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## Fiftieth (2006) Regular Session

# Plenary

## Record of the Seventh Meeting

*Held at the Austria Center, Vienna, on Thursday, 21 September 2006, at 10.05 a.m.*

**President:** Mr. BAZOBERRY (Bolivia)

**Later:** Mr. MINTY (South Africa)

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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 |
| ARCAL                 | Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean            |
| CPF                   | Country Programme Framework   |
| CPPNM                 | Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material   |
| CTBT                  | Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty   |
| CTBTO                 | Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization  |
| DPRK                  | Democratic People's Republic of Korea   |
| EU                    | European Union  |
| Euratom               | European Atomic Energy Community  |
| HEU                   | high-enriched uranium   |
| INIS                  | International Nuclear Information System  |
| INLEX                 | International Expert Group on Nuclear Liability   |
| IPPAS                 | International Physical Protection Advisory Service  |
| IRRS                  | Integrated Regulatory Review Service  |
| Joint Convention      | Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management               |
| LDC                   | least developed country   |
| LEU                   | low-enriched uranium  |
| NAM                   | Non-Aligned Movement  |
| NGO                   | non-governmental organization   |
| 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                              |
| NWFZ                  | nuclear-weapon-free zone  |
| OECD/NEA              | Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development                                      |
| OSART                 | Operational Safety Review Team  |

**Abbreviations used in this record (continued):**

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| PACT              | Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy   |
| PATTEC            | Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign   |
| RaSSIA            | Radiation Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources Infrastructure Appraisal  |
| RCA               | Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific) |
| SIT               | sterile insect technique   |
| SPECT             | single photon emission computed tomography   |
| TCDC              | technical cooperation among developing countries   |
| TCF               | Technical Cooperation Fund   |
| Tlatelolco Treaty | Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean   |

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

1. Mr. TAGIZADE (Azerbaijan), having congratulated the Director General and all Agency staff on being awarded the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize, emphasized the importance of the Agency's mission in the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes. The Agency was the only international forum capable of counteracting nuclear and radiological terrorism and Azerbaijan was in favour of strengthening its activities in that area. His country was actively working with the international community to strengthen the nuclear security and safeguards regime and, as an advocate of universal nuclear disarmament, had acceded to the relevant international conventions and treaties.
2. Azerbaijan was complying with the obligations issuing from its agreements and was taking the necessary measures to ensure the security of radioactive sources and to prevent illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive materials. To ensure that it had an effective State system for the safety and security of radioactive sources and materials, Azerbaijan had created a Ministry of Emergency Situations and designated it the only State body for the regulation of the safety and security of radioactive sources and materials. One of its main tasks was the development of a national plan to deal with the consequences of a radiation accident.
3. Azerbaijan was planning to upgrade its centralized database system, containing information on the export, import, transport, transit and storage locations of sources of ionizing radiation and radioactive waste. Also, in cooperation with the Agency, it was taking measures to develop its legislation with a view to improving the nuclear and radiation regulatory system. As part of its efforts to improve bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the field of radiation safety with Member States, it had already signed an agreement with Ukraine.
4. He thanked the Agency for the technical cooperation it had provided to his country in 2005-2006, particularly in determining the level of radionuclide contamination in the Araz and Kura Rivers and Azerbaijan's Caspian Sea coast.
5. Another key technical cooperation project aimed to upgrade radiation oncology through the application of modern radiotherapy techniques at the National Oncology Centre. Doctors and health physicists had participated in special training to prepare them for work on the new Teragam and brachytherapy equipment installed in 2005. A CT scanner, simulator and X-ray therapy machine would be installed in 2006, and a linear accelerator was planned for 2007-2008.
6. A further main area of cooperation with the Agency was in controlling illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive material. Under the corresponding national projects two stationary detection systems had been installed. More stationary facilities were needed to detect nuclear and radioactive material and it was important from the point of view of effectiveness to ensure that a unified system was in place.
7. Finding and rendering harmless lost and orphan radioactive sources in Azerbaijan was an important nuclear security issue. With that in mind, a project had been started in January 2005 to train national specialists.
8. Recognizing the dangers posed by environmental pollution and radioactive contamination, Azerbaijan had set out to determine the origin of such problems, particularly on the Abseron Peninsula. In 2005, a regional seminar, attended by representatives from more than 18 countries, had

been held in Baku on the organizational and technical requirements for ensuring quality assurance in radioactive waste management.

9. The 11th regional course on on-site inspections was due to take place in Baku from 22 to 29 October 2006, with representatives from approximately 45 countries participating.

10. Azerbaijan supported the creation of a nuclear-free zone in the South Caucasus. However, no progress was currently being made on that initiative because of the unconstructive and self-isolating policy of Armenia, which had carried out an armed attack against Azerbaijan and occupied 20% of its territory. The continuing occupation had led to the creation of areas which were not under the control of the Government of Azerbaijan and were to all intents and purposes outside the sphere of influence of international verification mechanisms. That increased the risk of illicit transfers of radioactive and nuclear material through the occupied territory.

11. Another cause for concern was the fact that the Armenian nuclear power plant was located in a seismically active zone, which could lead to a regional disaster in the event of an earthquake.

12. Having noted that Azerbaijan was meeting its financial commitments to the Regular Budget and that provision had been made for its voluntary contribution to the TCF, he said that it would continue to participate actively in Agency activities. He expressed appreciation of the efforts of the Director General and the Secretariat to strengthen international cooperation in the peaceful use of atomic energy.

13. Mr. MOHAMAD (Malaysia) congratulated the Director General and the Agency on receiving the Nobel Peace Prize for 2005 and said he hoped that it would encourage them to strive for greater achievements.

14. In his introductory statement to the General Conference, the Director General had identified three phases in the development of a new approach to the fuel cycle: the establishment of mechanisms for assurances of supply of fuel for nuclear power plants; the development of assurances regarding the acquisition of nuclear power reactors; and the conversion of existing enrichment and reprocessing facilities from national to multilateral operations. Malaysia supported the move towards improving assurances of supply in the field of nuclear power generation technology, as well as reducing the risks of further proliferation of sensitive technologies that could be used in the development of nuclear weapons. A multilateral approach to the nuclear fuel cycle should provide a more economically attractive option for developing countries embarking upon a nuclear power generation programme, particularly those countries with a small nuclear power programme. However, progress in that direction should not lead to the unilateral adoption of any standard that would affect the inalienable right of the Parties to the NPT to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination. Furthermore, attention should not be drawn away from the obligations of nuclear-weapon States to undertake to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament. Despite the overwhelming attention being given to nuclear non-proliferation, Malaysia believed the most effective way to remove the threat of nuclear weapons proliferation was the pursuit of a general, complete and irreversible nuclear disarmament under strict and effective international control.

