

General Conference

GC(52)/OR.8

Issued: April 2009

General Distribution

Original: English

Fifty-second regular session

Plenary

Record of the Eighth Meeting

Held at the Austria Center, Vienna, on Friday, 3 October 2008, at 3.10 p.m.

President: Mr BERDENNIKOV (Russian Federation)

Later: Mr GHISI (Italy)

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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
APCs	assessed programme costs
ARASIA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Arab States in Asia for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARCAL	Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
G8	Group of Eight
GDP	gross domestic product
GNEP	Global Nuclear Energy Partnership
INIS	International Nuclear Information System
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
INSSP	Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan
IPSART	International Probabilistic Safety Assessments Review Team
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
ISSAS	IAEA SSAC Advisory Service
LEU	low-enriched uranium
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NPCs	national participation costs
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PCMF	Programme Cycle Management Framework
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
R&D	research and development
RCA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
SESAME	Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East
SIT	sterile insect technique
SQP	small quantities protocol
SSAC	State system of accounting for and control of nuclear material
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
Wassenaar Arrangement	Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies
WWER	water cooled water moderated reactor (former USSR)

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

1. Mr TAN (Singapore) recalled that 2007 had marked the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Agency. After five decades of important progress, its activities remained vital in advancing the peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology for economic and social development. In that context, Singapore welcomed the Agency's initiative to reflect on the challenges and opportunities that the Agency would face in future years. The report of the Commission of Eminent Persons on the future of the Agency represented a timely exercise in examining ways of strengthening the three key pillars of nuclear safety, nuclear technology and nuclear verification. To that end, Singapore extended its full support to the Agency and stood ready to work with all stakeholders.
2. With the upsurge of nuclear energy as an option for many countries, the Agency's role as guardian of the peaceful, safe and secure use of nuclear energy had gained renewed importance. At the end of 2007, a total of 34 nuclear power plants had been under construction around the world. That growth in the use of nuclear power was mainly centred in Asia, in line with the region's rapid economic growth and the accompanying rise in energy demand.
3. Ensuring the highest standards in nuclear safety and security remained a fundamental matter of common interest. The various international legal instruments, conventions, codes of conducts, safety guides and standards served as building blocks for a global nuclear safety regime. Singapore supported the Agency's efforts in setting the relevant benchmarks in nuclear safety through the various Agency instruments, peer reviews, assistance and review missions. Singapore commended the success of the fourth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, held in April 2008 and in which Singapore had participated, and urged Member States that were not yet Contracting Parties to join that important convention.
4. Singapore also commended the Agency's continuing efforts to strengthen global emergency preparedness through new and revised guidelines based on lessons learned from past responses. Given the transboundary nature of the matter, Singapore was supportive of a proactive approach in building bilateral and regional networks through which Member States could share their emergency response plans and work towards possible regional approaches to integrating their capabilities. Singapore congratulated the Agency on the successful convening of the ConvEx-3 full-scale international emergency response exercise in July 2008 in which Singapore had participated. The exercise had provided an excellent opportunity for Singapore to test communication between its local agencies involved in nuclear/radiological emergencies and the Agency's Incident and Emergency Centre.
5. Singapore supported greater regional cooperation in the area of nuclear safety and security because such efforts helped build public confidence with regard to the use of nuclear power. In South East Asia, ASEAN had taken positive steps towards closer nuclear safety cooperation. That was a timely development as more countries in the region had either indicated an interest in or were pursuing nuclear energy programmes to meet their increasing energy demands. Recognizing the importance of the issue at their annual meeting in Singapore in August 2007, the ASEAN Energy Ministers had endorsed in principle the establishment of a nuclear energy safety subsector network to discuss nuclear safety issues. In 2008, two meetings to discuss the network had been held and he was pleased to report that the Agency had been involved in the initial meeting.

6. The promotion of nuclear safety must go hand in hand with ensuring nuclear security. Global security challenges continued to dominate the international agenda. States needed to be vigilant in protecting nuclear material and installations from potential terrorist threats and to combat those threats through joint action. Singapore remained committed to supporting efforts to combat terrorism in all forms and at all levels. In July 2007, it had had the honour of hosting the pilot Agency subregional workshop on illicit nuclear trafficking information management and coordination and looked forward to further such cooperation with the Agency.

7. Singapore was committed to fully implementing Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by stepping up domestic vigilance and international cooperation. Also, Singapore was constantly reviewing its export controls system to identify ways to improve and strengthen it. Since January 2008, Singapore had expanded its strategic goods control list to include the full lists of the four multilateral export control regimes: the NSG, the Wassenaar Arrangement, the Australia Group, and the Missile Technology Control Regime.

8. The right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes had to be exercised alongside States' compliance with their non-proliferation obligations. Singapore firmly believed that the Agency's safeguards should remain capable of responding credibly and effectively to new challenges within its mandate. The Agency's verification regime should continue to play a central role in providing safeguards assurances. The universalization of the comprehensive safeguards agreement and the additional protocol were crucial in that regard and Singapore urged Member States that had yet to undertake such commitments to do so as soon as possible. In March 2008, Singapore had concluded the modified SQP and ratified an additional protocol.

9. Several cases of proliferation concern had come before the Agency in recent years. The DPRK continued to pose a serious challenge to the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. Singapore remained deeply concerned that the DPRK had chosen to remain outside the Agency's verification system, thereby depriving the international community of the necessary assurances about its nuclear material inventory and activities. Singapore urged the DPRK to return to the NPT, resume cooperation with the Agency, accept full-scope Agency safeguards and dismantle any nuclear weapons programme in a prompt, transparent and verifiable manner.

