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President: Mr VALLIM GUERREIRO (Brazil)

Later: Mr SOLTANIEH (Islamic Republic of Iran)

Later: Mr BJÖRNSSON (Iceland)

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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
AIDS	acquired immune deficiency syndrome
AIPS	Agency-wide Information System for Programme Support
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
CANDU	Canada deuterium-uranium [reactor]
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CRP	coordinated research project
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Early Notification Convention	Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident
EU	European Union
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
FMCT	fissile material cut-off treaty
GIF	Generation IV International Forum
HEU	high-enriched uranium
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
INLEX	International Expert Group on Nuclear Liability
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
INSAG	International Nuclear Safety Group
INSSP	Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan
IPPAS	International Physical Protection Advisory Service
IPSAS	International Public Sector Accounting Standards
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
ITER	International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

Joint Convention	Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management
LDC	least developed country
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
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
NSF	Nuclear Security Fund
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group
Nuclear Safety Convention	Convention on Nuclear Safety
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
OAS	Organization of American States
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PHWR	pressurized heavy water reactor
RCA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
SAGSI	Standing Advisory Group on Safeguards Implementation
SCART	Safety Culture Assessment Review Team
SQP	small quantities protocol
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WMD	weapons of mass destruction

7. General debate and Annual Report for 2007 (continued) (GC(52)/9)

1. Mr VEJONIS (Latvia) expressed satisfaction that agreement had been reached on targets for the TCF for the years 2009–2011, enabling the Agency to move forward in finalizing the technical cooperation programme for that cycle. Latvia, for its part, had submitted only two national technical cooperation projects, a step consistent with the trend of increasing the use of regional projects, which were useful forums for the exchange of ideas and experience. Latvia was also hosting scientific visits and training courses, thereby contributing to the exchange of nuclear knowledge.
2. With regard to the funding of technical cooperation projects, he said that Member States participating in the technical cooperation programme for Europe had adopted a common position on the development of a regional technical cooperation strategy, and had decided that funds not used by European Union countries should be used for other countries in the region requiring additional resources for their development and infrastructure. The Secretariat should engage in timely, active and transparent consultations with Member States in cases where budgeting principles were being reviewed and modified. Any changes to the share of the TCF allocated to Europe should be introduced only with the consent of the Member States of the Europe region in a transparent and constructive way. Latvia was ready to pay its full share of the TCF target. It had gained much from participating in the Agency's technical cooperation activities and continued to allocate supplementary contributions for its national projects.
3. Latvia welcomed the agreement reached on measures to fund the initial stage of the AIPS project in order to facilitate the adoption of IPSAS by 2010. Latvia had permitted its 2006 cash surplus to be used for the funding of AIPS, a system that would provide greater transparency and improve efficiency in the internal control of the Agency's procurement options, to the benefit of all Member States.
4. Latvia welcomed the assistance provided by the Agency to a number of Member States concerning the repatriation of HEU fuel. Thanks to help from the Agency and the Government of the United States, Latvia had succeeded in returning spent fuel to the country of origin in May 2008.
5. In the current international environment, effective measures to combat nuclear terrorism and to prevent terrorists from acquiring nuclear, biological, chemical and radiological weapons were essential. Member States should therefore attach the utmost importance to strong national and internationally coordinated export controls in order to prevent and combat the establishment of procurement networks, illicit trafficking in nuclear technologies and materials, and the threat of proliferation of such materials by non-State actors. A project to develop training materials on dual-use items had been implemented by Latvian customs institutions in close cooperation with the United States Department of Energy. As a result, a handbook on goods identification had been published, experts educated, and the control system and procedures concerning dual-use goods had been improved significantly.
6. In the field of nuclear security, the conclusion of the first CRP on the improvement of technical measures to detect and respond to illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive material had been an important milestone. Also, he noted the adoption by the Council of the European Union of the third Joint Action in support of Agency activities in the area of nuclear security.

7. The Agency's safeguards system was an essential part of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, and Latvia strongly supported strengthening its effectiveness and efficiency. Thirty States parties to the NPT had still not fulfilled their obligation to bring into force comprehensive safeguards agreements, which meant that more than 1100 facilities containing nuclear material were not under safeguards. Latvia regretted such a situation, and called upon the countries concerned to bring their safeguards agreements into force. It had been pleased to note that 12 Member States had concluded an additional protocol since the previous session of the General Conference.

8. Mr MOSQUERA (Ecuador) said that since the Agency's establishment, the international community had witnessed the evolution of a solid organization that was noted for its professionalism, impartiality and independence. Efforts had to continue for the creation of a safer, fairer world, where nuclear technologies contributed to social welfare rather than causing concern or destruction. His country applauded the Director General's initiative to establish a Commission of Eminent Persons to analyse the challenges that the Agency would face up to 2020 and beyond. The Commission's work and conclusions would serve as a good point of departure for Member States to engage in a dialogue to ensure that the Agency continued meeting its objectives with the same effectiveness and impartiality.

9. Ecuador had shown its commitment to non-proliferation through the principles and values enshrined in its foreign policy. It belonged to the world's first densely populated NWFZ and rejected any non-peaceful nuclear programme by any State. Furthermore, Ecuador complied faithfully with its obligations under relevant international agreements.

10. States must make every effort to control nuclear material, radioactive sources and nuclear technologies, given the potential consequences of their accidental or malicious use. Ecuador welcomed the steps that had been taken to create a legal framework in that regard. Its national regulatory authority had helped to strengthen the national security regime for radioactive material during transport and temporary and final storage. Ecuador supported the existence of an international regime for the safe transport of radioactive material, including the principle of responsibility for damage to human health, the environment and economic losses that could occur in the event of an accident or incident. It was also very important to establish prior, transparent and clear communication among States on the movement of such material, especially by sea. Dialogue between shipping and coastal States should continue, as it was of mutual benefit.

11. Ecuador recognized the Agency as the competent authority to verify and ensure compliance with safeguards agreements, and to prevent the diversion of nuclear knowledge, technology and material for non-peaceful purposes. The Agency's safeguards system should be applied universally, without exception, including by those countries outside the regime. Adherence to the NPT should not be considered merely as an option, but as a priority for the international community to guarantee global and regional security. There was also a need to create a NWFZ in the Middle East, and Ecuador urged all countries to adopt the measures required to facilitate the suggested approach and promote the forum recommended at the General Conference in 2000, about which a consensus was gradually forming.

12. Ecuador had maintained a principled position on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. It firmly believed in the inalienable right of all States Parties to the NPT to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination, provided that they complied in a full and transparent manner with their obligations under the regime. Diplomatic dialogue was very important for finding an agreed solution to any type of international conflict. Ecuador rejected the adoption of unilateral measures of force outside the multilateral United Nations system and international law.

13. Given the expansion of nuclear power, the demand for nuclear fuel cycle services, and related proliferation risks, all options for assuring the supply of nuclear fuel had to be examined in detail. Ecuador was willing to support the most viable initiatives that were proliferation resistant and also allowed countries to benefit from the use of nuclear power.

14. His country's new Constitution that had recently been approved included a vision for energy efficiency and renewable energy. Lasting safety could not be achieved without sustainable human development. Cooperation for development had made a major contribution in Ecuador, and his country called on the Agency to increase its cooperation activities and strengthen its Department of Technical Cooperation. Ecuador thanked the Agency for its support in implementing national projects, which had led to sustainable social development. It hoped that the projects in the 2009–2011 cycle relating to nuclear applications in industry would receive similar support. Ecuador attached special importance to ARCAL and appreciated the efforts made to strengthen it. His country had made major efforts to keep up to date with its financial contributions to the Regular Budget and the TCF, and was aiming to end the year without any balance outstanding.

15. The national competent authority in Ecuador been merged with the Ministry for Electricity and Renewable Energy. The aim was to develop an energy mix that relied less on fossil fuels and used cleaner energy, taking into consideration the nuclear option.

16. Ms KAUPPI (Finland) said that the NPT remained the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Her country strongly supported achieving universal application of the NPT and the associated safeguards agreements and additional protocols. Nuclear weapons proliferation was a serious concern to her Government, and the NPT could only fulfil its role if there was confidence that all States were complying with their obligations under the Treaty. The international community had to take appropriate measures in the event of non-compliance, in order to preserve the integrity and authority of the system. Finland was dedicated to ensuring the success of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. It would also continue to promote the strengthening of export controls, the entry into force of the CTBT, and negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

17. Well-functioning safeguards and verification were a prerequisite for public confidence in and acceptance of the use of nuclear energy in the longer term. It was important to ensure that the Agency could continue its highly professional and impartial work in safeguards implementation, and had sufficient resources for future verification activities. Finland strongly supported the strengthening of the Agency's safeguards system, and further reinforcement of the Agency's capability and legal authority to assure the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities. The safeguards framework and mechanisms were well developed and had to be implemented effectively throughout the world. Comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols, which together formed the basis of the safeguards system and constituted the current verification standard, should be brought into force and implemented in all Member States without delay. The efficiency of safeguards could also be enhanced by more information-driven verification activities, use of state-of-the-art technologies, high-calibre staff and outsourcing.

18. Integrated safeguards brought benefits to the Agency and the State concerned. Following successful negotiations between Finland, the Agency and the European Commission, the implementation of integrated safeguards in her country would commence in October 2008. Finland was at an advanced stage in developing an underground final disposal facility for spent nuclear fuel, and much progress had been made in developing an integrated safeguards approach for the repository.

19. The growing interest in the use of nuclear power led to increasing challenges for the Agency in all its areas of activity. The first report on the international status and prospects of nuclear power, presented in response to General Conference resolutions, had been of great interest to Finland, which

was currently building a new nuclear power plant unit and considering further nuclear power capacity. Her country had over 30 years of experience concerning nuclear power plant operation, and a very good safety and performance record. A fifth nuclear power plant unit was under construction, and three companies were interested in building additional capacity. In Finland, the most important step concerning new projects was the “decision-in-principle”: a decision made by the Government that needed to be ratified by the Parliament. One application for a decision-in-principle had been filed and two more applications were expected over the coming months. Nuclear power was expected to play a significant role in Finland’s energy mix far into the future, with the national energy strategy based on the strong promotion of renewable energy, intensified energy efficiency and increased self-sufficiency. Once the new 1600 MW reactor was in operation, nuclear power was expected to meet over 35% of national electricity demand.

20. Public acceptance of nuclear power was, to a great extent, related to nuclear safety, so it was very important to improve nuclear safety worldwide. The Agency would play an increasingly important role in such efforts as more countries developed their nuclear power capabilities, and Finland strongly supported the continuation and further development of Agency activities in that area. Member States and the Agency had to strengthen and coordinate their efforts to ensure that countries embarking on nuclear power programmes developed sound safety infrastructures, including effective and independent regulatory authorities. Finland had shared with interested countries its experiences in that area. Responsibility for the safe and secure use of nuclear power lay solely with the national authorities and the operators: the Agency could only give advice and support, and develop robust international standards.

21. Finland sincerely appreciated the Agency’s work in developing modern safety standards, and had actively contributed to those efforts. Her country was party to all international safety conventions and had participated actively in the relevant review meetings. It called upon all countries to accede to the safety conventions and apply the resulting obligations in full.

22. Finland’s good safety record had contributed to better public acceptance of nuclear power, making it possible to expand nuclear power production. Experience had shown that a good safety regulatory infrastructure was key for a successful and safe nuclear power programme. If all stakeholders were aware of the regulatory control and related requirements and activities from the outset, and if the system was well organized, there should not be any significant economic risk or delay in the nuclear power programme.