15. Malaysia shared the view that there was a need to optimize the effectiveness and benefits of nuclear technology. In that regard, Malaysia had begun to develop a capability to evaluate objectively the socio-economic benefits of the nuclear technology it used. That would improve the planning and selection of its nuclear technology applications by ensuring that the programmes capable of giving the most added value to the targeted economic sectors were identified. Also, it would ensure that other areas where intangible benefits were more justifiable, such as medicine, agriculture and human resources development, were not neglected.

16. Malaysia had actively supported Agency programmes on non-power nuclear technologies by hosting regional and interregional training courses, workshops, seminars and meetings, by training Agency fellows, by providing Malaysian experts and by providing financial support for selected Agency programmes, such as PACT.

17. He commended the PACT Programme Office for engaging the support of other international organizations in line with resolution GC(49)/RES/12, which had requested the Director General to continue to advocate, build support, and allocate and mobilize resources for the implementation of PACT as one of the priorities of the Agency. Malaysia appreciated the joint efforts of the Agency and those organizations in conducting integrated missions of PACT to assist countries in developing national cancer strategies and plans. In view of the current critical funding situation of PACT, Malaysia was prepared to contribute its share of the 2004 Agency Regular Budget cash surplus and urged other Member States to do the same.

18. Malaysia hosted an Agency postgraduate education course in radiation protection. In that regard, his delegation reiterated its call for a long-term agreement to be concluded with the host university in line with the Agency's long-term strategy on the sustainability of training and education in all Member States. Malaysia was working with the Agency to upgrade that postgraduate course from diploma level to that of a Master of Science and to expand its scope to include other relevant areas of nuclear science and technology.

19. While welcoming the higher priority accorded to nuclear security by the international community in view of the serious threats of mass transnational terrorism, his delegation noted that that had led to the development of overlapping initiatives by a number of international organizations, including the Agency. That imposed a heavy burden on the work of the relevant government agencies and posed new challenges for inter-agency coordination in Member States. To optimize resources, Malaysia called on the Agency to coordinate the implementation of its nuclear security initiatives with that of other relevant multilateral organizations, in particular within the United Nations framework, for example, with the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee.

20. He reiterated Malaysia's commitment to meeting its safeguards obligations. He reassured the international community that any apparent delay in meeting those obligations, notably ratification of Malaysia's additional protocol signed on 22 November 2005, was largely owing to the need for due legal process. Also, Malaysia was actively studying the Board's decision for States to modify the text of the small quantities protocol.

21. On broader nuclear non-proliferation issues, Malaysia welcomed the signing of the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in September 2006. The establishment of that latest NWFZ helped to strengthen regional and global peace and security. He urged nuclear-weapon States to provide unconditional assurances against the use, or threat of use, of nuclear weapons on all the States in that zone. In that connection, he reiterated Malaysia's call for the prompt establishment of a similar NWFZ in the more volatile region of the Middle East, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 487 of 1981 and 687 of 1991, and other General Assembly resolutions adopted by consensus. Also, in accordance with Security Council resolution 487, Malaysia called upon Israel promptly to place all its nuclear facilities under Agency full-scope safeguards. In the same context, his delegation remained concerned about the unwillingness of a majority of nuclear-weapon States to sign the Protocol to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone, which had been signed by all ten States in the region in 1995.

22. Malaysia recognized the Agency as the sole competent authority for the verification of safeguards obligations in the Islamic Republic of Iran. It stressed that there should be no undue pressure or interference in the Agency's activities in that regard, which could jeopardize its efficiency

and credibility. The Malaysian delegation, while taking note of the Director General's assessment that all the nuclear material declared by Iran had been accounted for, encouraged Iran to continue to cooperate actively and fully with the Agency with a view to resolving the outstanding issues so as to build confidence and move towards a peaceful resolution of the issue.

23. Finally, turning to the DPRK nuclear issue, he expressed his country's support for the joint statement issued at the conclusion of the six-party talks on 19 September 2005 and called for its expeditious and faithful implementation. Malaysia supported resumption of the six-party talks at the earliest possible time and stressed their vital role in achieving a peaceful negotiated resolution to the DPRK nuclear issue.

24. Mr. MSOLLA (United Republic of Tanzania), having commended the Director General for his comprehensive introductory statement, underscored the great value placed by his country on the Agency's technical cooperation programme under which it had recently adopted a CPF. Tanzania was indebted to the Agency for the good progress it was making in radiotherapy and nuclear medicine applications, the management of water resources, the control and eradication of the tsetse fly, the strengthening of non-destructive testing capabilities and the development of human resources. Also, its capacity for regulating and enforcing radiological safety and security standards in most radiation practices had been greatly enhanced.

25. The global desire to eradicate poverty in Africa had intensified, and his country appealed for the continuation and strengthening of the technical cooperation programme. The Agency should find more reliable sources of funding to increase the TCF. Tanzania, for its part, was doing everything possible to fulfil all of its obligations, particularly those relating to the TCF.

26. Tanzania appreciated the international community's increased commitment to combating cancer. His delegation's appeal at the 49th General Conference had not gone unheard and Tanzania had been selected to be a beneficiary of the first phase of PACT. As requested, the Agency had implemented a nuclear medicine and radiotherapy project at the Bugando medical centre, which now served over a third of the population. It had been agreed to improve radiotherapy services on a cost-sharing basis, as a result of which Tanzania had already deposited \$600 000 with the Agency. He appealed for more support for PACT so that the population of Tanzania could have better access to nuclear medicine.

27. Like many developing countries, Tanzania was caught in a vicious circle with regard to energy constraints. The country relied mainly on carbon-based energy, and while there was sufficient coal to meet demand, its use contributed to global warming by releasing greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. Over the past year, Tanzania had suffered a serious energy crisis caused by persistent drought and soaring world oil prices. Consequently, Tanzania was seriously considering other sources of sustainable energy in its national energy mix. In its CPF, it had prioritized capacity-building in the areas of human resources and infrastructure in order to facilitate research on comparative energy sources. That was an area in which Africa, and particularly the LDCs, required Agency assistance.

28. Valuable support had been given to African Member States through PATTEC in dealing with the tsetse fly problem in Africa. Tsetse-transmitted trypanosomiasis placed major constraints on agricultural production and posed a serious threat to public health, particularly in Tanzania. As a result of the application of the SIT, eradication of tsetse fly species in various parts of Africa was progressing well.

