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President: Mr. OTHMAN (Syrian Arab Republic)

Later: Mr. GOTTWALD (Germany)

Mr. HIGUERAS RAMOS (Peru)

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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
Assistance Convention	Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency
BSS	International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources
CANDU	Canada deuterium-uranium [reactor]
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
Early Notification Convention	Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
FMCT	fissile material cut-off treaty
G8	Group of Eight
ICRP	International Commission on Radiological Protection
INES	International Nuclear Event Scale
INIS	International Nuclear Information System
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
INSSP	Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan
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
OECD/NEA	Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

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
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PATTEC	Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign
PHWR	pressurized heavy water reactor
R&D	research and development
RCA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
SIT	sterile insect technique
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
Wassenaar Arrangement	Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies

8. General debate and Annual Report for 2006 (continued) (GC(51)/5)

1. Mr. ALOBIDI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) warmly thanked the Agency for its support in recent years under the technical cooperation programme, especially in the areas of health, groundwater resource management and energy planning.
2. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had hosted the eighteenth AFRA Technical Working Group Meeting from 22 to 26 April 2007, attended by national coordinators of AFRA projects and representatives of the Agency who had discussed a human resources development strategy in the area of nuclear science and technology to promote sustainable development in Africa in accordance with identified priorities and the drafting of a plan of action in support of AFRA programmes.
3. The Libyan Renewable Energies and Water Desalination Research Center had organized a training course in cooperation with the Agency from 1 to 5 April 2007 on the use of radioisotope techniques to detect leaks in oil pipelines and heat exchangers. The course had been attended by participants from AFRA member countries, experts from Poland and South Africa and local trainees from the oil sector.
4. His country intended to proceed with its plans to use nuclear energy for electricity generation and water desalination. A number of companies from the United States of America, Canada, France, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation and Argentina had been invited to present their nuclear technology and the Agency would be asked for technical and legal support in due course.
5. In view of the importance it attached to nuclear, radiation and transport safety and waste management, his country had established a fully independent National Nuclear and Radiation Safety Authority. It monitored and assessed compliance with Agency standards and participated in most Agency projects aimed at strengthening the country's capacity to build a strong radiation protection infrastructure in all sectors using ionizing radiation.
6. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya also took part in nuclear security activities such as training courses, workshops and meetings. It was a party to the CPPNM and had signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. His country had hosted a workshop under the Agency's auspices and in cooperation with the Renewable Energies and Water Desalination Research Center on the physical protection of research reactors from 16 November to 7 December 2006 for trainees from Arab countries with research reactors. Experts from the Sandia National Laboratories in the United States had participated in the workshop.
7. He noted that, according to the Director General's report to the Board of Governors contained in document GOV/2007/48, the Islamic Republic of Iran was cooperating with the Agency on inspections and had provided the requisite reports on declared nuclear material and facilities. He further noted that the Agency was still unable to verify certain aspects relevant to the scope and nature of Iran's nuclear programme. While recognizing the importance of such cooperation and of seeking greater transparency so that the Agency possessed all relevant facts regarding the programme, he stressed the basic right of all States without exception to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes provided that they complied with their obligations under the NPT. The Islamic Republic of Iran was thus also entitled to produce nuclear energy and radioisotopes for peaceful purposes.

8. Some countries, however, were dissatisfied with the agreement of a work plan between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Agency and were still bent on imposing additional Security Council sanctions. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya viewed the agreement as a step in the right direction and urged the countries that were calling for more sanctions to refrain from adopting a Security Council resolution, to give diplomacy a chance and to have confidence in the Agency and its Director General, especially since the agreement set a short time limit for Iran to comply with its international obligations. He reminded those who were alluding to the possible use of force against Iran on the pretext that it was covertly pursuing a nuclear programme for non-peaceful purposes of the consequences of the ongoing war in Iraq, which had been waged on the basis of erroneous information that contradicted the findings of the Agency and its inspectors.

9. His country was deeply concerned about the existence of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, since the Israelis had developed their military nuclear capabilities and had amassed a huge arsenal of nuclear weapons, triggering an arms race in the region and hence threatening regional and international peace and security. Libya had supported all General Assembly resolutions since 1974 that urged every State in the region to take practical steps to establish a NWFZ in the Middle East, to comply with the NPT and to refrain from developing, producing, testing or storing nuclear weapons and from permitting the stationing of nuclear weapons on their territories. It therefore emphasized the need to rid the Middle East of all weapons of mass destruction and of ensuring that nuclear installations were subject to international verification in accordance with the NPT. It called for the implementation of relevant General Assembly resolutions, Security Council resolution 487 (1981) and the 1996 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice which urged all parties to take steps to establish a NWFZ in the Middle East. He wondered why the Western States did not call on the Israelis to accede to the NPT if they genuinely wanted security and peace in the Middle East.

10. While commending the Agency's efforts to increase the representation of nationals from developing countries in its staff, he noted that no tangible progress had been made to date and called for more equitable representation of developing countries, including his own, in senior posts, since they possessed the necessary expertise.

11. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya considered that it was more urgent than ever to ensure compliance with the provisions of the NPT and to enhance the effectiveness of the safeguards regime by working for the universality of both. He called on all nuclear-weapon States to draw up a programme for the elimination of their nuclear arsenals and to cease all forms of development of such weapons, thereby setting an example for other States of compliance with their NPT obligations.

12. Mr. GAISENAK (Belarus) said that since its founding the Agency had become the leading international organization responsible for promoting the safe use of nuclear energy and ensuring compliance with international non-proliferation obligations. Belarus expressed its full support for the Agency's efforts towards the goal of "Atoms for Peace".

13. Belarus valued highly the professionalism and competence with which the Secretariat approached technical cooperation projects and believed that future projects should continue to be guided by such professionalism focused on definite results. No political subtexts or outside influences should be permitted to affect technical cooperation.

14. The coordinated efforts of Member States and the Secretariat had led to a positive trend in the financial technical cooperation implementation indicators. The Secretariat and Member States would have to continue to work actively in the future to ensure the TCF had sufficient financial resources. For its part, Belarus had paid its voluntary contributions to the Fund in full and on time for many years and intended to do so also in 2008.

15. Belarus considered technical cooperation to be an essential instrument for the transfer and introduction of technology and experience in the nuclear field. In the case of Belarus, which had suffered the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, technical cooperation had been particularly important in creating the right socio-economic and medical conditions for rehabilitation of the affected regions and ensuring their stable development. The Agency had, over many years, successfully carried out projects to minimize the effects of the disaster. Currently, a project was in progress whose main goal was to improve living conditions in the affected regions by means of agricultural technologies capable of reducing the occurrence of radioactive elements in food products. It would contribute to the economic growth of those regions and improvement of the ecological situation. The significance of such projects could not be overstated.

16. In that context, he drew attention to resolution GC(50)/RES/12, which requested “the Secretariat to continue, within the framework of the Technical Cooperation Programme, to work actively to render assistance to the most affected countries in mitigating the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster and establishing prerequisites for the sustainable development of the affected areas”. Belarus expressed the hope that the Agency would continue its active role in that regard.

17. Nuclear power accounted for around 16% of global energy production and had a growing role in meeting humankind’s energy needs in an ecologically safe and economically viable way. A growing number of Member States had announced their intention to establish national nuclear power programmes. Belarus was among those States interested in dialogue with the Agency regarding a possible national nuclear power programme and was in the process of reviewing various options for the future development of its energy sector so as to ensure stable economic growth of the country. Belarus actively supported the Agency’s efforts to assist Member States in establishing nuclear power programmes, and he emphasized that particular attention should be paid to safety and security issues.

18. In the framework of the development of nuclear power, new approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle which would guarantee the supply of nuclear fuel were of particular interest. Belarus was convinced that the relevant initiatives should be studied without undue haste and with full and transparent participation by all interested parties. It fell to Member States to draw up a fair, multilateral system for an assured supply of nuclear fuel to all users of nuclear power.

19. Belarus was a committed and consistent supporter of the strengthening of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and strictly fulfilled its obligations under the NPT. It was also aware of the complexity of the issues related to implementation of the NPT, as had been recently confirmed at the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

20. Belarus intended to collaborate further with the Agency to strengthen that regime and expressed its support for the professional work of the Agency in the application of safeguards in Member States. Belarus was concerned by the trend for the Agency to concentrate its efforts on the application of safeguards. Such a one-sided approach to fulfilling its statutory functions would cause irreparable harm to the Agency’s authority as the leading international organization in the nuclear field.

21. Significant work had been conducted over the past year in the field of nuclear and radiation safety and security. In particular, efforts had been made to universalize and implement such international agreements in the field as the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Joint Convention and the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. There had been collaborative work between national infrastructures and international experts to ensure radiation protection and the safety of nuclear facilities, research reactors, radioactive waste management and transport. Belarus supported the Agency’s efforts to establish a global regime of nuclear and radiation safety and considered its own work at the national level to be an integral part of those efforts.

22. Belarus noted the constructive role of the Agency in working with Member States to ensure the safety of facilities which presented a cross-border radiation risk and believed such work should continue. A successful example had been the Agency's mission in 2005 to evaluate the safety of the planned radioactive waste storage facility at the Ignalina nuclear power plant. Implementation of the conclusions of that mission would ensure improved safety in the interest of all concerned Member States.

23. Belarus was particularly concerned by illegal trafficking in nuclear and radioactive materials across State borders and was participating in the relevant Agency database. In 2006, Belarus and the Agency had organized a national seminar on response to such trafficking incidents and, at the start of September 2007, Belarus had established regional training courses on the same subject. They greatly enhanced the effectiveness of national and regional efforts to combat illegal trafficking. Belarus expected to be involved in further cooperation with the Agency in that sphere.