23. A clearly defined waste management policy and strategy, that was declared openly by the government and included solid funding arrangements defined in the nuclear legislation, were essential to facilitate progress in the area of waste management. The geological repository for spent nuclear fuel in Finland was under development, and was now over 3000 m long and 300 m deep. The repository was expected to be operational by 2020 and safeguards implementation should be in order before licensing began in 2012. Since the 1990s, any nuclear waste generated during power plant operation had been placed in waste disposal facilities underground at each plant site.

24. With more countries planning to use nuclear power, it was necessary to create mechanisms that would allow access to nuclear power, while reducing the need to construct proliferation-sensitive facilities and minimizing the risk of dissemination of sensitive technologies. Finland welcomed the Agency’s active and crucial role in developing multilateral nuclear approaches. Such approaches should not only cover fuel supply, but also the back end of the fuel cycle.

25. Finland welcomed the progress achieved in the field of nuclear security, and noted the Agency’s important role in the fight against nuclear terrorism. Finland had provided support in kind to the Agency’s activities and would be making another voluntary contribution to the NSF.

26. Lastly, Finland welcomed the Report of the Commission of Eminent Persons on the future of the Agency, which gave a comprehensive view of the challenges and tasks facing the Agency now and in the future.

27. Mr HAMER (Netherlands) said that his government's policy on non-proliferation continued to be based on the international system of treaties and agreements, and observed that it was important to be aware of new emerging security and proliferation risks. The Netherlands was prepared to use new techniques and assist in developing new instruments to be used in specific instances to counter new risks, which could only be dealt with by the international community working together through multilateral cooperation; such a strategy called for a legal approach as well as a practical one. The Proliferation Security Initiative, Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism were all examples of new instruments supported by the Netherlands. His country considered that a customized approach, based on individual cases and developments and using a mix of both old and new instruments, was necessary to contain proliferation risks.

28. The Agency's international safeguards system was an essential part of the global non-proliferation regime. The Netherlands favoured further strengthening of the system and advocated its universal adoption and implementation. Comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols constituted the verification standard, and his country called upon all Member States to conclude such agreements. However, the strengthening of safeguards was not enough. In order to guarantee the integrity of the NPT and the Agency's inspection regime, a strong policy against non-compliance was required.

29. The NSF was pivotal to efforts aimed at preventing proliferation and improving nuclear security, yet the NSF was dependent on voluntary contributions for 90% of its funding. Since nuclear security was indispensable to the world as a whole and an integral part of the Agency's core activities, the Netherlands believed that the NSF should be funded from the Regular Budget. Pending a decision to that effect, his country called upon all Member States to contribute generously and unconditionally to the NSF. Experience had shown that conditionality could seriously hamper the implementation of programmes and projects. The Netherlands had donated generously and without conditions for several years, and was ready to consider similar contributions in the future. His country also looked forward to discussions on the Nuclear Security Plan 2010–2013.

30. The Netherlands supported the existing mechanisms in the field of nuclear safety and had joined the related conventions and codes of conduct. Learning from the collective knowledge and insight of experts from so many countries was an enriching experience that contributed to broader political backing for nuclear safety.

31. The results of a recent IPPAS mission to four nuclear installations in the Netherlands were anticipated. An OSART mission had inspected the Borssele Nuclear Plant in 2005, and in June 2007 a follow-up mission concluded that all the recommendations and suggestions had been implemented.

32. The Netherlands was a strong supporter of the Agency's technical cooperation activities and had already pledged its full share of the target for 2009. It hoped that Member States that had not yet done so would pledge their share as soon as possible. The Netherlands was optimistic about the Agency's progress in streamlining its technical cooperation programme and it commended the Agency on its technical cooperation projects that would contribute towards achieving the MDGs. It was pleased that a consensus had been reached on the target figures for the TCF for the coming years.

33. The Netherlands had been a strong supporter of AIPS since the Agency had first tabled the proposal in 2007. Full implementation of AIPS would not only enable the Agency to meet the IPSAS requirements by 2010, the deadline for all UN organizations, but would also result in significant efficiency gains for the Agency and cost savings for Member States. The Netherlands was therefore

happy to increase its pledge for the financing of the first plateau of AIPS to 145 000 euros. Subsequent plateaux should be financed from the Regular Budget.

34. The Netherlands had been at the forefront of the discussions on nuclear fuel assurances and had been one of the six countries to have jointly submitted the first proposal for a fuel assurance arrangement. In 2008, together with the United Kingdom and Germany, the Netherlands had organized a seminar on the challenges and opportunities regarding the nuclear fuel cycle. His country remained committed to continuing an open and constructive dialogue on the issue between all interested States — both suppliers and consumers.

35. The Netherlands welcomed the Director General's initiative to reflect upon the long-term future of the Agency. His country attached great importance to the discussions, which should be taken up by Member States within the relevant decision-making bodies. Member States would decide on the instruments, role and tasks that the Agency should have in order to perform its statutory mandate. The Netherlands was also prepared to discuss potential budgetary implications of those choices. If Member States were to decide that the Agency should be charged with additional tasks without relinquishing any of its current responsibilities, it would only be realistic to expect additional financial consequences.

36. Over the next three years his country would invest seven billion euros to make its energy system more sustainable. It would increase international cooperation in that area and would adapt the legislative framework so that energy markets and the investment climate would improve. The Netherlands was the European hub for imports, processing and exports of oil and had the potential to play a similar role for natural gas, biomass and carbon dioxide. Energy savings and sustainability would remain the cornerstones of the Netherlands' energy policy. In 2020, 20% of the energy generated should be sustainable and 2% should be saved annually on energy consumption. His country's government was focusing on wind and biomass energy and preparing for a large-scale roll-out of solar panels. Together with the private sector, his Government would take steps to harness the potential of the North Sea as a source for sustainable energy. The development of carbon dioxide capture and storage was being strongly stimulated. Three nuclear energy scenarios were being developed which could form the basis of future government decision-making.

37. Ms MACMILLAN (New Zealand) said that creating a world safe from nuclear weapons had to remain one of the international community's most pressing goals. Preventing the spread of nuclear weapons through the implementation of safeguards under the NPT was a fundamental pillar of the Agency's work and New Zealand offered its continued support in achieving that objective. Her country had participated actively in the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Efforts should be made to work cohesively towards agreement on concrete measures for implementation of the Treaty across the full range of nuclear issues, to ensure that its relevance and credibility was reaffirmed at the 2010 Review Conference.

38. The Agency had to have all of the tools necessary to provide robust assurances to the international community that nuclear activities undertaken by States were purely for peaceful purposes. Current proliferation challenges meant that the comprehensive safeguards agreement alone no longer gave the Agency enough authority to carry out fully its verification mandate under the NPT. The additional protocol was the key tool in that regard, and New Zealand strongly supported efforts to make it a condition in new supply arrangements with non-nuclear-weapon States. Her country urged all States that had not yet done so, particularly those with significant nuclear activities, to conclude and bring into force an additional protocol without delay. It supported the decision to modify the SQP in order to address a weakness identified in the safeguards system, and welcomed the Agency's offer of assistance to small States to assist in implementation of that decision.

39. The possibility of terrorists obtaining nuclear or other radioactive material remained a grave threat, and uncertainty in funding made the Agency's programme planning and prioritization in the area of nuclear security difficult. New Zealand was intending to make a contribution of 50 000 New Zealand dollars to the NSF, and had increased the level of its contribution for 2008 to reflect its participation in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. The Agency's nuclear security programme was well placed to implement some of the key principles of the Initiative, to prevent nuclear and other radioactive materials falling into the hands of terrorists.

40. New Zealand was committed to the principles and objectives of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and the supplementary Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources. The safe transport of radioactive materials continued to be of considerable significance to her country. Given that such shipments sometimes passed the shores of New Zealand and small island States in the South Pacific, her country considered that: they should take place against a backdrop of the highest possible safety and security standards; it should receive appropriate information in advance of any such transports; proper emergency response systems should be in operation, and that an effective liability and compensation mechanism should be in place so that any innocent victim was assured of support in the event of an incident. New Zealand was pleased that progress was being made in many areas but urged all parties to continue to strive for improvements where possible.

41. Her country appreciated the valuable role that INLEX had played in examining and clarifying the application and scope of the Agency's nuclear liability regime, and welcomed the outreach workshops being held to explain the nature and content of the international regime. It was important for INLEX to examine possible gaps in the regime and ways in which they might be addressed. New Zealand welcomed the continued dialogue between coastal and shipping states, in particular on the exchange of information regarding shipments, and looked forward to further progress with a view to working towards an understanding on future practice which met the concerns of both sides.

42. New Zealand supported ongoing international efforts to achieve the denuclearization of the DPRK. However, the steps being taken by the DPRK to restore its nuclear capability would seriously undermine the good faith and confidence that had been built with the international community. The DPRK needed to comply fully with its international obligations resulting from the six-party talks, including an early return to Agency safeguards and the NPT.

43. New Zealand shared the concerns of the international community about the outstanding questions regarding Iran's nuclear programme and Iran's failure to comply with the provisions of Security Council and Agency resolutions. Iran should comply with the resolutions, particularly through the suspension of its enrichment and reprocessing activities, implementation of its additional protocol and reconsideration of its decision to suspend implementation of Code 3.1 of the Subsidiary Arrangements. Iran needed to work with the Agency in a timely and transparent manner to provide information on the outstanding issues identified in the Director General's report regarding possible military dimensions to its nuclear programme. New Zealand strongly supported a diplomatic solution based on Iran's compliance with the relevant resolutions.

44. As a strong proponent of the NPT, New Zealand supported the principle that all States should have access to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, particularly the many civilian applications unrelated to nuclear power generation that could enhance the lives of millions of people worldwide. New Zealand had rejected the use of nuclear power for itself, not considering it to be compatible with the concept of sustainable development given the long-term financial and ecological costs, particularly those associated with the disposal of nuclear waste. There were also proliferation risks associated with nuclear power generation. Any responsible discussion about the nuclear power option should be balanced and include consideration of the serious risks and costs as well as any potential benefits. The

international community had to direct more attention and resources to other safe, renewable energies. New Zealand was not convinced that the Agency should place increased focus on the provision of nuclear power expertise and resources when there were many other, more sustainable, energy sources that could be developed.

45. The international community needed to work together to tackle challenges to the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The Agency had a vital role in that regard, working with Member States to safeguard and secure nuclear material for exclusively peaceful purposes.

46. Ms GOICOCHEA ESTENOZ (Cuba) said that the modern world perpetuated the inequities inherent in the contemporary system of international economic relations. As a result, the problems faced by developing countries in areas such as electricity generation, food production, health improvement, and protecting the environment required ever more international cooperation in their resolution. The Agency's technical cooperation activities had an essential role to play in enabling nuclear science and technology to be used in promoting economic and social development in developing countries. Those activities should be strengthened and receive the required resources in a predictable and unconditional fashion, in accordance with the priority they deserved and the Agency's Statute.

47. Cuba attached great importance to PACT, which was a programme that demonstrated the benefits of nuclear technology in areas of great importance to the public, and needed to be provided with all the resources necessary for effective implementation.