29. In Tanzania, the tsetse and trypanosomiasis institute based in Tanga was being used to support national and regional efforts aimed at eradication of the tsetse fly within the framework of PATTEC and was also acting as a regional centre for expertise in tsetse rearing. Fellows from countries implementing tsetse control and eradication programmes were being trained at the institute. The



improved tsetse fly facility at Tanga was being used to rear tsetse seed colonies of *Glossina pallidipes* for Ethiopia and *Glossina morsitans centralis* for Botswana. In addition, the institute was actively participating in a study to examine the feasibility of SIT to create a zone free of *Glossina swynnertoni* in northern Tanzania.

30. The collection of stratified baseline data according to a standardized, grid-based sampling frame was progressing well. Plans were under way to establish and maintain a seed colony of *Glossina swynnertoni* and further Agency support for the purchase of fly-rearing equipment and consumables and for the development of stratified baseline data was required.

31. The Tanzanian Government remained committed to fulfilling its obligations and supporting the Agency's efforts towards the realization of its statutory objectives. His country was pleased to pledge the full share of its voluntary contribution to the TCF.

32. Mr. TRUONG GIANG (Vietnam) congratulated the Agency and the Director General on having been awarded the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize and expressed appreciation for their efforts to ensure the peaceful and safe use of nuclear energy.

33. In January 2006, Vietnam had approved a strategy for the peaceful uses of atomic energy up to 2020, reaffirming that it would utilize atomic energy for peaceful purposes only and develop both non-power and power applications to promote sustainable socio-economic development in a safe, secure and cost-effective manner. To implement that strategy, preparations were under way to formulate a national programme of action for the development of human resources and technical infrastructure and to establish a nuclear regulatory framework. In addition, the pre-feasibility study for the construction of Vietnam's first nuclear power plant had been submitted to the Government.

34. Vietnam had ratified the CTBT in February 2006 and was studying other international nuclear-related instruments with a view to participation. It supported the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and the supplementary Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources, and was in the process of developing the necessary regulations for implementation of the Code.

35. The management of radiation and nuclear safety in Vietnam, through its Agency for Radiation and Nuclear Safety and Control, had been substantially enhanced over the previous year by increasing the relevant professional staff and funding. In addition, drafting of Vietnam's atomic law was in progress and the final draft was expected to be completed and submitted for approval in late 2007 or early 2008.

36. Vietnam attached great importance to the effective and efficient implementation of the technical cooperation programme. Its CPF, finalized with the Agency in September 2003, had identified priority areas for national nuclear science and technology development, which were being addressed by 14 ongoing projects in the 2005–2006 cycle and 6 new and extended project proposals for the next cycle. Cooperation with the Agency had yielded productive results with respect to the development of human resources, the improvement of the national nuclear and radiation safety infrastructure, and the expansion of nuclear applications to areas including the creation of new rice varieties, food preservation, radiotherapy, nuclear medicine and groundwater management.

37. Vietnam had fulfilled its obligations to the Agency in full, including providing the necessary resources for its technical cooperation projects, payment of its NPCs for the 2005–2006 cycle, Regular Budget contributions and its pledged contribution to the TCF for 2006. Vietnam had also hosted 6 Agency/RCA events in the current year.

38. Vietnam was grateful to the Agency for its close cooperation and valuable assistance over the years and was keen to continue effective cooperation with the Agency, other international

organizations and Member States, particularly in the area of nuclear power development. It remained a staunch supporter of the Agency's activities to enhance and promote nuclear science and technology applications in the interests of peace, stability, cooperation and development.

39. Mr. SERRANO CADENA (Colombia) recalled, on the occasion of the 50th session of the General Conference, that the establishment of the Agency had been inspired by the desire for "atoms for peace". That vision had paved the way for the subsequent adoption of the NPT which, together with the Agency's Statute, enshrined the three pillars of the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, disarmament and non-proliferation. They formed the basis of the international community's commitment to build a peaceful, safe and prosperous world to the benefit of all human beings. It was important to remember and renew the spirit underlying the adoption of the Agency's Statute.

40. It was no coincidence that the Agency and its Director General had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of the organization's contribution to global peace and security, its efforts to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, disarmament and non-proliferation, and its role in achieving sustainable development.

41. The commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation informed Colombia's foreign policy-making. It participated actively in all initiatives that promoted that dual goal. Addressing those issues multilaterally, with full respect for the rights and obligations of States and with the participation of the international community, was crucial to global peace and security.

42. Colombia had always supported international legal instruments and organizations. It was firmly committed to the NPT and to the Tlatelolco Treaty, a pioneering instrument establishing the world's first NWFZ. Colombia observed its safeguards agreement with the Agency and had signed the additional protocol thereto in May 2005, which it was in the process of ratifying. It supported multilateral initiatives to counter the threat posed by nuclear proliferation, including by terrorists, and aimed at disarmament.

43. The global disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation system was facing serious challenges. The NPT's main objective, namely international peace and security, could only be achieved by implementing all three of its pillars: disarmament, non-proliferation and the right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. As a State Party to the Treaty, Colombia believed that the membership of the 'nuclear club' must not increase and that efforts must be made to prevent horizontal and vertical proliferation. In that regard, the failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference was regrettable. It was vital that the process be resumed in a constructive spirit in order to make progress. Also, with a view to strengthening and universalization of the system, the establishment of more NWFZs should be given the highest priority.

44. One of the fundamental pillars of the disarmament and non-proliferation system was cooperation, enabling the Agency to fulfil its objective to "accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world". It was paradoxical that the Agency's technical cooperation programme lacked assured, predictable and sufficient resources.

45. Nuclear technology development over the past fifty years had shown the great potential of nuclear applications for sustainable development. Since the Agency played a key role in the transfer of nuclear knowledge and technologies for peaceful purposes, efforts should be made to mobilize resources to enable it to strengthen that function.

46. In Colombia, the Agency's technical cooperation programme had helped build capacities in areas that were crucial to socio-economic development, especially energy planning. Energy security was vital to economic development, and thus poverty eradication. Colombia was both a beneficiary and a contributor to that programme. It contributed to the TCF and paid its NPCs on time. In addition,

Colombia attached great importance to ARCAL, which helped promote peace and cooperation between developing countries. A programme of particular importance, as underlined by the General Conference, was PACT and he commended the Secretariat's efforts in that regard.

