant rice varieties which were expected to cover an area of 1 million hectares by the end of 2006.

30. Indonesia appreciated the Agency's support in ensuring the safety of nuclear installations. Information provided by the Asian Nuclear Safety Network was disseminated to Indonesian universities and the academic community in order to preserve and share nuclear safety knowledge among young people. In addition, a website had been established to share his country's experience and knowledge on nuclear safety.

31. In 2005, the Agency had maintained a good record on safe operation of research reactors and Indonesia welcomed in particular the implementation of the national project on inspection procedures and methods for assessing the condition of reactor tank liners. With the assistance of the United States Department of Energy, Indonesia had improved the operational safety and security of its three research reactors.
32. His country continued to support the Agency's INPRO activities and welcomed the application of the INPRO user methodology in multiple contexts as part of assessing innovative nuclear systems.
33. Turning to the issue of radiation safety and security, he noted that Indonesia had established an information system on licensing and inspection of radiation facilities and radioactive sources. In cooperation with the Agency, it had carried out a field exercise on radiation dispersion devices in the Jakarta Province and had successfully conducted a training course for first responders to radiological emergencies.
34. Although his country was pleased that the issue of denial of shipments had been resolved successfully, the security aspect of transport of radioactive material should be addressed as a priority. Security was also a concern when transporting radioactive waste from remote areas to centralized waste management sites. With regard to the security of radioactive sources, Indonesia was revising its regulations on the safety of ionizing radiation and security of radioactive sources based on the Agency's Basic Safety Standards.
35. His country appreciated the work undertaken by the Agency in the area of nuclear safety and security, and safeguards and verification to ensure non-proliferation. However, proliferation concerns and safeguard issues were best addressed through multilaterally negotiated, universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory agreements. Non-proliferation control arrangements should be transparent and open to the participation of all States and should not impose restrictions on access to material, equipment and technology. As a party to the NPT and a safeguards agreement and additional protocol, Indonesia supported the inalienable right of all States to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with the NPT. Nothing in that Treaty should be interpreted as affecting that right, which constituted one of its fundamental objectives. Each country's decision in that regard should be respected, without jeopardizing its policies, international cooperation agreements, arrangements for peaceful uses of nuclear energy or its fuel cycle policies.
36. Indonesia was gravely concerned about the stagnation of the peace process in the Middle East and the continuing flagrant violation by Israel of international law. It endorsed the declaration adopted by the 14th NAM summit in Havana calling for intensified international efforts to revive the peace process and ensure respect for international law. Resumption of the peace process was crucial to peace and stability in the region.
37. The lack of progress with regard to full implementation of Agency safeguards in the Middle East as a result of Israel's continuing intransigence was also regrettable. Israel's deplorable attitude reflected a total disregard for the needs and concerns of the international community. The Director General should continue to work towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East as a matter of urgency. All parties concerned should implement the General Conference resolutions concerning the application of comprehensive IAEA safeguards in the Middle East. He urged Israel to place all its nuclear installations under Agency safeguards and to accede to the NPT without delay.
38. The denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula was crucial to maintaining peace and stability in that region. All parties should sustain their efforts in pursuit of that goal, especially through the six-party talks. Indonesia endorsed the support expressed by NAM leaders at the Havana Summit for

the joint statement of principles on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula of 19 September 2005 and called for its expeditious and faithful implementation.

Ms. Gervais-Vidricaire (Canada), Vice-President, took the Chair.

39. Mr. KIRAKOSSIAN (Armenia) congratulated all Member States and the staff on the Agency's 50th anniversary. The Agency played a very important role in non-proliferation, verification and safety and security. In retrospect, it was clear that the decision to establish the Agency had been a very important one. Since that time, the Agency had carried out thousands of missions all over the world and had improved the safety and security of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The NPT, comprehensive safeguards agreements, additional protocols and the CTBT were the main legal instruments guiding the Agency's work. Armenia had recently ratified the CTBT and appealed to all States which had not yet done so to sign and ratify the Treaty as evidence of their peaceful intentions and cooperation in the field of nuclear energy.

40. The Agency's strength was that it had been a forum for dialogue and diplomacy rather than conflict and confrontation, and it should remain so in the future as current and future challenges would require the Agency to make fair and transparent assessments of nuclear issues. The award of the Nobel Peace Prize bore testimony to the international community's recognition of the Agency's professionalism and the dedication of its staff. That notwithstanding, additional efforts should be made to improve further the safety and security of nuclear energy and the fuel cycle, particularly at a time when there was more intense cooperation in the international community to combat terrorism and other new threats. In coming years, the energy market would come to rely on nuclear power to a greater extent. In the past, the use of nuclear power had been restricted to a few countries, but an increasing number of developing countries were implementing ambitious plans to construct nuclear power plants. It was therefore important to upgrade the safety and security of nuclear power plant operation and to combat illicit trafficking in nuclear material and other radioactive sources.

41. The recent visit by the Director General to Armenia had resulted in very fruitful discussions. It had become clear that there was a certain lack of coordination with respect to various activities and projects for Armenia. In order to make international assistance more efficient, the Director General had, in December 2005, convened a special technical meeting for the coordination of international assistance to the Armenian nuclear power plant in which representatives of various Agency divisions and donor countries had participated. The summary of the meeting had presented a careful analysis of design, seismic, and operational safety issues, and regulatory issues, and of the relationship between safety issues in IAEA TECDOCs and the Armenian nuclear power plant upgrading programme. Under that programme, his country had committed itself to implementing a number of additional measures aimed at upgrading the safety of the power plant and the Armenian Government had allocated an additional US \$1.8 million for the purpose. The measures were due to be implemented in October 2006 during the plant's annual outage and refuelling. The next technical meeting for coordination of international assistance was to be held in Yerevan in October 2006 and would consider the measures already taken and make further recommendations. The Armenian power plant had been licenced by the Armenian National Regulatory Authority in 2006.

42. In the field of the protection of radioactive sources, an inventory of existing radioactive sources had been taken and orphan sources were being investigated as part of an ongoing project.

43. In 2006, Armenia had taken up chairmanship of the Cooperation Forum for WWER Regulators and had hosted the 13th annual meeting in Yerevan in June. The Forum allowed regulators to share experiences and exchange relevant information and knowledge. The discussions had been very fruitful and transparent, and three new Member States — China, India and Iran — had joined the Forum.

44. Armenia was grateful to the Agency for the assistance it provided, in particular for its nuclear power plant. With the assistance of the Department of Technical Cooperation and Armenia's permanent partners, a number of projects had been prepared and implemented in various fields. A project had been approved for the next biennium for a feasibility study for nuclear energy development in Armenia which would assess the cost of constructing new nuclear reactors taking into account existing infrastructure and the professionalism of the staff operating the Armenian nuclear power plant. The political instability in the region and the continued attempts by two neighbouring countries to isolate the country economically meant that the feasibility study was highly important for Armenia's future energy policy. Under the 2006–2007 TACIS programme, his Government was working on a project to assist the Armenian Nuclear Regulatory Authority with the development of a decommissioning plan for Unit 2 of the Armenian nuclear power plant.

45. Armenia took a great interest in the INPRO project and, in view of its importance for countries planning to develop nuclear energy, felt that the General Conference and the Board should avail themselves of any opportunity to allocate funds from the Regular Budget so that INPRO did not have to rely exclusively on extrabudgetary contributions.

46. He conveyed the sincere gratitude of his Government to all donor countries, especially those with which it had been cooperating on a bilateral basis since operation of the Armenian nuclear power plant had resumed in 1995. The assistance provided by the Czech Republic, the United States, France, Slovakia, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and Bulgaria had been very important for the country.

47. Mr. WASZCZYKOWSKI (Poland), having congratulated the Director General and the Agency on the award of the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize, said that recent years had demonstrated the vital role of the Agency in verifying non-proliferation commitments and providing assurances to the international community regarding the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear material and facilities. The award had also provided an excellent opportunity for the Agency to promote its work in nuclear sciences and applications. Poland welcomed the Board's decision to use the prize money for the IAEA Nobel Cancer and Nutrition Fund, to which Poland would make a substantial voluntary contribution. To mark the 50th anniversary of the Agency, Poland together with France, had donated a bust of the double Nobel Prize winner, Maria Skłodowska-Curie, to the Agency.

48. A universal nuclear non-proliferation regime backed by a strong international safeguards system was an essential basis for global efforts to strengthen and maintain security by pursuing, inter alia, nuclear disarmament in line with Article VI of the NPT. Poland deeply regretted the failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference, which did not however change the position of the Agency as the organization responsible for implementing comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols. His country strongly supported the universal introduction of integrated safeguards. It had had a bilateral additional protocol in force since 2000 and had recently completed internal ratification of the trilateral safeguards agreement and related additional protocol between the European Atomic Energy Community, EU Member States and the Agency. He urged all States which had not concluded safeguards agreements and additional protocols to do so as soon as possible. He also encouraged the States concerned to sign and implement the modified version of the SQP. The Agency's safeguards system had to adapt to new challenges and the creation of the Advisory Committee on Safeguards and Verification within the Framework of the IAEA Statute was a step in the right direction. Finally, he appealed to all countries recognizing the importance and legitimacy of the CTBT to adhere to it.