10. The implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran was another such issue. Singapore took note of the Director General's recent report on Iran, contained in document GOV/2008/38, and urged Iran to implement all appropriate measures to dispel every doubt and to build confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme at the earliest possible date. His delegation remained hopeful that diplomatic efforts could lead to a peaceful and sustainable long term solution to the issue.

11. On the positive side, Singapore was heartened by the full cooperation that the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had extended to the Agency, which had led to the Agency's recent decision to continue to implement safeguards in that Member State as a routine manner.

12. Beyond the field of nuclear energy, the Agency's work in facilitating international cooperation in the useful application of nuclear technology could have a meaningful impact on the socio-economic growth of developing countries and contribute to the achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. Singapore encouraged the Agency to enhance its work to help developing countries, especially through technical cooperation aimed at capacity building, to meet the increasing demands for nuclear power. Fortunately, the Agency's technical cooperation programme had expanded considerably in recent years, in both the scope and number of its activities. The Agency was to be commended for establishing partnerships with international and regional development organizations to build greater synergies. Singapore remained firmly committed to supporting the

Agency's technical cooperation programme and looked forward to continued cooperation through its memorandum of understanding with the Agency in outreach efforts to assist other developing countries.

13. Keenly aware that a comprehensive and effective technical cooperation programme would require adequate, steady and sustainable funding, Singapore would pledge its full share of the 2009 TCF target. Also, Singapore reiterated its continued support for regional activities undertaken under the RCA.

14. The common goal of the General Conference was to strengthen the Agency by providing it with the necessary support and tools that it required to carry out its mandate. Singapore commended the Director General and his colleagues on the excellent and professional work they had done within the constraints of the Agency's limited resources.

15. Mr TOUKAN (Jordan) said that Jordan, like other developing countries, was faced with real difficulties in its efforts to obtain alternative energy sources to meet the country's demand for electricity, which was expected to grow by more than 6% annually. With limited conventional energy resources, Jordan imported 95% of its energy needs, equivalent to 52% of its GDP, from neighbouring countries. A further challenge was the shortage of water resources, which was compounded by a decline in rainfall and in the quality of drinking water. Jordan therefore urged the Agency and donor countries to assist Member States in using nuclear energy to generate electricity and for water desalination.

16. Jordan had enacted law No. 42 of 2007, as amended in 2008, concerning the establishment of an independent Nuclear Energy Commission attached to the office of the Prime Minister. Responsibility for its management and supervision was assigned to a Board of Commissioners, comprising a chairman and four members. Its main goals were the transfer and incorporation of nuclear peaceful technology with a view to building a nuclear power plant for electricity generation. Jordan was currently working with the Agency and other States on the preparation of a feasibility study concerning the use of nuclear reactors for electricity generation and seawater desalination. Negotiations had taken place on nuclear cooperation agreements with States possessing expertise in that area, including the United States of America, Canada, France, China, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Korea. Cooperation agreements had already been signed with the Governments of France and China, and memoranda of understanding had been signed with the Governments of the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. Also, the Jordanian Government had set up a company for the exploitation of the country's deposits of natural uranium ore and phosphate ore.

17. He emphasized the importance of training human resources to work in nuclear energy related areas. Jordan was looking into the possibility of building a nuclear research reactor with a capacity of 1–5 MW. To that end, it had drawn up a comprehensive national plan providing for bachelor's degrees in nuclear engineering and master's degrees in nuclear and medical physics in the Jordan University of Science and Technology, courses concerning radiation protection and radiation technology in a number of Jordanian universities, and courses in nuclear science and technology and their applications in the country's various higher education establishments.

18. The assistance provided to Jordan under the technical cooperation programme for national, regional and interregional projects had led to tangible development in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. One of the most important projects was the SESAME Project, which was supported by the Agency and UNESCO. Jordan was currently cooperating with them on the building of human capabilities in accelerator physics and radiation applications of synchrotron light. Construction work had been completed and the facility would be officially opened on 3 November 2008.

19. Jordan had announced on the first day of the General Conference its intention to pay its share of the TCF target for 2009 in full.

20. His country attached great importance to the safety and security of radioactive sources and nuclear material and to the regulations governing the handling of radioactive waste and the movement of radioactive sources. The Government had enacted law No. 43 of 2007 on radiation protection and nuclear safety and security, under which an independent authority for the management of radioactive and nuclear activities attached to the office of the Prime Minister had been established. Its purpose was to supervise the use of nuclear energy and ionizing radiation and to draw up regulations and instructions regarding the safety and security of radioactive sources based on the Agency's regulations and guidelines. Work would be done on developing and maintaining a national register of radioactive sources in conformity with the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. Jordan supported the Agency's efforts in that field and would assist it, in coordination with Member States, in application of the Code of Conduct and its supplementary Guidance.

21. The Agency's safeguards were a vital component of the international non-proliferation regime. Jordan had signed a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol thereto with the Agency. Nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction constituted a major threat to international peace and security and, in particular, to stability in the Middle East. The region was still unable to implement international resolutions regarding the establishment of a NWFZ. To achieve that goal, Israel must accede to the NPT, thereby ensuring its universality in the Middle East, and place all its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards. The States of the region could then concentrate on socio-economic development instead of investing their resources in an arms race, which only escalated tension and increased distrust.

22. Mr TZOTCHEV (Bulgaria), said his country pursued a consistent nuclear non-proliferation policy. As a State party to the NPT and the CTBT, Bulgaria encouraged all States that had not yet done so to sign and ratify both treaties. The NPT provided a solid foundation for the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, and the Agency had played — and would continue to play — a very important role in its implementation. The Agency's safeguards system must be strengthened further, including through the implementation of the additional protocol.