48. In Cuba, the application of nuclear technologies in important areas such as public health, agriculture, food, hydrology and environmental protection were greatly appreciated. Cuba stressed its firm commitment to promoting technical cooperation, which it had demonstrated in 2007 by meeting its financial obligations to the TCF in full and on time, and by implementing its national projects at a rate of over 90% and contributing 30 international experts and 11 professors. The importance it accorded to cooperation among developing countries was also reflected in its participation in coordinated research programmes and ARCAL.

49. Cuba was both a recipient of and a contributor to Agency technical cooperation. Its capacity to participate in those activities was, however, affected by the illegal economic blockade that the United States of America had imposed upon the country for almost 50 years, in flagrant violation of the principles of multilateralism and international law, and which had, according to conservative calculations, caused Cuba losses of more than \$93 thousand million as of December 2007. As a result of that criminal policy, Cuba continued to face difficulties in acquiring important equipment, and its specialists had difficulties in obtaining visas in order to take part in Agency technical meetings held in the United States. She thanked the Secretariat for its professionalism and dedication in finding alternative ways of ensuring the implementation of technical cooperation programmes with Cuba.

50. The Agency's statutory activities should be carried out in a balanced manner, in accordance with the principles of international law, including those set out in the Charter of the United Nations. Cuba rejected all efforts to give the other pillars of the Agency's work priority over technical cooperation, which should be given all the support required, in particular by providing assured and predictable resources.

51. Cuba opposed efforts to impose on particular States safeguards obligations which went beyond their legal commitments. Voluntary measures could in no way be turned into obligations for Member States.

52. Cuba welcomed the Director General's initiative to initiate a study on the role of the Agency to 2020 and beyond, which would provide important input for consideration. She expressed concern that

many of the matters addressed went beyond the remit of the Agency, and that some of the recommendations made were very general. The vision for the Agency's future should be developed through a broad process of analysis, in which all Member States should actively participate.

53. Her country attached great importance to radiation safety, and was continuing to develop appropriate infrastructure and train its staff. It also participated in the Ibero-American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies, and the ConvEx-3 large-scale nuclear exercise.

54. Cuba was proud of its results in the field of non-proliferation. Scarcely four years after having signed the NPT, Cuba was among the small group of 47 countries in which the Secretariat had detected no diversion of nuclear material declared for peaceful purposes and no sign of undeclared nuclear material or activities.

55. Cuba rejected the link that some were seeking to establish between multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle and non-proliferation. Such approaches could not be used to introduce new discriminatory measures against developing countries, in breach of their inalienable right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

56. The Agency's verification activities had to be conducted in an impartial and unbiased manner. Cuba rejected attempts to put pressure on or interfere in those verification efforts, which put their efficiency and credibility at risk. Verification should remain a technical matter, and should not be manipulated for geopolitical purposes.

57. The Agency was the only authority competent to verify fulfilment by Member States of their obligations under safeguards agreements. Cuba recognized and firmly supported the Agency's professional and technical work in that respect, and was confident that the Agency would continue to work without external interference.

58. The Iranian nuclear issue could only be resolved through unconditional dialogue, based on equality and mutual respect. Decisions violating its inalienable rights could not be imposed on Iran, and efforts to do so should cease.

59. There was an inextricable link between non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. There was a lack of political will among some of the nuclear powers to make progress in nuclear disarmament, and Cuba deplored their double standards.

60. Cuba supported the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East, and called upon Israel to sign the NPT, submit its nuclear facilities to Agency safeguards, and implement its nuclear activities in accordance with the non-proliferation regime. The United States of America should stop transferring nuclear equipment, information, material, facilities, resources and devices to Israel, and providing it with assistance in the fields of nuclear science and technology. Such action would make the most effective contribution possible to peace and stability in the Middle East.

61. The policies of certain States had led to economic, food and energy crises and contributed to the continuing deterioration of the environment. Human civilization and all that had been created over thousands of year were in danger of disappearing owing to the irresponsible actions of those who used their economic and military power to attempt to impose their policies in flagrant violation of international law. The opportunity to change that situation should not be missed.

62. Mr ERTAY (Turkey) said that securing his country's energy supply involved using domestic resources to the extent possible and diversifying imports. Given its positive safety record and cost-effectiveness, nuclear power would become a major component of Turkey's energy mix in the medium to long term. There were plans to add 4000–5000 MW(e) nuclear capacity before 2020 to meet an annual increase in electricity demand of 7.9%. The first stage of tender for a nuclear power

plant had been completed and an evaluation was in progress. The country was also updating its nuclear legislation to incorporate the latest safety standards issued by the Agency. A draft nuclear law, the contents of which had been discussed with the Agency, had been submitted for approval.

63. The NPT had been serving collective security interests for four decades, but was facing challenges that were difficult to overcome. The non-proliferation regime rested on three pillars — nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and promotion of the peaceful use of nuclear energy — which required equal attention from all States party to the NPT, nuclear and non-nuclear weapon States alike. Non-proliferation and disarmament were mutually reinforcing, and Turkey would continue to promote key issues for the sustainability of the NPT in the long term including the universalization of the Treaty, further reduction of nuclear weapons and strengthening of the Agency's safeguards system. Such steps, together with the additional protocol, should be regarded as the universal verification standard.

64. Nuclear terrorism had emerged as a new challenge to be considered seriously in non-proliferation efforts. All possible steps had to be taken to prevent terrorists from gaining access to nuclear material and other WMD components, and new measures should be devised to combat illicit trade in sensitive nuclear equipment and technology. In that context, Turkey called for adherence to and effective implementation of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the CPPNM.

65. Turkey attached great importance to alleviating, through peaceful means and as early as possible, the ongoing crisis of confidence between Iran and the international community. The Director General and his staff were to be commended for their tireless and impartial efforts to resolve the outstanding issues. Turkey was pleased to note that the Agency had been able to continue its verification of the non-diversion of declared nuclear material in Iran, and that Iran had provided the Agency with the required accounting reports in connection with its declared nuclear activities. However, it was concerning that the Agency was still not able to verify the full scope of Iran's nuclear programme. Turkey encouraged Iran to comply with Security Council resolution 1835 (2008) in implementing all measures required to build confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme at the earliest possible date.

66. The complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula remained a regional and global priority, and the actions agreed on 13 February 2007 were an important step towards achieving that goal. It was concerning that the DPRK had decided to suspend disabling activities at the 5 MW(e) reactor and had asked the Agency to remove the seals and surveillance equipment at its reprocessing plant. Turkey hoped that conditions could be created for the DPRK to return to the NPT at the earliest possible date and for the Agency to resume its activities under comprehensive safeguards.

67. The Agency played an ever-increasing role in maximizing the contribution of nuclear technology to human welfare while minimizing the risks of proliferation. Turkey welcomed the report of the Commission of Eminent Persons on the role of the Agency to 2020 and beyond, agreeing in principle that a strengthened Agency equipped with adequate authority and resources was essential in reinforcing global nuclear order to promote peace and prosperity.

68. Several countries had expressed the intention of using nuclear power to meet their future energy needs. Measures should be taken to guard against a heightened risk of weapons proliferation, but States in full compliance with their safeguards obligations should enjoy unfettered access to civil nuclear technology, as enshrined in the NPT. Many proposals had been put forward concerning multilateral approaches to the fuel cycle. Any such arrangement should guarantee States' long-term access to nuclear fuel in a predictable, stable and cost effective manner. However, participation should

be on a voluntary basis, should not require the relinquishment of any rights under the NPT and should not hinder or replace well functioning market mechanisms.

69. The safety of nuclear and radioactive sources remained a priority for the international community. Turkey encouraged the Secretariat to continue strengthening its nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety efforts, focusing particularly on mandatory activities and on regions where the need for improvement was greatest. His country had welcomed the results of the fourth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety. The high number of participants and the quality of the national reports presented had been a clear indication of the special importance attached to achieving and maintaining an increased level of nuclear safety worldwide.

70. The Agency played an important role in facilitating implementation of effective programmes to further improve the scientific and technological capabilities of Member States. Turkey strongly supported the technical cooperation programme, as demonstrated by its consistent, timely and full payment of its TCF contributions. Strengthening the Agency's technical cooperation activities would substantially increase quality of life throughout the world, but particularly in developing countries. The Turkish Government had decided to bear the full costs associated with the implementation of its national projects in the next technical cooperation cycle.

71. Mr SHANNON (Australia), welcoming the new Member States, said that his country had worked closely with the authorities of Papua New Guinea to upgrade the safety and security of radioactive sources and to assist in establishing a new radiotherapy unit. The Government of Australia was committed to taking a more active role in multilateral affairs and would work to advance and strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament architecture. It had, together in Japan, established the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament, which had a two-year mandate to reinvigorate nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament in the context of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and beyond.

72. Strengthening the Agency's safeguards system was critical to reinvigorating global non-proliferation efforts, diplomacy should be used to bring all States into the nuclear non-proliferation regime and under Agency safeguards and inspections. States should support the evolution of the safeguards system in order to address contemporary challenges and ensure that Agency inspectors had the necessary authority to carry out inspections. Australia had worked with the Agency in that regard, including through the Australian safeguards support programme and its continued membership of SAGSI. Australia strongly urged all States that had not yet done so to ratify the additional protocol as part of the contemporary safeguards standard in order to enhance the confidence of all States in the peaceful nature of nuclear activities. Australia also firmly supported recognition of the Agency's existing authority to inspect for indicators of weaponization.

73. A robust international response was needed to violations of safeguards commitments. In some cases, information and access beyond that required by a safeguards agreements and an additional protocol might be required. Regrettably, Iran continued to expand its enrichment-related activities in defiance of legally binding Security Council requirements, despite growing evidence of military dimensions to its nuclear programme. Iran continued to block Agency investigation of that evidence and deny the Agency the means to verify that the country's current nuclear activities were exclusively peaceful in nature. He called on Iran to implement the additional protocol and Code 3.1 of the Subsidiary Arrangements without delay, and to undertake any further transparency measures deemed necessary in the light of Iran's long history of undeclared activities. In that connection, Australia welcomed the recent adoption of Security Council resolution 1835 (2008), and urged Iran to follow the example of Libya which, in late 2003, had disclosed its undeclared activities and embarked on a policy of full transparency.

74. The Agency had a vital role to play in the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, and the DPRK's return to complete compliance with the NPT and its obligations under the comprehensive safeguards agreement. Australia was disappointed that the DPRK had yet to agree on a mechanism for verifying denuclearization and was concerned that the DPRK had suspended the disablement of the Yongbyon nuclear facility. The steps that the DPRK had taken towards restoring the facilities – including its decision to deny access to Agency inspectors and its stated intention to introduce nuclear material there – were very worrying. Australia called upon the DPRK to reverse those decisions and work with its partners in the six-party talks to implement its commitments. The General Conference should join Australia in making such a call. His country was also concerned by credible information suggesting that the DPRK was assisting Syria in building an undeclared nuclear reactor. Under its safeguards agreement, Syria was obliged to report the planning and construction of any nuclear facilities. Australia therefore urged Syria to cooperate fully with the Secretariat's investigation of the information.

75. Member States must hold each other to account for safeguards violations, as failure to do so would erode the credibility of the safeguards system and the global security architecture that it supported. For similar reasons, it was inappropriate for States under investigation by the Agency to serve on the Board of Governors.