47. Ensuring the safety and security of radioactive sources was fundamental. To that end, it was important to strengthen national legislation and international cooperation so as to minimize the potential risks arising from their use. The Agency played an important role by helping Member States strengthen relevant national infrastructures and regulations. In 2005, Colombia had adopted legislation on the safe transport of radioactive material, in accordance with Agency guidelines, and in early 2006 its infrastructure had been appraised by a RaSSIA mission. His Government had decided to apply the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and the supplementary Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources and hoped for the Agency's support in implementing the recommendations contained in those instruments.

48. As a coastal State, Colombia attached special importance to the safe maritime transport of radioactive material, including radioactive waste, and to strengthening the relevant legislative framework. Given the Agency's competence in transport safety, it should continue promoting dialogue and consultation between coastal and shipping States. In that context, Colombia welcomed the continuing work of INLEX. It would be useful to have in place a legal instrument covering liability, ratified by the largest possible number of coastal and shipping States. With the support of the Agency, progress had been made in the development of safety legislation. It was vital to extend that to transport safety.

49. Colombia remained concerned about the existence of an illicit trafficking network in radioactive material and equipment, and the associated risks. The Agency should continue its efforts, together with the assistance of Member States, to disclose its structure and membership. The threat of proliferation, terrorism and illicit trafficking required a joint effort at all levels. The collective security system must be based on full respect for States' rights and the fulfilment of their obligations and should take account of the needs of developing countries. A firm commitment to disarmament, non-proliferation and the promotion and transfer of nuclear science and technology would enable the international community to rise to the current threats and challenges. It was the only way to build a future devoid of nuclear threat, where atomic energy was used exclusively for peaceful purposes and the only way to realize the dream of "atoms for peace" and sustainable development.

50. Mr. ROSELLÓ (Spain), having congratulated the Director General and the Secretariat for receiving the Nobel Peace Prize for 2005, said the Agency's 50th anniversary represented a historic landmark. Over the years, the importance of the three pillars of its Statute had been demonstrated and the Agency's impartiality and professionalism had been widely recognized.

51. With nuclear non-proliferation concerns becoming more prevalent in recent years, the Agency's safeguards system had moved into the international spotlight. The most effective way of responding to the threat posed to international security by nuclear proliferation was to ensure the prompt and universal implementation of additional protocols. While Spain was pleased to see that an increasing number of States had signed an additional protocol, it was worrying that 106 States had still not brought their respective additional protocols into force and a large number with significant nuclear activities had yet to sign one. Since the entry into force of the additional protocol in the EU in 2004, Spain had been providing the Agency with all the relevant information on time and had facilitated all the complementary access requested. The Secretariat knew that it could rely on the full cooperation of the competent authorities in Spain in that regard. Cooperation and coordination between Euratom and the Agency should be strengthened at all levels to enhance the efficiency of the system and thereby facilitate the transition to the application of integrated safeguards within the EU as quickly as possible. Spain commended the Director General's efforts in that field. His delegation had participated actively

in the Special Event on assurances of supply and non-proliferation coinciding with the General Conference, which would help to clarify the possible multilateral approaches to the front and back ends of the nuclear fuel cycle, while taking account of the various strategic implications for countries.

52. Safeguards activities were complemented by those being implemented by the Agency and States to improve the security of nuclear material and facilities, as well as high-activity radiation sources. It was to be hoped that the consensus achieved for the amendment of the CPPNM at the diplomatic conference in 2005 would be translated into its timely entry into force. Spain had already begun its ratification process.

53. In the field of nuclear safety and radiation protection, Spain was pleased with the steps taken by the Agency to strengthen international cooperation. Spain reiterated its support for all the nuclear and radiation safety services provided by the Agency, especially those aimed at strengthening national regulatory bodies. The Secretariat's decision to combine its services in that area to give more scope and flexibility was very positive.

54. The new IRRS missions were the best tool available to the international community for the review, verification and improvement of national regulatory capacities. The Secretariat should increase its efforts in that regard, facilitating coordination with activities related to the international conventions on nuclear and radiation safety. Currently, Spain was working with the Secretariat to prepare for its forthcoming IRRS mission.

55. One of the most important international milestones recently in nuclear and radiation safety had been the second review meeting of Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention in May 2006. His delegation congratulated the Secretariat on its contribution to the success of that meeting and urged it to apply the lessons learnt in future.

56. The Spanish authorities attached great importance to safety in nuclear facilities because incidents were frequently attributable to a lack of safety culture in facility operation and maintenance. The Secretariat should consider increasing resources allocated for that purpose and strengthen activities aimed at, on the one hand, understanding and dealing with the problems arising from a lack of safety culture and, on the other, facilitating the development of methods for its appropriate consideration by nuclear facility management.

57. Over the preceding year, Spain had strengthened its cooperation with the Agency in the field of security. It was prepared to offer its support to the Agency in strengthening the regulatory infrastructures of countries with emerging nuclear programmes.

58. Spain, recognizing the important role played by education and training in the global nuclear and radiation safety regime, asked the Secretariat to make a special effort and consider allocating more resources in that area. That activity should go further than the Agency's technical cooperation and involve all Member States.

59. Spain anticipated improvement in the technical cooperation implementation rate of 68.6% for 2005 once the Department of Technical Cooperation had been restructured. In 2005, pledges and payments to the TCF had amounted to 89.5% of the target. Spain had paid its share of the target in full and was among the top eight contributors. Spain welcomed improved management of the technical cooperation programme to optimize the use of the limited resources available and also restructuring of the Department of Technical Cooperation into four new geographical areas. However, resources should be shared out equally among those areas. The Latin American region, having received only 17% in 2005, should receive a greater percentage.

60. In 2005, Member States had contributed approximately \$15 000 000 extrabudgetary resources for footnote-a/ projects and Spain also planned to participate actively in funding that type of project,

principally in the Latin American region. In the year under review, Spain had made an extrabudgetary contribution of €300 000 to help finance a project initiated by the Ibero-American Forum of Nuclear Regulators aimed at developing nuclear and radiation safety. Experts from various countries, in collaboration with the Secretariat, had developed an Ibero-American network for knowledge management of radiation safety in the region. Spain intended to maintain the same level of funding in the coming years. Aside from Spain's contribution to the TCF, its national institutions, in particular the Research Centre for Energy, Environment and Technology (CIEMAT), had provided experts for missions, conducted training courses, subsidized fellowships and received fellows and scientific visits. Spain also collaborated with ARCAL by means of active participation through CIEMAT, contributing approximately €150 000 to various of its projects. CIEMAT also intended to establish cooperation with countries in the Mediterranean region.

61. Under the memorandum of understanding that ENRESA (National Radioactive Waste Company) had signed with the Agency in 2005 for joint technical cooperation in the area of decommissioning, a workshop had been held in Spain on support in dismantling nuclear power plants, as part of a European regional project. ENRESA also continued to participate actively in the planning and possible launch of projects related to waste management.