23. His delegation hoped that a diplomatic solution would be found to the DPRK nuclear issue in the framework of the six-party talks. The DPRK's decision to deny the Agency's inspectors access to the reprocessing plant in Yongbyon and to remove the Agency seals and surveillance equipment was regrettable. However, the process of negotiation should continue. His Government would support all steps leading to a Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons.

24. The world's complex and rapidly changing security environment brought with it new transboundary challenges, including the risk of terrorists acquiring nuclear weapons and technologies. The international community's response to that complex problem must be collective and multifaceted. The existing system of treaties and initiatives provided nuclear non-proliferation mechanisms that made such a response possible.

25. Bulgaria had an ambitious nuclear programme in place, with nuclear power reactors in operation, the decommissioning of WWER-440 type reactor units forthcoming, and plans for the construction of a new nuclear power plant well advanced. At the same time, steps had been taken towards constructing a dry storage facility for spent nuclear fuel in preparation for the establishment of a national repository for the disposal of low and intermediate level waste. Also, Bulgaria had over 2000 industrial, medical and scientific facilities using sources of ionizing radiation.

26. Bulgaria, which was participating in the GNEP, believed that there was a need to expand nuclear energy worldwide. It also believed that the development and deployment of advanced fuel cycle

technologies, protection of the environment and reduction of the risk of nuclear proliferation were achievable goals under that initiative.

27. Another important initiative for the progress of nuclear energy was INPRO, which helped Member States build competence in developing innovative nuclear energy systems. As a member of INPRO, Bulgaria was convinced that it would continue to play a key role in the nuclear sector.

28. Modernization of Units 5 and 6 of the Bulgaria's Kozloduy nuclear power plant had been completed according to schedule in 2007. The programme had been the first and to date the only one to implement all the recommendations for improving WWER-1000 units. To ensure the transparency of the process and to benefit from independent expertise, his Government had invited an Agency mission — to be conducted in November 2008 — to assist Bulgarian experts in the assessment of the results.

29. His delegation shared the view expressed in the Annual Report that the rising expectations for nuclear power were based on growing energy demand, concern over national energy supply security, the increasing price of fossil fuels and global environmental concerns. To meet those expectations, Member States must recognize that the future of nuclear energy was not feasible without meeting internationally agreed safety levels, applying appropriate technology and ensuring trained personnel. In that regard, his Government attached great importance to the Agency's assistance to Member States in their efforts to preserve and enhance nuclear knowledge, as well as its efforts to facilitate international collaboration on the matter. He commended the Agency for supporting national and international efforts to ensure the safe and secure use of nuclear technology. The publication of new safety guidelines and standards and the use of safety services in support of the wider application of those standards should be encouraged.

30. An agreement had been signed between the Bulgarian National Electricity Company and the Russian Atomstroyexport company in 2006 for the construction of the new Belene nuclear power plant. The Bulgarian Nuclear Regulatory Agency had now approved the site and had issued permission for designing a nuclear facility. Once work on the technical design safety assessment, safety analysis report and a probabilistic safety assessment of the new plant had been completed, his Government would be looking to the international community and the Agency for support and assistance.

31. Another important issue was radioactive waste management. Under Bulgaria's strategy for spent fuel and radioactive waste management, adopted in 2004, it planned to build a national repository for the disposal of radioactive waste by 2015. The repository would be a multibarrier near-surface facility, designed for the radioactive waste generated by the country's nuclear facilities and nuclear applications.

32. In 2008, all the spent fuel from the Bulgarian research reactor had been repatriated. Those activities had been carried out within the framework of the Russian Research Reactor Fuel Return programme, in cooperation with the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the Agency.

33. Technical cooperation remained an essential tool in contributing to sustainable social and economic development in Member States. His delegation was pleased with the high rate of attainment (almost 96%) of the TCF target in 2007, the first year of the current biennium. In 2008, the Agency's European Regional Profile had been adopted by consensus. The document would be used as a planning tool for the development of regional programming for 2009-2013 in four strategic areas, namely nuclear and radiation safety, nuclear energy, human health, and isotope and radiation technology applications. The Profile was helping to shift the balance from national to regional programmes, as illustrated by the new project concepts for the 2009 — 2011 cycle. In that connection,

he informed the Conference that Bulgaria had officially confirmed its voluntary share of the TCF target for 2009.

34. Mr EL-KHOURY (Lebanon) said the Agency was playing an important role in meeting contemporary challenges in the areas of energy, health, food security, water resources, environmental protection and climate change, in line with the slogan “Atoms for Peace”, to which might be added “atoms for comprehensive social security”.

35. In that context, the Arab States, including Lebanon, were endeavouring to establish a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East and repeatedly urged Israel to accede to the NPT and to place its nuclear facilities and nuclear weapons under Agency safeguards. The fact that such weapons existed was no longer denied even by Israeli decision-makers, but the intransigence of successive Israeli Governments prevented any progress in that regard and in the peace process. All initiatives had failed and the vicious circle was compounded by double standards and the interpretation of international law in different ways according to the temporal and geographical circumstances. Israel’s intransigence was a major obstacle to the universality of the NPT and to the application of Agency safeguards. The Commission of Eminent Persons had stated that the need for the NPT to become universal could not be stressed enough.

36. Lebanon had been suffering for decades from the consequences of Israel’s aggressive policies. The impact of the most recent attack in July 2006 was still threatening civil peace. Thousands of cluster bombs were strewn around an area of 40 million square metres and Israel refused to provide maps of their whereabouts. As a result, 14 Lebanese nationals had been killed and 38 wounded, according to the United Nations Mine Action Coordination Centre. Moreover, Israel had still failed to comply with the provisions of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006). It continued to occupy territory in southern Lebanon and violated Lebanese airspace on a daily basis.