76. The Government of Australia attached great importance to nuclear safety and security. As a major uranium supplier, it supported the Agency's work to foster best-practice safety standards in uranium mining and had recently, in association with the Agency, hosted a roundtable meeting on the safety implications of the revival in the uranium mining industry. With specific regard to reactor safety, Australia had hosted the Agency's International Conference on Research Reactors in Sydney in 2007 and would participate in the international meeting on application of the Code of Conduct on the Safety of Research Reactors in October 2008.

77. As a strong supporter of the continuing development of Agency safety standards, Australia backed the recent roadmap for the future of those standards. It recognized the need for effective Agency facilitation of emergency response arrangements and, as such, had registered four response assistance network teams with the Agency's Incident and Emergency Centre.

78. Australia attached importance to the safe, reliable and timely transport of radioactive materials that had an essential role in medical, scientific and industrial applications. It had played an active role in establishing the International Steering Committee on Denial of Shipment of Radioactive Material and welcomed recent regional workshops held on the issue.

79. Australia strongly supported the Agency's nuclear security activities, including through contributions to the NSF. It encouraged all Member States that had not yet done so to commit to voluntary implementation of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and its supplementary guidance. Australia had ratified the amendment to the CPPNM and was working with the Agency on a range of security documents. It had chaired the open-ended meeting of legal and technical experts on sharing lessons learned in implementing the guidance in May 2008 and commended that meeting's conclusions to interested Member States.

80. Australia enjoyed the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology and was proud of its record in supporting the right of other Member States to share those benefits. Although not a direct beneficiary of the technical cooperation programme, Australia had been the twelfth biggest contributor to the TCF in 2007 and contributed significant extrabudgetary funding to the RCA. However, Australia's contribution was not just financial: the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation had been designated as a collaborating centre for neutron scattering applications, and its OPAL research reactor, which had now returned to full operating power, was

again producing neutron beams for cutting-edge research. Following regulatory approval, OPAL would provide irradiated targets for a new enlarged molybdenum-99 facility for production of lifesaving radiopharmaceuticals.

81. His Government would consider carefully the thoughtful recommendations in the report by the Commission of Eminent Persons, and would work towards ensuring that the Agency had the resources it needed to undertake effectively its statutory responsibilities.

82. Mr MYRTIL (Haiti), having welcomed the new members of the Agency, said that Haiti hoped that other States, such as members of the Caribbean Community, would join the Agency, so that their populations could also enjoy the advantages offered by peaceful uses of nuclear energy. His Government recommended that the Secretariat send missions to the Caribbean region to raise awareness among the region's Governments. In July 2008, a high-ranking Agency official had participated in an intersessional meeting of the Association of Caribbean States, during which options for cooperation with the wider Caribbean had been discussed.

83. The Government of Haiti attached great importance to the Agency's technical cooperation programme. The Agency's work in fields such as water, energy, agriculture and the environment might be integrated with that of other United Nations bodies, for example through UNDAF in Haiti. He hoped that a technical mission could shortly be sent to Haiti to discuss with UNDP the feasibility of such a project.

84. His Government had requested once again that an imPACT mission be sent to Haiti to perform a systematic evaluation of Haiti's needs in terms of cancer treatment. The project to build a radiotherapy centre, which had been somewhat delayed, was now progressing well, and a call for tender to build the centre had been launched. National projects were also being implemented in areas including agriculture, water management and nutrition, and it was to be hoped that during the 2009–2011 cycle, Haiti's cooperation with the Agency would intensify at every level.

85. For almost five years, Haiti had actively participated in ARCAL and had received vital assistance in diverse and strategic areas. ARCAL was at a turning point and its institutional strengthening was increasingly under discussion. Haiti welcomed the efforts of the Board of ARCAL Representatives, and looked forward to working with the new ARCAL executive board.

86. The Agency needed to provide for technical assistance in order to rehabilitate bi-national projects between Haiti and the Dominican Republic, in particular concerning the management of shared aquifers and environmental management using isotopic and nuclear techniques.

87. Since 2007, Haiti had repeatedly stressed the need for the Agency to pay particular attention to LDCs, a group that included Haiti. Those countries had been severely affected by the food crisis and needed Agency help to improve agriculture so as to meet populations' food needs. As LDCs had different problems to those faced by developing or developed countries, Haiti requested that the Agency set up an LDC unit within the Secretariat. Haiti also intended to submit a draft resolution to the General Conference making the LDC issue a permanent agenda item.

88. Haiti welcomed the report of the Commission of Eminent Persons on the future of the Agency. It had particularly noted the Commission's emphasis on the need to develop a number of partnerships to strengthen the world nuclear order, for example between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States; suppliers of fuel cycle services, and States wishing to use nuclear energy and the Agency. Haiti attached particular importance to partnership between developed countries, developing countries, international development agencies and the Agency, and called upon the Agency to make the necessary contacts with the Association of Caribbean States and other regional organizations such as the Caribbean Community or the OAS. The Agency should increase its efforts to raise awareness

among other international organizations of the great benefits to be gained from the peaceful uses of nuclear technology, which could assist in the achievement of the MDGs.

89. The Board of Governors must consider the increasing budgetary and financial problems facing the Agency. Haiti would, despite the many difficulties it faced, do all it could to make its modest contribution to the Agency's financial and budgetary efforts.

90. Haiti was fully committed to the efforts to combat all forms of terrorism, including nuclear and radiological terrorism, and his Government supported the efforts of the international community to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Haiti would take all steps necessary to comply with Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). Lastly, Haiti encouraged all States party to the NPT to comply with the Treaty, since that was the only way to achieve a reinforced global nuclear order.

Mr Soltanieh (Islamic Republic of Iran), Vice-President, took the Chair.

91. Mr JOHANSEN (Norway) said that the report by the Commission of Eminent Persons provided a sound basis for discussions on the future of the Agency. Norway shared the Commission's view that, given the prospect of increased use of nuclear energy worldwide, the Agency's role in non-proliferation, safety and security would become increasingly important. The Agency must be fully equipped to perform its main tasks; it should focus on its comparative advantages and pursue new partnerships with actors and stakeholders.

92. Safeguards were fundamental to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The Agency must have the necessary access, information and resources to safeguard Member States' peaceful nuclear programmes, and the tools required for evaluating evidence and information at the Safeguards Analytical Laboratory and cooperating laboratories. Member States could facilitate the Agency's task by applying comprehensive safeguards and the additional protocol. Norway urged those countries that had not yet done so to sign and ratify the additional protocol. It also appealed to Iran to fully implement the additional protocol and any other transparency measures deemed necessary by the Agency, as called for in resolution 1835 (2008) adopted unanimously the previous week by United Nations Security Council. Norway expected all countries to cooperate fully with Agency investigation.

93. As stated in the Commission's report, the Agency must play a key role in efforts to identify credible and legitimate multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle. Market mechanisms would to a large extent meet demands for civilian nuclear fuel; nevertheless, various types of international cooperation efforts should be devised to alleviate any concerns regarding long-term predictability. As a first step, Norway was committed to supporting the establishment of a fuel bank under the Agency's auspices. It acknowledged the generous contributions made in that connection by some Member States, and encouraged others to provide further political and financial support.

94. The expected increase in the use of nuclear energy would pose new challenges for the safety of citizens, workers and the environment. Countries must be ready to prevent, mitigate and respond to any danger that might arise and alert other countries. Norway had long advocated better international coordination of response measures, and highly valued the Agency's assistance in developing and implementing safety principles and norms. It had therefore underlined the importance of ensuring sufficient and predictable financial resources for the Agency's work in that area.

95. Norway advocated the universalization of all relevant conventions and guidelines for preventing nuclear terrorism, and strongly supported the Agency's efforts to assist Member States in implementing those instruments. Norway valued the Agency's readiness to work with other organizations and initiatives in that field in the kind of partnership called for by the Commission of Eminent Persons. His country had decided to support the establishment of the World Institute for

Nuclear Security because it recognized the importance of industry awareness and involvement, and the need for all interested parties to have the opportunity for participation.

96. Promoting the peaceful applications of nuclear energy and technology was at the heart of the Agency's mandate. The Agency must take its share of the responsibility for meeting the MDGs, and close partnership with other United Nations agencies was of vital importance.

97. Every nation should have the sovereign right to choose its own energy mix, but not at the expense of common security or safety. The Agency should be ready to assist in the overall assessment of the options of Member States that requested assistance in energy planning: nuclear energy might not necessarily be the appropriate option.

98. Norway noted the Commission's concern that lack of progress in disarmament could undermine the Agency's non-proliferation mission. However, any perceived lack of progress must not be used as an excuse not to seek universal adherence to improved safeguards. A credible non-proliferation regime would clearly enhance collective security and was a precondition for achieving a world free from nuclear weapons. Norway was concerned that the CTBT had not entered into force and that negotiations on the FMCT had not even begun. Norway had called on the States concerned to accelerate disarmament in a transparent, irreversible and verifiable manner. It would continue to advocate multilateral instruments designed to prevent any new nuclear arms race.

99. Verification was at the heart of safeguards and of any successful disarmament process. Norway supported the Commission's recommendation to involve Agency experts in consultations on a FMCT verification regime and on safeguards of fissile materials no longer required for military purposes. Once the DPRK process was back on track, the Agency should monitor the dismantlement of the country's former nuclear programme.

100. Mr COGAN (Ireland) said that the Agency's mission remained as important as it had been when the Agency was first established 51 years previously. A key debate on the future of the Agency had begun with the publication of the Report of the Commission of Eminent Persons, which sought to examine the role of the Agency to 2020 and beyond.

101. A cornerstone of Irish foreign policy had always been its commitment to effective multilateralism as the best way of upholding the rule of law and ensuring international peace and security. Disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements offered the best guarantee of continued peace and security. Ireland was committed to maintaining the integrity and inviolability of such instruments, and to supporting the institutions that oversaw their implementation. Ireland attached particular importance to the NPT, which had been born out of an Irish resolution at the United Nations. It formed the essence of the global non-proliferation regime and was the foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. With the failure of the 2005 Review Conference to achieve any meaningful outcome, decisions taken at previous conferences being called into question and ongoing controversy regarding the compliance of States party to the Treaty, the NPT was under great pressure.

102. Ireland had reluctantly joined consensus on the decision of the NSG to exempt India from the requirement of full-scope safeguards as a condition of supply, which had been a key provision of NSG Guidelines since 1992, and of the NPT since 1995. That step was predicated on India's key positions on disarmament and non-proliferation, which included a unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing and strong safeguards against nuclear proliferation in third countries.

103. Safeguards and verification were more crucial than ever, with the comprehensive safeguards agreement and additional protocol being the only acceptable verification standard. Ireland called on States that had yet to adopt such measures to do so without delay, as they were necessary to ensure the international community's full confidence in the peaceful purposes of nuclear programmes.

104. Ireland welcomed the agreement reached with the DPRK in February 2007, through the six-party talks, to freeze the nuclear weapons programme, and the subsequent decisions and actions taken by the DPRK regarding the dismantlement of the Yongbyon reactor and its nuclear programme. Very significant progress had been made since then by the DPRK. However, Ireland regretted the DPRK's recently stated intention to cease and reverse its denuclearization activities. It called on the DPRK and those involved in the six-party talks to work together to resolve the impasse and make every effort to get the denuclearization programme and all reciprocal arrangements back on track, in the interests of regional and international security.