24. Mr. FRANK (Israel) said that, at a time of growing concern regarding nuclear proliferation and increased demand for nuclear power as a non-polluting source of energy, the Agency had an important role to play in making nuclear power safe, reliable and resistant to proliferation. In recent years, the non-proliferation regime had been undermined by serious violations of international obligations by a few States. The Agency, as the sole legitimate nuclear fact-finder, had the indispensable task of verifying compliance with those obligations by virtue of its ability to detect diversion, to submit full and timely reports and to facilitate efforts by the international community to handle such concerns effectively. Lamentably, some instances of gross and consistent non-compliance, mostly in the Middle East region, had not been initially detected by the Agency and had not yet been checked by proper enforcement of corrective measures.

25. Although the gravity of the situation had been recognized in successive Board of Governors and Security Council resolutions, the desired outcome of those resolutions had not yet been achieved. Current developments, if left unchecked, would undermine regional and global security and posed a grave existential challenge to Israel. His country could not remain oblivious to intensive efforts by some parties in the region to develop weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, while the same parties denied the legitimacy of Israel's sovereign existence and called for its destruction.

26. Israel remained hopeful, however, that the international community would summon the collective will to take all appropriate measures to address the challenges satisfactorily. He called on all parties concerned to assist the Agency in exercising its mandate with appropriate guidance from the Security Council. It was important to take part in efforts inspired by the Security Council to condemn such reckless behaviour and to avert serious threats to international security and stability.

27. Israel was aware of the need for a clean and sustainable power supply and took the view that countries which behaved responsibly should not be denied access to nuclear power. However, sensitive nuclear technology should not be transferred without taking into account certain parameters and the credentials of the recipient. In that context, he congratulated Presidents Bush and Putin on their joint declaration in which they encouraged States to use nuclear technology and adopt a viable alternative to sensitive fuel cycle technologies.

28. Israel had enacted new legislation in line with the Wassenaar Arrangement, completing its efforts to harmonize its export control policy with best practices set by the various supplier regimes. It submitted regular reports on its implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

29. Israel had taken steps to ratify the amended CPPNM and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. It was also implementing the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and the Code of Conduct on the Safety of Research Reactors. His country was stepping up security at its international border crossings, in cooperation

with the United States Department of Energy, in order to prevent illicit trafficking of nuclear and radiological materials and was installing the first set of megaport portals at Haifa. Israel also actively supported and participated in the work of the CTBTO and had joined the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.

30. Israel participated as an observer in the Agency's INPRO and was considering the possibility of taking part in some proposed projects. The Ministry of National Infrastructure was conducting a preliminary feasibility study in cooperation with the Israel Atomic Energy Commission on the building of nuclear power reactors on the premise that such reactors would be subject to international safeguards.

31. Some States were again pressing for action at the current session, under agenda item 22, on the so-called "Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat", an item that had been removed from the agenda in 1993 and never acted upon since. None of the proliferation developments in recent years had involved Israel, but they all challenged his country's security. They demonstrated the alarming attitude of some States in the region to their international commitments. The sponsors of the agenda item were motivated by cynical political considerations that were unrelated to the Agency's mandate and that were also evident in efforts to challenge Israel's credentials. Such conduct cast serious doubt on the sponsors' willingness to make any real progress towards cooperative security in the Middle East and he called on Member States to reject their proposals outright.

32. Israel had been advocating global and complete disarmament long before the introduction of the agenda item calling for the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East. It remained committed to a vision of the Middle East as a zone free of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. Yet the establishment of such a zone called for a fundamental transformation of the regional political and strategic environment through the gradual building of mutual trust and reconciliation, followed by more modest arms control measures. So far such a transformation had eluded the Middle East. Israel had joined in the consensus on resolutions under the relevant item at previous sessions despite grave reservations about its modalities. Unfortunately, certain States had insisted at the previous session on introducing amendments to the text that had not been negotiated. He urged all parties involved to adhere to the tradition of consensus. Israel would only support the item if its contents were mutually agreed upon and no action was taken on agenda item 22.

33. In recent years, Israel had worked closely with the Agency under the technical cooperation programme to extend the benefits of peaceful applications of nuclear energy in the areas of health, agriculture, environment and industry to its own citizens and to its neighbours. The benefits of projects aimed at controlling the tephritid fruit flies were particularly noteworthy.

34. The Israel Atomic Energy Commission had pledged a substantial donation to the Agency's Department of Nuclear Safety and Security of personal detection and search units for a recipient State in need. It had also increased its annual contribution to the Department of Technical Cooperation and had created a mechanism to update its contribution regularly.

35. Mr. BERNHARD (Denmark) said that the world depended and would continue to depend on the Agency's safeguards system and the NPT as the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime. The Nobel Peace Prize had been awarded to the Agency and its Director General for their efforts to prevent nuclear energy from being used for military purposes and to ensure that it was used for peaceful purposes in the safest possible way. Yet some States that had signed comprehensive safeguards agreements had nonetheless developed secret nuclear programmes. All States should therefore recognize that the current Agency verification standard consisted of both a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol.

36. The United Nations Security Council also had a key responsibility for non-proliferation. To maintain their credibility, both the Security Council and the Agency had to react promptly and consistently when States breached their safeguards commitments or sought to break out of the NPT regime. Denmark supported increased Security Council involvement in the area of non-proliferation both in general and in specific cases such as those of the DPRK and Iran. The adoption of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) had been an important step in that direction. Denmark had also supported the adoption of resolutions 1695 (2006) and 1718 (2006) concerning the DPRK and resolutions 1696 (2006) and 1737 (2006) concerning Iran's nuclear programme.

37. With regard to the DPRK, he welcomed the intensified dialogue among the participants in the six-party talks. The shutdown of the Yongbyon nuclear facilities, which was being monitored by Agency inspectors, was an important first step towards the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. The Agency should be provided with the necessary funds to continue its verification efforts.

38. Security Council resolution 1747 (2007), which had been adopted by consensus, stated that further appropriate measures would be taken if Iran failed to suspend enrichment and heavy water related activities. He urged Iran to take the suspension steps required by the Board of Governors and the Security Council in order to build confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme. The door for negotiations remained open and the generous offer presented by the European Union High Representative in June 2006 on behalf of China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States of America remained on the table.

39. The threat posed by proliferation to non-State actors such as terrorists had presented a new challenge in recent years. Denmark was committed to ensuring that sufficient resources were available under the Nuclear Security Fund to address that threat. While responsibility for nuclear security lay with individual States, joint action was necessary to strengthen non-proliferation, nuclear verification and export controls. Denmark had contributed from the outset to the Proliferation Security Initiative by playing a leading role on containerized shipments in the maritime domain and facilitating outreach to industry. It had also recently joined the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.

40. Denmark believed that nuclear power was not a sustainable form of energy and that it should not be included in energy planning. Hence, while respecting others' choice and noting the Agency's mandate as stipulated in its Statute, Denmark was not in favour of a promotional role for the Agency in that regard.

41. The step from mastering sensitive civilian technology to building a nuclear weapon was becoming smaller, raising proliferation concerns regarding the technology for the most sensitive parts of the nuclear cycle, such as uranium enrichment. Denmark would therefore consider supporting a multilateral proliferation-safe mechanism that would provide an assured nuclear fuel supply for States that had opted for nuclear power.

Mr. GOTTWALD (Germany), Vice-President, took the Chair.

42. Mr. ARÉVALO YÉPES (Colombia) reiterated that the commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation informed Colombia's foreign policy-making. It had 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.

43. 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 supported multilateral

initiatives to counter the threat posed by nuclear proliferation, including by terrorists, and by the very existence of nuclear weapons.

44. As part of its policy to support the peaceful use of nuclear energy and as a contribution to the Agency's verification task and international security, Colombia had signed an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement in 2005 and was in the process of ratifying it.

45. The NPT and the global disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation system were facing serious challenges. In the first half of 2007, the first preparatory meeting for the 2010 NPT Review Conference had taken place. He stressed the need to participate in that process in a constructive spirit so that progress could be made. 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 not only horizontal but also vertical proliferation. The disarmament and non-proliferation system needed the support and agreement of all States in order to be effective. Colombia urged that renewed efforts be made to strengthen the NPT through the honouring of commitments undertaken and adherence by the whole international community. Also, the establishment of more NWFZs should be given the highest priority.

46. For the Agency to fulfil its statutory objectives, a balance should be maintained among its three pillars, namely verification, technical cooperation and nuclear safety, particularly in view of the major challenges faced by developing countries. Nuclear technology development over the past fifty years had shown the great potential of nuclear applications for sustainable development. In the health field, Colombia emphasized the importance of the Agency's programme for cancer treatment, PACT. 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.

47. Given the importance of technical cooperation, it was paradoxical that the Agency's technical cooperation programme lacked assured, predictable and sufficient resources. Work should continue to ensure the resources necessary to strengthen the Agency's technical cooperation function and its contribution to sustainable development.

48. Colombia had benefited from the Agency's technical cooperation in many areas important for social and economic growth and was also a contributor to the TCF. Colombia paid its NPCs and had worked with the Agency on a cost sharing basis. Ongoing national technical cooperation projects included one to determine optimal techniques in support of humanitarian demining activities, to which his country assigned great importance.