37. The Agency’s cooperation programme with Lebanon included projects aimed at training human resources, developing the scientific and technological capabilities of Lebanese institutions engaged in using atomic energy for peaceful purposes, and assisting supervisory bodies in ensuring the safe and secure use of ionizing radiation. More than 200 technicians and scientists had recently received training in radiation monitoring, in the use of ionizing radiation in medicine, industry, the environment and materials science, also in the application of appropriate legislation in close cooperation with the Agency, the public and private sectors, universities and higher education establishments. He commended in particular the role of ARASIA in radiation protection and radiation physics.

38. Lebanon had also received assistance from the Agency in strengthening nuclear security and had just established the first border post for radiation monitoring at Masna’a. That programme was also being supported by the European Union and the United States of America, and would eventually cover all air, sea and land border crossings in Lebanon.

39. The Agency’s work in pursuit of its mandate needed to be reviewed on a regular basis, and the recommendations of the Commission of Eminent Persons provided valuable guidelines for the coming decades.

40. Mr QUIMBAYA MORALES (Colombia) said that disarmament and non-proliferation were fundamental principles of his country’s foreign policy. Those important issues should be addressed multilaterally with full respect for the rights and obligations of States and with the participation of the entire international community. Colombia was committed to the NPT and the Tlatelolco Treaty, was part of the world’s first NWFZ, complied with its safeguards agreement with the Agency and supported multilateral initiatives to free the world from the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction. In addition, as proof of its transparent policy with regard to the peaceful use of nuclear

energy and to contribute to Agency verification and international security, Colombia had signed an additional protocol in May 2005.

41. The aim of the NPT's collective security system, based as it was on disarmament, non-proliferation and the right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, was international peace and security. As a party to that instrument, Colombia called on the international community to prevent the expansion of the so-called 'nuclear club' and to control horizontal and vertical proliferation. For the disarmament and non-proliferation system to be effective, all States needed to make a commitment to it. Colombia therefore called for renewed efforts to strengthen the NPT with a view to making it both efficient and universal.

42. Colombia, a member of the Agency since 1960, recognized the importance of the Agency's role and supported its statutory functions, namely verification, technical cooperation and nuclear safety. Those competencies conferred on the Agency in the wake of the terrible effects of its non-peaceful application, had ensured an ever-increasing membership and had made the Agency an indispensable international forum for the use of nuclear resources to improve lives. Colombia recognized the Agency's contribution to meeting basic needs by promoting training, knowledge transfer and technical cooperation for development. The enormous potential of nuclear applications in areas fundamental for development, the Agency's work to transfer nuclear knowledge and technology for peaceful purposes, its contribution to the transparency of Member States' nuclear programmes, and its activities to develop a global nuclear safety culture would benefit generations to come.

43. His country was pleased with the FAO decision to extend its cooperation arrangement with the Agency until the end of 2009, and called on the international community to deploy its best efforts to ensure the continuity of FAO support to the Joint FAO/IAEA Division of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture, given the huge benefits it brought in the agricultural sectors of the least developed countries.

44. He drew special attention to PACT and to the technical cooperation work implemented by the Agency in various fields to improve the availability of trained human resources. It was, however, worrying that the technical cooperation programme did not have assured, predictable and sufficient funding. Work should continue on mobilizing resources to strengthen technical cooperation and to help achieve sustainable development goals. Colombia, which had benefited from Agency technical cooperation in many areas, supported the programme through its contributions to the TCF, and by paying its NPCs on time and participating in cost sharing.

45. As regards the 2007–2008 technical cooperation cycle, he highlighted two national projects related to determining optimal techniques in support of humanitarian demining activities and to the use and safety of the nuclear research reactor. Adapting nuclear technologies in support of humanitarian demining was vitally important and the related project was consistent with Colombia's aims in the field of safety.

46. Colombia appreciated the fast response of the Office of Nuclear Security to its request for cooperation in capacity building and acquiring equipment and technology for the detection and management of nuclear and radioactive material. During the first half of 2008, training activities had been carried out in Colombia and technology and knowledge had been transferred, enabling 33 illegal radioactive sources to be seized, thus combating a crime that had been previously unknown in the country.

47. Expressing his country's concern over the existence of illicit trafficking networks in radioactive material, equipment and components, he underscored the importance of the Agency's continued work, with the support of all Member States, to uncover the structure and membership of such networks.

48. At the regional level, he drew attention to the successes achieved during the 24 years of the existence of ARCAL, which had contributed to promoting and strengthening cooperation among developing countries.

49. Colombia welcomed the Director General's initiative resulting in the report of the Commission of Eminent Persons on the future of the Agency (GOV/52/INF/4). Noting that the report set down the vision of its authors and was not binding in nature, he said any mechanism to review or amend the Agency and its legal instruments would require the participation of all Member States.

50. Regarding the Agency's verification work to ensure compliance with the NPT, he affirmed that, as a multilateral organization and by virtue of its statutory mandate, the Agency was competent to fulfil that task.

51. Proliferation and terrorism threats must be addressed jointly at all levels. An appropriate collective security system would have to be based not only on full respect for the rights of States and their legal equality, but would also have to take into consideration the needs of the developing world. That, together with a firm commitment to disarmament, would help to build a future where the nuclear threat did not exist and make the legitimate aspiration for development shared by most countries in the world a reality.

52. Mr KIRAKOSSIAN (Armenia) said that, in view of the current nuclear renaissance, the Agency's role had become more important and its mandate had to be strengthened.