49. The role of the Agency in verifying the nature, scope and direction of programmes which might lead to the proliferation of nuclear weapons and capabilities was vital. Knowledge of the DPRK's nuclear activities had become drastically limited following the expulsion of the Agency's inspectors in 2003. The Director General's professional and comprehensive reports on the implementation of

safeguards in Iran provided the international community with the information needed to devise a solution which would contribute to international peace and security while addressing legitimate needs for the peaceful applications of nuclear energy. Poland strongly supported the actions taken by both the Agency and the United Nations, whose resolutions should be respected and implemented. It also supported the diplomatic efforts undertaken by a group of countries with the direct and active involvement of the EU High Representative. Furthermore, his country was disturbed by the recent trends in the proliferation of uranium enrichment technologies. It strongly supported the initiatives relating to assurance of nuclear fuel supplies, which would enable countries with modest nuclear energy programmes to forgo such proliferation-sensitive technologies.

50. The Agency played an important role in planning and coordinating efforts to protect against nuclear terrorism. The CPPNM, as amended in 2005, was a valuable instrument in that regard. Poland had signed the amendment and the ratification procedure would soon be complete. It hoped that other States party to the Convention would do the same. In order to limit the amount of HEU in its peaceful applications, as part of its involvement in the Global Threat Reduction Initiative, Poland had decided to convert its research reactor core to use LEU fuel, and the transfer of its unirradiated HEU fuel stockpiles to the Russian Federation had been completed in August 2006. It was grateful to all parties involved in that process. It had also taken note of the new initiative announced by the United States of America and the Russian Federation to combat nuclear terrorism and looked forward to the first meeting under that initiative in October 2006. Poland had also made a voluntary contribution to the Nuclear Security Fund in 2005.

51. His country attached great importance to the role of international legal instruments in ensuring the safety and security of nuclear material and facilities worldwide. It welcomed the results of the third review meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the review meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. It also strongly supported the Agency's safety standards and encouraged Member States to apply them voluntarily. Twenty years after the Chernobyl disaster, he urged those States which had not yet done so to sign and ratify the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency.

52. Poland was reconsidering the nuclear power option and therefore wished to reactivate its nuclear research and education activities. Initiatives like the regional networks and the nuclear knowledge packages proposed during the conference on nuclear knowledge management held in Saclay, France, in 2004, or the education and training activities organized by the ICTP could be very valuable in that context. A conference on nuclear power plants for Poland had recently been held in Warsaw and recent meetings and discussions on the application of high-temperature reactor technologies to the reprocessing of hard coal and for hydrogen production could provide important new solutions for Poland, as one of the world's leading coal producers.

53. Technical cooperation remained an important Agency activity. He noted with satisfaction that the Agency had made considerable progress towards increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the technical cooperation programme and hoped that the restructuring of the Department of Technical Cooperation and the new Programme Cycle Management Framework would contribute to that aim.

54. The financing of technical cooperation activities should be assured, sufficient and predictable, and all Member States should demonstrate their commitment to the programme by paying their TCF target shares on time and in full. As in previous years, Poland was prepared to pledge and pay its target share.

55. Mr. SKOKNIC (Chile) conveyed his country's congratulations to the Director General and all the staff at the Agency for their productive and professional work on the occasion of the organization's 50th anniversary. The award of the Nobel Peace Prize undoubtedly constituted one of the most important landmarks in the Agency's history and was a deserved recognition of the prestige and significance of the Agency's work under the competent and balanced leadership of its Director General. The Agency's achievements over the preceding five decades had been significant, particularly in the areas of non-proliferation, application of safeguards, and technical assistance and cooperation for the development and implementation of nuclear technologies, and they had contributed to improving the welfare of all countries. However, despite the progress made, there was still a long way to go. Chile remained dedicated to achieving worldwide peace and security based on the application of international law. The best way of contributing to that objective was by ratifying the relevant international legal instruments, in particular those concerning the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

56. Chile, together with the other States in the Latin American and the Caribbean region, had maintained a common vision regarding the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear energy and it was profoundly pacifist in its unconditional compliance with international law. Thus, it had signed and ratified the NPT and the Tlatelolco Treaty, through which the Latin American and Caribbean region had become the first densely populated region in the world to be declared free of nuclear weapons. In addition, it had ratified the CTBT. Chile was also party to other international instruments in the fields of nuclear and radiation safety, emergency assistance, civil liability for nuclear damage and the physical protection of nuclear material. That legal framework should become the basis for a safer and more predictable international situation.

57. Chile's commitment did not end with the ratification of such international legal instruments. It was making a serious effort to apply them rigorously within the country and to disseminate the benefits of the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear energy by participating in various regional cooperation projects. The importance of renouncing the use of nuclear energy for military purposes could not and should not be used as an argument for limiting or preventing scientific research and the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, which right all States enjoyed under the NPT.

58. Chile believed that the main challenge facing the Agency's safeguards regime was the need to gain more international support. That meant more States signing and subsequently ratifying comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols. Strengthening verification capacities and international safeguards instruments should include strengthening the SQP, which was currently not an effective instrument. For that reason, Chile supported giving the Agency more authority to carry out on-site verification activities.

59. His country had signed and ratified an additional protocol with the Agency, which had entered into force in April 2004. Since then, Chile had complied fully with the schedule established by the Agency, supplying all the declarations requested. During the annual safeguards visit to the facilities of the Chilean Nuclear Energy Commission, the inspections required under the additional protocol had been performed with satisfactory results.

60. The issue of the application of safeguards in Iran continued to be of concern to the international community. The Director General's various reports on the matter, as well as the resolutions of the Board of Governors and subsequently of the United Nations Security Council, had been clear in calling on Iran to collaborate fully and transparently with the Agency and to provide the information required to clarify the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear development plan. It was regrettable that the Agency had not received the cooperation requested and he urged Iran to meet the Agency's requirements in line with its international obligations as soon as possible. Chile had observed with interest the recent meetings between the European and Iranian authorities and hoped that the problem

of Iran's nuclear programme could be overcome through constructive dialogue with the cooperation of the international community.

61. All States were affected by the challenge that terrorism posed to security, the prevalence of which obliged governments to be on constant alert. Alongside all domestic measures that governments could adopt, international agreements were invaluable instruments for international cooperation in the fight against terrorism and the protection of citizens against terrorist acts. Chile had signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, the thirteenth anti-terrorist instrument adopted by the United Nations, after it had been approved by consensus at the General Assembly.

62. His country attached high priority to the safe transport of nuclear material, which was why it had insisted on the need to keep the topic on the Agency's agenda. An appropriate framework for such transport had to include clear regulations for transport of radioactive material, covering protection of the marine environment, and rules to prevent pollution, timely information on the choice and frequency of use of maritime routes and information on volumes of cargo, inter alia. The consultations between representatives of coastal and shipping States that had been taking place within the framework of the Agency were proving very useful. It was to be hoped that they would continue, since they served to maintain an atmosphere of trust that facilitated a rapprochement on politically sensitive issues.

63. Technical cooperation and nuclear technology applications in Chile had been given new impetus by the creation of the Chilean Nuclear Energy Commission in 1964. During the 42 years of the Commission's existence, progress had been made on the production of radioisotopes and radiopharmaceuticals, the application of tracers in medicine, mining, industry, the environment and agriculture, and the use of intense gamma-ray sources to preserve and sterilize food and pharmaceutical and medical products. That had all been made possible thanks to the valuable support of the Agency. Since the 1980s, Chile had taken part in 108 national projects and 81 regional and interregional projects.

64. In the coming years, the Agency's technical assistance programme would be focusing on physical infrastructure and training of human resources. Recently, in line with the new technical cooperation strategies established by the Agency, Chile had attempted to solve problems with an economic and social impact in sectors related to the country's development, such as health, agriculture, industry, mining, water resources and the environment. In view of the various free trade agreements the country had signed, Chile's projects relating to the export of agricultural products were aimed at meeting export market requirements in terms of quality, hygiene and food safety, in particular with regard to the use of chemicals. Chile's technical cooperation programme for the 2007-2008 biennium focused on development areas of national priority based on the country's CPF, which had been signed in September 2005. Those areas included strengthening of the nuclear safety regulatory infrastructure, management of low- and intermediate-level radioactive waste, and nuclear applications to consolidate techniques for the detection and early warning of red tide. Aware as it was of the importance of technical cooperation, Chile was up to date with its commitments to the TCF. The ARCAL agreement, which had been ratified by Chile in November 2005, played an important role in regional cooperation.