62. Spain supported PACT, which was a clear example of the application of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes; it had made an extrabudgetary contribution of €20 000 to it in 2005, and would do so again in 2006.

63. In 2005, nuclear power had continued to play an important role in Spain. The 9 units in operation had produced 57 550 GW·h, which was 19.7% of the total national electricity generation. The 160 MW José Cabrera nuclear power plant had been shut down on 30 April 2006. Commissioned in 1968, it had been the least powerful and oldest plant in operation. The anticipated growth in international demand for energy resources and the need for assured energy supply in the long term posed challenges to governments and the specialized international organizations alike. Nuclear energy was one — not uncontroversial — option. To exchange views on the many issues surrounding nuclear energy, taking into account technical, economic, environmental and also socio-political factors, a debate forum had been held from November 2005 to May 2006 in Spain, attended by representatives from all spheres. Convened in response to a commitment made by the Spanish President in Parliament, it had produced a number of conclusions. Relating firstly to basic guidelines and requiring action in the near term, they dealt with such matters as the strategy for high-level radioactive waste management, public information, public participation in the decision-making mechanisms, and the nuclear regulatory regime. Secondly, the conclusions related to less pressing issues of meeting future energy demand in Spain. Given the importance and complexity of the problems to be overcome in meeting future energy needs in an environmentally sustainable way, they required a global approach and continued analysis of the possible strategies in order to achieve balanced and effective energy policy solutions.

64. As regards radioactive waste management, the Spanish Government had approved the revised General Radioactive Waste Plan in June 2006. It contained the strategies and actions to be undertaken in Spain in the fields of radioactive waste management and facility decommissioning, along with the corresponding economic and financial study. The revised plan took into account the experience of Spain and other countries in managing spent fuel and high-level radioactive waste and attached priority to the construction of a centralized temporary store, thereby postponing decisions related to final radioactive waste disposal.

65. Mr. WIN (Myanmar) congratulated the Agency and its Director General on being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 2005. He reaffirmed Myanmar's support of the Agency's vital work in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear technology and welcomed its efforts to enhance nuclear safety

and security and to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the safeguards system and the non-proliferation regime.

66. Myanmar had signed the CTBT in 1996 and also, in 1995, the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ), which had come into force in 1997. In his country's view, NWFZs helped prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and contributed to nuclear disarmament.

67. Myanmar, which had embarked upon a programme to develop nuclear applications, was aware of the need for an adequate radiation protection and waste safety infrastructure. In that connection, his delegation expressed appreciation to the Agency for assisting Myanmar through the interregional Model Project and the national technical cooperation project on strengthening radiation protection infrastructure.

68. The Agency's technical cooperation programme was an effective way of promoting the use of nuclear energy for peace, health and prosperity throughout the world with the help of technology transfer. His Government thanked the Agency for its assistance in making nuclear techniques used in medical research and in industry available in Myanmar. The nuclear technologies provided under the Agency's technical cooperation programme had also contributed to the country's development efforts in the areas of livestock and breeding, food, agriculture and health care. The relevant facilities were sustained by the Agency's contribution in terms of equipment, expertise and training. Technical cooperation projects were also assisting in the area of human resources development.

69. His delegation commended the Agency on its role in promoting regional cooperation on nuclear science and technology through the RCA, AFRA and ARCAL programmes. Myanmar benefited from its membership of the RCA, and it was active in the areas of agriculture, energy, the environment, industry, health care, radiation protection and the management of TCDC efforts.

70. Mr. DE VISSER (Netherlands) said it was paradoxical that the years since the end of the cold war had seen more setbacks than successes for the global non-proliferation regime. The NPT remained the cornerstone of that regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. Too many opportunities had been missed to create a more positive climate for bringing armaments under control. Further steps could have been taken on a fissile material cut-off treaty, the CTBT, the comprehensive safeguards agreement and the additional protocol thereto. The international community needed to overcome the obstacles to success and breathe new life into the non-proliferation and arms control agenda. The Agency's safeguards system, an essential part of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, should be further strengthened and universalized. The Netherlands called on all Member States to conclude comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols.

71. His country was committed to the early entry into force of the CTBT, which was in its tenth anniversary year. At a recent 'Friends of the CTBT' meeting in New York, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands had underlined the political and practical relevance of an operational and verifiable CTBT. Realistically, great efforts would have to be made to keep the CTBTO alive.

72. His country was convinced of the need to bring the most sensitive nuclear activities, notably enrichment and reprocessing, under better multilateral control. It had taken an active stance on the topic of the Special Event of the General Conference, namely assurances of nuclear supply and non-proliferation. As a country with a large enrichment industry and a strong supporter of a strengthened non-proliferation regime, the Netherlands had participated in the independent expert group set up by the Director General two years previously to consider multilateral nuclear approaches, which had made a number of recommendations worthy of further consideration. In the same spirit, it had cooperated with the United States of America, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, Germany and France to produce the concept for a multicultural mechanism for reliable access to nuclear fuel. His delegation hoped that the Special Event would give rise to more contributions, fruitful discussions

and useful recommendations on the matter. He also hoped that the Agency would play a significant role not only in exploring the feasibility of ideas on fuel supply and non-proliferation but also in the management of a future system. He stressed that broad acceptance of any future mechanism was crucial.

73. The Netherlands, which attached great importance to the Agency's technical cooperation activities, had already pledged its full share of the TCF target for 2007. Adequate and predictable resources were a prerequisite for those activities. He urged all Member States to contribute to the TCF in full and on time. His delegation welcomed progress in streamlining the technical cooperation programme and hoped that it would result in a considerably higher rate of implementation of the TCF in 2006.

74. The Nuclear Security Fund was a very useful instrument through which nuclear safety could be improved worldwide. His country, while in favour of a mechanism whereby Nuclear Security Fund activities were financed from the Regular Budget, accepted that voluntary extrabudgetary contributions remained necessary for the time being. He called upon all States to contribute to that Fund generously and unconditionally as the Netherlands had done.

75. The second review meeting of the Joint Convention held in Vienna in May had been a success. There had been a welcome increase in the number of State party to that Convention — from 33 to 42 — since the preceding review meeting, enabling much to be learnt from the collective knowledge and insight of many national experts. He encouraged Member States which had not yet done so to accede to the Joint Convention.

76. The Netherlands was grateful for the OSART mission to the Borssele nuclear power plant, its only operational power reactor unit, in November 2005. He invited all Member States to consult the mission report on the Agency's website. The staff and management of the plant were implementing the report's recommendations in cooperation with the Dutch regulatory authorities and were looking forward to the follow-up mission scheduled for June 2007.