53. In 2007, Armenia had been one of the 47 countries for which the broader safeguards conclusion had been drawn. Also, it had submitted a national report under the Convention on Nuclear Safety, which had elicited valuable recommendations. As part of Armenia's collaboration with the Agency, every year it accepted up to 30 missions to verify the safety and security of its nuclear power plant, including its seismic and operational safety. An ISSAS mission was planned for October 2008 and an IPSART mission for March and April 2009. The recommendations of the two missions would be incorporated in future measures aimed at safety upgrades of the Armenia nuclear power plant at Metsamor.

54. In the context of technical cooperation with the Agency, six national projects involving 20 governmental and non-governmental organizations were being implemented. Armenia had participated in 30 regional projects in addition to its national projects and thanked the Agency for its assistance.

55. Since the 51st General Conference, Armenia had taken significant steps towards improving the safety of its nuclear power plant. Dry storage capacity for nuclear waste had been enlarged in collaboration with the French company AREVA; 12 additional modules had been constructed to help deal with the waste management problem for another 35 to 40 years. Recently a new educational centre had been constructed at the Armenia nuclear power plant, with the assistance of the Government of the United States of America, to serve as a training facility for plant personnel. Several safety improvement measures had been carried out in 2007 and 2008 and others were to be performed during outage in 2008. The nuclear power plant had allocated US \$1 million for that purpose in 2007 and \$600 000 in the first half of 2008. The plan for safety upgrading of the plant, which had been revised in 2005, would be fully implemented by the end of 2009, by which time an additional \$3 million would have been spent. A further safety upgrade stage had been elaborated for the years 2009–2016. The Government had taken the decision to decommission the existing unit in 2016 and had already approved a preliminary timetable and budget for that purpose.

56. Turning to developments in the legislative field, he said that Armenia's law on the peaceful use of nuclear energy, revised in 2005, needed to be amended, especially now that Armenia had serious

plans to construct a new unit to replace the operational one after its closure. The Government had decided to make urgent amendments to the existing law as an interim measure before engaging in the lengthy process of adopting a new one.

57. Since December 2005, yearly meetings of technical cooperation donor countries had been held dedicated to the safety upgrading of the Armenian nuclear power plant. In 2008, the EBRD had announced its intention to allocate €100 000 for a feasibility study and for decommissioning. The United Kingdom had reported that it was going to spend \$2.8 million, mainly for the development of radioactive waste storage, and that in the future it would concentrate on a project related to security issues. The United States of America had announced two additional projects to be implemented, and the European Commission had said that it would focus on decommissioning projects. The Russian Federation had recently offered \$10 million for several projects to cover various aspects of safety upgrading, including technical aspects, general examination, equipment and training of personnel.

58. The Government of Armenia had decided to join the agreement between the Governments of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation on the establishment of the International Uranium Enrichment Centre in Angarsk. He thanked all donor countries as well as other partner countries for their continuous assistance and experience sharing.

59. He emphasized his country's interest in INPRO projects, especially those concerning countries with a small grid energy supply. Armenia was actively participating in a collaborative project on implementation issues for the use of nuclear power in smaller countries and had been invited to attend a GNEP conference in Paris.

60. There was no doubt that solidarity in combating terrorism was now of major importance for the international community in general and for the nuclear community in particular. Armenia, like many other countries, had created an emergency management centre. In July 2008, it had organized a seminar and exercise with the participation of all the relevant agencies, regional authorities, regional rescue offices and personnel from the Armenia nuclear power plant responsible for physical protection. Another exercise was planned for December 2008. To further develop the physical protection of the Armenian nuclear power plant, an INSSP had been elaborated together with the Office of Nuclear Security touching on various aspects of physical protection, including improvement of the legal and regulatory framework, prevention, detection, response and human resource development. Within the framework of the INSSP, a project for physical protection system upgrades at the Armenian nuclear power plant had been signed with the Agency. The Government of the United Kingdom was to provide €1 580 000 for that project. Armenia had recently joined the Nuclear Smuggling Outreach Initiative, a United States effort to eliminate nuclear smuggling through activities in the four major fields of prevention, detection, response and fighting against corruption. Armenia, the seventh country to have joined the Initiative, appealed to other Member States to follow suit. It was an important part of international collaboration to combat nuclear terrorism.

61. Such initiatives were inalienable parts of the non-proliferation regime and would facilitate the outcome of the NPT Review Conference to be held in 2010. In addition, Armenia encouraged States to ratify the CTBT, which was another important international instrument aimed at the further strengthening of the non-proliferation regime.

62. Mr WIN (Myanmar) said that the Agency had been playing an essential role in providing assistance to Member States in peaceful, safe and secure applications of atomic energy in various fields. Through its technical cooperation programme the Agency had made a contribution to global efforts to combat poverty, hunger and disease, and was also supporting environmental sustainability and the health of mothers and children. Its role in promoting development programmes around the

world for the betterment of humankind using nuclear technologies was unique and should be expanded.

63. Myanmar had eight national technical cooperation projects for the year 2007–2008, involving its Ministries of Health, Education, Livestock and Fisheries, Agriculture and Irrigation, and Science and Technology. The total allocation for Myanmar for the 2007–2008 technical cooperation cycle was \$1.3 million. Since 2000, the assistance that had been received by Myanmar under the Agency technical cooperation programme totalled \$5.23 million. The largest shares of assistance had been provided in the areas of radiation health and medicine (26%), radiation applications in food and agriculture (19%), nuclear radiation safety and security (17%), general atomic energy development (14%) and nuclear engineering and technology (11%).

64. His delegation thanked the Agency for providing equipment, expertise and training through the technical cooperation programme. Such assistance had contributed to Myanmar's national development efforts in many areas, especially in health, agriculture, food, livestock breeding and industry, as well as in human resource development for nuclear science.