49. At the regional level, Colombia had recently had the honour of presiding over the Board of Representatives of ARCAL, an organization which had contributed greatly to cooperation among developing countries during its 23 years of existence. Much progress had been made, particularly in developing a strategic regional profile, which would be of great assistance in planning future regional technical cooperation projects. Other ARCAL achievements during 2007 included the establishment of the ARCAL-Spain partnership and the approval of its work programme, which would consolidate the traditionally strong relations between Spain and the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

50. The establishment of the ARCAL prize, awarded annually to an individual or institution which had contributed to the promotion of regional collaboration in the field of the peaceful use of nuclear energy, represented another significant step forward. The first ARCAL prize had been awarded to the nuclear institutions of the countries of the Andean Group in recognition of their efforts towards the peaceful development of nuclear energy.

51. Ensuring the safety and security of radioactive sources was fundamental. To that end, it was important to strengthen means of international cooperation so as to minimize the possible risks arising from the use of radioactive sources, as well as from illicit trafficking in radioactive material and its potential use for terrorist purposes.

52. In 2007, Colombia had hosted an Agency review mission on control of public exposures and waste safety appraisal programme. The Agency had continued to support the process of regulatory harmonization and development, in line with the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and its supplementary Guidance. Colombia was working actively to put the recommendations contained in those documents into practice and reiterated its support for the Agency's efforts in that field.

53. As a coastal State, Colombia attached special importance to the safe maritime transport of radioactive material and to strengthening the relevant legislative framework. Given the Agency's competence in the area of transport safety, it should continue promoting dialogue and consultation among coastal and shipping States. It would be useful to have in place a pertinent legal instrument with broad accession by coastal and shipping States. With Agency support, progress had been made in the development of safety legislation, which should be made applicable to transport safety.

54. 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 take account of the needs of developing countries. Allied with a firm commitment to disarmament that would help build a future devoid of nuclear threat where the aspirations for development shared by the majority of the world's countries could become reality.

55. Mr. COGAN (Ireland) said that his country had long held the conviction that effective multilateralism was the best way to ensure international peace and security. For a small country like Ireland, the multilateral regime of disarmament and non-proliferation treaties provided the best guarantee of peace and security and it was therefore committed to upholding and strengthening such instruments and the institutions that oversaw their implementation.

56. The NPT was the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime and the foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. Ireland was particularly attached to the Treaty because it had originated in a "non-dissemination" initiative taken in 1958 by the then Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Frank Aiken. Disarmament and non-proliferation were mutually reinforcing processes that should be pursued with equal vigour. At the 2000 NPT Review Conference, States Party to the NPT had agreed to thirteen practical steps for progressive implementation of Article VI of the Treaty. The nuclear-weapon States had given an unequivocal undertaking to eliminate their nuclear arsenals and a framework had been agreed for the purpose. Following the disappointment of the 2005 NPT Review Conference, it was vital to ensure that the 2010 review cycle achieved a successful outcome in respect of all aspects of the Treaty and contributed to achieving its universality. While progress had been made at the first meeting in the cycle, it was important to remain focused on the fundamental goal of eliminating all nuclear weapons.

57. Ireland called on States that had not yet implemented a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol to do so without delay, since they constituted the only acceptable verification standard for ensuring the international community's full confidence in the peaceful purposes of nuclear programmes.

58. When the CTBT had been opened for signature in 1996, there had been great expectations of a new dawn in the pursuit of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Regrettably, eleven years later the international community was still awaiting the Treaty's entry into force. The need for a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests was greater than ever following the nuclear test by the DPRK less than a year

previously. He urged the DPRK to fully implement Security Council resolution 1718 (2006) and to implement its comprehensive safeguards agreement under the NPT. At the same time, he welcomed the DPRK's return to the six-party talks and strongly supported the Agency's monitoring and verification measures at its nuclear facilities. The shutdown of the Yongbyon facility was a significant first step towards the dismantling of the DPRK's nuclear weapons programme.

59. Ireland appreciated the Agency's professional and impartial verification work in the Islamic Republic of Iran. It hoped that the recently agreed work plan would resolve outstanding issues relating to Iran's nuclear programme and reaffirmed its support for efforts to find a negotiated long-term solution. Nevertheless, Ireland remained concerned about Iran's intentions and was disappointed at its failure to comply fully with Security Council resolutions 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007) and with the resolutions adopted by the Board of Governors. It called on Iran to comply fully with their provisions, to suspend all enrichment related and reprocessing activities and to cooperate fully in an open and transparent manner with the Agency.

60. Ireland did not consider that the use of nuclear energy for the generation of electric power provided a safe, sustainable and environmentally acceptable option. Unresolved problems associated with nuclear energy included the safety and security of nuclear installations, the transport of nuclear materials, the disposal of radioactive waste, the reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel, contamination of the marine and terrestrial environment, and the risk of accidents and proliferation. Ireland acknowledged, however, that its views were not shared by many other countries and that each country had the sovereign right to decide on its own energy mix.

61. Similarly, Ireland did not share the belief that nuclear energy could help to solve the problem of global warming. The ongoing debate on the subject sought to downplay the environmental, waste, proliferation, nuclear liability and safety issues. Ireland had therefore hosted a meeting of like-minded ministers of the environment in Dublin in March 2007 in order to provide a counterweight to that debate by highlighting the issues that remained an integral part of the nuclear energy option after more than fifty years. It looked forward to participating in a follow-up meeting in Vienna in late September 2007.

62. In spite of its decision not to develop nuclear power, Ireland derived considerable benefit from its membership of the Agency. It appreciated the Agency's pioneering work in such areas as agriculture, food, human health, as well as its vital role in promoting nuclear safety and security through safeguards and verification. A recent example of that role was the Agency's dispatch of a team of experts in response to a request by the Japanese authorities following the earthquake that had affected the Kashiwazaki Kariwa nuclear power plant.

63. General Conference resolution GC(46)/RES/9.D, adopted in 2002, concerning the Early Notification and the Assistance Conventions encouraged Member States to contribute to international efforts to develop a coherent and sustainable joint programme for a more efficient international response to nuclear emergencies. A meeting of competent authorities convened by the Agency in 2003 had agreed to establish a National Competent Authorities' Co-ordinating Group to develop an international action plan to strengthen the international emergency response system. Ireland had contributed \$30 000 to the fund for the implementation of the action plan and encouraged other Member States to contribute also.

64. Coastal States such as Ireland considered that, given the risks posed by shipments of nuclear materials, they should be informed of shipments that passed near their coasts, even if they were outside their territorial waters. They could then assess the risks and take appropriate emergency response measures. Ireland was seeking to strengthen the ongoing dialogue among coastal and shipping States with a view to improving communications between the governments concerned.

65. The use of the shared marine environment to discharge radioactive waste from reprocessing operations was neither acceptable nor sustainable. Moreover, the cost of reprocessing spent fuel was significantly higher than that of direct disposal. While States were free to decide whether or not to engage in reprocessing, such practical concerns should first be addressed. Ireland's concerns were not founded on abstract ideological policy but were informed by its negative safety and environmental experience.

66. Ireland urged Member States to contribute to the Nuclear Security Fund, to which it had so far made voluntary contributions of approximately €240 000. The question of funding of the Nuclear Security Plan for 2006–2009 should be addressed in the context of the strategic review of Agency resources.

67. Ireland also attached great importance to the TCF as a means of upgrading safety in beneficiary States and supported applications of non-power related nuclear technology. It had paid its full share of the TCF target for both 2006 and 2007.

68. Mr. BEKOE (Ghana) said that his country acknowledged and appreciated the Agency's role in the transfer of nuclear technologies to African Member States to address problems in the areas of health, agriculture, industry, environment and energy. Ghana attached great importance to technical cooperation as a mechanism for promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy and its contribution to economic and social development. Ghana, which was utilizing nuclear energy in a number of fields to promote development, was grateful for the Agency's support of regional and national projects. Ghana was making every effort to secure funding to expand and upgrade its infrastructure and intended to put in place a comprehensive cancer therapy programme. Also, Ghana welcomed the Agency initiative to develop isotope techniques for use in water resource management, which would find wide application in Africa given its water availability problems.

69. To meet its target of achieving middle income status by 2015, Ghana was making efforts to assess and harness all available energy sources, including nuclear power. Ghana would soon be requesting Agency assistance in installing the necessary regulatory, legal and physical infrastructure to implement a nuclear power programme and in support of human resource development. Ghana had recently signed a statement of principles at a ministerial meeting of the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership which, it was hoped, would provide assistance in developing safety and security infrastructure.

70. Human resource development and nuclear knowledge management were crucial for the safe and effective operation of nuclear facilities and Ghana had established a postgraduate school for nuclear sciences at the University of Ghana. The school, now in its second year, had 90 postgraduate students and offered 8 accredited programmes. Ghana recognized the major role the Agency had played in establishing the school.

71. Ghana was in the process of establishing a national accelerator facility to strengthen its institutional capacities. His Government had already released funds to refurbish a building to house the facility and was securing funds towards cost-sharing of the project. Ghana would welcome financial assistance to implement the project and thanked the Agency for organizing a recent Technical Meeting on enhancing nuclear science education and training using accelerators in Accra.

72. Ghana's efforts, with Agency assistance, to develop non-destructive testing methods were yielding positive results. He thanked the Agency for initiating the regional project on radioisotope and radiotracer applications and was of the view that nuclear technology could only be successfully applied in Africa if Member States strove to achieve sustainability of national nuclear institutions. Ghana welcomed Agency support for AFRA regional projects to build human capacities and establish quality management projects in collaboration with such regional partners as NEPAD and the

International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC). The development of nuclear legislation and the establishment and expansion of radiation protection infrastructure were also important.