65. Unfortunately, in December 2005 there had been a radiological accident in a national enterprise in the south of Chile and workers had been exposed to radiation from a source from a piece of industrial equipment. The relevant authorities had taken urgent measures to protect the workers' health and evaluate the magnitude of the accident. They had notified the Agency in good time and requested assistance, under the relevant conventions. The Agency had responded to the request immediately by sending a multidisciplinary expert mission comprising professionals from France, Argentina, Brazil

and Russia, which had arrived in Chile only four days after the accident and had carried out various tasks. Chile was grateful to the Agency and its outstanding professional staff for their swift response and appreciated the recommendations of the mission, which had visited the country twice. It was also grateful to the Governments of France, Argentina, Brazil and Mexico for the solidarity they had shown during those months, and to the doctors and medical team at the Percy military hospital in Paris, France, for successfully treating the worst affected patient. Chile had learnt many lessons from that regrettable incident, which it hoped would never be repeated. With that in mind, an Agency mission had evaluated the country's management system for nuclear and radiological emergencies, and the Nuclear and Radiation Safety Department of the Chilean Nuclear Energy Commission had been reorganized.

66. In May 2006, the conversion of the RECH-1 research reactor, which was located in Santiago and belonged to Chilean Nuclear Energy Commission, to the use of LEU had been completed. That marked the end of a process that had begun 20 years previously and showed the country's commitment to a peaceful nuclear policy and to non-proliferation. In that connection, Chile appreciated the efforts of the Norwegian Government which, in collaboration with the Agency, had organized a seminar and technical workshop on fuel conversion.

67. Mr. ZNIBER (Morocco) commended the Agency on its many achievements in carrying out its noble, yet delicate mission of strengthening peace and security in the world. The award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Agency and its Director General had been a just recognition of their work. Notwithstanding the challenges in a difficult international context, the Agency should continue its efforts to promote the goal of Atoms for Peace while maintaining a balance between the three main pillars of its activities, and Member States should provide it with the financial, staffing, political and moral support it needed.

68. The verification activities entrusted to the Agency by the international community played a key role in efforts to safeguard international peace and security. The NPT remained the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime, with the safeguards system as its essential instrument.

69. Morocco had supported all initiatives to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, had encouraged all efforts to achieve disarmament and the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and had promoted the introduction of a credible Agency verification regime. It therefore welcomed the conclusion of new safeguards agreements and additional protocols that strengthened the universality of the safeguards system. In cooperation with the Agency, it had organized a seminar on the additional protocol in December 2005 for African officials responsible for safeguards-related issues. The credibility of the safeguards system depended both on its capacity to detect illicit activities and on its universal, transparent and just implementation. Therefore, ways had to be found to encourage States that had not yet done so to adhere to the safeguards system and the additional protocol.

70. It was regrettable that no progress had been made in the implementation of the resolution adopted by the General Conference at its forty-ninth session on the application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East. Israel's persistent refusal to accede to the NPT and place its nuclear installations under Agency safeguards was a serious obstacle to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and to just and sustainable peace in the region. Israel should take urgent steps to rectify that situation. The international community should consider the concerns arising from the deployment of nuclear weapons in the Middle East in a serious, fair and equitable manner.

71. The threat of nuclear terrorism should also be taken seriously and all States should be given the assistance they needed to establish nuclear security infrastructures. He urged States to cooperate fully with the Agency in the physical protection of nuclear material and equipment and in combating illicit

trafficking, with a view to preventing malicious use of nuclear energy. The programmes and tools the Agency had developed in that field, such as missions to assess national infrastructures and nuclear security needs, were commendable and should be developed further.

72. Morocco welcomed the notifications of support by 83 countries for the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and for the establishment of a voluntary information exchange mechanism on application of the Code. His country had been one of the first to notify the Director General of its acceptance of the Code and had hosted a seminar for French-speaking African countries on the protection and control of radioactive sources. He called on Member States to contribute to the full implementation of the Nuclear Security Plan for 2006–2009.

73. His country appreciated the progress made with regard to low- and medium-power reactors. The first Moroccan Triga II-type research reactor would be inaugurated in late 2006 and he thanked the Agency for its assistance with that project.

74. Safety was crucial to the future and public acceptance of nuclear energy and his Government attached special importance to improving domestic legislative and regulatory infrastructure in order to strengthen the peaceful and safe use of nuclear energy. Legislation drafted with the assistance of the Agency was currently being considered for adoption.

75. The progress made in the past year with regard to the safe operation of nuclear power plants and research reactors, transport safety and occupational radiation protection was commendable. Guaranteeing a high level of nuclear safety required continuous efforts and scrupulous respect for international standards. Training and information exchange were vital in that regard and the Agency's activities in that area should continue.

76. As part of its cooperation with the Agency, Morocco would be hosting a regional training course on the Code of Conduct on the Safety of Research Reactors in November 2006. It was also pursuing its training activities for African experts in the field of radiation protection: a fourth postgraduate course was scheduled to commence in October 2006 in Rabat. The Agency should strengthen its technical and financial support for such postgraduate training and might wish to explore the possibility of concluding a long-term agreement to guarantee the continuation of such courses.

77. Currently, nuclear power met only 16% of the world's energy requirements. However, in view of the enormous energy demand, the progress made with regard to the safety and security of nuclear installations and material, and the increased economic competitiveness of nuclear power, considerable growth was expected in that sector, especially in developing countries to meet their rising demand for energy and drinking water. The role of the Agency in that context was twofold: it should step up its efforts to publicize the advantages of nuclear energy compared to other energy sources and to dispel misconceptions about the dangers of nuclear power, and it should strive to ensure that the development of nuclear energy went hand in hand with effective nuclear safety and security and non-proliferation measures.

78. Technological innovation, efforts to reduce the cost and construction time of small and medium-size nuclear facilities, and safety assurances would have a major impact on the attractiveness of nuclear power for developing countries. Morocco was following with interest the progress made with regard to the development of reactors and fuel cycles that allowed the safe, peaceful and environmentally friendly use of nuclear energy, including activities carried out within the framework of the INPRO project and the Generation IV International Forum.

79. It also welcomed the progress made with regard to non-energy applications in the areas of health, the environment and water resources. In the light of the challenges facing humanity in the areas of nutrition, health, water and energy, nuclear technologies had an important role to play.

80. He commended the Agency on its SIT activities which had yielded positive results in terms of health and nutrition in several developing countries, and had had considerable economic impact. The Agency should continue to study the possibility of using nuclear technologies to combat locusts.

81. The African continent had a great need for human resources and equipment. Efforts to strengthen safety and security and reduce proliferation risks should not be allowed to become obstacles to the transfer of technology for peaceful purposes. The right of access to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes was recognized in the NPT.

82. Morocco supported the Agency's technical cooperation programme which enabled developing countries to benefit from atomic energy in a number of areas that were crucial to their socio-economic development. He commended the Agency's efforts to improve the planning and implementation of technical cooperation activities and to promote cooperation with all Member States. It was essential that Member States provide adequate financial resources to enable the Secretariat to meet the ever growing needs of developing countries. All Member States should honour their financial commitments to the Agency and should contribute generously to the TCF in order to ensure that financing of technical cooperation was sufficient, predictable and assured.

83. Although adopted by the Board of Governors in 1998, the amendment of Article VI of the Statute had still not entered into force. So far, only 46 countries, among them Morocco, had deposited their instrument of acceptance. The slow progress in that regard undermined the democratic principles underlying international organizations. He urged all Member States to accept the amendment.

84. Ms. GASSAMA DIA (Senegal) congratulated the Agency and the Director General on the award of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005 which was a just recognition of the Agency's activities.

85. Agency technical cooperation activities in Senegal focused primarily on training, technology transfer, exchange of experts and scientific meetings in various fields, including water resources management, improvement of agricultural production, development of livestock production through the programme to combat the tsetse fly, cancer treatment and prevention, and research relating to malnutrition. Senegal was determined to develop education, health, agriculture, trade and energy using science and technology. The promotion of a strong national industrial sector and the provision of services in all economic sectors would help lay the foundations for sustainable economic and social development in Senegal. Apart from a State's responsibility to implement national development policies, nowadays it was accepted that civil society and the private sector also had an important role to play in the development process. A new type of partnership was needed between all parties concerned. Such partnership could be seen in the NEPAD initiative.

86. Her country was known for its support for the universal values of work culture, the spirit of dialogue and initiative, as well as solidarity, peace and justice. The Agency, which worked for peace by promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear technology, was an obvious strategic partner for a country like Senegal. Thus, it had joined the Agency after gaining its independence in 1960. Since that time, it kept up to date with its contributions and had ratified various instruments, the most recent one being the Pelindaba Treaty.

87. Nuclear terrorism and the related risk of proliferation of nuclear and radioactive substances was a real threat to security and health and to peace throughout the world. Following the example of other African countries and the international community, Senegal had recognized the need to put in place a global coordinated strategy to combat nuclear terrorism. She welcomed the Agency's activities in that area, as well as its assistance to Member States in the field of physical protection, regulatory control and the detection of illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive material, as well as the integration of nuclear safety and security systems.

88. The oil crisis had plunged the world, and countries in the South in particular, into an unprecedented energy crisis. There were many solutions to that problem. The Government of Senegal was not as yet considering the use of nuclear technology for electricity generation, as no resolution of the problem of radioactive waste management was on the horizon for African countries. Senegal was currently looking at bioenergy as an alternative. The economic, environmental and political issues had to be taken into consideration. African researchers needed the support of Member States and the Agency to study biofuel options in greater depth.