65. Myanmar acknowledged the Agency's efforts to strengthen international cooperation in nuclear, radiation and transport safety and waste management. The Agency's activities in supporting the implementation of international instruments for nuclear safety, the development and application of safety standards and safety guides, and the strengthening of the national safety infrastructures of Member States had made a contribution to strengthening the global nuclear safety regime.

66. As a developing country, Myanmar had a programme of promoting the applications of nuclear science and technology for peaceful development purposes. The application of nuclear techniques in medical diagnosis and in industry, as well as in academic R&D for peaceful nuclear technology, was gradually increasing and so it was important to establish an adequate infrastructure for radiation protection and radiation safety. Myanmar was also working towards ensuring the effective control and safe and secure use of radiation sources and nuclear and radioactive material. In that area also, Agency assistance was requested in establishing and strengthening infrastructures, including capacity building and the transfer of technical expertise.

67. To prevent nuclear terrorism and to establish effective nuclear security regimes, it was essential throughout the world to strengthen the security of nuclear and other radioactive materials, their associated operational nuclear facilities, their locations and their transport. Myanmar confirmed its support for the Agency's Nuclear Security Plan and, in particular, its activities to provide nuclear security training to improve the practical nuclear security skills of relevant personnel in Member States.

68. Myanmar highly appreciated the Agency's role in monitoring the implementation of safeguards agreements, which were intended to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, and in providing the necessary assurances regarding compliance with those agreements. The Agency's safeguards system and verification activities would remain important in providing assurances to the international community that nuclear materials and facilities were not diverted for non-peaceful purposes.

69. Myanmar had signed the NPT in 1992, a safeguards agreement and SQP in 1995, and the CTBT in 1996. It had also signed the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone at the fifth ASEAN formal summit held in Bangkok in December 1995, which had come into force in 1997 and was aimed at the complete disarmament of nuclear weapons and the promotion of international peace and security. Myanmar believed that NWFZs in various regions of the world were effective measures for preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and contributing to nuclear disarmament.

70. Reiterating his appreciation and thanks to the Director General and to the Secretariat, he reaffirmed his country's belief that the Agency would continue to play an essential role in promoting and facilitating cooperation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy and in nuclear weapon non-proliferation.

71. Mr ABDRAKHMANOV (Kazakhstan) said that recent events had again demonstrated how difficult it was to create an atmosphere of mutual confidence in the world. Successful implementation of the NPT was the basis of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and of prevention of the further development of weapons of mass destruction. It was therefore of paramount importance to have an efficient NPT regime and to take measures to strengthen it. That meant, first and foremost, steadfast adherence to the commitments made under the NPT.

72. In February 2007, Kazakhstan had ratified the additional protocol to its safeguards agreement with the Agency, which had entered into force in May that year. His country was an active participant in nearly all initiatives to combat the nuclear threat, including the G8 Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, the Proliferation Security Initiative, and the Global Threat Reduction Initiative of the United States of America. In addition, his country had welcomed the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism proposed by the Russian Federation and the United States of America in 2006. In demonstration of its commitment to international security and its support for collective international efforts to counter terrorism, Kazakhstan had signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and also had hosted the 3rd meeting of participants in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism in Astana in June 2007.

73. Kazakhstan was taking measures to strengthen radiation border control and to upgrade further its system for combating illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive materials. It fully supported Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

74. His country had joined the GNEP, and had signed its Statement of Principles in September 2007. Kazakhstan shared the GNEP's vision for nuclear energy cooperation to enable safe and secure expansion of civil nuclear energy. Involvement in the GNEP would give Kazakhstan new momentum in the development of its national atomic industry and energy sectors.

75. Kazakhstan abided by all the accepted norms in its export control policies and, as a member of the NSG, was taking effective measures to meet its obligations to strengthen nuclear non-proliferation. It had set up, and was continuously improving, a system for combating illicit nuclear trafficking. Thorough scrutiny of the introduction of new restrictions on nuclear technology transfer was needed to avoid unjustified barriers being placed in the path of peaceful nuclear development.

76. By giving up the world's fourth largest nuclear arsenal, Kazakhstan had made a historic contribution to enhancing non-proliferation and disarmament and had demonstrated its commitment to its international obligations. Recognizing the threat posed by highly enriched material, Kazakhstan's Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources had adopted a five-year programme to convert its WWR-K research reactor to LEU fuel. Furthermore, safe decommissioning of the BN-350 fast breeder reactor in Aktau was continuing.

77. Kazakhstan was implementing the new edition of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. Projects to strengthen control over ionizing radiation sources and to manage sources in a safe and secure fashion were being implemented successfully. Instruments for introducing a national register of ionizing radiation sources had been prepared and an inventory of radiation sources in Kazakhstan was being carried out. His country greatly appreciated the support and assistance provided to those programmes by the Agency and other participating countries.

78. With the support of the Government of Kazakhstan, the Nuclear Technologies Park company had been registered and had begun its operations in Kurchatov. The company's purpose was to lay the foundations for the development of peaceful atomic energy applications, including nuclear power development, in Kazakhstan. A heavy ion accelerator had entered into service in Astana in 2007, and the construction of a tokamak for materials research was under way in Kurchatov. The construction of a large nuclear medicine centre, supported by the Government, was being planned in Almaty. In view of the expansion of nuclear activities in the country, his Government was planning to create a special authority to coordinate the relevant national programmes.

79. Kazakhstan was an active participant in the creation of a NWFZ in Central Asia, an initiative which Central Asian States had formulated in the Almaty Declaration of 1997. The initiative had become an important contribution by Kazakhstan and other States of the region to strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime. In 2006, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and their representatives from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan had signed the Central Asian Nuclear-Free-Zone-Treaty in Semipalatinsk.