73. Ghana commended the Agency's efforts in supporting the creation of tsetse-free zones in Africa using the SIT. Ghana, a participant in PATTEC, was involved in the mass rearing of flies and welcomed the Agency's commitment to using the SIT to suppress and eradicate anopheles mosquitoes in the fight against malaria.

74. Ghana had finally taken the decision to establish a nuclear regulatory body, the Ghana Nuclear Regulatory Authority (GNRA), which was to be independent from the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission.

75. Aware of the paramount importance of nuclear security, his country would intensify its efforts to implement the INSSP. An IPPAS mission had recently assessed the physical protection of Ghana's major nuclear facilities and every effort would be made to implement its recommendations. Ghana appreciated the role played by the Agency's Office of Nuclear Security and reiterated its commitment to the Agency's nuclear security programme. It intended to work closely with the Agency to host national and regional training courses in that field.

76. Ghana adhered strictly to the NPT and already had an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement in force. It welcomed the recent understanding reached with respect to the DPRK's nuclear activities and urged all concerned parties to continue negotiations aimed at a peaceful outcome. Ghana shared the serious concern of many other States regarding the slow progress towards nuclear disarmament, one of the central objectives of the NPT.

77. In conclusion, he reaffirmed Ghana's support for Agency safeguards, safety and security and technology transfer activities and urged all Member States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in conformity with their obligations under the NPT.

78. Ms. GERVAIS-VIDRICAIRE (Canada) stressed the importance of the Agency, which Canada had always strongly and actively supported throughout its history. The Agency's three pillars had each made significant contributions towards the peaceful use of nuclear technology. Canada looked forward to a future of increased nuclear cooperation, increased use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and a universally-accepted enhanced safeguards and verification system.

79. The NPT remained the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the Agency's role in verifying compliance was as unique as it was essential. Its safeguards system had been strengthened so that the Secretariat could draw broader safeguards conclusions, leading to increased confidence in the peaceful nature of States' nuclear programmes. Canada called on all States which had not joined the NPT to do so and on all States party to the NPT to accept the enhanced verification standard by entering into a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol with the Agency.

80. Her country was following with interest recent developments which could lead to new safeguards agreements between India and the Agency. It welcomed closer collaboration which would increase the number of safeguarded facilities in India.

81. Canada applauded the Agency's efforts to resolve outstanding issues related to the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear programme. Iran still had considerable work to do to achieve compliance with its obligations and resolve issues stemming from its history of concealment. Canada regarded the work plan between the Agency and Iran as a step in the right direction, but noted with grave concern from the Director General's latest report that Iran had not suspended enrichment related activities. Canada urged Iran to comply with relevant Security Council resolutions by suspending all such activities and implementing its additional protocol. Only then would it be possible to verify Iran's

claims that its nuclear programme was entirely peaceful. Canada would be closely monitoring the work plan's progress to ensure that Iran followed through on its commitment to cooperate with the Agency. It was aware that further Security Council action might be necessary.

82. Canada was deeply concerned by the DPRK's nuclear activities, including the nuclear explosive test conducted in October 2006, which was inconsistent with the DPRK's international commitments. Canada supported a peaceful solution to the issue through the six-party talks and welcomed the 13 February 2007 agreement and consequent actions, including the shutdown of nuclear facilities at Yongbyon and the return of Agency personnel to the DPRK. Canada called on all parties to complete the implementation of that agreement and encouraged the DPRK to take further steps, including declaring all its nuclear programmes, disabling all existing nuclear facilities and recommitting itself to the NPT and Agency safeguards. As the DPRK moved towards meeting its commitments, Canada was reviewing the scope and nature of its engagement with the DPRK.

83. The safeguards system had to be evolutionary in order to respond to new challenges and continue to provide the basis for credible safeguards conclusions. Therefore Canada attached great importance to a system that utilized a State level, rather than a facility level, perspective and featured transparency in process and non-discrimination in implementation. During the previous year, a State level safeguards approach had been introduced in Canada and was being implemented on a sector-by-sector basis. Full implementation of that approach would enable greater optimization and efficiency in a country which had historically received a significant proportion of the Agency's inspection effort.

84. The threat of nuclear terrorism required a concerted international response. Canada had contributed \$8 million to the Nuclear Security Fund, as part of its commitment to the G8 Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, which made it the second largest donor State to the Fund. Canada looked forward to continuing to work with the Agency on nuclear security activities in Russia and other countries of the former Soviet Union and continued to believe that the Agency's nuclear security activities were an integral part of efforts to strengthen nuclear security and prevent, detect and respond to acts of nuclear terrorism. Encouraging other Member States to contribute to such efforts and to the Nuclear Security Fund, she said Canada would like to see more such activities funded by the Regular Budget.

85. Canada believed that international standards, particularly Agency safety standards, should play a central role in ensuring consistent safety approaches and common safety goals. The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) was represented on the Agency's Commission on Safety Standards and its subcommittees and was continuing to use international standards and all available experience to regulate nuclear activities in Canada.

86. Her country recognized the importance of sharing regulatory experience and good practices and was to host, with the support of the Agency, the CANDU Senior Regulators' Meeting in November 2007 bringing together all countries operating such nuclear power plants.

87. Looking back over its recent chairmanship of the 3rd Review Meeting of Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, Canada was proud of the achievements made. It was looking forward to the 4th Review Meeting in April 2008 as an opportunity to advance the Convention's objectives.

88. Nuclear energy formed an important part of Canada's energy supply. Over the previous year, three applications for new reactors had been submitted to the CNSC and progress was being made with reactor refurbishments. Canada had a great deal to offer the international community in that sphere and would continue to share its capabilities as a responsible nuclear supplier country. As regards national developments in the nuclear industry, Canada looked forward to continued Agency

support for PHWR technology. The future looked bright as a new nuclear era was dawning and in that context Canada was pleased that it would host the 2008 summer institute of the World Nuclear University.

89. Canada valued INPRO, which had generated considerable international interest. The project focused on innovative nuclear power and brought together technology developers and users, as a complement to the Generation IV International Forum. Canadian researchers were continuing their work on supercritical water reactors, which were seen as a natural future development of the CANDU reactor.

90. Canada was a strong supporter of the Agency's technical cooperation activities and commended the Secretariat's efforts aimed at improved prioritizing and at answering more efficiently and effectively the needs of donors and recipients. Expressing appreciation for the excellent Technical Cooperation Report for 2006, she called on all States to submit their voluntary contributions to the TCF on time and, to the extent possible, in full.

91. Ms. KAUPPI (Finland) said that the NPT remained the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the Agency a key actor in it. Finland was in favour of universalization of the NPT, strengthening the Agency's safeguards system, strengthening export controls, early entry into force of the CTBT and the immediate start of negotiations on an FMCT.

92. Having welcomed the Agency's report on assurance of supply of nuclear fuel, she said that access to nuclear fuel for peaceful use should be ensured. Finland noted that market neutrality was a fundamental criterion for any future nuclear fuel cycle mechanism. The various initiatives in the form of multilateral nuclear approaches that had been proposed, and also to extend multinational cooperation on the back-end of the nuclear fuel cycle, warranted further study.

93. Finland strongly supported the strengthening of the Agency's safeguards system to reinforce the Agency's capability and authority to provide assurances about the absence of undeclared nuclear material. A comprehensive safeguards agreement together with an additional protocol represented the current verification standard and Finland urged all States that had not yet done so to conclude and bring into force additional protocols. Finland had brought its additional protocol into force in 2004 and was about to begin the implementation of integrated safeguards, the aim of which was to improve efficiency and enhance cost-effectiveness.

94. The upturn in worldwide interest in nuclear power, and the corresponding need to control and guarantee nuclear safety and security, posed a growing challenge for the Agency and the international community. Member States, on the one hand, should ensure that the Agency had sufficient financial resources to fulfil its mandate and the Agency, on the other, would have to continue its efforts to organize itself and its work efficiently and prioritize its use of resources. In that context, Finland noted the 20/20 study initiated by the Director General.

95. There had been welcome progress in the field of nuclear security with the entry into force of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism in July 2007. Also, Finland called upon all States to complete early ratification of the amendment to the CPPNM, which would strengthen the global nuclear security regime. Her country had provided support in kind to the Agency's activities in the fight against nuclear terrorism and was pleased to announce a further voluntary contribution to the Nuclear Security Fund.

96. A high level of nuclear safety, including effective and sustainable infrastructures controlling the use of nuclear energy, was an indispensable prerequisite for the use of nuclear energy. The Agency's work to support countries in developing nuclear safety and safety culture was very important. In particular, Finland appreciated, and had actively contributed to, the work of the Agency in setting up

modern safety standards. Finland, which was party to all the international safety conventions, called upon all countries to accede to those conventions and comply with the related obligations.

97. Finland, recognizing the importance of the Agency's technical cooperation programme, had always paid its share of the TCF target in full and on time and called upon all Member States to do the same.

98. Nuclear energy had played a role in Finnish electricity production since the early 1980s and now accounted for one quarter of its production. There were four nuclear power plant units in operation in Finland with a fifth under construction. Environmental impact studies were under way regarding the possible construction of a sixth unit, but no decisions would be made until those studies were complete.

99. Construction of the third-generation 1600 MW Olkiluoto 3 reactor was two years behind schedule. That delay indicated the difficulty of constructing a new nuclear power plant after many years of worldwide cessation. There was a general shortage of manufacturing capacity and experience in producing safety related equipment that met quality requirements. Increased size and stringent safety requirements posed new challenges in terms of design, construction and manufacturing making verification of safety and quality a demanding task for the power company and national authorities.