89. Her country was concerned over the lack of resources and equipment to deal with the problem of dumping of toxic waste. As a matter of urgency, effective detection and protection measures need to be put in place in Africa, with the assistance of the Agency, to protect vulnerable populations from large-scale pollution caused by irresponsible and criminal acts.

90. The Agency should maintain and strengthen its support to African States in priority areas such as health, water resources management, agriculture, nuclear safety and security, and radiation protection. Nuclear science and technology were already being used to promote sustainable development. However, scientific and technical capacity needed to be strengthened and the problems of waste management and illicit trafficking solved.

91. In conclusion, she expressed the hope that the Agency's activities and their impact on the NEPAD initiative would help shorten the long road towards social and economic development in Africa.

92. Mr. SCHALLER (Switzerland), also speaking on behalf of Liechtenstein, said that, since the preceding General Conference, important developments in the areas of non-proliferation, disarmament and nuclear cooperation had dominated the international agenda, especially the Iranian nuclear issue. He welcomed the diplomatic efforts which had been made. In its response of 22 August to the proposals made, Iran had signalled its willingness to engage in discussions on all aspects of its nuclear programme. The Iranian nuclear issue should be resolved through diplomacy and he called on all parties to return to the negotiating table to prevent the situation from escalating, which would have repercussions on all States.

93. While hopes had been high in 2005 that negotiations on the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue might resume, various rumours about possible nuclear testing by the DPRK had given rise to new concerns. His country called on all parties to the six-party talks to show a spirit of consensus to facilitate the resumption of negotiations and it urged the Government of the DPRK to accede to the NPT.

94. The United States–India civilian nuclear cooperation initiative continued to pose fundamental questions about the future of the NPT-based non-proliferation system. The Agency's involvement was considerable, in terms of defining the safeguards measures to be applied. The project, which liberalized nuclear cooperation with India, stood in stark contrast with a number of recent proposals to impose even greater restrictions on access to so-called sensitive nuclear fuel cycle technologies. The right to cooperation and access to sensitive technologies should remain subject to accession to the NPT and strict implementation of its provisions.

95. His country was satisfied with the Agency's accounts for 2005 and the proposed budget for 2007. Every effort should be made to ensure that expenses were covered by the Regular Budget; recourse to extrabudgetary funds should be limited and regulated. Excessive use of extrabudgetary resources could undermine States' willingness to participate actively in the management of the Agency.

96. For internal reasons, Switzerland had been unable to pay its full share of the TCF for the preceding two years. Measures had been taken to address the situation and an additional payment would be made shortly for 2006.

97. His country was impressed by the continued improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of the activities undertaken by the Department of Technical Cooperation, especially the development of regional and interregional partnerships and the successful implementation of the system of NPCs.

98. It was important that all States subject to safeguards took a positive view of the Agency's activities in that area. While recognizing the need for a high-quality, effective safeguards system, his country was convinced that, above all in the nuclear non-proliferation field, every State had to respect the rights and concerns of others and fulfil its obligations. Those two aspects were complementary and crucial to fostering confidence and cooperation in the application of safeguards. He welcomed the annual report on safeguards but expressed concern over the progressive increase in costs. One year after Switzerland's accession to the additional protocol, its investments in terms of time and human resources had increased considerably. For example, the breakdown of a remote surveillance system had prompted an additional visit by inspectors. Thus, the introduction of more efficient and modern equipment had led to additional controls and increased workload for the Agency, operators and the SSAC. While there was a clear need for effective surveillance by the Agency, efforts should be made to avoid costly measures of doubtful effectiveness and to ensure that the Agency's tasks were not simply transferred to national authorities or operators. His country hoped that the Advisory Committee on Safeguards and Verification within the Framework of the IAEA Statute would bring improvements in that area.

99. Liechtenstein had signed an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement on 14 July 2006 and intended to implement it swiftly. However, a number of issues related to the customs union between Switzerland and Liechtenstein were currently being discussed and would need to be resolved prior to the implementation of the protocol. A workable solution should be found shortly.

100. Switzerland attached special importance to activities in the field of nuclear security. In recent months, Swiss experts had participated actively in IPPAS missions and the country had benefited itself from one such mission, which had confirmed that efforts made in recent years had borne fruit. Further improvements had been proposed and would be introduced gradually.

101. The Swiss Government had announced that the technical feasibility of storage of radioactive material had been confirmed, which meant that geological disposal in Switzerland was possible. Thus, the problem of nuclear waste management from production to storage was solved. However, the construction of an underground disposal facility could not commence as yet. The choice of a site remained open and would necessitate extensive consultation with the public. International cooperation within the framework of a multinational project for storage of high-level waste also remained an option.

102. Mr. JOHANSEN (Norway) congratulated the Agency on its 50th anniversary and the award of the Nobel Peace Prize which was to be used to develop human resources in the vital areas of health and nutrition. Norway had contributed 4 million Norwegian kroner to the IAEA Cancer and Nutrition Fund.

103. The Agency played a vital role in dealing with challenges to the nuclear non-proliferation regime. He called upon Iran to comply with the requirements of United Nations Security Council resolution 1696 (2006), including the suspension of its enrichment programmes, and to accelerate its cooperation with Agency with a view to reaching a diplomatic solution. The DPRK should likewise allow the Agency to monitor the dismantling of its nuclear programme.

104. The new NPT review cycle offered a fresh opportunity to consolidate and strengthen the Treaty. The Agency was the cornerstone of the global security and disarmament system. A comprehensive safeguards agreement plus an additional protocol constituted the new standard for verification and the Agency should continue to work for universal adherence to that standard.

105. Integrated safeguards provided the optimum combination of safeguards measures and gave the Agency more flexibility in deciding where to focus its efforts and limited resources. Norway had accepted integrated safeguards and was willing to share its experiences in that area with other countries.

106. His country likewise welcomed the establishment of the Advisory Committee on Safeguards and Verification within the Framework of the IAEA Statute, although the Committee had made little progress as yet. He urged Member States to redouble their efforts to agree on a programme of work.

107. Nuclear-weapon-free zones were important for both non-proliferation and disarmament. Norway encouraged the Director General in his laudable efforts to promote safeguards and eliminate weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East and commended the Agency's role in encouraging States to begin negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

108. Nuclear safety and security were vital elements in the fight against nuclear terrorism. The Agency's conventions and codes of conduct in that field set an international standard which all Member States should strive to reach. The international nuclear security regime had improved greatly in recent years, thanks to various Security Council resolutions, the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism of 2005 and the amendment of the CPPNM. Norway was currently reviewing its own regulatory framework as part of the process of ratifying the amended CPPNM.

109. Norway had received valuable support from the Agency in the preparation of the International Symposium on the Minimization of Highly Enriched Uranium in the Civilian Sector held in Oslo in June. The Agency was well positioned to assist States with HEU minimization, where that was technically and economically feasible. At the end of the symposium, the Chair had concluded that the majority of the world's research reactors could be converted to LEU without significant loss of performance. More effort should be put into developing alternative high-density LEU fuels.

110. Peer review mechanisms were very useful to strengthen implementation of international legal instruments and codes at national level. Norway welcomed the positive outcome of the open-ended meeting on the application of the Code of Conduct on the Safety of Research Reactors and looked forward to the first periodic meeting to discuss the application of the Code, which would help make the review mechanisms of the Convention on Nuclear Safety more effective.

111. No country was immune to the effects of nuclear or radiological emergencies. For some years, Norway had been calling for the strengthening of the international emergency preparedness and response system and it looked forward to the rapid implementation of the Agency's action plan on that subject. The newly established Incident and Emergency Centre should make a valuable contribution in that regard. However, sustained, predictable and adequate funding would be required and that need should be duly taken into account in the Agency's regular programme and budget process.

112. Norway appreciated the efforts that were being made to implement the action plan for the safety of transport of radioactive material, and the work of INLEX. His country encouraged a continued dialogue between coastal and shipping States.

113. It was important that peaceful nuclear activities did not have a negative impact on the environment. His country supported the ongoing efforts to establish an international framework to protect the environment from the effects of ionizing radiation. The proposed Agency Fundamental

Safety Principles also highlighted the environmental dimension. Indicators should be developed to monitor possible environmental damage.

114. The Agency was an important contributor to development work in public health, agriculture, water management and environmental protection. It had a global role to play in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Norway welcomed the Agency's PACT programme and its support for Member States in their use of radiation for medical purposes.

115. In view of its increasingly important global role, it was essential the Agency continue to be well managed, that it be given the resources and flexibility it needed to respond efficiently to new challenges, and that those financial resources were managed and spent efficiently. Its efforts to recruit well qualified female professionals through points of contact at Member States' missions were constructive, but more needed to be done in that area.