105. Ireland deeply appreciated the Agency's professional and impartial work in trying to resolve the long outstanding issues related to the nature and history of Iran's nuclear programme. Ireland supported efforts to find a negotiated long-term solution to the issue, and remained very concerned about Iran's intentions with respect to its nuclear programme. Iran needed to comply fully with its obligations stemming from Security Council resolutions 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007), 1803 (2008) and 1835 (2008) and Board resolutions. It should suspend all its enrichment-related and reprocessing activities and cooperate fully with the Agency in an open and transparent manner.

106. Although Ireland acknowledged the sovereign right of each country to decide on its energy mix, it did not agree with the use of nuclear energy for electricity generation. Its policy was shaped by the belief that nuclear energy and its associated activities posed an unacceptable threat to human health and the environment. Use of nuclear energy entailed many serious problems that had not yet been resolved, such as the safety and security of nuclear installations, the transport of nuclear material, radioactive waste management, reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel, contamination of the marine and terrestrial environment, and the risk of accidents and proliferation. The renaissance of nuclear power seemed to be based on a belief that nuclear energy could help to solve the problem of global warming, but Ireland did not share that view. The perceived benefits of nuclear energy were outweighed by the serious risks involved. The ongoing nuclear energy debate sought to downplay environmental, waste, proliferation, nuclear liability and safety issues. Ireland welcomed and supported the Agency's work in those important areas, and hoped for a real debate that could properly address all issues and concerns. Although Ireland had chosen not to exercise its right to develop nuclear power, it benefited considerably from its membership of the Agency.

107. The Agency provided the necessary framework for cooperative efforts to build and strengthen the international nuclear safety and security regime, including advisory international standards, codes, guides, binding international conventions, international peer reviews and an international emergency preparedness and response system. The Agency's vital role in implementing such standards was often complemented by bilateral agreements between States.

108. Ireland greatly valued and supported the pioneering work and high quality research of the Agency in such areas as agriculture and food, human health and other applications of non-power nuclear technology. Technical cooperation activities were particularly important in upgrading safety in beneficiary States: Ireland had paid in full its share of the target for 2006, 2007 and 2008 and agreed with the target for the subsequent three years.

109. General Conference resolution GC(46)/RES/9.D, adopted in 2002, concerning the Early Notification and Assistance Conventions encouraged Member States to contribute to international efforts to develop a coherent and sustainable joint programme for a more efficient 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 US \$30 000, and encouraged other Member States to make a contribution.

110. Coastal States such as Ireland considered that they should be fully informed when shipments of nuclear materials passed near their coasts, given the risks of such shipments. They could then assess the risks and take appropriate emergency response measures. Ireland was seeking to strengthen the ongoing dialogue between coastal and shipping States with a view to improving communication between the governments concerned.

111. There were substantial safety and environmental concerns associated with reprocessing. Safety aspirations were not always met, and discharges from reprocessing operations into shared marine environments were neither acceptable nor sustainable. Moreover, the cost of reprocessing spent fuel was significantly higher than the cost of direct disposal. While States had the sovereign right to choose whether or not to engage in reprocessing activities, certain practical concerns should first be addressed. Ireland's concerns were not founded on abstract ideological policy but were informed by its negative perception of the reprocessing experiences of its neighbouring States.

112. Ireland supported the Nuclear Security Plan for 2006–2009 and called upon States to contribute to the NSF, to which it had made voluntary contributions of approximately €239 000. It might be appropriate to consider how some of the activities of the Nuclear Security Plan could be absorbed into the Agency's Regular Budget and programme.

113. Ms GERVAIS-VIDRICAIRE (Canada) welcomed the report by the Commission of Eminent Persons and the Secretariat's background report, and supported their general assessment of global trends and events likely to affect the Agency. Canada strongly supported the view that the Agency must remain focused on its core mandates, along with the promotion of nuclear power and applications. Nevertheless, in examining the proposals of the Commission, care must be taken to ensure that the Agency did not go beyond its mandate and take on tasks that would be better addressed in other fora. Overall, the reports offered an opportunity to engage in new and innovative thinking, with a focus on areas where the Agency could add value in a cost-effective manner. To help future work, Canada was pleased to contribute its share of the 2006 cash surplus, €242 000, in support of AIPS.

114. The Agency's role in verifying compliance with legally binding safeguards commitments was as unique as it was essential. The safeguards system had been strengthened so that the Agency could draw broader safeguards conclusions, leading to increased confidence in the peaceful nature of States' nuclear programmes. As noted in the report by the Commission of Eminent Persons, Member States must strive to strengthen the safeguards system within the Agency's existing authorities, as well as the safeguards culture more broadly. 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.

115. Canada applauded the Agency's efforts to resolve outstanding issues related to the scope and nature of Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear programme. Iran still had considerable work to do to achieve compliance with its obligations and resolve serious concerns arising from nuclear activities with possible military dimensions. Canada noted with grave concern from the Director General's latest report that Iran had not suspended enrichment-related activities or addressed outstanding issues potentially related to weaponization. It also deeply regretted that Iran had not extended the cooperation required to begin to build confidence in claims that its nuclear programme was exclusively for peaceful purposes. Canada urged Iran to comply with relevant Security Council resolutions by offering full and unfettered cooperation to the Agency, and suspending all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities and work on the Arak research reactor.

116. Canada remained deeply concerned about the DPRK's nuclear activities, including the nuclear explosive test conducted in October 2006. Canada supported a peaceful solution to the issue through

the six-party talks and welcomed the shutdown of nuclear facilities at Yongbyon and the return of Agency personnel to the DPRK. Canada also welcomed steps towards implementing the October 2007 agreement, including provision of a declaration of nuclear programmes and work on the disablement of the Yongbyon facility. It was increasingly concerned by the recent halt and reversal of the disablement process, and urged the DPRK to resume and complete its disablement work in line with six-party commitments, and recommit itself to the NPT and Agency safeguards.

117. Canada was also concerned by revelations pointing to undeclared facilities and activities in Syria and possible nuclear collaboration between Syria and the DPRK. It fully supported the Director General's efforts to investigate the situation and looked forward to the findings. It encouraged Syria to cooperate fully with the Agency to resolve the matter.

118. Canada welcomed the new safeguards agreement between India and the Agency, implementation of which would ensure an impermeable separation between civilian and strategic nuclear programmes. Broader implementation of safeguards in India would be an important step towards international civil nuclear cooperation and greater integration of nuclear into the energy supply mix. Increased generation would help to meet the rapidly increasing energy needs of the Indian population and fuel economic and social development. Canada looked forward to greater collaboration with India in the nuclear sphere in future.

119. Canada was pleased to note that, for the first time, the majority of States with comprehensive safeguards agreements also had an additional protocol in force. A total of 47 States had attained the broad safeguards conclusion that was a prerequisite for the introduction of State-level integrated safeguards approaches, and Canada encouraged the Secretariat to expedite the transition to integrated safeguards in those countries. A State-level integrated safeguards approach was being implemented in Canada on a sector-by-sector basis, and she was hopeful that it would be fully implemented by mid-2009. Cooperation with the Agency, transparency, and a consistent record of compliance with safeguards should be essential factors in determining the annual inspection effort to be undertaken in a State, particularly for those States with integrated safeguards.

120. The threat of nuclear terrorism required a concerted international response. Canada had contributed 8 million Canadian dollars 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 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.

121. An unprecedented growth in the nuclear industry in Canada was posing new challenges for the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC). Environmental review and assessment committees had been established to examine the environmental impact of applications for new reactors. The Commission was also completing two regulatory guides on designing new nuclear power plants and assessing their location. Canada would be hosting an IRRS mission in May 2009.

122. Canada had appreciated the opportunity to examine the overall nuclear safety situation during the fourth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety. The participation of all the Contracting Parties in the review process would help to increase safety at nuclear power plants throughout the world. As a signatory to the Joint Convention, Canada looked forward to the third Review Meeting in May 2009 as an opportunity to advance the Convention's objectives.

123. The CNSC placed strict controls on the utilization, transport and export of sealed radioactive sources, in full compliance with the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and its guidance document. Canada was a world leader in the export of radioactive sources subject to the Code, and continued to promote an effective and efficient regime of regulatory controls on import and export of radioactive sources. It welcomed the encouraging outcome of the open-ended meeting on lessons learned from implementing the supplementary guidance.

124. Canada participated significantly at all levels of the Transport Regulations, which formed the basis for Canadian legislation on transport of radioactive materials. Representatives of Canada's nuclear industry and the CNSC were also serving on the International Steering Committee on Denials of Shipment of Radioactive Material.

125. Nuclear energy formed an important part of Canada's energy supply. The nuclear industry made a significant contribution to the country's economy and also contributed to the environment. The generation of electricity using the CANDU reactors reduced air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Canada stood ready to use its expertise and technology to help in the safe and non-polluting use of proliferation-resistant nuclear energy, both at home and abroad.

126. Recently, 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, Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL) had been given an additional 100 000 million dollars to develop a third-generation CANDU reactor. The AECL had also signed a memorandum of understanding on the issue with the CNSC. As interest in nuclear power increased, Canada looked forward to continued Agency support for PHWR technology.

127. 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.

128. Canada was interested in advanced-design, proliferation-resistant nuclear fuel cycles and believed that heavy water CANDU reactors could be used in that connection. It had also noted a renewed interest in proliferation-resistant thorium cycles, and believed that a heavy water reactor fuelled by thorium had many promising advantages.

129. Canada remained one of the largest suppliers of medical isotopes; nevertheless, temporary shortage of isotopes in Canada and Europe over the last year had highlighted the need for better cooperation and coordination in the management of their production.

130. Canada was a strong supporter of the Agency's technical cooperation activities and continued to make significant contributions to the TCF. It commended the Secretariat's efforts aimed at improved prioritizing and at meeting more efficiently and effectively the needs of donors and recipients. She called on all States to pay their voluntary contributions to the TCF in full and on time.

131. Ms ŽIAKOVÁ (Slovakia) said that in accordance with her country's energy strategy, nuclear power would remain an important energy source in the long term. Over 50% of electricity in Slovakia was currently generated by nuclear power, and the shutdown of Unit 2 of the Bohunice V-1 nuclear power plant that was to be carried out by the end of the year posed a challenge to the security of energy supply. The Government and the energy sector were endeavouring to find appropriate replacement energy sources to make up the shortfall in electricity production. The country's largest energy producer intended to complete two nuclear units at the Mochovce site, which would make a major contribution to energy security in the country. Moreover, the Nuclear Regulatory Authority had recently approved a proposal for modification at units 3 and 4 of the Mochovce nuclear power plant.

Consent would be granted subject to the fulfilment of several provisions, taking into account national legislation, the opinion of the European Commission, Agency recommendations and international best practices.

132. In May, her Government had approved an initiative for the construction of a new unit at the Bohunice site. Details, including conditions for construction, timetables for preparatory work and construction, and financing options, would be discussed before the end of the year.

133. In the area of waste management, her Government had approved a strategy for the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle, the main elements of which were the management of radioactive waste and spent fuel, the shut down and decommissioning of nuclear installations, and the closure of repositories.

134. The European Nuclear Energy Forum, which created a platform for broad discussion on the use of nuclear power in Europe, had held its first meeting in Bratislava in November 2007. The third meeting would also be held in Bratislava October 2008.

135. Slovakia paid the closest attention to nuclear safety and security. On the basis of operational performance, regulatory assessments and inspection results, the independent Nuclear Regulatory Authority considered the operation of all nuclear installations in Slovakia to be safe, reliable and operated in accordance with national legislation. At the Fourth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, held in Vienna in April, Slovakia's national report on nuclear safety had been widely discussed, and its comprehensiveness and transparency commended by several contracting parties. Moreover, the conclusions of the Review Meeting had confirmed that the safety of her country's nuclear installations as well as the legal and regulatory framework were in line with international best practices.