100. Nuclear power production helped to meet the Kyoto Protocol greenhouse gas emission target. However, in its energy strategy Finland stressed the importance of a diversified energy mix and had set clear objectives for increasing the share of renewable energy sources.

101. The use of nuclear power required a robust and reliable solution to final disposal of high level and long-lived nuclear waste. All the nuclear waste generated in Finland would be handled, stored and permanently disposed of in Finland following parliamentary ratification in 2001 of the construction of a final repository. The underground facility, in which it was planned to store spent nuclear fuel at a depth of 520 metres, was scheduled to be operational in 2020. In establishing the safeguards system for the future repository site there had been active cooperation between the Agency and Finland which included the sharing of information and experience and technical visits to the site.

102. Mr. WIN (Myanmar) said that his country had eight national projects under the technical cooperation programme for 2007-2008. The Ministries of Health, Education, Livestock and Fisheries, Agriculture and Irrigation, and Science and Technology were cooperating with the Agency on the projects. The assistance his country had received in the form of equipment, experts and training had contributed to national development in many areas, including health, agriculture, food, livestock breeding and industry. A total allocation of \$1.3 million had been recommended for Myanmar under the 2007-2008 programme. The largest share of assistance had been allocated to radiation medicine and health (26%), followed by applications of isotopes and radiation in food and agriculture (20%), radiation safety and nuclear security (17%), and general atomic energy development (14%). The Agency's continued support in that regard was greatly appreciated.

103. A gradual increase in the application of nuclear techniques in medical diagnosis and industry as well as in academic research on peaceful nuclear technology was expected in Myanmar. An adequate radiation protection and radiation safety infrastructure had therefore become necessary and he thanked the Agency for its assistance through the national project on radiation protection and technical cooperation projects on establishing radiation protection infrastructure. He urged the General Conference to take further steps to promote technical assistance programmes, giving priority to projects for less developed Member States.

104. Expressing support for the Nuclear Security Plan, he said that adequate nuclear security arrangements, including the physical protection of nuclear materials and associated nuclear facilities,

the safety and security of radioactive sources, transport safety and security, and accounting for and control of nuclear material were prerequisites for the prevention of global nuclear terrorism and criminal acts. He called for the implementation of nuclear safeguards agreements by all Member States and welcomed the fact that the number of States that had not yet brought their comprehensive safeguards agreements into force had declined to 31 at the end of 2006.

105. Myanmar had signed the NPT in 1992, a safeguards agreement in 1995 and the CTBT in 1996. It had signed the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone at the fifth ASEAN summit in Bangkok in 1995. Myanmar believed that such zones were an effective means of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and of contributing to nuclear disarmament.

106. The 1987 Regional Cooperative Agreement (RCA) for Asia and the Pacific, which was the Agency's first regional agreement, had been extended for the fourth time for a further five years. Myanmar benefited from its membership and appreciated the Agency's cooperative efforts under the RCA programme.

107. Mr. PETRIČ (Slovenia) said that a comprehensive safeguards agreement together with an additional protocol was the current Agency verification standard and encouraged all States to bring into force such a standard.

108. Slovenia welcomed the entry into force in July 2007 of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, of which it had been among the first signatories. The Agency had assessed the threat of nuclear terrorism to be real, transnational and multifaceted. Effective measures had to be taken to minimize that threat. Resources were required to implement such activities and the Agency's efforts were mainly financed by the Nuclear Security Fund, to which Slovenia was a donor.

109. As a State party to the CPPNM, Slovenia had been involved in its revision and had begun the internal process of ratifying the amendments to it adopted in July 2005.

110. Slovenia saw it as its role to assist the Agency in fulfilling the technical cooperation pillar of its mandate. It hosted Agency courses and accepted more than a dozen fellows from developing countries each year. Also, Slovenian experts were involved in the project to assist Serbia in decommissioning its nuclear sites. Slovenia had pledged its full share of the TCF target for 2008 and had decided to make a voluntary contribution to finance PACT.

111. Slovenia, which recognized the Agency's effort to upgrade its Incident and Emergency Centre, had made a financial contribution towards modernization of it in 2006. He stressed the need to establish sustainable emergency infrastructures, in relation to which Slovenia supported the implementation of the Response Assistance Network (RANET).

112. Like many other countries, Slovenia was facing a growing demand for energy and was considering nuclear power as an option to meet that demand. The development of new and safer power plant designs would make that option more viable and so Slovenia was awaiting with interest the results of the multinational design evaluation programme, launched in 2006, to review the design of the European pressurized reactor. The programme could save a great deal of effort in licensing a particular design, which would be greatly appreciated by regulators with small nuclear programmes.

113. Nuclear power plants were relatively inexpensive to operate, which made life extension attractive. Slovenia's sole nuclear power plant at Krško was in the third quarter of its design lifetime and its power generation had been significantly upgraded twice. An efficient programme to control equipment ageing and to ensure long term operational reliability had been developed at the plant, and many modifications had been made to upgrade nuclear safety.

114. Slovenia had prepared its fourth national report on nuclear safety, which was to be reviewed by the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety in 2007. Along with the Joint Convention, the Nuclear Safety Convention contributed greatly to the enhancement of nuclear safety and the safe management of radioactive waste. The peer review process provided a strong incentive to improve and harmonize nuclear safety.

115. Slovenia planned to authorize a repository site for low and intermediate level radioactive waste in 2009 and to begin its operation in 2012. He noted that the issue of spent fuel management would be one of the parameters influencing the future of nuclear energy. Solutions to permanent disposal were developing slowly. Slovenia did not consider it reasonable that each country operating a nuclear power plant should construct its own spent fuel repository. More initiative and support was needed to develop regional approaches whereby one repository would be available to several countries.

116. Slovenia had joined the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership in September 2007 and shared its vision of the need to expand nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in a safe and secure manner.

117. Mr. KARIMOV (Azerbaijan) said that events over the preceding year had highlighted the difficulties in creating a climate of mutual trust in the world, based on strict application of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Effective implementation of the NPT, along with additional measures to ensure nuclear security, were key to countering the new threats to international stability. Like other countries confronted with acts of aggression and separatism, Azerbaijan had to find answers to existing security challenges linked with terrorist threats and the illegal proliferation of nuclear and radioactive materials.

118. Azerbaijan supported the efforts of the Agency and Member States to prevent acts of nuclear terrorism and was in favour of strengthening the physical protection regime for nuclear sites. It was concerned that it was untenable for the Agency or the national regulatory bodies to carry out their non-proliferation functions in a significant part of the territory of Azerbaijan which was occupied by neighbouring Armenia and separatists from Nagorno-Karabakh. That situation could lead to radical and extremist groups coming into possession of nuclear materials. Azerbaijan appreciated the Agency's work to strengthen the nuclear security regime and called on the Agency to impose stricter controls on nuclear sites located in States which carried out a policy of aggression and occupation against their neighbours.

119. Azerbaijan supported Security Council resolution 1540 on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which aimed to strengthen international cooperation in the struggle against such illegal trafficking. It noted the Agency's role in countering threats to peace and stability and believed that the Agency and the international community should take decisive measures against any attempts to use temporarily occupied territory for illegal activities and the transit of sensitive materials, technologies or equipment.

120. As part of its reform process, Azerbaijan was optimizing the work of its regulatory bodies responsible for radiation safety and control over work with sources of ionizing radiation. The responsible body in Azerbaijan was the Ministry for Emergency Situations, which had been created in 2006. Cooperation between it and the Agency would promote the strengthening of the national radiation safety infrastructure and the creation of a reliable and effective accounting and control system for radioactive and nuclear materials.

121. Recent technical cooperation between Azerbaijan and the Agency through national and regional projects had helped improve the legislative and regulatory framework for radiation safety and had significantly improved the technical equipment of all the State bodies responsible for ensuring the safe management of radioactive materials.

122. One of the most important achievements of technical cooperation with the Agency in Azerbaijan had been the preservation and expansion of nuclear knowledge, which was the fundamental basis for nuclear safety, for the further development of safe nuclear technologies and for improving nuclear education. Azerbaijan greatly valued the Agency initiative to develop a strategic approach to nuclear safety education and training.

123. Technical cooperation activities in Azerbaijan had led to the successful implementation of projects to set up a modern long term storage facility for highly radioactive sources and also a cancer therapy centre which met the highest international standards. A nuclear medicine laboratory had been set up at the national oncology centre and the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources now had a laboratory for radionuclide monitoring. Such projects were considered by Azerbaijan to be major contributions to the country's safety and development.

124. Azerbaijan intended to promote the development of innovative nuclear technologies. Thus, projects to broaden the use of radioisotopic methods in health, industry and agriculture, to establish a research reactor and to develop and introduce nanotechnology would be given high priority in its cooperation with the Agency. He noted that Azerbaijan devoted significant budgetary resources to technical cooperation projects and that it duly met its financial obligations to the Agency's Regular Budget and the TCF.

125. In conclusion, he reiterated Azerbaijan's wholehearted support for the Agency's role in the peaceful use of atomic energy and ensuring global peace and stability.

126. Mr. SANZ OLIVA (Spain) congratulated the Director General and the Secretariat for following the spirit of the Nobel Prize Committee's declaration by setting up the IAEA Nobel Cancer and Nutrition Fund at the start of 2006.