116. Mr. AL-JASEM (Kuwait) said that his country attached great importance to the Agency's technical cooperation programme, which had demonstrated its effectiveness in meeting needs in such areas as agriculture, livestock production, water purification and human health, and in enhancing scientific and technological expertise in Member States. He therefore urged the Agency to continue and intensify its efforts to promote peaceful uses of nuclear energy for sustainable development. It was essential to ensure continuous and reliable funding for the TCF in order to guarantee the successful implementation of current and future projects and avoid shortfalls due to the failure of some States to pay their contributions. Although the contributions were voluntary, States should honour their political obligations to pay them in full and on time. The Kuwaiti Government had a consistently good record in that regard.

117. Kuwait was eager to strengthen its cooperation with the Agency in developing the nuclear science and technology sector and peaceful applications of nuclear energy in support of social and economic development, especially in the field of water resources, nutrition, combating disease and treatment of health problems.

118. He commended the Agency's efforts to promote international cooperation in the area of nuclear and radiation safety. It was important to develop strict rules and regulations to control and monitor movements of radioactive sources and nuclear material. Kuwait was prepared to collaborate in all activities aimed at enhancing the safety of such sources and material and their use, through the implementation of national or regional projects with the Agency or other relevant organizations. The Agency should work with Member States that were building nuclear installations on their territory in order to ensure that they took the necessary precautions, and should continuously verify that their authorities were following sound procedures in their nuclear facilities in order to prevent nuclear accidents.

119. The international community should redouble its efforts to prevent nuclear terrorism. All nuclear facilities in every country without exception should be placed under Agency safeguards as a matter of urgency. Kuwait was concerned about evidence of cases of smuggling and illicit trafficking in nuclear material and hoped that the Agency's plan of activities to protect against nuclear terrorism could be implemented successfully, bringing to light trafficking activities by clandestine nuclear networks, preventing theft and protecting nuclear installations. His country had approved the amendment to the CPPNM and had signed to International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. It was in favour of the security measures that some countries were taking to protect against nuclear terrorism, provided that such measures were not adopted in isolation but as part of the non-proliferation regime and within the framework of the Agency's mandate.

120. The safeguards system was supported by most countries as the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime. His Government greatly appreciated the Agency's efforts to promote the

application of the NPT, safeguards agreements and additional protocols. It urged all States that had not yet signed a comprehensive safeguards agreement or an additional protocol to do so and to cooperate with the Agency through constructive and transparent dialogue in order to dispel any doubts that might arise regarding their nuclear programmes.

121. Kuwait attached great importance to the universal application of the comprehensive safeguards regime to all nuclear activities in the Middle East. Unfortunately, despite the fact that States in the region were committed to the NPT and to the application of safeguards, one State – Israel – remained outside the non-proliferation regime, thereby undermining regional and international security and stability. Was it reasonable for all countries in the region to honour their obligations except Israel, which was permitted to remain outside the legal framework for nuclear disarmament?

122. He called on the Agency to redouble its efforts to universalize the safeguards system so that it covered all nuclear installations and activities in Israel and other countries in the region, with a view to establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone. There could be no security or stability in the Middle East while Israel refused to place its facilities under Agency safeguards. It was an unnatural situation that might well encourage other States to try to obtain or manufacture nuclear weapons on the pretext that the world was turning a blind eye to Israel's conduct. The current situation also prevented the establishment of an nuclear-weapon-free zone as a first step towards ridding the Middle East of all weapons of mass destruction. The Government of Kuwait, motivated by its fear of Israel's military nuclear capabilities, called on the entire international community, especially countries with special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, to do their utmost to achieve the universality of the NPT and to dispel the fears of the peoples of the Middle East region.

123. Mr. SYCHOV (Belarus) said that the years that had passed since the founding of the Agency had confirmed its leading role in ensuring the safe use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and in effectively monitoring compliance by Member States with their international nuclear non-proliferation obligations. Member States and the Secretariat had made great achievements. A global nuclear and radiation safety regime had been put in place. A plan of action for combating nuclear terrorism was being successfully implemented as well as measures to strengthen the physical protection of radiation sources and nuclear material. Efforts were being made to universalize the nuclear non-proliferation regime and improve the effectiveness of Agency safeguards. Work was being conducted on nuclear knowledge preservation and expert training. Under the technical cooperation programme, Member States were being given assistance with solving problems in various areas through the application of advanced nuclear technology. In addition, the organization's work had been justly recognized through the award of the Nobel Peace Prize, which should lend new impetus to its statutory activities.

124. Technical cooperation was an important tool for fostering sustainable development. Through effective cooperation with the Agency, Belarus had established and strengthened its radiation protection and health and safety standards infrastructure. It had also been able to train specialists from other countries. It welcomed the strengthening of partnerships among Agency Member States.

125. Dealing with the consequences of the Chernobyl accident had been a priority area of cooperation between the Agency and Belarus. Technology had been transferred allowing the production of clean produce in contaminated areas and the rehabilitation of agricultural land. The projects implemented had, inter alia, set up production lines for rape oil and flour and had introduced effective measures to ensure compliance with strict national standards for the radionuclide content of foodstuffs and timber products. The significance of such projects for the contaminated areas was hard to overestimate.

126. The most important conclusion reached at the 2005 concluding conference of the United Nations Chernobyl Forum, which the Director General had proposed setting up during his visit to

Belarus in 2001, had been that the main task at the present stage was to overcome the socio-economic consequences of the accident while continuing research into the long-term medical and environmental consequences. Resolution A/RES/60/14 adopted at the 60th session of the United Nations General Assembly had praised the Agency's contribution to international cooperation on Chernobyl and the assistance it had provided to Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine. The Agency should continue to promote the expansion of international cooperation on Chernobyl and the implementation of the recommendations made at the international conference held in Minsk in April 2006 to mark the twentieth anniversary of the accident.

127. Nuclear power currently produced 16% of the world's electricity. Ecologically safe and economically competitive technologies would be needed to meet future demand. The work on a new generation of reactors and fuel cycles could provide a solution. In that connection, Belarus had high hopes of the INPRO project and wished to contribute to it.

128. As a strong supporter of the strengthening and universal application of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, Belarus met its safeguards commitments under the NPT and had signed an additional protocol in November 2005. However, the mechanisms of the NPT should never be used as a pretext for opposing peaceful nuclear programmes. States party to the NPT had an inalienable right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, as well as an obligation to act with maximum transparency in compliance with the spirit and the letter of the Treaty. Moreover, non-proliferation efforts should go hand in hand with nuclear disarmament and confidence-building measures between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States.

129. Belarus would continue to cooperate with the Agency to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime and supported its highly professional work on the application of safeguards. However, it was concerned at the trend to transform the Agency into just a safeguards authority. The IAEA had acquired its status as a leading international organization in the nuclear field through the exercise of all its statutory functions.

130. His country welcomed the Agency's activities to preserve nuclear knowledge and train experts. Radiation safety training was of particular interest to Belarus which had hosted several events on that subject under the auspices of the Agency. The International Sakharov Environmental University had trained many experts from CIS States and Eastern Europe in radiation protection and the safety of radiation sources. He welcomed the efforts of the Secretariat and the Sakharov University to lay the foundations for sustainable cooperation in the medium term in that area.

131. Finally, as in previous years, Belarus was prepared to pay its TCF target share in full and on time. It called upon all Member States to take the necessary measures to ensure that financing of the technical cooperation programme was sufficient.

Mr. Bazoberry Otero (Bolivia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

132. Mr. BAHARAN (Yemen) said that, since its establishment, the Agency had made many tangible contributions to the daily lives of people throughout the world, especially in the fields of health, agriculture, industry and energy. He congratulated it and its Director General on being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

133. After more than three decades of stagnation, the nuclear energy industry was experiencing a global expansion driven by three sensitive international issues. The first was energy security, i.e. the availability of sufficient cheap energy sources to support current economic and social activities and guarantee a decent life for future generations. The second was environmental deterioration and climate change. Experts and decision-makers agreed that the planet's survival was at stake unless immediate action was taken to halt and reverse current trends. There was a direct link between the deteriorating

environmental situation and the immoderate use of fossil fuels. The third issue, nuclear proliferation, was the subject of major political and legal wrangling in the light of the challenges facing not only the NPT but the international non-proliferation regime as a whole.

134. The NPT had many achievements to its credit since its adoption and would hopefully continue to provide the basis for international peace and security on the one hand and development, prosperity and justice on the other. His country therefore attached great importance to freeing the Middle East region of weapons of mass destruction in general and of nuclear weapons in particular. That would not happen, however, until Israel acceded to the NPT, abandoned its nuclear programmes and signed a safeguards agreement and an additional protocol with the Agency. Israel was the only country in the region that remained outside the vitally important non-proliferation regime. Any strengthening of that system had to focus on the principles of equality and justice under international law. All States party to the NPT, especially nuclear-weapon States, should be asked to refrain from transferring material and technological data relating to nuclear activities to Israel until such time as it acceded to the Treaty.

135. He had pleasure in informing the Conference that the people of Yemen would be voting the following day in presidential and local elections. Five representatives of the ruling and opposition parties, and independents, were running for the office of President and thousands of candidates, both men and women, were running for seats in local councils. Observers had described the election campaign as unprecedented in terms of political pluralism and freedom of expression.