77. Following the OSART mission, the Netherlands had invited physical protection experts from the Agency for an IPPAS mission, which had been combined with a national review. The findings had been very positive and the few recommendations the mission had made were currently being implemented.

78. The Netherlands had hosted two Agency events in 2006: one on design basis threat and another on the security of research reactors. Yet another event on the refurbishment of research reactors was planned for October 2006 and the Netherlands remained committed to hosting such events in the future.

79. A decision had recently been taken to extend the operating life of the Borssele nuclear power plant — which had been commissioned in 1973 and which had originally been scheduled for closure in 2013 — by 20 years. That reflected his country's renewed commitment to nuclear energy. One condition for that extension was that the plant invest 250 million euros in sustainable energy, the main focus being on energy saving, clean fossil fuels, including carbon sequestration, and renewable energy, such as biomass. His Government had already committed itself to investing an equal amount in sustainable energy and the total investment of 500 million euros would bring about a reduction of 1.4 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in the Netherlands per year.

80. The High Flux Reactor in Petten, one of the most powerful multi-purpose research and test reactors in the world, had now been converted to LEU, thereby making a positive contribution to limiting the use of proliferation-sensitive material.

81. In conclusion, he said the Netherlands attached the utmost importance to the Agency's role in strengthening disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation and advancing nuclear technology for the benefit of all. It would continue to support the Agency wherever possible in carrying out that vital mandate.

82. Mr. NIEWENHUYS (Belgium) said that as a founder member of the Agency, his country had shown an early interest in the civil applications of nuclear energy. Its first research reactor was 50 years old and nuclear power now accounted for almost 60% of Belgium's electricity generation. Belgium shared the interest shown by many others in developing the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

83. Security was a vital adjunct to development of the civil nuclear sector but required a high level of national responsibility and organization as well as international cooperation. The competence, professionalism and impartiality of the Agency — the appropriate forum for such cooperation — had been justly rewarded with the Nobel Peace Prize for 2005. Mutual support between the Agency and its Member States was essential to the effectiveness of its work.

84. Events had unfortunately demonstrated that comprehensive safeguards alone could not provide conclusive proof of the absence of undeclared nuclear activities. The additional protocol, which should be concluded by all States, enabled the Secretariat to verify State declarations fully. In the event of any serious doubt about whether a State was meeting its commitments, that State should automatically make every effort to cooperate transparently with the Agency to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

85. There were legitimate doubts about the peaceful intentions of Iran's nuclear programme. Recalling relevant decisions by the Board of Governors and Security Council resolution 1696, he said that every effort should be made to resolve that complex problem with full regard for the United Nations Charter and the NPT. Belgium appealed to the Iranian authorities to respond positively to offers to negotiate.

86. In the same vein, Belgium urged the DPRK to resume the path of dialogue with a view to allaying the international community's legitimate concerns about its nuclear programme.

87. Belgium applauded Libya's renunciation of its nuclear weapons programme and, in the same context, noted Iraq's recent declaration that it would not continue the activities of the preceding regime.

88. The second review meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention had proved a positive exercise in fostering enhanced safety practices, which would be underpinned by the recent consolidation by the Secretariat of the Fundamental Safety Principles.

89. Belgium would receive its first OSART mission in May 2007, which would be extensive. It wanted the safety of the nuclear power plant concerned to be studied in depth in order to learn as much as possible.

90. The procedure leading to parliamentary approval of the CPPNM amendment was under way. Belgium's national system for the physical protection of nuclear material and nuclear facilities was largely based on the Agency recommendations in document INFCIRC/225/Rev.4. The European Directive on the control of high-activity sealed radioactive sources and orphan sources had been transcribed into national law, and future regulations would be based on the Agency's Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

91. His Government had recently decided on the site for a final disposal facility for low and intermediate level waste with a short half-life, following close consultation with local communities.



92. Belgium had followed with interest the work of the Oslo symposium on the minimization of HEU in civilian nuclear applications and would be in a position to convert its BR-2 research reactor to LEU when certain economic and technical conditions had been met. It had also been following the preliminary discussions at the General Conference's Special Event on multilateral assurances of nuclear supply with great interest.

93. Finally, he said that Belgium had a long history of extensive involvement in technical cooperation with developing countries, particularly training students and fellows at its universities and research centres. The Belgian Nuclear Research Centre at Mol had recently concluded cooperation agreements with various countries. Belgium's voluntary contributions to the TCF were increasing but depended on budgetary availability and competition with contributions to other international organizations. Belgium would make every effort to provide its contribution for 2007.

**Mr. Minty (South Africa) took the chair.**

94. Mr. BELEVAN-MCBRIDE (Peru) said the 50th anniversary of the Agency was a symbolic moment. Fifty years since its creation, the "atoms for peace" Agency had become the global focal point for peaceful nuclear cooperation. It was an essential international instrument for the prevention of nuclear proliferation and for combating nuclear terrorism. The time was right to reflect on how far the Agency had come in implementation of its central pillars: non-proliferation, verification, safety and technology. Much progress had been made in the Agency's first half-century, but the way ahead was arduous and much remained to be done. In Peru, the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, complete verification of the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the security demanded by the overwhelming majority of non-nuclear-weapon States, elimination of nuclear weapons, and technical cooperation to benefit from nuclear energy continued to be fundamental aims of foreign policy, as the newly elected Government had just reiterated.

95. His delegation was discouraged by the lack of progress the Agency had been making towards nuclear disarmament. It was important to strengthen the Agency's capabilities as regards verification, control and other of its responsibilities. In taking stock of the status quo, it was ironic to note that, since the atom had been harnessed, more people had died in the world than during any other period in human history. It was scandalous that the huge potential of nuclear energy had not yet led to any real improvement in life on earth. Although some progress had been made, the growing number of disasters facing humanity were a constant reminder of man's incapability to ensure equitable development for all. The gap between rich and poor was widening. Nuclear energy should have allowed that gap to be narrowed, but that had not been the case. The attainment of a just and rational world order was still only being talked about and not being put into practice. On receiving the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize, the Director General had underlined the fact that the world was still far from achieving the new order many had dreamed about at the end of the cold war, with the progressive but definitive destruction of nuclear arsenals and determined progress towards the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The walls between East and West had been torn down, but bridges had yet to be built between North and South — the rich and the poor. It should come as no surprise that poverty continued to breed conflict.