80. In 2007, Kazakhstan had signed an intergovernmental agreement with the Russian Federation on the organization of an International Uranium Enrichment Centre in Angarsk. Kazakhstan believed that such centres, under strict Agency control, would be a basis for the application of all the principles of the non-proliferation regime to the most sensitive stages of the nuclear fuel cycle. They would also support the principles outlined by the Director General for the non-proliferation of sensitive nuclear technologies.

81. In his statement at the G8 Summit in July 2006, the President of Kazakhstan had stressed that global security could be ensured only through complete nuclear disarmament since the possession of such weapons posed a direct threat to humanity.

82. It was time for all to think about alternative energy sources and global energy security. His Government supported the development of peaceful applications of nuclear energy under strict international control, in particular by the Agency. Any State that satisfied the requirement for transparency under a safeguards agreement and additional protocol with the Agency should have the right to develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and build nuclear power reactors. Ways had to be found to resolve recent conflict situations by rebuilding the confidence of the international community in the nuclear activities of countries without restricting their right to technological development and access to knowledge. On account of their experience, the Agency and its Director General were in a good position to address such complex issues.

83. Control over nuclear weapons and nuclear technology should be improved to prevent the diversion of fissile material for military purposes. One approach was to establish a body under the auspices of the Agency that would ensure the reliable supply of fuel for nuclear power plants and manage safe storage and waste processing. Political, commercial and financial issues would need to be resolved prior to the establishment of such an entity. Although the idea might appear unrealistic at present, efforts should be made to start moving in that direction.

84. Mr GALANXHI (Albania) said that technical cooperation with the Agency was one of the most efficient uses of resources for Member States and it was important to strengthen activities in that regard. His country was pleased that TCF contributions had reached a record level of \$83.6 million in 2007, while the rate of attainment had increased to 95.6%. The higher target for voluntary contributions to the TCF in 2009 would go further towards meeting Member States' needs. The Albanian Government was committed to paying its contributions to the Regular Budget and TCF in full and on time.

85. Nuclear and isotope techniques continued to make substantive contributions in the areas of human health, agriculture, water resource management and the environment. Albania was involved in national and regional technical cooperation projects related to monitoring environmental radioactivity, particularly in the assessment of the marine environment of the Mediterranean Sea and air pollution in the Mediterranean region, and to improving clinical practices in radiation oncology and radiotherapy services. At the regional cooperation level, good progress had been made in the areas of education and training in support of radiation protection infrastructure, the strengthening of national infrastructure for the control of radiation sources, and in upgrading national capabilities in controlling public exposure.

86. As a beneficiary of PACT, Albania was fully committed to strengthening national cancer control activities and was very appreciative of the Agency's assistance in that regard.

87. While Albania was aware that nuclear technology transfer was a long process and that it would require the Agency's assistance for many years to come, national nuclear power and non-power applications had prospects. For the first time, his Government was seriously considering the use of nuclear technology for power generation. Initial steps had been taken in that regard, and consultations with the Agency were under way.

88. The fight against organized crime and terrorism remained a top priority for Albania. It had improved its border controls, seeking Agency advice on establishing the necessary infrastructure to prevent the theft, diversion and illicit trafficking of nuclear and other radioactive materials. In addition, Albania supported global initiatives to combat nuclear terrorism.

89. Albania attached great importance to the additional protocol which, if fully implemented, could strengthen the Agency's investigative powers to verify compliance with NPT safeguards obligations and to enable it to respond quickly in the event of indications of undeclared nuclear material, facilities or activities. Thus, Albania had signed — and was in the process of ratifying — an additional protocol. Moreover, Albania was taking legislative measures to prepare and adopt a comprehensive national atomic law that would ensure control over all nuclear and radiation obligations, requirements and standards.

90. Mr KEBEDE (Ethiopia) said that his country had finished preparing its CPF for the period 2007–2012 with strong technical support from the Agency. The CPF identified national priority areas in which nuclear science and technology could make significant contributions. The Ethiopian Government was reviewing the country's institutional framework as part of national efforts to create the necessary institutional capacity to strengthen technical cooperation with the Agency and to meet international obligations to ensure the peaceful, safe and secure application of nuclear energy. The transformation process should strengthen the institutional framework for the SSAC, the regulatory services and the promotion of peaceful applications of nuclear energy.

91. Ethiopia was involved in a number of national and regional technical cooperation projects in the areas of animal health and productivity, human health, water resource management, non-destructive testing, energy planning, nuclear instrumentation and radiation protection. The project with the highest priority remained the Southern Rift Valley Tsetse Eradication Project, which aimed to eradicate tsetse flies from 25 000 km² of land using the SIT. The project was gradually moving towards achievement of its objectives and had reached a decisive stage where the cooperation of all partners was more crucial than ever. The most pressing need was the acquisition of additional equipment and materials to intensify suppression of tsetse populations, a prerequisite to application of the SIT. As the project approached its operational phase, Agency cooperation was needed to provide high technology and ensure skilled, experienced human resources. For its part, the Ethiopian Government was establishing an autonomous and more flexible project management structure and was purchasing an industrial

irradiator for the tsetse rearing and sterilization centre. It also planned to provide local short- and long-term training courses with an emphasis on the tsetse fly in order to upgrade the knowledge and skills of professional and technical staff. Ethiopia called on all development partners to intensify their support for the project since its outcomes would have significant implications for the remaining 36 African nations affected by tsetse and trypanosomosis. He expressed his country's appreciation to the Agency, the United States of America, China, Japan, the OPEC Fund for International Development and the African Development Bank for their generous technical and financial assistance to the project.