136. Yemen was attempting to address fundamental economic and social development challenges such as poverty, ignorance and disease. Peaceful applications of nuclear energy could play an important role in meeting those challenges in areas such as energy production and water desalination, especially in a country without sufficient cheap energy sources. Nuclear energy was an environmentally friendly and economically competitive option.

137. The Agency's technical cooperation activities were of vital importance to many countries and Yemen was grateful to the Department of Technical Cooperation for the assistance it had provided in the areas of public health, agriculture and water resources. Under the PACT programme, Yemen had developed and was implementing a national programme covering carcinogen control, public education, early diagnosis and therapy.

138. Yemen supported the projects currently being implemented by the ARASIA group of countries, and those planned for the future, and it requested the Agency to look into the possibility of strengthening its cooperation with the Arab Atomic Energy Agency.

139. Ms. ŽIAKOVÁ (Slovakia) congratulated the Agency on its achievements over the preceding 50 years which had been recognised by the award of the Nobel Peace Prize.

140. The NPT was the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime. It was regrettable that the 2005 NPT Review Conference had not provided the necessary guidance on meeting the important challenges to that regime. That outcome had shown a lack of political will and had confirmed the continuing crisis in the areas of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. The 2005 United Nations Summit had resulted in a similar failure. Cooperation was needed to deal with the crisis of compliance and confidence faced by the NPT and to allow it to fulfil its purpose.

141. The additional protocol was an essential verification tool which could enhance confidence among States and play a key role in preventing nuclear weapons proliferation. Comprehensive safeguards agreements with additional protocols should constitute the Agency verification standard, which should foster the confidence necessary for enhanced international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Unfortunately, universal implementation of additional protocols was still far from a reality. Her country urged all States to sign, ratify and implement an additional protocol as

soon as possible and appealed to those States which had not yet done so to bring comprehensive safeguards agreements into force without further delay. In that connection, she was pleased to announce that the new safeguards agreement between EU member States, the Agency and Slovakia, and the protocol additional thereto, had entered into force on 1 December 2005. Slovakia looked forward to fruitful cooperation with Euratom and the Agency.

142. More than half of Slovakia's electricity came from nuclear power which would remain an important source of energy in the medium term under the country's energy strategy. The shutdown of two units at the Bohunice nuclear power plant in 2006 and 2008 could affect security of supply, particularly at a time when the world was facing rising energy prices and a lack of fossil fuel. Her Government and the energy sector were trying to find an economically acceptable, reliable and environmentally sound source of electricity. Security of fuel supply, in particular nuclear fuel, was crucial to maintain the country's economic growth and Slovakia was ready to discuss that issue with the international community, in particular as it related to a market-oriented economy, security and non-proliferation.

143. Safety was a precondition for the use of nuclear energy in all its applications. Over the years, regulators and operators had exchanged experience and technical information on nuclear safety in a number of fora. The Agency should support those activities and make its services available to Member States. The new Fundamental Safety Principles represented a milestone in the development of Agency safety standards. It was logical to combine the safety fundamentals for nuclear installations, radioactive waste management, radiation protection and the safety of radiation sources in one document. Slovakia was ready to contribute to the development of subsequent safety requirements and safety guides. The Agency's peer review services and expert services were an essential part of international cooperation and a confidence-building measure which supported the national regulatory decision-making process. In 2006, Slovakia had received an IPPAS mission and an OSART mission at the Mochovce nuclear power plant which had provided valuable input on how to promote the safety and security of nuclear facilities. Cooperation between the Agency and other relevant international bodies also contributed to the globalization of nuclear safety.

144. The Nuclear Regulatory Authority of Slovakia considered the operation of all facilities in the country to be safe, reliable and within the national legal framework. That had also been confirmed by the outcome of the second review meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. There was no cause for complacency, however, and further steps were being taken to improve safety.

145. In its 13 years of Agency membership, Slovakia had participated in a number of national, regional and interregional technical cooperation projects. Technical cooperation relating to human resource development, safe long-term nuclear power plant operation, decommissioning and nuclear medicine was an important source of information transfer. As in previous years, Slovakia would continue to provide experts and training facilities and accept fellows and scientific visitors sponsored by the Agency. Slovakia had paid its TCF share for 2006 in full and on time and had taken measures to fulfil its obligations in that regard in 2007 as well.

146. Mr. TZOTCHEV (Bulgaria) congratulated the Agency and its Director General on receiving the Nobel Peace Prize which was a remarkable recognition of their efforts to prevent nuclear energy from being used for military purposes and to ensure the safe use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

147. The Agency was the world's focal point for peaceful nuclear cooperation and nuclear safety and it played a global role in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and countering the threats of nuclear terrorism. Recent developments in the field of nuclear non-proliferation highlighted the need for further international efforts to strengthen the NPT.

148. The DPRK's nuclear policy was cause for concern and posed a serious challenge to the safeguards regime. Bulgaria welcomed United Nations Security Council resolution 1695 (2006) which urged the DPRK to continue participating in the six-party talks without any preconditions and to fulfil its commitments in accordance with the joint statement of September 2005.

149. Bulgaria was strongly committed to a universal nuclear non-proliferation regime reinforced by a strong international safeguards system. The additional protocol should become a verification standard for NPT non-proliferation obligations and he called on all States party to the Treaty to sign and ratify that instrument. He also highly commended the efforts of the Director General to strengthen the effectiveness and improve the efficiency of the safeguards system, including through the implementation of additional protocols.

150. His country welcomed the implementation of integrated safeguards in a number of States. To improve the efficiency of the system, the Agency should make every effort to introduce integrated safeguards as quickly as possible in States with significant nuclear activities.

151. The early entry into force of the amendments to the CPPNM would contribute significantly to efforts to reduce the risk of nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism. Bulgaria had ratified those amendments in February 2006 and hoped that States which had not yet done so would take steps to ensure their prompt ratification.

152. Work on the project to construct a new nuclear power plant in Bulgaria had continued in 2006 pursuant to the preliminary plans for completion of the tender procedure for granting the engineering, procurement and construction contract. The technical and financial proposals from both preselected vendors had been submitted and were under review by a specially appointed evaluation committee. The bid winner was expected to be announced before the end of 2006 with a view to beginning work in 2007. At the same time, many initiatives were being implemented under national technical cooperation projects with a view to developing local capabilities for strengthening the new nuclear power infrastructure.

153. With regard to the licensing process for the new nuclear units, the Bulgarian Nuclear Regulatory Agency would be looking for increased cooperation with the Agency and with regulatory bodies and technical support organizations from other countries. Such cooperation would be required for all stages of the construction and commissioning of the new nuclear power plant. He thanked the Agency and its Director General for all the support it had provided for Bulgaria's new nuclear project.

154. The Annual Report for 2005 reflected the Agency's leading role in developing international cooperation in the field of the peaceful use of atomic energy. The report gave a clear and analytical picture of the broad range of important results obtained in the Agency's activities in 2005, and the significant achievements it had made in the field of nuclear technology, safety, verification, security and management. The Agency's role in establishing the global nuclear safety regime and in providing technical assistance to Member States was also vital.

155. The Agency's technical cooperation programme had established itself as a well-functioning mechanism for the transfer of technology to developing Member States. Bulgaria hoped that the new structure of the Department of Technical Cooperation would further enhance the programme and its successful implementation. Bulgaria appreciated the Agency's technical cooperation activities in a wide range of areas, such as human health, food and agriculture, water resources management, environmental protection and knowledge management. A significant number of nuclear safety- and security-related projects had been implemented in the Europe region at national and regional level and they had contributed significantly to improving safety and security in all areas of the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

156. Bulgaria had always attached high priority to its technical cooperation with the Agency. It was grateful to the organization, and in particular to the Department of Technical Cooperation, the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security and the Department of Nuclear Energy, for providing assistance with upgrading the safety of its nuclear facilities, developing and applying new technologies in the nuclear energy field and increasing and strengthening the capabilities of the Bulgarian Nuclear Safety Authority. The application of nuclear technologies in the field of medicine was also of great importance and it was to be hoped that Agency activities in that area would receive more support from the Member States.

157. Bulgaria supported the Agency's proposed budget, which maintained a balance between the main priorities in the Agency's activities. It had met its financial obligations to the Regular Budget for 2006 in full and those pertaining to its pledged voluntary contribution to the TCF. Bulgaria's voluntary contribution to the TCF for 2007 would be \$12 800.

158. Mr. NADER (Uruguay) said that his country was committed to peace and the resolution of conflicts in accordance with international law. It used nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, chiefly for medical diagnosis and treatment. Its cooperation with the Agency over the preceding year had been very fruitful.

159. In October 2005, Uruguay had become the second Latin American State to accede to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, and it had been pleased to participate in the second review meeting of the Contracting Parties in May 2006. That valuable experience should help it in its efforts to establish a national strategy on the safety of radioactive waste. It also needed a strategy for the appropriate and correct storage and management of disused medical and industrial sources. His country was striving to achieve the highest possible level of safety culture. To that end, the National Regulatory Authority had been established and a new draft radiation protection law had recently been submitted to the Uruguayan parliament which it was hoped would enter into force before the end of 2006.