96. Through its technical cooperation programme, the Agency was making a direct and positive contribution to overcoming poverty and conflict by gradually improving living conditions through the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Peru was grateful for the assistance it continued to receive in that connection.

97. Peru had declared its reservations regarding those parts of the final document of the 14th NAM summit held recently in Havana, Cuba, that did not correspond with its foreign policy. They related in

particular to non-proliferation, disarmament and international security. Peru had also expressed its reservation regarding the statement on the Iranian nuclear issue.

98. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and in fulfilment of its responsibilities as a member of the Security Council, Peru was organizing a regional seminar for countries from Latin America and the Caribbean to be held in Lima in November 2006. Peru had also invited representatives from the Agency and the CTBTO to participate.

99. Peru supported the work of INLEX, whose function was to develop for the Agency an effective, just and universal system for compensation in the event of a nuclear incident. In that context, Peru was hosting a regional workshop on nuclear liability in December 2006, in line with resolution GC(49)/RES/9.B on transport safety.

100. Finally, he reiterated Peru's commitment to ARCAL and his country's unwavering support for the Agency's guiding principles aimed at the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear energy.

## – **Requests for the restoration of voting rights** (GC(50)/INF/7 and 11)

101. The PRESIDENT noted that the General Committee had had before it requests from Georgia and the Republic of Moldova for the restoration of their voting rights. The General Committee had recommended that Georgia's right to vote not be restored. It had also recommended that the Republic of Moldova's right to vote not be restored.

102. He took it that the Conference accepted the recommendations of the General Committee.

103. It was so decided.

## **24. Examination of delegates' credentials** (GC(50)/27)

104. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee had met earlier in the day to examine the credentials of all delegates, as provided for in Rule 28 of the Rules of Procedure. The report of the Committee was contained in document GC(50)/27. After discussion, the Committee had recommended the adoption by the Conference of the draft resolution contained in paragraph 7 of its report, with the reservations and positions expressed in the report.

105. Mr. AGHAZADEH (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his country continued not to recognize Israel as a State. Accordingly, his delegation wished to express its strong reservations regarding the credentials of the delegation of Israel.

106. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference was prepared to adopt the draft resolution contained in paragraph 7 of document GC(50)/27.

107. It was so decided.

## **9. Election of members to the Board of Governors** (GC(50)/5 and 24)

108. The PRESIDENT recalled that in 1989 the General Conference had approved a procedure whereby, when there was agreement regarding the candidate or candidates from a particular area, no secret ballot would be held; balloting would take place only for those areas where no candidate had been agreed upon. That procedure considerably facilitated the rational use of the General Conference's time. Accordingly, he proposed that Rule 79 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, which provided that elections to the Board should be by secret ballot, be suspended in respect of those areas for which there was agreement.

109. It was so decided.

110. The PRESIDENT said he was happy to report that agreement had been reached in all area groups on their candidates for the vacancies to be filled. He expressed his sincere appreciation to all groups for their efforts to reach agreement, which had expedited the Conference's work.

111. Drawing attention to document GC(50)/5, containing a list of the Agency Member States designated to serve on the Board from the end of the Conference's current session until the end of the fifty-first (2007) regular session, he recalled that, under Rule 83 of the Rules of Procedure, he had to inform the General Conference of the elective places on the Board that had to be filled. To that end, document GC(50)/24 had been prepared; it indicated that the Conference had to elect eleven members of the Board from the seven categories listed.

112. He took it that the General Conference wished to elect Bolivia, Brazil and Chile to the three vacant seats for Latin America.

113. Bolivia, Brazil and Chile were duly elected.

114. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Austria and Finland to the two vacant seats for Western Europe.

115. Austria and Finland were duly elected.

116. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Croatia to the vacant seat for Eastern Europe.

117. Croatia was duly elected.

118. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Ethiopia and Nigeria to the two vacant seats for Africa.

119. Ethiopia and Nigeria were duly elected.

120. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Pakistan to the vacant seat for the Middle East and South Asia.

121. Pakistan was duly elected.

122. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Thailand to the vacant seat for South East Asia and the Pacific.

123. Thailand was duly elected.

124. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Morocco to the floating seat for Africa/MESA/SEAP, which it was the turn of a member from Africa to fill.

125. Morocco was duly elected.

## **8. General debate and Annual Report for 2005 (resumed)** (GC(50)/4)

126. Mr. SOTIROPOULOS (Greece) said that in the fifty years since its foundation, the Agency had dealt with increasingly important issues in connection with its statutory activities, and its efforts had been justly rewarded with the Nobel Peace Prize for 2005.

127. The Agency had developed many nuclear research programmes in the fields of health, nutrition, agriculture, industry and education, thereby enabling many developing countries to combat infant malnutrition, to produce better crops and to manage water resources. An important development in that area was PACT, which aimed to build partnerships and acquire funds from traditional and non-traditional donors. Greece fully supported resolution GC(49)/RES/12 calling for the allocation and mobilization of resources for the implementation of PACT as one of the Agency's priorities.

128. Greece had always played an active role in all aspects of nuclear safety and security, having joined the Incident Reporting System for Research Reactors and having ratified the Convention on Nuclear Safety. It attached great importance to the Agency's efforts to establish and maintain a global safety regime through the adoption of action plans as a first step. It welcomed the high priority accorded to the operational safety performance of nuclear power plants and related nuclear facilities worldwide, which should be backed up by legal instruments on international safety. Specifically, it had appreciated the adoption of the International Action Plan on the Decommissioning of Nuclear Facilities and looked forward to the appearance of the related safety documents. His Government would be hosting the International Conference on Lessons Learned from Decommissioning of Nuclear Facilities and the Safe Termination of Nuclear Activities in conjunction with the Agency, the OECD/NEA and the European Commission in Athens in December 2006. He hoped that the conclusions of that conference would contribute to the global nuclear safety culture and he encouraged the Director General to step up efforts to ensure the implementation of Agency safety standards by all States.

129. Within the framework of the EU, Greece had unequivocally backed and actively participated in all international and regional endeavours to counter terrorism and to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Greece attached great importance to the Agency's nuclear security programme and had made both financial and in-kind contributions to the Nuclear Security Fund. Several seminars on security issues under the EU Joint Action with the Agency had been or would be held in Athens in conjunction with the Agency and the Greek Atomic Energy Commission. Greece endorsed the EU Council Joint Action 2006/418/CFSP of 12 June 2006 on support for Agency activities in the areas of nuclear security and verification and in the framework of the implementation of the EU Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

130. His country was a member of the Agency's illicit trafficking information system, which played an active role in the United Nations committees established by Security Council resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1540 (2004), and was participating in the Proliferation Security Initiative. It had signed the amendment to the CPPNM and had signed, ratified and actively participated in the review meetings of

the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention. It had also signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism adopted by the General Assembly, which represented vital progress in multilateral efforts to prevent nuclear terrorism.