136. The security of nuclear facilities was a national responsibility, and her Government was preparing a law on the protection of critical infrastructure, including the protection of nuclear facilities. Moreover, Slovakia had ratified all 13 conventions regarding international terrorism, including the amendment to the CPPNM.

137. In the fifteen years since it had joined the Agency, Slovakia had collaborated with the Agency on many national, regional and interregional technical cooperation projects. The Agency's technical cooperation activities had significantly contributed to the development of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in Europe. European Member States had prepared the European regional profile for 2009–2013, which addressed four sectors, namely nuclear and radiation safety, nuclear energy, human health, and isotope and radiation technology applications. In May, 29 Member States of the region had met and agreed on a common position regarding their future expectations of technical cooperation. Technical cooperation activities should consider the needs of those countries with greater potential for development in the nuclear area, and financial resources for technical cooperation activities should be adequate, assured and predictable. Member States from the region had emphasized the need to work with the Agency to develop a strategy to respond properly to the recommendations made in the regional profile. Slovakia was ready to continue to provide experts and training facilities and host fellows and visiting scientists sponsored by the Agency. It was committed to fulfilling its financial obligations to the Agency, including payment of its share of the TCF target. Her Government had already approved Slovakia's contribution to the Regular Budget for 2009.

138. With regard to the report of the Commission of Eminent Persons, she said that the Agency should be marked by high professionalism, independence and accountability, which would encourage effectiveness and impartiality.

Mr Björnsson (Iceland), Vice-President, took the Chair.

139. Ms TOBING (Indonesia) said that Indonesia attached great importance to the Agency's technical cooperation activities, and commended those countries that had regularly paid their contribution to the TCF in full and on time. Indonesia, for its part, had consistently paid the amount it had pledged towards the TCF target, and had pledged US\$ 100 000 for the 2009 target. Much had to be done to respond to the increasing needs and requests of Member States for technical cooperation while ensuring that the resources available were sufficient, predictable and assured. The current funding system for technical cooperation, which relied on voluntary contributions, was neither fair nor capable of meeting the essential needs of Member States, particularly the developing countries. The Agency should seek to ensure a more balanced distribution of the budget to reflect the equal importance of the three pillars of the Agency.

140. Indonesia welcomed the Director General's initiative to establish the Commission of Eminent Persons. Although the Commission's report accurately projected the future role of the Agency, it did not adequately address many issues of concern to developing countries, particularly the technical cooperation programme.

141. Indonesia commended the Agency's work in enhancing the capabilities of Member States regarding sustainable food security and productivity through the application of nuclear techniques. It welcomed the Agency's efforts in the area of radiation-induced breeding of new plant varieties of rice and sorghum, and was pleased to report that two high-yielding, high-quality rice mutant varieties produced by irradiation techniques had been already been planted in Indonesia.

142. Indonesia noted with satisfaction that the Nuclear Technology Review 2008 had highlighted the results of the Thirteenth Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Bali in December 2007. Although nuclear power had not been a principal topic of discussion, the Conference had constituted a step forward in managing risks related to global climate change.

143. As one of the members of INPRO, Indonesia continued to support the activities aimed at meeting global energy demand and promoting sustainable economic and social development. It also supported the INPRO programme by sending cost-free experts to work on the preparation of documentation regarding common user considerations for nuclear power plants in developing countries.

144. Indonesia had actively participated in the Asian Nuclear Safety Network and encouraged other countries in the region to join the Network. It also encouraged the Agency to continue supporting regional nuclear safety activities within the framework of the Network.

145. Her country welcomed the Agency's efforts to strengthen nuclear safety and security, but stressed that measures to strengthen nuclear security should not hamper international cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear activities, the exchange of nuclear material for peaceful purposes and the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. As an archipelagic State, Indonesia noted with concern the potential for accidents or incidents during transportation of spent fuel and high-level radioactive waste by sea.

146. Indonesia looked forward to a successful outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. It hoped that all countries would renew their commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and intensify efforts to realize the three pillars of the NPT in a balanced, comprehensive and non-discriminatory manner. As the Director General had said, nuclear disarmament, the core of the NPT, had been on the back burner for far too long. It was therefore timely for the Agency to be involved in verifying the nuclear disarmament efforts of the nuclear-weapon States.

147. The creation of a multilateral fuel cycle arrangement, which would guarantee the security of nuclear fuel supply, was a complementary mechanism for strengthening the existing non-proliferation regime. It should not restrict the right of each State to develop nuclear technology.

148. The situation in the Middle East remained a source of deep concern for Indonesia. Progress would be achieved only if Israel placed all its nuclear installations under Agency safeguards and acceded to the NPT. Indonesia supported the proposal of the League of Arab States for the inclusion of an additional agenda item concerning Israeli nuclear capabilities, and the submission of a draft resolution in that regard. Referring to the Israeli attack against a Syrian facility in September 2007, she said that the use of force was unacceptable and constituted a flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter and international law.

149. Indonesia welcomed the continued cooperation between the DPRK and the Agency concerning the monitoring and verification of the shutdown of the Yongbyon nuclear facilities. However, it was concerned about the DPRK's intention to request Agency inspectors to remove seals and surveillance equipment at the reprocessing plant. Indonesia looked forward to the DPRK's continued cooperation with the Agency, and encouraged all the parties involved to fulfil the commitments they had made during the six-party talks.

150. It was important to ensure that the scope and nature of Iran's nuclear programme remained peaceful. Sanctions alone would not lead to a sustainable solution to the issue, and Indonesia attached great importance to a negotiated solution as part of the dual-track approach; an atmosphere conducive to negotiation must therefore be promoted.

151. Efforts to bring India into the mainstream of a non-proliferation regime should be conducted in such a way as to reinforce global non-proliferation norms, rather than undermine them. The decision of the Nuclear Suppliers Group to grant an unconditional waiver to the long-standing nuclear trade restrictions on India was regrettable, and was likely to do more harm than good to the non-proliferation regime since it would discourage others from abandoning their nuclear ambitions.

152. Mr SANZ OLIVA (Spain) underlined the importance of the joint statement made by the Director General and the President of the European Commission on 7 May 2008, coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the Agency and the entry into force of the Euratom Treaty.

153. His Government was committed to strengthening the non-proliferation regime, as shown by its extrabudgetary contributions to support the Agency's main policies, to promote multilateral solutions to the nuclear fuel cycle and encourage the conclusion of safeguards agreements, additional protocols and SQPs in Latin America, the Caribbean and North Africa.

154. His country appreciated the Agency's impartial and professional efforts to clarify the nature of Iran's past and present nuclear programme. Iran needed to consider the offer made by China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States and the EU High Representative to find a negotiated solution and avoid confrontation. The most effective step that the international community could and should adopt to respond to the threat posed to international security by nuclear proliferation was to ensure the prompt and universal implementation of the additional protocol. It was therefore a matter of concern that, 11 years after the adoption of the Model Additional Protocol, 104 States had still not brought their respective additional protocols into force and 29 States party to the NPT had still not brought their comprehensive safeguards agreements into force. However, Spain was pleased to note that the Agency was already applying integrated safeguards in 26 States, with a view to extending them to all States with additional protocols and comprehensive safeguards agreements in force. It was hoped that integrated safeguards could be introduced in all EU countries by the end of 2008. It was essential to ensure that there was no discrimination among Member States and that the specific conditions of each country's legal framework were taken into account. In those EU countries that

requested it, specific procedures should be established according to the type of facility; the Subsidiary Arrangements and Facility Attachments for each facility should be revised in a timely manner on the basis of those procedures.

155. Spain's willingness to cooperate with the Department of Safeguards was shown by the various projects implemented under the Spanish safeguards support programme. That commitment 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. The Spanish Government attached special importance to the correct functioning of an integrated national system to ensure the security of its nuclear industry and activities, as well as to prevent and disclose illicit trafficking and the improper use of nuclear and radioactive material. Spain welcomed the Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plans that the Agency had made available to Member States, and offered the collaboration of Spanish institutions in combating nuclear terrorism and the illicit use of radioactive material. Spain's entry into the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, and its decision to host the fourth meeting of the Initiative in June 2008 and a subsequent practical exercise demonstrated its commitment to combating nuclear and radiological threats. Spain had also made a considerable contribution to the NSF to fund projects to improve the Agency's capacities in that field.

156. Spain appreciated the Agency's efforts to strengthen international cooperation in nuclear safety and radiation protection, especially those aimed at consolidating and strengthening national regulatory bodies in conformity with the Agency's standards. At regional level, Spain was trying to promote cooperation among the countries of the Mediterranean basin to improve radiation protection and radioactive waste management using an action plan developed by the Spanish Nuclear Safety Council. As a member of the Ibero-American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies, Spain was collaborating with countries from the area to improve regulatory capacities, in particular regarding control of medical and industrial applications of radiation. Spain recognized the Agency's efforts to share the lessons learned in the Forum, and asked the Secretariat to intensify those efforts in the near future.

157. At the beginning of 2008, the Nuclear Safety Council had received an IRRS mission, the results of which had been more than satisfactory. It had been a full-scope mission, reviewing security aspects for the first time. Such missions were the best tool available to the international community to review, verify and improve national regulatory capacities and practices. The success of the IRRS mission had motivated the Nuclear Safety Council to organize an international meeting in Seville in November 2008 to share lessons learned through such missions in 2007 and 2008.

158. Spain paid its full share of the TCF target and, in addition, the Nuclear Safety Council and Research Centre for Energy, Environment and Technology (CIEMAT) funded a series of projects in Ibero-America and North Africa. The country had also provided experts for missions, offered training courses, subsidized and received fellows and hosted scientific visits to Spanish institutions and companies. The Research Centre collaborated actively in ARCAL by contributing financially, and providing experts and facilities for the development of nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes in Latin America and the Caribbean. Spain had contributed to the development of the Regional Strategic Profile which identified the priority areas for technical assistance. The national company for radioactive waste participated actively in the area of radioactive waste management, especially with Ibero-America.

159. Spain had eight nuclear units in operation, generating 7728 MW of installed electricity which represented 8.5% of total national capacity. In 2007, the gross electricity generation from nuclear power had been 55 039 GW·h, or 17.6% of the total electricity generated nationally. The process of selecting a site for a centralized interim store for spent fuel and high activity waste had begun in June 2006, pursuant to a parliamentary resolution. In July 2008, the Ministry of Industry, Tourism and

Trade, following a favourable report from the Nuclear Safety Council, had authorized the startup of an additional facility at the El Cabril Storage Centre, for the final disposal of very low activity waste.

160. At the end of 2008, the Spanish Government planned to present a prospective study on the country's energy needs up to 2030, with a view to analysing their evolution and defining the long-term energy policy, taking into account such aspects as assurance of supply, environmental and economic sustainability, the European objectives for 2020, reduction of emissions, the development of renewable energy and reduced dependence on foreign supplies.

161. Ms VADJA (Romania) said that nuclear power was a clean, reliable and sustainable energy source that could help address many of the world's most pressing concerns. The contribution of nuclear power to her country's energy mix was set to double over the coming few years. Two units at the Cernavoda nuclear power plant were in operation and a third and fourth unit were due to be completed by 2014–2015, bringing the nuclear power share to around 35%. The Government was also planning the construction of a new nuclear power plant; the site selection would be concluded by January 2009.