160. Uruguay had also been one of the first Latin American countries to establish an integrated nuclear security support plan focusing on the prevention and detection of illicit trafficking in nuclear material, but covering other aspects of nuclear security as well, including the prevention of malicious use of sources.

161. In July 2006, his country had joined the Ibero-American Forum of Nuclear Regulators and had already hosted a meeting on patient protection.

162. Uruguay would participating actively in the next technical cooperation cycle both through its national project proposals and the new regional projects on radiation protection and safety.

163. He thanked the Agency and in particular the Department of Technical Cooperation for the assistance they had provided which had allowed Uruguay to attain international respect in the radiation safety field.

164. Mr. ERTAY (Turkey) said that nuclear weapons proliferation, including potential proliferation to non-State actors, was a serious concern for his country. The NPT remained the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and his Government would continue to promote the universalization of the Treaty and strengthening of safeguards, as well as reinforcement of export controls, the early entry into force of the CTBT and the immediate start of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

165. Turkey strongly supported the strengthening of the safeguards system, since the Agency's capability and legal authority needed to be reinforced to detect undeclared nuclear activities. A comprehensive safeguards agreement together with an additional protocol should constitute the current verification standard. Indeed, the future of the NPT depended on universal compliance with tighter

verification measures. All States party to the Treaty, nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States alike, should reaffirm their commitment to comply with their obligations under it. More effective regional security strategies needed to be developed and a specific and balanced programme of action agreed upon to strengthen compliance and implementation. In the event of non-compliance, the international community should take measures to preserve the integrity and authority of the system.

166. The absence of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in a particular region would allay significantly the security concerns of countries in that region. Accordingly, Turkey supported the establishment of effectively verifiable zones free of weapons of mass destruction, in particular in the Middle East.

167. Turkey advocated peaceful and diplomatic solutions to the non-proliferation issues currently of concern to the international community. It therefore called on the DPRK to abandon and dismantle completely any nuclear weapons-related programme in a prompt, transparent and verifiable manner, in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolution 1695 (2006). With regard to the Iranian nuclear issue, he drew attention to the importance of the political and diplomatic efforts to find a negotiated solution guaranteeing Iran's legal right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes while ensuring the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme. Iran should, without further delay, take the necessary confidence-building steps and resolve outstanding issues. Turkey welcomed the recent meetings between the EU High Representative and the Iranian chief nuclear negotiator and hoped that their efforts would result in a positive outcome in the near future.

168. His country's energy policy was focused on the security, sustainability and competitiveness of the energy supply, with a view to upholding targeted socio-economic growth. There had been an almost threefold increase in electricity demand in Turkey over the preceding 15 years, resulting in the need to introduce a substantial amount of new capacity in the grid. Conventional energy resources were not sufficient to meet Turkey's energy needs and a significant increase would be required in the coming years in both energy production and supply in order to meet the country's energy demands in a secure and reliable manner.

169. Turkey recognized the importance of the peaceful uses of nuclear technology and the crucial role of the Agency in that regard. It also recognized that any significant increase in nuclear power would only be possible if the international community met certain challenges and addressed concerns about waste, proliferation and safety and security. Plans were already well under way to make nuclear power a major component of Turkey's supply mix in the medium to long term. Nuclear power was expected to enhance the country's strategies for reducing environmental emissions. His Government had already expressed its intention to introduce nuclear energy. Priority was currently being given to the reorganization of the nuclear regulatory structure. The next phase would be to put the final touches to a programme aimed at making the first nuclear power plant operational in the coming decade. Turkey attached the utmost importance to close cooperation with the Agency throughout the process of implementing its nuclear programme.

170. His country remained committed to contributing to international efforts to combat all forms of terrorism, including malicious acts involving nuclear and radioactive material. It strongly supported all measures aimed at preventing terrorists from acquiring nuclear, biological, chemical and radiological weapons and their means of delivery. Turkey was party to all universal anti-terrorist instruments, including the CPPNM. It would shortly be ratifying the amendments to that Convention. It had also been one of the first signatories of the Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. The new Turkish penal code had established many acts involving the unauthorized use of nuclear material as criminal offences. Turkey would continue to support United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and the Proliferation Security Initiative. States should take every step to

prevent illegal trade in nuclear material and technology, and weapons of mass destruction or their components, in order to preserve peace and security.

171. Nuclear science, technology and applications addressed a wide variety of basic socio-economic development needs of Member States in such areas as energy, industry, food and agriculture, human health and water resources management. Scientific cooperation among nations had a role to play in contributing to peace and security, particularly in the Middle East. Turkey strongly supported collaborative scientific endeavours, such as the SESAME project, and trusted that the Agency would provide its full support for such efforts.

172. A global nuclear, radiation and waste safety culture was a key element of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and his country attached importance to the Agency's role in building and enhancing such a culture worldwide through its relevant programmes. It appreciated the Secretariat's ongoing efforts to update and extend the Agency's safety standards to cover all important thematic areas and encouraged it to continue to assist Member States in applying those standards.

173. Turkey had always attached the utmost importance to the promotional activities of the Agency and strongly supported the technical cooperation programme. The funding of technical cooperation activities was the responsibility of all Member States and he urged each Member State to pay its share of the target in full and on time. His country supported the Agency's efforts to improve the quality of technical cooperation activities and would encourage further cooperation in that regard with the relevant United Nations agencies.

174. Ms. PRIJVOIT (Kyrgyzstan) said that, although her country had only been a member since 2003, its cooperation with the Agency had acquired definite shape and direction. A national body responsible for cooperation had been established in 2006. The internal procedures required for the country's accession to the additional protocol had now been completed and it would be notifying the Agency accordingly in the near future.

175. Her country was also in the final stages of signing its technical cooperation agreement and had great hopes that the Agency would help solve many pressing problems, particularly in the areas of nuclear and radiation safety, environmental protection, medicine and agriculture.

176. On 8 September 2006 in Semipalatinsk, five Central Asian countries had signed a treaty creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region, completing work begun in 1997 and contributing to the prevention of international terrorism, in particular nuclear terrorism, and to strengthening of the non-proliferation regime and global nuclear disarmament. Compliance with the non-proliferation regime was vital to regional security in view of Central Asia's strategic location and the abundance of uranium and nuclear technology in the region, whose people had suffered from the consequences of the arms race during the Cold War. Her Government was grateful to the Central Asian countries and the United Nations for acknowledging Kyrgyzstan's trustworthiness, and its contribution to the establishment of the zone, by designating it as the depositary for the Treaty.

177. The Treaty also had an important environmental protection component since it banned the establishment of radioactive waste storage sites in the region. On more than one occasion, her country had drawn attention to the grave environmental problems it faced, which threatened at any moment to develop into a regional catastrophe. During the Soviet era, Kyrgyzstan had been an important mining and processing area for heavy metals and uranium ore. Those activities had lasted several decades, ending in 1970, and had left behind numerous tailings dumps containing vast quantities of radioactive waste. There were some 40 such tailings dumps in Kyrgyzstan, the largest and most hazardous of which lay in the southern regions that formed part of the Fergana valley. Approximately 6500 hectares of land were radioactively contaminated and the volume of waste approached 145 million tonnes. The problem extended beyond the borders of Kyrgyzstan and posed a real environmental threat to

neighbouring countries. Kyrgyzstan was unable to meet that challenge alone. The only way her country could overcome the problem was through cooperation with the Agency and its Member States and, as a full member of the Agency, it counted on the Agency's expertise, support and assistance.

178. Finally, she thanked the Director General and the Secretariat for all their efforts, which had been justly rewarded with the Nobel Peace Prize.

179. Mr. HAMZÉ (Lebanon) congratulated the Director General and the Secretariat on the 50th anniversary of the Agency and on being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

180. In July and August 2006, his country had been the target of brutal Israeli aggression that had claimed the lives of over 1200 citizens, left thousands injured and disabled, displaced tens of thousands of peaceable men, women and children, and destroyed their homes and villages in a ruthless campaign directed against human life and the Lebanese economy and infrastructure. It was the sixth war waged by Israel against Lebanon in less than two decades. His country appreciated the expressions of support it had received from countries all over the world. Their emergency assistance had helped the Lebanese people to stand firm against the aggression. Perhaps the most valuable support had been the international community's recognition of Lebanon's right to resist occupation and its condemnation of the war on civilians and Israel's use of types of weapons that continued to inflict horrendous damage even after the military operations had ceased. Lebanon and its scientific institutions, with United Nations support, had been endeavouring since the cessation of the hostilities to protect the population from cluster bombs that claimed new victims daily and prevented farmers from cultivating their land and harvesting their crops.

181. Israel's actions in Lebanon had not created a climate conducive to peace in the Middle East and were at odds with the content of the attachment to document GC(50)/18 submitted by Israel. He therefore called for strong condemnation of the use of internationally prohibited munitions against civilians, and for endorsement of the content of the memorandum submitted by Arab Member States of the Agency contained in the attachment to document GC(50)/17, which aimed at bringing about a secure and stable Middle East. Israel's full, speedy and unequivocal compliance with the provisions of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), by withdrawing from the territory it was still occupying in Lebanon and handing over maps showing the location of cluster bombs and the type of weapons used, should provide an opportunity to move forward with a just and equitable peace process that was long overdue, a fact which was beginning to have detrimental consequences for the world as a whole.