127. The challenges facing the Agency's safeguards system had attracted increased international attention, particularly in recent years. His Government, as a promoter of active multilateralism, supported the Director General's efforts to clarify the outstanding questions related to Iran's past nuclear programme and considered the work programme agreed with the Iranian authorities to be a step in the right direction. In that regard, he pointed to the need for Iran to meet its international obligations and the continued validity of the European Union's offer of assistance.

128. Spain believed that the most effective method that the Agency and the international community could and should adopt to respond to the threat posed to international security by nuclear proliferation, was to ensure the rapid and universal implementation of the additional protocol, which was essential to strengthen the safeguards system and to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. It was therefore a cause for concern that, ten years after adoption of the Model Additional Protocol, more than 100 States had still not brought their respective additional protocols into force, and a significant number of countries carrying out relevant nuclear activities had not yet signed one.

129. Spain considered it crucial to strengthen cooperation and coordination between Euratom and the Agency at all levels. In that regard, the high level coordination meeting between those two institutions held on 18 January 2007 had been a very positive step that would undoubtedly contribute to achieving the necessary conditions for the application of integrated safeguards in the European Union as quickly as possible. However, several technical and procedural questions remained as regards the respective roles of both institutions. Spain highlighted the positive results achieved under the pilot programme agreed by its national authorities, the Agency and Euratom for the implementation of a new regime of short notice random safeguards inspections at the Juzbado nuclear fuel element fabrication plant in Salamanca. The programme's success, largely owing to the excellent coordination among the institutions and the operator's willingness to collaborate, offered high hopes for early implementation

of the new regime. The experience acquired would certainly be beneficial in setting up similar regimes at other facilities of that type in the European Union.

130. Spain's willingness to cooperate with the Department of Safeguards was demonstrated by its contribution of €400 000 in support of nuclear verification R&D projects. That commitment also extended to activities undertaken by the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security to improve the security of nuclear material and facilities and highly radioactive sources.

131. A priority for the Spanish Government was the development of an integrated national system to ensure the security of its nuclear industry and all activities involving nuclear material, as well as to prevent and disclose illicit trafficking and improper use of nuclear and radioactive material. To that end, the national system, which was coordinated and implemented by national institutions and law enforcement bodies, was subject to constant self-evaluation and self-improvement. The support given by the Agency to its Member States through Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plans was of great importance. Spain offered the support, experience and collaboration of all its relevant institutions to combat nuclear terrorism and the illicit use of radioactive material. Spain was committed to combating nuclear and radiological threats, as shown by its entry into the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. It had contributed €200 000 to the Nuclear Security Fund in 2006 and a further €355 000 in 2007 to improve the Agency's capabilities in that field. Spain supported the resolution before the General Conference submitted by the Governments of France and Germany on measures to protect against nuclear terrorism.

132. In 2005, the amendment to the CPPNM had been adopted by consensus at a diplomatic conference. Spain hoped that the States party to the Convention would ratify that amendment so that it could enter into force as early as possible. For its part, Spain was close to concluding its ratification procedure. It offered the Secretariat assistance in reviewing and updating document INFCIRC/225 on the physical protection of nuclear material and nuclear facilities with the objective of incorporating changes resulting from the amendment. Spain supported the Secretariat's initiatives to develop information systems to help combat nuclear terrorism and illicit trafficking, integrating databases already existing in the Agency and complementing other international initiatives.

133. As regards the possible existence of uncontrolled radioactive sources, his Government was aware that, although Spain had regulatory systems for controlling the use and possession of radioactive sources, it could not rule out occasional sources outside those systems. Therefore, with the assistance of the Spanish Nuclear Safety Council, it had launched a campaign, under the responsibility of ENRESA (National Company for Radioactive Waste), for the recovery of orphan radioactive sources. That initiative provided continuity to other effective measures already implemented in Spain.

134. Spain welcomed the entry into force of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the Board's decision to authorize the Director General to implement the functions assigned to the Agency under that Convention.

135. Spain supported all the Agency's nuclear safety and radiation protection activities, in particular those aimed at consolidating and strengthening national regulatory bodies. The Secretariat should increase its efforts to set up assistance programmes to ensure that all countries had a regulatory body in accordance with Agency standards.

136. The growing use of radiodiagnostic techniques and radiopharmaceuticals, as well as the substantial progress in radiotherapy to combat various types of cancer, brought with it an increasing challenge to ensure the radiation safety of patients and workers. As a member of the Ibero-American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies, Spain was collaborating with Latin American countries to strengthen the capabilities of regulatory authorities. However, controls over the use of radioactive material for medical and industrial applications were still in need of improvement.

The Agency should increase its support for associations such as the Ibero-American Forum so that the countries involved could benefit from the lessons learned by other countries with more experience.

137. Spain supported collaboration among countries of the Mediterranean region to improve radiation protection and radioactive waste management. Greater cooperation among countries with developed regulatory capabilities in those fields and countries just embarking on an activity involving the peaceful use of nuclear energy would be beneficial.

138. Spain had been preparing for its IRRS mission in January 2008 and was grateful to Agency staff for their help in that regard. Such missions were the best tool available to the international community for the review, verification and improvement of national regulatory capabilities. The success of the IRRS missions meant that there was a need to expand resources to meet all the requests and to improve verification tools, learning from the experience gained by completed missions. Spain's Nuclear Safety Council had suggested that the Agency organize a follow-up workshop at the end of 2008 or beginning of 2009 to sum up the experience acquired from the missions carried out in 2007 and 2008.

139. With many countries building their first nuclear power plants, support for the creation of competent and rigorous regulatory bodies and systems should be a priority for the Agency. OSART missions were a useful Agency tool for reviewing the safety of a nuclear facility. The lessons learned from such missions could be put to better use by organizing a system for sharing the knowledge accrued. The Spanish authorities attached great importance to promoting a safety culture at nuclear facilities. The Secretariat should continue its efforts to strengthen activities aimed at understanding and dealing with problems caused by a lack of safety culture and to facilitate the development of methods ensuring that nuclear facility management paid due attention to safety culture.

140. Spain attached great importance to the development and application of INES, which its Nuclear Safety Council had been using since 1990. Since 2002, the Council had been expanding the application of INES to cover radiological and transport events. The classification of events through INES provided countries with a homogeneous risk evaluation that could be understood by the public. Spain supported the Agency in its task to develop and promote a single scale for use by Member States, enabling better harmonization in categorizing nuclear and radiological events.

141. While the ICRP had finished its revision of its publication No. 60 setting forth recommendations on radiological protection, the Agency had begun the process of revising its BSS, a process in which Spain was participating actively. Aware of the importance of the Agency's standards and with a view to increasing the dissemination of such texts, the Nuclear Safety Council was financing their translation into Spanish. Spain encouraged other countries to follow its initiative so as to enable all countries to have access to the Agency's standards in their own language.

142. As regards the Agency's activities in technological innovation, Spain was particularly interested in the analysis of various multilateral approaches to front- and back-end nuclear fuel cycle activities. Attention must always be paid to the various strategic implications of those approaches, avoiding any kind of discriminatory positions among Member States and the risk of nuclear proliferation. Spain welcomed the fact that more countries had joined INPRO in 2006, bringing the total number of members to 28, and was pleased to see how much relevance the project had gained since its inception.

143. Spain paid its full share of the TCF target. Also, it had contributed extrabudgetary funds for footnote-a/ projects in Latin America in the fields of human health, nutrition and groundwater management, and had made an extrabudgetary contribution of €67 000 to PACT. Moreover, Spain's Nuclear Safety Council had supported the Agency with an extrabudgetary contribution of €300 000 in 2006, and a similar contribution was planned for 2007, to fund a project supported by the Ibero-American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies, which would allow

progress in the development of nuclear and radiation safety in Ibero-America by establishing, inter alia, an Ibero-American network for radiological safety knowledge management. In 2006, the Nuclear Safety Council also had made an extrabudgetary contribution for projects in Latin America related to radiation protection, health and to the control of radioactive sources, and also in Morocco for the establishment of a national regulatory body. Spain had assisted by providing experts for missions, offering training courses, subsidizing fellowships and receiving fellows and scientific visits at Spanish institutions and companies, mainly at CIEMAT (Research Centre for Energy, Environment and Technology). Spain was prepared to strengthen its cooperation activities under ARCAL by means of the active participation of CIEMAT and with a financial contribution of approximately €130 000 for various projects. In October 2006, his Government had approved Spain's association with ARCAL, designating CIEMAT as the executive body and in April 2007, the President of the Board of ARCAL Representatives had visited CIEMAT for a ceremony to celebrate that association, with substantial representation from the Agency.

144. ENRESA had continued its active participation in technical cooperation, especially with Ibero-America, supporting the planning and potential implementation of projects related to waste management.

145. Spain took note of the improvements made to management of the technical cooperation programme in order to optimize the resources available and of the fact that, in 2006, Latin America had received a fairer share of the funds distributed among the four geographical regions.

146. Nuclear power continued to play an important role in Spain. The country had 8 nuclear power units in operation at 6 sites with an installed power of 7 716 MW, which represented 9.3% of the total installed power for electricity generation. In 2006, the gross electricity generation from nuclear power had been 60 126 GW·h, which was 19.8% of the total electricity generated nationally. The Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Trade was carrying out a study of Spain's energy needs by the year 2030, in which it intended to perform an objective and rigorous analysis of the role of all the primary energy sources with a view to ensuring a long term, high quality, environmentally friendly energy supply at a reasonable price.

147. A round table had been held in Spain in 2006 to discuss the future development of nuclear power. One outcome had been recognition of the need to embark on a national debate on how to establish a sustainable network of primary energy sources for the long term which had wide political and social support. The resulting decisions would affect the well-being and quality of life of Spaniards in the future.