131. Nuclear security infrastructure and know-how in Greece had significantly improved as a result of the cooperation with the Agency and the United States Department of Energy for the Olympic Games in 2004. Since then, Greece had been taking advantage of the equipment installed and had shared its experience with other countries by providing training and seminars. For example, a Chinese delegation had met with Greek scientists and officials with a view to ensuring a high level of nuclear security and emergency preparedness during the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing.

132. Greece was adhering to the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, now being incorporated into national legislation, and it was implementing the complementary Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources.

133. Unfortunately the nuclear non-proliferation regime had recently come under pressure for a number of reasons, including the lack of substantive progress on disarmament, the threat of nuclear terrorism and regional instability. Greece supported the strengthening of the Agency's verification role and of its safeguards system. The universal application of comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols would provide the required assurances. National and multilateral export controls relied on Agency safeguards to ensure that items were not diverted and the efficiency and effectiveness of safeguards also helped to create confidence and promote international trade and cooperation.

134. Greece had benefited from Agency support in converting its GRR-1 research reactor to LEU fuel. All the HEU spent fuel had been shipped back to the United States. Greece had welcomed the international symposium on minimization of HEU in the civilian nuclear sector, held in Oslo in June 2006, and endorsed the Chair's summary contained in document INFCIRC/677.

135. Greece reiterated its support for the Director General's initiative to establish an expert group to study ways and means of achieving multilateral control of sensitive nuclear technology. The Special Event at the General Conference on assurances of supply and non-proliferation would provide an opportunity for constructive discussion on that matter. However, while the Agency's Statute authorized the Agency to take almost any conceivable action and to launch almost any undertaking to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy, attainment of that goal depended mainly on politics and nuclear commerce, over which the Agency had little or no control.

136. Greece supported the creation of the Advisory Committee on Safeguards and Verification within the Framework of the IAEA Statute, as approved in June 2005 by the Board of Governors, with the aim of strengthening the Agency's safeguards systems and was looking forward to participating in it.

137. Greece, which contributed its full share to the TCF, fully appreciated the contribution of the technical cooperation programme to the worldwide promotion of scientific, technological and regulatory capabilities for the benefit of participating Member States through technology transfer and capacity-building. Technical cooperation was a fundamental pillar of the Agency's statutory activities. Greece supported every measure to ensure that its projects achieved meaningful and sustained benefits to Member States. Although programme planning was the prerogative of individual Member States, the Agency should assist them in preparing their programmes and help ensure that they enjoyed strong government support. Technical cooperation projects needed to be implemented in the context of a network of partnerships, primarily between the Agency and its Member States, but also including partners from other national institutions, relevant United Nations agencies, NGOs and private-sector donors. Cooperation among the Agency Departments involved in the programmes was also vital.

138. As a recipient country of Agency technical cooperation, Greece had established specialized laboratories and its scientists had been trained in other countries. Currently, as a donor, Greece participated in regional projects, organized training courses, provided expertise and hosted scientists from various regions. It was ready to contribute in kind by training scientists free of charge and, in 2006, had trained 10 Agency fellows in specialized laboratories for 23 months. It wished to maintain regional scientific contacts and cooperation in areas of common interest such as radiation protection, environmental radioactivity control, illicit trafficking and nuclear safety and security.

139. Greece had two national programmes under the Agency's technical cooperation programme, one on the development of a regional neutron scattering centre and the other on the measurement of the radionuclide intakes of workers. It also participated in regional programmes on environmental monitoring, marine monitoring, nuclear techniques for the protection of cultural heritage artefacts and on the strengthening of national capabilities in radiation, waste and transport safety. During the next technical cooperation cycle it wished to continue participating in existing programmes and to introduce new projects on education and training to support the radiation protection infrastructure and capacity-building for upgrading the nuclear security infrastructure.

140. The Greek Atomic Energy Commission was a recognized regional training centre and annually organized and hosted a regional postgraduate course attended by around 20 scientists on radiation protection and the safety of radiation sources. A long-term agreement between it and the Agency could ensure the sustainability of that course and the operation of regional centres. The Commission also hosted several shorter seminars annually in the fields of radiation protection and nuclear applications and medicine. They included a regional training course on SPECT in cardiology and oncology and a regional training course for the first responders to radiological emergencies, both being held in September 2006, and a regional training course on gamma spectrometry for monitoring radionuclides in air, which had been held in May 2006. In cooperation with the Agency's Office of Nuclear Security, the Commission had also organized and hosted 7 regional training courses on nuclear security advanced detection equipment for front line officers and mobile expert support teams in the year under review.

141. Mr. AMADOU (Niger) congratulated the Director General and the Agency on having been awarded the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize.

142. Niger was fully committed to the Agency's objectives and would make every effort to help promote the peaceful uses of nuclear techniques and strengthen the international legal framework. To that end, his Government had embarked on a general review of its legislative and regulatory texts with a view to strengthening the national radiation protection infrastructure and nuclear safety and security. Furthermore, Niger had recently organized a national seminar on nuclear safety, and one on radiation protection and quality assurance in radiodiagnosics. It had also given its political support to the Agency's Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and the Supplementary Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources. In addition, his country had joined the Agency's illicit trafficking database (ITDB).

143. Niger, which attached importance to the Agency's work in such areas as health, agriculture, stockbreeding, water resources management and the environment, welcomed the results obtained through the technical cooperation programme.

144. With the incidence of cancer in Niger rapidly increasing, his Government had made plans to establish a national radiotherapy cancer treatment centre. He hoped that the Agency would continue to provide technical assistance in the second phase of the relevant national project by promoting human resources development through training, and by providing international experts and equipment.

145. With 80% of its active population engaged in agriculture, Niger attached importance to the Agency's technical cooperation projects seeking to increase agricultural and animal production. The use of nuclear techniques, in particular for varietal improvement and animal nutrition, could make a major contribution in that regard.

146. His Government, which was committed to improving human health and environmental aspects with respect to its mining sector, attached importance to the Agency's activities in the areas of radiation safety and the management of mining waste. As one of the largest uranium producers in the world, Niger particularly welcomed the Agency's work concerning radiation protection of workers and the environment in connection with uranium mining.

147. Niger had recently begun to evaluate its knowledge in the field of the peaceful uses of nuclear techniques. The establishment, with the support of the Agency, of a national INIS centre would be particularly useful in that regard.

**The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.**