182. Under its regional cooperation projects, the Agency had provided Lebanon with the support it needed to strengthen its radiation monitoring and nuclear safety infrastructure. Since 2005, in close cooperation with the Agency and relevant Lebanese bodies, Lebanon had published regulations governing all matters relating to the use of ionizing radiation in the country. The Lebanese Atomic Energy Commission acted as the national supervisory body, laying the foundations for radiation safety and security and worked closely with the Agency in implementing Lebanon's nuclear safety and security policy. It applied the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and dealt with monitoring and the technical aspects of agreements between Lebanon and the Agency. The Lebanese Government had recently decided to approve the amendments to the SQP and would sign an additional protocol very soon.

183. In the area of nuclear security, Lebanon was collaborating with the Agency through its participation in the illicit trafficking database and its cooperation with the Office of Nuclear Security. In May 2006, a nuclear security mission had visited the country to investigate ways of enhancing the effectiveness of the system for monitoring land and sea borders in order to prevent the entry or exit of radioactive or nuclear material. The requisite legal framework for an effective system was currently being developed.

184. He thanked the Agency's Department of Technical Cooperation for reactivating Lebanon's national technical cooperation projects, especially those relating to the use of radioactive sources, after verifying the steps taken by the Government to enhance the monitoring system.

185. Lebanon attached importance to the promotion of a culture conducive to the safe and secure use of nuclear energy for development, especially in the fields of agriculture, industry, medical science and applied scientific research. A meticulous and transparent radiation monitoring system was essential to protect workers and the environment from the risks associated with the use of nuclear technology.

186. His country appreciated the Agency's speedy response to its urgent requests for technical assistance. The political, social and economic circumstances created by the recent Israeli aggression, and the damage it had inflicted on the environment and industry, increased Lebanon's determination to step up its cooperation with the Agency.

187. Mr. ZAMBEZI (Zambia) noted with satisfaction the Agency's efforts to strengthen its technical cooperation activities. PACT was one such innovative activity which deserved support to ensure its full implementation. The programme on radiological protection of patients helped promote the safe application of nuclear science and technology in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. Zambia would benefit greatly from such programmes, especially now that the first cancer treatment centre had been established and was ready to be commissioned.

188. His country fully supported the Agency's safeguards work throughout the world, including in the Middle East. Safeguards measures should continue to be comprehensive and non-selective. In that connection, he endorsed the call by the Director General for the entry into force of the CTBT. It was disappointing that, ten years after its adoption, that Treaty had still not entered into force. The need for it was greater than ever in order to dispel the notion that belonging to the nuclear weapons club conferred prestige, an idea fuelled by the failure of the nuclear-weapon States to disarm while they prevented others from acquiring such weapons.

189. He congratulated the Director General and the Agency on being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and commended the proposed use of the prize money.

190. Zambia had taken steps to combat illicit trafficking in nuclear material and radioactive sources by strengthening its legal framework. Legislation making the regulatory authority independent was in place. The country was also in the process of finalizing consultations on its additional protocol.

191. His country was happy with the focus of the Agency's programme and budget for 2007 and the support it gave for the technical cooperation programme. Zambia continued to build on the benefits it had gained from that programme. Developments since the preceding General Conference included, inter alia, the completion of the ICT telecentre that would shortly host a regional training course on ICT-based training, completion of the cancer hospital and hiring of expert oncologists from the African Region, expansion of neonatal screening across the country by establishing satellite laboratories in the Copperbelt province, and the pre-release of several mutant bean varieties. The plant tissue culture facility continued to provide input to the national potato seed supply and food security initiatives. Several varieties of cassava — a drought-tolerant food crop — had been produced and were being micropropagated for use as disease-free plant material in rural areas

192. Zambia continued to support AFRA. Since the preceding General Conference, it had received AFRA missions in various areas. Zambian scientific and technical staff had participated in training courses and seminars, as well as coordinating meetings and programmes. He appealed to cooperating partners to continue supporting AFRA financially in order to ensure that all projects planned for 2007-2008 could be carried out.

193. In conclusion, Zambia pledged its full share of the TCF target for 2007.

194. Mr. RISTORI (European Commission) congratulated the Agency and its Director General on having been awarded the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of their tireless efforts to ensure that nuclear energy was used in the safest possible manner.

195. The Agency and the European Commission shared the same objectives with regard to non-proliferation, safety, secure energy production, and research and development. Strengthened cooperation between the two organizations was all the more necessary in view of the potential of nuclear energy in the new world energy context. Many States had chosen nuclear power as one of the most effective options for diversification and one which could also help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In order to realize the potential of nuclear energy, enhanced cooperation among all involved was required.

196. The three main objectives of the energy policy of the European Union were security of supply, competitiveness and environmental protection. As far as security of supply was concerned, at current rates of consumption global uranium reserves would appear to be sufficient; moreover, the geopolitical distribution of resources was favourable in stable regions. The European Union was pursuing a policy aimed at consistent supply of nuclear material in a well-functioning market. In that connection, it welcomed multilateral approaches to assure access to nuclear fuel and it therefore appreciated the special event on assurances of supply and non-proliferation that was being held during the Conference. Costs associated with nuclear power production were becoming increasingly predictable and competitive, and less sensitive to rising raw material prices. Moreover, fuel costs accounted for a much smaller share of overall costs in nuclear plants than in traditional thermal power plants. As far as the environmental dimension was concerned, it was important to develop energy sources that produced few or no greenhouse gases. Accordingly, nuclear power could prove an effective choice for diversification, while at the same time achieving the Kyoto targets.

197. The growing importance of energy issues could not be overestimated. In March 2006, the European Commission had published a Green Paper on a European strategy for sustainable, competitive and secure energy. World energy investment was estimated at some €12 trillion; €1 trillion would be required in the European Union in the forthcoming two decades alone to fill the void in energy investment over the preceding 20–25 years. There was a growing awareness that energy savings and efficiencies alone, though essential, would not be sufficient to meet the increasing energy demand.

198. Essential conditions had to be met for the development of nuclear energy and priority areas of action included nuclear safety and waste management, non-proliferation and technological development. With respect to nuclear safety and waste management, including dismantling, the European Union had been striving to maintain the highest harmonized standards. Countries outside the Union also benefited from its efforts, for example through the TACIS programme, the Chernobyl Shelter Fund, and cooperation with the Agency to improve the safety of WWER reactors. The EU was providing significant financial assistance for the dismantling of certain facilities in Lithuania and Slovakia following the enlargement of the Union in 2004. It was also providing assistance to Bulgaria.

199. The sustainable management of radioactive waste and spent fuel was another essential element of nuclear safety and Member States had to develop detailed programmes with well defined milestones in that area. There were scientific and technical challenges associated with the management of long-lived high-level radioactive waste and spent fuel.

200. Euratom was party to a large number of nuclear-related international conventions, including the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, the Early Notification Convention and the Assistance Convention. It also continued to

cooperate closely with the Agency in the area of radiation protection and participated actively in the work of the Commission on Safety Standards. Ongoing cooperation, together with the new recommendations of the International Commission on Radiological Protection, would promote the harmonization of requirements for radiation protection and safety of radiation sources.

201. As a party to the CPPNM, Euratom strongly supported the tightening of the international nuclear security regime. Illicit trafficking and strengthening of the regulatory framework for dual-use items were high priorities. Safeguards were also a major political priority and cooperation between the Commission and the Agency should be further developed by building on the complementary strengths of the two organizations. An additional protocol, together with a comprehensive safeguards agreement, should constitute the current worldwide verification standard. He was pleased to report that an additional protocol was in force in all 25 Member States of the European Union and he invited all members of the Agency that had not yet done so to sign an additional protocol.

202. Considerable efforts should be made with regard to technological development. The European Union, through the Joint Research Centre, had been involved for some time in an extensive programme of scientific and technological cooperation with the Agency. Euratom had become a member of the Generation IV International Forum in 2003, and in 2006 it had concluded the Framework Agreement for International Collaboration on Research and Development of Generation IV Nuclear Energy Systems.

203. The European Commission welcomed the efforts undertaken by the Agency within the framework of INPRO to evaluate innovative nuclear reactors and fuel cycles from the point of view of economics, sustainability, the environment, safety, waste management and proliferation resistance. It also welcomed the Agency's constructive and effective support for the ITER project and its instrumental role in bringing the ITER negotiations to a successful conclusion.

204. In the current world energy context, it was essential to strengthen cooperation and dialogue among all actors. The European Commission would enhance its cooperation with the Agency in all areas with a view to building on the complementary strengths of the two organizations. The nuclear option required the full commitment of all to non-proliferation, and improved safety and security. The European Commission, for its part, was committed to continuing its efforts to that end.

The meeting rose at 7.55 p.m.