Mr. HIGUERAS RAMOS (Peru), Vice-President, took the Chair.

148. Mr. ZOGRAFOS (Greece) said that his country supported the Agency's efforts to promote nuclear safety and security and was party to all the relevant conventions. Although individual Member States bore responsibility for the safe operation of their nuclear facilities, the Agency played the lead role in establishing safety norms and standards. Experts from the Greek Atomic Energy Commission participated in Agency activities, including the preparation of standards and technical documents and the organization of missions and training courses. Greece followed Agency and European Union guidelines on the security and safety of radioactive sources.

149. Decommissioning and the safe termination of nuclear activities were of great importance to Greece, which had organized, in conjunction with the Agency, the OECD/NEA and the European Commission, an international conference on the subject in December 2006 with participants from more than 50 countries and 6 organizations.

150. Greece valued the Agency's nuclear security programme and made financial and in-kind contributions to the Nuclear Security Fund. The publication of guidance covering border monitoring equipment, nuclear forensics support and radioactive material monitoring was of great importance in assisting Member States in curbing terrorist activities. Greece supported the Agency's nuclear security and verification activities within the framework of implementation of the relevant European Union strategy and had organized seminars on security issues together with the Agency.

151. Greece participated in the Agency's illicit trafficking information system, relevant United Nations committees, the Proliferation Security Initiative and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and had signed the CPPNM. Also, Greece had ratified the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism adopted by the General Assembly and would support any effort to assist the implementation of the Agency's Nuclear Security Plan.

152. On safeguards matters, he noted that in recent years the Agency's safeguards system had encountered more limitations and certain States had used the negotiation of Subsidiary Arrangements and Facility Attachments as an opportunity to present the Agency with further restrictions by invoking national legislation or political considerations.

153. In the light of the agreement reached on 13 February 2007 in the framework of the six-party talks, Greece hoped that the DPRK would take steps towards prompt and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in conformity with international security standards, including disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

154. Greece appreciated the Director General's efforts to achieve full cooperation and transparency regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear programme and reaffirmed its support for a negotiated long term solution of the issue. Iran's authorities should be encouraged to answer all outstanding questions without further delay. The Director General had recently reported that, although certain positive steps had been made by Iran, further progress was needed in implementing the Security Council resolutions on the suspension of enrichment activities and on the Agency's request that Iran reconsider application of Code 3.1 of the Subsidiary Arrangements, General Part. Greece considered the work plan agreed between the Agency and Iran to be a positive step towards creating confidence in Iran's peaceful nuclear intentions. It therefore hoped that Iran would demonstrate good faith and full transparency, paving the way for the suspension of all enrichment related and reprocessing activities and adoption of its additional protocol. The opportunity for a peaceful settlement of the issue should not be missed.

155. It was unfortunate that, fifty years after the foundation of the Agency, no substantive progress had been made in non-proliferation and disarmament. Today, the threat of nuclear terrorism and regional conflicts still hung over the future of the world like the sword of Damocles. The non-proliferation regime had to be strengthened and that could be achieved only through global implementation of Agency safeguards with additional protocols in force. National and multilateral export controls relied on Agency safeguards to verify that exported items were not diverted. The efficacy and effectiveness of safeguards helped to create confidence and promote trade and cooperation. Export controls alone without strict safeguards would not help to maintain peace and security.

156. The Director General had proposed an initiative to achieve multilateral control of sensitive nuclear technologies which focused on the issues of assurance of supply and non-proliferation. The Director General had stated that it was time to limit the production of new material through reprocessing and enrichment, by agreeing to restrict such operations to facilities under multinational control. Greece supported the principle of establishing a mechanism for the assured supply of nuclear fuel.

157. For many years, Greece had been a beneficiary of Agency technical cooperation. Specialized laboratories had been set up and scientists had been able to complete their education and gain experience abroad. Now Greece was also a donor and was returning the Agency's investment by supporting its activities, organizing training courses, providing experts and hosting scientists from different regions of the world. The needs of other countries now had priority over those of Greece.

158. Greece intended to maintain and enhance its regional scientific contacts and cooperation on subjects such as radiation protection, environmental radioactivity control, illicit trafficking and nuclear safety and security. The Greek Atomic Energy Commission had been recognised as an Agency regional training centre and a number of seminars and training courses had been planned for the year ahead. Technical cooperation programmes should be well-designed and implemented through a network of partnerships. An important element in their planning and execution was the 'one-house' principle.

159. Greece was confident that the Agency's strenuous efforts to achieve peace through diplomacy, on the one hand, and technological and economic development, on the other, would bear fruit.

160. Mr. KODAH (Jordan) expressed appreciation of the Agency's contribution to the socio-economic well-being of Member States through the promotion of diverse peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology, the provision of training opportunities for national personnel and its assistance in the development of infrastructure for radiation protection and the safety and security of radioactive sources.

161. Many countries, including Jordan, were facing a serious crisis due to their inability to meet increasing energy needs at a time of soaring energy prices. The shortage of potable water was an equally pressing issue, compounded by declining rainfall and diminishing water quality. He urged the Agency to redouble its efforts to assist the countries concerned in surmounting their problems. Jordan, for instance, urgently needed help from the Agency and donor countries in harnessing nuclear energy for electricity generation and water desalination. It had taken steps, in cooperation with the Agency, to include nuclear energy among the country's range of options for electricity generation. Moreover, Jordan had recently enacted Law No. 42 of 2007 concerning the development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, pursuant to which an independent Atomic Energy Commission had been established. Its main functions were to promote the transfer of peaceful nuclear technology and the building of nuclear power reactors. In addition, a company for the exploitation of natural uranium ore and the extraction of uranium from phosphates had been established.

162. Jordan had received assistance under the technical cooperation programme for national projects and had participated in regional and interregional projects in a number of areas such as agriculture, medicine, pharmaceuticals, industry, radiation protection and monitoring, nuclear legislation, safety and security, training, improving national capabilities and the acquisition of materials and equipment. Thanking the Agency for its support, he mentioned in particular the interregional synchrotron project. Jordan was currently engaged, with the Agency's assistance, in training human resources in the physics of synchrotron radiation processes and applications.

163. Jordan had enacted Law No. 43 of 2007 concerning radiation protection and nuclear safety and security pursuant to which an Authority for the Organization of Radiation and Nuclear Activities had been established. The Authority, which was linked to the Prime Minister's office, was responsible for organizing and overseeing the use of nuclear energy and ionizing radiation. It would complete the drafting of safety and security regulations and guidelines for radioactive sources based on the Agency's recommendations. Jordan would also develop its national register of radioactive sources in accordance with the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

164. The Agency's comprehensive safeguards system was the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, which was supported by the majority of States. Jordan's position on weapons of mass destruction was based on its awareness of the threat they constituted to world peace and security and its support for the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Jordan was a party to the NPT and had signed a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol with the Agency and faithfully complied with its obligations under those instruments. He urged States that had not yet signed additional protocols to do so forthwith. Moreover, the Jordanian Government called on Israel to accede to the NPT and to comply with all its provisions.

165. Mr. GRIMA (Malta) said that new threats and challenges to international peace and security, including illicit trafficking in nuclear material and non-compliance with Agency safeguards, had emerged since the creation of the Agency fifty years before and the international community had to respond with existing and, when appropriate, new tools. The NPT remained the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation regime and Malta called on those States not yet party to it to join it as non-nuclear-weapon States as soon as possible.

166. Those challenges also required the strengthening of the Agency's safeguards system. Comprehensive safeguards agreements together with an additional protocol were the current verification standard and Malta urged those States that had not done so to adopt both without delay.

167. Malta was pleased to note the progress being made on the DPRK issue through the six-party talks and welcomed Agency verification of the shutdown of the nuclear installations at Yongbyon. Also, Malta appreciated the Agency's continuing efforts to resolve issues related to the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear programme through the work plan and its implementation would help build the confidence called for by the international community.

168. Malta appreciated the Agency's work to support Member States in developing and implementing measures to suppress nuclear terrorism. Its recent publication of new guidelines and recommendations on the security of radioactive material during transport complemented existing transport safety guidance. Full implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 was an essential part of the effort to prevent terrorists from acquiring nuclear and other radioactive material. Malta had been one of the first States to sign the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, which had entered into force in July 2007, and viewed the CPPNM and its amendment as important parts of the nuclear security architecture.

169. Nuclear safety was of increasing importance at both the national and international level as the demand for nuclear power rose. Malta therefore welcomed the Agency's activities to assist States in matters of nuclear safety, and intended to play an active role in the international effort to ensure the highest safety standards. It was currently in the process of acceding to the Convention on Nuclear Safety.

170. The exercise of the inalienable right of States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes brought with it a responsibility to meet the highest standards of safety and security. Malta supported the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and urged all countries to implement both it and the associated Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources.

171. Malta stressed the importance of States upgrading their national regulatory authorities and radiation protection infrastructure. Malta viewed positively the development of a global nuclear and radiation safety network for exchanging experience and best practice and would support the establishment of a similar network for the Mediterranean region. In that context, Malta welcomed the recent establishment of the draft Safety Requirements on the safety of fuel cycle facilities as an Agency safety standard.

172. With regard to the safety of marine transport of radioactive material, Malta stressed the importance of better communication between States shipping radioactive material and coastal States. The latter should be kept fully informed of shipments of nuclear material in their vicinity.