162. Romania welcomed increased Agency involvement in nuclear power application and noted with appreciation a number of useful documents issued on the subject. It encouraged the Agency to provide more support to those States that wished to build or strengthen their nuclear infrastructure. Romania was also working to develop other applications of nuclear energy and relied on the Agency's expertise and networking capacity to help Romania achieve its goals.

163. Romania strongly supported the Agency's efforts to promote sustainable education and training, and to preserve and enhance nuclear knowledge.

164. Romania attached the utmost importance to the safe and secure use of nuclear facilities and to creating a solid safety infrastructure and culture. It valued the Agency's work to enhance the global nuclear safety regime, and adhered to all international safety conventions and applied the Agency's codes of conduct and safety standards. The Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage — the only effective solution to concerns over nuclear liability — should be brought into force as soon as possible. Romania welcomed the Agency's activities to enhance nuclear and radiological emergency preparedness and response and continued to support the strengthening of the Incident and Emergency Centre.

165. Her country believed that the peaceful use of nuclear energy should be based on full compliance with the NPT and transparency in nuclear programmes. A universal international non-proliferation regime, supported by a strong international safeguards system, was vital. Romania was committed to the prevention of proliferation of nuclear technologies that might be misused, and she was pleased to report that integrated safeguards had been introduced in Romania in June 2007. Comprehensive safeguards agreements together with the additional protocol constituted the current verification standard, and Romania welcomed the Agency's efforts to strengthen the safeguards system. The strengthening and universalization of the multilateral non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament treaties, as well as their strict implementation, were at the core of Romanian policy.

166. International terrorism was a very real threat to international peace and security. Her Government was actively committed to preventing nuclear terrorism and to reinforcing joint efforts to increase international cooperation to combat that threat. It had ratified the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and was a partner nation of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. The amended CPPNM was another valuable instrument that Romania had ratified, but she noted with concern that the ratification process was still slow. The Agency had an important role to play in the prevention of nuclear terrorism and in helping States with their national

and regional nuclear security frameworks. Romania had again decided to make a national voluntary contribution in an amount of approximately US \$40 000, to be transferred by the end of 2008.

167. Romania believed that technical cooperation would remain an important part of the Agency's work with Member States. The country was assessing its changing role within the technical cooperation programme and trying to define a new strategy and new mechanisms for future cooperation. The main task of regional technical cooperation in Europe was to promote the sharing of knowledge and best practices, and Romania was ready to continue providing its experts and training facilities. It intended to focus more on regional projects in the future, and would partner 30% more projects in the 2009–2011 cycle.

168. It was generally agreed that financing of technical cooperation activities should be sufficient, assured and predictable. Romania had demonstrated its commitment to the programme each year by pledging and paying its share of the TCF target on time and in full, and called on others to do the same.

169. Mr HIGUERAS RAMOS (Peru) said that, as a founding member of the Agency, his country was committed to world peace and security, non-proliferation and disarmament, and had contributed actively to the Agency's objectives, namely the peaceful use of nuclear energy, regulation of its safe use and the application of verification, safeguards and physical protection measures. The Agency's work to promote socioeconomic development was the surest way of achieving world peace and security.

170. His Government would look favourably on any decision designed to strengthen the non-proliferation regime. It supported the actions of the United Nations Security Council aimed at preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by State and non-State actors, and encouraged application of the mechanisms provided for in existing international instruments such as the NPT and the Tlatelolco Treaty. Peru also supported international conferences aimed at establishing NWFZs in other regions of the world.

171. The NPT was the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and was crucial to achieving the final objective of general and complete nuclear disarmament. Although Peru recognized the right of every State to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, that right was conditional upon strict compliance with commitments to non-proliferation and application of the Agency's safeguards regime based on the NPT, an important instrument to which those States which had not yet done so should accede.

172. Peru had signed an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement in 1999 and had continued to apply integrated safeguards in 2007.

173. Peru welcomed the recent agreement between the Agency and the Government of India to apply safeguards to civilian nuclear facilities as an important element of the Agency's nuclear verification and safeguards activities.

174. Peru had expressed its general reservations regarding those chapters and paragraphs of the Final Document of the 2008 XV Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, which were not consistent with Peru's foreign policy on areas including, non-proliferation, disarmament and international security, as well as the declaration on the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Nevertheless, Peru continued to believe that all types of international conflict should be resolved through diplomatic dialogue alone, so that all decisions were always taken within the framework of the United Nations system and international law.

175. The international situation showed that there was an urgent need to strengthen the Agency by expanding its verification and monitoring capacities and its other responsibilities. Those tools should be used more effectively to ensure that nuclear energy was used for exclusively peaceful purposes.

176. The Agency's work to promote the transfer of nuclear technology should be strengthened. New challenges and realities necessitated a review of the Agency's future role in the field of the security of nuclear waste, illicit trafficking in nuclear material and the verification of nuclear-weapon-free zones. In that connection, he welcomed the report of the Commission of Eminent Persons, which would make a valuable contribution to the consideration of the future of the Agency.

177. As in the past, Peru had participated actively in efforts to increase the contribution of nuclear energy to the socio-economic development of the country in sectors related to increased food production, diagnosis and treatment of neoplastic diseases, water resource management and modernization of new facilities. The Peruvian Nuclear Energy Institute had continued with the implementation of a number of programmes, projects and activities aimed at giving added value to the production of goods and services, where nuclear technology offered comparative advantages.

178. With Agency assistance, the Peruvian Nuclear Energy Institute and a number of other national institutions had successfully initiated and continued cooperation projects aimed at the application of genomics to increase wool production in alpacas and improve the neonatal health of South American camelids, genetic improvement of quinoa and kiwicha, management of the Máncora aquifer to prevent seawater intrusion, and training of human resources and support for nuclear technology.

179. Thanks to the cooperation of the Agency and countries, the Peruvian Nuclear Energy Institute had been able to provide specialized training in security to the relevant institutions. In May 2008, Peru had hosted the V Summit of Heads of State and Government of Latin America, the Caribbean and European Union and would host various meetings that were part of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC).

180. His country valued the contribution the Agency made to national objectives through the supply of equipment, materials and inputs. Technology and knowledge transferred to Peru by Agency experts enabled the country to train its technical specialists locally. It was continuing to organize advanced courses on the use of nuclear techniques in biotechnology, materials science, medicine, nuclear instrumentation and other subjects.

181. Over the previous year, Peru had hosted important meetings organized under the auspices of the Agency, including a seminar on nuclear technology and the meeting of the ARCAL Steering Group. In December 2008, Peru would host the Regional Training Course on Environmental Management Systems in the Uranium Production Cycle.

182. He thanked the Agency for agreeing to send an IRRS mission to Peru from 19 to 30 April 2009.

183. The Peruvian Nuclear Energy Institute and the Agency had completed their efforts to identify important cooperation projects for 2009–2011 in areas including nuclear technology support, modernization of the RP-10 research reactor, and improvements in cancer treatment. Peru highly valued Agency cooperation and was well aware of the considerations and obligations that it must meet, in particular the payment of national participation costs. In the previous year, Peru had dedicated its resources to reducing outstanding obligations to the Agency and hoped to continue those payments as far as possible.

184. His country fully supported ARCAL, which helped close the technological gaps between the countries of the region and establish cooperation links that had already begun to bear fruit at regional level.

185. Lastly, he noted that the year 2008 was the fortieth anniversary of the agreement between Peru and Argentina concerning peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

186. Mr ENKHSAIKHAN (Mongolia) said that in January 2008, the Mongolian Parliament had adopted an MDG-based national development strategy with the aim of making Mongolia a middle income country by 2021. One of the prerequisites for such rapid development was securing and increasing the supply of energy, a task rendered difficult by rising energy needs and oil prices. Under the strategy, an integrated energy system would be established and the energy mix would be diversified, including by exploiting the country's uranium resources and possibly building nuclear power plants.

187. With regard to the nuclear programme, his Government would initially work to create an appropriate legal framework and develop a programme for rational exploitation of the uranium deposits. A draft State policy on the exploitation of radioactive minerals and nuclear energy and associated implementation plan had been presented to Parliament for consideration and adoption. Comprehensive nuclear legislation was also being drafted, and Mongolia was working to accede to a number of relevant international legal instruments, including the Joint Convention and the Nuclear Safety Convention.

188. In view of the importance his Government attached to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology, the Mongolian Nuclear Energy Commission now reported directly to the Prime Minister, and related Government agencies, research and academic institutions were being restructured. Steps were also being taken to give the Nuclear Regulatory Authority the necessary independence to perform its tasks.

189. New and safer power plant designs would make the nuclear option more attractive and viable, and Mongolia supported the Agency's efforts to promote the design of smaller, low-cost reactors that were more affordable for small and medium-sized developing countries.

190. Although safety was mainly a national responsibility, its impact extended beyond national boundaries. Safety culture and international cooperation were crucial and, in that context, the services of INSAG and SCART were invaluable. Safety and security should not be confined to nuclear reactors and associated structures and radiation protection; equal importance should be given to ensuring safety and security in the application of non-nuclear power technologies. Given the number of nuclear facilities adjacent to its territory, Mongolia supported the Agency policy of continuously improving safety and security standards and closely followed the activities under the INPRO and ITER projects, as well as those of the GIF.

191. Mongolia benefited greatly from Agency technical assistance, which had yielded positive results in such areas as human health, agriculture, industry and the environment. He thanked the Department of Technical Cooperation for its support. Five national projects were being implemented in the 2007–2008 cycle, and talks were under way to determine further projects for 2009–2011. The three pillars of the Agency's work were of equal importance, and there should be a reasonable balance in the distribution of the Agency's resources. Accordingly, Mongolia supported the increase in the funding of technical cooperation projects, and noted the importance of ensuring that resources were sufficient, predictable and assured.

192. Mongolia firmly believed that NWFZs contributed to confidence-building and strengthened the non-proliferation regime. It hoped that the forum to share the experience of regions with NWFZs and examine the relevance of a NWFZ for the Middle East region would be convened shortly.

193. While the NPT guaranteed the right to peaceful use of nuclear energy to all its States parties, a fully transparent nuclear policy was essential for mutual trust, productive cooperation and broader security.

194. Noting that the progress made by the six-party talks on the DPRK's weapon programme should not be reversed, he said that further progress could only be achieved through cooperation and diplomacy. The Agency's objective and essential role should not be diminished.

195. In the 10 years since the adoption of United Nations General Assembly resolution 55/33 S on Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status, Mongolia had adopted national legislation which criminalized acts leading to violation of that status. At the international level, the five nuclear-weapon States had issued a joint statement providing security assurances to Mongolia. To formalize its nuclear-weapon-free status, Mongolia had presented a draft trilateral treaty to its immediate neighbours in 2007 that was intended to form the international legal basis for Mongolia's status as a single-State nuclear-weapon-free zone, and would hopefully lead to institutionalization of Mongolia's status in the near future.

196. Mr LEGWAILA (Botswana) said that, at a time when the world was facing challenges such as natural and manmade disasters, high energy costs and food shortages, it was encouraging that the Agency had continued to pursue the peaceful and beneficial exploitation of nuclear technology with a view to providing a better future for all. Botswana supported the Agency's efforts to uphold the principles enshrined in the NPT and would oppose efforts by any one nation or group to divert atomic energy for military uses.