173. Malta appreciated the contribution made by the Agency to promoting scientific and technological capabilities throughout the world through its technical cooperation projects. In particular, it applauded PACT and had pledged Malta's surplus from the 2004 Regular Budget to fund that programme. Malta benefited from national and regional technical cooperation projects in a number of fields and participated in Agency training courses and international conferences.

174. Malta reiterated its support for the Agency's indispensable role in efforts to build a stronger international framework for peace and security in accordance with its Statute.

175. Mr. NEZAM (Afghanistan) said that his country supported the Agency's efforts to promote peace and security. Universal compliance with all international non-proliferation instruments, especially in the nuclear sphere, was of fundamental importance and Afghanistan supported all initiatives aimed at limiting nuclear proliferation, such as the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East. Afghanistan had been one of the first States to ratify the NPT and to conclude a safeguards agreement. It had also ratified the CTBT in 2003 and signed an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement with the Agency in 2005.

176. Afghanistan condemned all activities related to nuclear terrorism and supported measures taken, whether through international conventions or Agency and United Nations resolutions, to fight it. As a State in an extremely unstable and troubled region, Afghanistan was at the forefront of efforts to combat terrorism, but was concerned by its lack of resources and equipment. It requested that suitable detection and protection equipment be made available to strengthen its capacity to address the problem of illicit trafficking of nuclear and other radioactive materials at its borders.

177. Afghanistan supported and appreciated the Agency's technical cooperation activities, which contributed to strengthening national capacities based on national needs and priorities. He highlighted in particular the use of nuclear applications in the field of human health, above all against cancer. Greater attention should be given to assisting the least developed countries in closing the gap in terms of nuclear knowledge and the benefits of peaceful applications of nuclear energy. Afghanistan was grateful to the Agency for the regional and subregional training courses which had allowed it to acquire the expertise to integrate nuclear techniques into its development programme.

178. The degree of cooperation between the Agency and Afghanistan had been satisfactory and his delegation hoped it would be further developed in the future. Afghanistan had defined its nuclear technology priorities in the fields of health, agriculture, education, water resources and food. It was pleased that the technical cooperation requests it had submitted had been approved and ten national projects had been implemented in the period 2007–2008. Successful results had been achieved through the training, technology transfer and expert assistance provided under the Agency's technical cooperation programme.

179. Afghanistan would attempt to consolidate that cooperation with the Agency in the coming years and hoped that the new project concepts submitted to the Agency for the period 2009–2011 would be well received. He regretted the delay in their submission, which was a direct result of the exceptional situation in which the country found itself.

180. His Government, aware of the need for an adequate infrastructure for radiation protection and waste safety, was in the process of drawing up relevant legislation with Agency assistance. In addition, Afghanistan had just set up a high commission for atomic energy and was hoping for support from the Agency to enable it to function effectively. In November 2007, Afghan experts were due to come to

Vienna for discussions with Agency legal experts with a view to strengthening the national legal framework so that peaceful applications of nuclear techniques could be developed in a secure manner.

181. In conclusion, he noted that Afghanistan, despite its financial difficulties, had managed to honour its financial obligations on time for the past three years.

182. Mr. BAZOBERRY (Bolivia) said that since its creation in 1957 the Agency had become the principal intergovernmental forum for activities relating to nuclear science and technology and their applications. Its technical cooperation activities were growing apace. The exchange of scientific and technical information, and the promotion of theoretical and practical knowledge about the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, provided the means for countries to pursue their nuclear power programmes safely and effectively.

183. Over the fifty years of its existence, the Agency had fulfilled its twin mandates of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and promoting the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The Director General had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005, the sixtieth anniversary of the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan. The Peace Prize signified recognition of the Agency's work to prevent the use of nuclear energy for military purposes. As President of the General Conference in 2005, he had himself travelled to Oslo for the award ceremony. At the ceremony, the Director General had spoken of the Agency's role in tackling poverty as well as in combating proliferation.

184. His delegation attached special importance to the Agency's work in promoting nuclear science and technology for sustainable development, which contributed to the achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and to the struggle against poverty, hunger and disease. It also helped to improve the management of natural resources, combat environmental degradation and climate change, and secure environmental sustainability. In that connection, he emphasized the value of the Agency's work on the use of isotope and nuclear techniques to develop and manage water resources, and to measure the impact of climate change on water supplies. Bolivia supported its efforts to enhance cooperation with national and international organizations in identifying strategies to alleviate shortages of drinking water.

185. To protect its tropical and rainforest resources and its biodiversity, Bolivia had adopted a five-year plan for their sustainable use, endeavouring to strike a balance between conservation and economic development. In the drive to produce more energy, due account must be taken of both direct and indirect impacts on the environment, especially in areas of fragile ecological equilibrium, like the Amazon Basin.

186. His delegation attached great importance to the nuclear applications relevant to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of disease, and especially to regional activities in the framework of the Agency's PACT. The PACT pilot programmes established in six Member States would serve as the foundation for expanding the programme to other developing countries. Newly-diagnosed cancer cases were expected to rise by 2020 to 16.5 million a year, of which 70% would be in developing countries because of the lack of early detection. He therefore urged the international community to step up its donations to the PACT programme. Bolivia, with one of the highest rates of cervical cancer in Latin America and the Caribbean, was grateful to Deputy Director General Cetto for her support for a cancer treatment programme in Bolivia. In the framework of ARCAL, a regional strategy for 2007–2013 had been developed by the Department of Technical Cooperation to promote the use of nuclear energy in accordance with the needs and priorities of the region. In addition, Bolivia acknowledged the constant support of Spain's CIEMAT.

187. Mr. LEGWAILA (Botswana) said that, at a time when the world was facing challenges posed by natural calamities, diseases, security threats and economic downturns, it was encouraging to note

that the Agency's programmes on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy were increasingly recognized as viable and sustainable solutions to those problems.

188. Botswana was committed to developing the peaceful uses of atomic energy in conformity with the NPT. Efforts by any one nation or group to divert atomic energy for military uses must be discouraged at all cost. In conformity with its obligations as a Member State of the Agency, Botswana had concluded an NPT safeguards agreement and additional protocol in 2006, had finalized the relevant legislative instruments and had established a radiation protection board and inspectorate.

189. The Agency's safeguards regime was crucial to implementation of the NPT and must be strengthened. He trusted that the forthcoming regional technical meeting on additional protocol implementation in Africa to be held in Gaborone, Botswana, in October 2007 would encourage Member States to conclude and implement outstanding instruments as soon as possible.

190. He expressed his country's gratitude for the invaluable expert advice, equipment and training provided by the Agency and thanked the Director General and Agency staff for facilitating the implementation of a range of technical cooperation projects in his country.

191. Botswana also participated in AFRA. The immense benefits of AFRA projects were being felt in areas such as agriculture, health, water resources and food and nutrition. His country had to rely on outside support for the acquisition, adoption, adaptation and use of appropriate nuclear technologies to promote economic development, thus contributing to poverty reduction and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.

192. The HIV/AIDS pandemic continued to put tremendous pressure on Botswana's health care system. Efforts were therefore under way, with Agency support, to research food and nutrition intervention techniques using stable isotopes. The research was expected to yield crucial information on the effectiveness of feeding programmes and, subsequently, the management of HIV/AIDS.

193. Botswana had identified several potential areas of cooperation with the Agency during the 2009–2011 project cycle, namely: agricultural uses of nuclear science and technology, including SIT; induced mutations and nutrient uptake; improvement of livestock productivity using assisted reproductive techniques; and improved diagnosis of animal diseases. In the health sector, plans were under way to set up a high dose rate brachytherapy unit for cancer treatment. Botswana also planned to set up a national INIS centre and a telecentre for information and communication technology based training and learning under the AFRA programme.

194. Mr. ENKHBAT (Mongolia) said that his country strongly supported the Agency's efforts to strengthen the global safeguards system. Mongolia fulfilled its commitments under its additional protocol and was making every effort to keep its territory free from nuclear weapons. He emphasized the importance of the spread of NWFZs and was confident that Mongolia's bilateral cooperation with the Agency would play an important role in international recognition of Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status.

195. As a developing country, Mongolia was facing many challenges. Technical cooperation projects had been a valuable support and a vital bridge between it and the Agency. In 2006 a number of projects had been successfully implemented in such areas as agriculture, health, environment, human resource development, geology and mining. A project to improve quality assurance in radiotherapy services had proved a sound investment in the country's health sector. Also, Mongolia was actively involved in the work of the RCA and commended its activities. For the past decade Mongolia had participated actively in and benefited from regional and international projects to improve radiation safety and security infrastructure.

196. Mongolia had recently been paying special attention to uranium exploration and mining. Uranium deposits were included on a 2006 national list of mining deposits of strategic importance and his Government had begun to formulate a national policy on the issue. It was clear that uranium exploration and further consideration of the construction of a nuclear power plant, based on modern nuclear technology and with high safety and security standards, could be of great benefit to sustainable development. Mongolia looked forward to cooperating with the Agency and using its technical expertise in developing the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It also hoped that developed countries with advanced nuclear energy technology would provide advice and support.

197. Mongolia was a country covering a vast territory, with long borders and a small population. As a result, border security presented a serious challenge at a time of increased concern regarding transnational crime, including trafficking in nuclear related materials. Mongolia's efforts to respond to such threats had been hampered by a shortage of trained personnel and appropriate equipment. In response to Mongolia's appeal under Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the United States of America had offered to fund a project to strengthen its export and import controls and to enhance the technical capability of border control agencies to detect nuclear and other radioactive material. Mongolia appreciated the offer and hoped that the project would soon be realized.

The meeting rose at 7.35 p.m.