197. His country was committed to continuing to meet its obligations as a Member State of the Agency. A fully funded and adequately staffed Department of Radiation Protection was now operational in Botswana. Regulations to enhance the 2006 Radiation Protection Act had been approved in June 2008, and efforts to establish a waste management facility were at an advanced stage. His country supported the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, and the National Development Plan 10 for the period 2009–2016 reflected a commitment to nuclear security and to the enhancement of supportive measures. Botswana was grateful for the invaluable support it had received from the Agency in the form of expert advice, monitoring, equipment and staff training, and was pleased to report that it continued to make satisfactory progress towards attaining the five milestones set out by the Agency.

198. Botswana continued to contribute to the Agency's outreach programme by hosting a number of beneficial seminars and workshops. It was participating in AFRA and was deriving benefits from AFRA projects in areas such as agriculture, health, water resources and food and nutrition. However, Botswana continued to require support for the acquisition, adoption, adaptation and use of appropriate nuclear technologies to accelerate economic development, thus contributing to poverty reduction and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.

199. Botswana continued to work tirelessly to reduce the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic but was encountering isolated challenges with related opportunistic diseases, such as drug-resistant tuberculosis strains. Research, supported by the Agency, on food and nutrition intervention techniques using stable isotopes was proceeding well, and would hopefully provide useful information.

200. His country welcomed the Agency's technical cooperation activities, and had identified a number of potential areas of cooperation with the Agency during the 2009–2011 project cycle. In agriculture, the areas included the use of nuclear technology to improve crop yield through induced mutations, assisted reproductive techniques to improve livestock productivity, and improved diagnosis of animal diseases. In the health sector, plans were underway to set up a high dose rate brachytherapy

unit for cancer treatment. Efforts would also continue to find the appropriate energy mix for Botswana and continued attention would be paid to the regulatory infrastructure.

201. Mr APOSTOL (Republic of Moldova) said that his country, like many in the region, paid great attention to the implementation of international conventions it had ratified, and to the safe use of nuclear technologies in medicine, industry and other important branches of the national economy.

202. During the preceding year, the National Agency for Regulation of Nuclear and Radiological Activities had been created as the single regulatory authority. Bringing Moldova's legislative framework into line with Agency and European Union standards was the next step in ensuring the safe implementation of peaceful nuclear and radiological activities in the country.

203. Since the previous General Conference, Moldova had ratified the amendments to Articles VI and XIV.A of the Agency's Statute and encouraged other States to do likewise. The Parliament had also ratified the Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, the Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the Agency and the amendment to the CPPNM.

204. In 2008, Moldova had submitted its initial national report on nuclear material to the Secretariat pursuant to the SQP, as well as its first report on the Nuclear Safety Convention. With the cooperation and assistance of the Agency's Office of Nuclear Security, it had drawn up an INSSP for security measures up to 2010. Moldova had also joined the Agency's Illicit Trafficking Database.

205. He was pleased to state that, although Moldova was in a transition period, its Government was implementing an approved plan for debt repayment, and paying current contributions to the Agency regularly.

206. In 2005, Moldova had signed its CPF, which identified the priority areas for cooperation as nuclear applications in human health, radiation processing, radiation safety, emergency preparedness and radioactive waste management. Over the previous eight years, Moldova had received technical assistance in an amount exceeding US\$4.5 million through Agency national and regional projects; activities undertaken included the establishment of a modern calibration laboratory and provision of new equipment for cancer treatment. Moldova had also recently joined PACT, which was of great importance for the country.

207. Noting that three new national projects would be implemented in the forthcoming cycle, he said that his country was grateful to the Department of Technical Cooperation for the support it had given with the implementation of ongoing national and regional projects. It was also grateful to the United States of America for the bilateral support it had given for the establishment of the inventory of radioactive sources and implementation of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

208. In its first half century, the Agency had played an indispensable role in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear technology and in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and had become one of the most respectable international organizations. The Republic of Moldova would continue to support its activities.

209. Mr GRIMA (Malta) said that the new threats and challenges to international peace and security that had emerged in the early twenty-first century had called into question the effectiveness of global institutions that had served the international community well for so many years. The need for new thinking and novel approaches to world governance had become more urgent, and the tools available to the international community must be updated and strengthened.

210. The NPT remained the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation regime, and Malta called on those States not yet party to the Treaty to join as non-nuclear-weapon States as soon as possible. The role of the Agency in verifying the compliance of States with their safeguards obligations under the NPT remained vital, and Malta considered comprehensive safeguards agreements together with an additional protocol to be the current verification standard. Accordingly, it urged those States that had not yet done so to adopt both without delay.

211. It was regrettable that the Agency was still unable to determine the nature of Iran's nuclear programme. Malta urged Iran to cooperate fully with the Agency; implementation of the additional protocol would constitute an important step in building the required confidence in Iran's nuclear programme.

212. With regard to the ongoing developments in the DPRK, Malta had noted with concern the recent announcement by the DPRK of its decision to suspend its disablement activities. Malta urged the DPRK to resume the dismantlement process and stressed that a comprehensive and peaceful resolution of the DPRK nuclear issue would lead to the early denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

213. Malta welcomed the developments regarding the implementation of safeguards in the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, and was pleased that the Agency was now able to implement safeguards in Libya in a routine manner. It commended Libya for the various steps it had taken leading to a new phase in its relations with the Agency.

214. The potential of malicious acts using nuclear material remained a continuing threat and Malta recognized the primary role of the Agency in providing States with assistance to control nuclear material and radiological sources, protect nuclear facilities and strengthen border controls. The illicit trafficking of sensitive nuclear material presented an enormous challenge in the area of non-proliferation. Malta was particularly concerned to note that 21 of the 243 incidents of illicit trafficking and other unauthorized activities involving nuclear and radioactive material reported to the Agency over the previous 12 months had involved the theft or loss of material that had never been recovered. His country supported measures to enhance the capabilities of States to prevent and respond to illegal acts involving nuclear and other radioactive material.

215. With the sharp fluctuations in oil prices, uncertainty of supply and climate change, more and more countries were considering adding nuclear power to their energy mix. The exercise of the alienable right of States to develop nuclear energy brought with it a heavy responsibility to meet the highest safety standards. Malta therefore welcomed the Agency's activities to promote education and training in all safety-related fields, and to enhance nuclear and radiological emergency preparedness and response. His country intended to play a part in the international effort to ensure the highest safety standards and had recently acceded to the Convention on Nuclear Safety.

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

217. Malta highly valued the Agency's technical cooperation programme and benefited from its activities in a number of areas, including in the establishment and strengthening of the national regulatory authority and the consolidation of public health services. Two additional national projects concerning consumer protection and human health had been planned for the next cycle. Malta also participated in several regional programmes in areas such as the preservation of cultural heritage and environmental protection.

218. Malta welcomed the report of the Commission of Eminent Persons. It looked forward to discussion in the coming months of the Agency's future role and the resources required for the Agency to fulfil its mandate effectively. Malta was confident that, in the decades to come, the Agency would remain at the forefront of the international efforts to make the world a better, safer and fairer place.

219. Mr TRAN (Viet Nam) said that in 2008, the Vietnamese National Assembly had passed the Atomic Energy Law, which concerned research, development and utilization of atomic energy for peaceful purposes in Viet Nam and would come into force from 1 January 2009. He thanked the Agency and countries such as Australia, France, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the United States of America for their cooperation in drafting that law. Various Government decrees and ministerial-level circulars to apply the law were being drafted, and a comprehensive legal framework regulating all nuclear-related activities should be effectively completed by the end of 2009. He hoped that the Agency and other countries would continue to cooperate with Viet Nam, in particular on a decree concerning nuclear power plants.

220. His country attached great importance to the Agency's technical cooperation programme, a vital resource for the development of national capacities in nuclear science and technology. In the 2007–2008 cycle, Viet Nam had been carrying out 11 technical cooperation projects, and 9 new project concepts had been proposed for 2009–2011. All the projects had been well implemented, producing many results of social and economic significance. Viet Nam had actively participated in the vast majority of regional and interregional projects, and thanked India for providing it with a Bhabhatron II teletherapy unit under the PACT programme.

221. Viet Nam had made substantial progress in the area of nuclear safety, security and safeguards. Important regulatory documents on the safety and security of radioactive sources, export and import control of radioactive sources, the recovery and handling of orphan sources and transportation of radioactive sources were being implemented effectively. Inspection of radiation facilities had been enhanced, with approximately 800 inspections covering 40% of the country's radioactive facilities conducted each year. The introduction of an online licensing system had significantly improved radiation facility licensing. A division for nuclear safety and safeguards had been established within the Viet Nam Agency for Radiation and Nuclear Safety (VARANS). An electronic communication channel for submission of nuclear safeguards reports to the Agency had also been established. The capacity of VARANS had been substantially enhanced following intensive Government investment and international cooperation and support.

222. Viet Nam had fulfilled all its obligations and commitments to the Agency, including by paying its NPCs for the 2007–2008 cycle, making payment to the Regular Budget and pledging a contribution to the TCF for 2008. Viet Nam had also cooperated closely with the Agency in hosting many joint Agency and RCA meetings, workshops and training courses. It hoped to cooperate more closely with the Agency, Member States and international organizations in future, in particular with regard to the introduction of nuclear power to the country.

223. Ms NORIEGA URIZAR (Guatemala) said that her country actively supported any initiative to promote nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. As a party to the Tlatelolco Treaty, an instrument that had established the first densely populated nuclear-weapon-free zone in the world, Guatemala had signed and ratified a safeguards agreement with the Agency. She was pleased to report that her country's additional protocol had entered into force in May 2008.

224. A balance must be maintained between the three pillars of the Agency's work, namely verification, nuclear safety and technical cooperation. With the increasing demand for nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, particularly among developing countries, it was essential that more financial resources were provided for the technical cooperation programme. Funding for technical cooperation

activities had to be sufficient, predictable and assured, and technical cooperation could not therefore continue to be dependent on voluntary contributions.

225. Increasing food prices were leading to greater poverty and hunger in the world, and Guatemala welcomed the Agency's work in the area of nuclear applications, in particular concerning crop improvement and PACT.

226. The Agency's technical cooperation activities in Guatemala were contributing to economic and social development in her country. The technical cooperation projects implemented in Guatemala in the 2007–2008 cycle had included a project on environmental control of mining operations in Guatemala, which sought to strengthen the technical capacity of the laboratories of the Ministry of Energy and Mining. In the area of human nutrition, a laboratory for diagnosis and evaluation of nutrition-related chronic diseases in Guatemala and Central America, had been established at the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama. In the energy sector, efforts were being made to introduce new techniques to improve the operation and maintenance of the Chixoy hydroelectric dam. In agriculture, a project had been undertaken to establish a fruit fly free area using the sterile insect technique. In June, the Deputy Director General for Technical Cooperation had visited Guatemala and discussed strategies to increase Guatemala's participation in the technical cooperation programme, as well as national priorities in the nuclear area. Two new projects had been included for the 2009–2011 cycle on strengthening cancer treatment at the National Cancer Institute and support for the development of human resources and nuclear technology. Guatemala was grateful to the Agency for the assistance it had received and welcomed the efforts of the Department of Technical Cooperation to increase Guatemala's participation in regional projects.

227. Guatemala welcomed the report of the Commission of Eminent Persons that would provide valuable input for the discussions of the future challenges and opportunities for the Agency. Guatemala looked forward to participating constructively in those discussions.

The meeting rose at 8 p.m.