92. Although technical cooperation with the Agency was progressing well, Ethiopia still had only one radiotherapy centre with a single cobalt therapy machine to serve more than 75 million people. Preliminary data indicated that only around 400 cancer patients received radiotherapy per year, despite an estimated 115 000 new cancer cases per year. The Ethiopian Government was committed to ensuring that, as a matter of priority, immediate action was taken in that regard in collaboration with the Agency and other development partners.

93. Ethiopia commended the initiative under AFRA to review the relevance, achievements and effectiveness of the agreement's policies, strategies and procedures of operation. The policy review seminar held in Egypt in November 2007 had achieved positive outcomes with regard to ownership by governments party to AFRA, but Agency support would continue to be required.

94. Ethiopia had completed the formulation of its technical cooperation projects for 2009–2011 using the interactive, Internet-based PCMF. Short-term courses of training on the PCMF would allow that tool to be used optimally.

95. Ethiopia had ratified the Pelindaba Treaty in conformity with its long-standing commitment to the NPT. Ethiopia called on fellow African countries to ratify the Pelindaba Treaty at the earliest opportunity to enable it to enter into force.

96. Member States had growing expectations of the Agency, primarily owing to the ever increasing opportunities and challenges in the use of nuclear energy. Adequate and predictable resources for the Agency's programmes had to be made available and a balance maintained in the resources allocated to safeguards, nuclear safety and technical cooperation. It was also imperative to upgrade the Agency's laboratory and computing facilities and to enhance its management information system.

97. The Joint FAO/IAEA Division of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture had been instrumental in creating synergy between those two organizations. Ethiopia urged the FAO to maintain and reinforce that partnership.

98. In conclusion, he thanked the Secretariat for their dedication and hard work to make cooperation with his country more relevant, efficient and effective.

99. Mr KAMANDA BATARINGAYA (Uganda) commended the Agency on its work to promote the peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology and, at the same time, encouraged Member States to observe safety, security and safeguards measures.

100. Uganda's President, Yoweri Kagutta Museveni, and its Government were committed to worldwide peace and security and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and recognized the role that nuclear science and technology could play in socio-economic development. As proof of its commitment, Uganda had ratified the NPT and an additional protocol and urged States that had not yet done so to ratify an additional protocol.

101. The use of atomic energy and ionizing radiation in Uganda was limited to such areas as the diagnosis of diseases, cancer treatment, improvements in agriculture, control of disease vectors,

industrial testing and water resource studies. The Government attached great importance to the Agency's technical cooperation programme, which had contributed significantly to enhancing the nuclear science and technology applications in the country. Particular progress had been made in radiotherapy applications for cancer treatment and in mutation breeding techniques for the development of virus-resistant cassava and sweet potato varieties.

102. In view of the growing energy demand and limited potential of fossil fuels and renewable energy sources, the Government of Uganda intended to explore the feasibility of including nuclear power generation in its future energy mix. It hoped that the Agency would continue to provide technical assistance to establish the competences and infrastructure required for a nuclear power programme.

103. Although nuclear science and technology contributed significantly to improving lives worldwide, its application, if not properly regulated, could have serious health and environmental consequences. With that in mind, the Government of Uganda had enacted an atomic energy act in May 2008. The new law would promote the peaceful application of nuclear energy in all fields, including power generation, while ensuring safety, security and safeguards. Uganda appreciated the Agency's assistance in developing that law.

104. In July 2008, the Director General's Chef de Cabinet had visited Uganda for high level consultations on the peaceful application of atomic energy. The outcome of those consultations would guide future applications of atomic energy to improve the standard of living of the Ugandan people.

105. Mr BAMBBA (Côte d'Ivoire) expressed appreciation of the Agency's efforts over the previous year to strengthen international cooperation in areas including nuclear safety, transport safety, waste management, protection against nuclear terrorism, and nuclear science, technology and applications.

106. Since joining the Agency in 1963, Côte d'Ivoire had, with the Agency's cooperation, successfully implemented a number of projects relating to animal production and health, improvements in crop yield, human health and the environment. It had implemented an extensive programme to develop its water and mining resources in order to meet energy requirements that were increasing as a result of social and industrial development. His Government had taken the decision to consider nuclear power in order to ensure a sustainable energy supply and was seeking to strengthen its cooperation with the Agency to that end.

107. His country was firmly committed to working together with the international community to achieve peace, security and prosperity, and to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The NPT remained the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, and he hoped that the international community would be able to advance towards the full implementation of the Treaty, including disarmament. He was pleased to report that his country's proposal to sign an additional protocol to its NPT safeguards agreement had been approved.

108. As part of its strategy for poverty reduction, his Government had submitted to the Agency for approval programmes to promote sustainable development with considerable socio-economic impact on the population. He welcomed the increasing number of technical cooperation projects in such areas as human health, animal production and health, nuclear science and applications, and radiation protection, which had resulted in capacity building of human resources in his country. His Government was seeking to strengthen the legislative and regulatory framework as a first step in its vision for nuclear power development. The next step would involve the creation of a national atomic energy commission and regulatory authority. He expressed his Government's gratitude for the assistance it continued to receive from the Agency.

109. He drew attention to his Government's efforts to pay all its APC arrears and noted that it was in the process of paying its contribution to the TCF.

110. For some time now, the international community had been paying increased attention to environmental issues and the problems associated with illicit trafficking in toxic and radioactive substances. The Agency should increase its efforts to deal with contamination from ionizing radiation sources and to protect the environment. It should consider the use of adapted techniques for the management of environmental risks. His country's recent experience with toxic waste had highlighted not only how fragile its infrastructure and methods of control were but also the need for strengthened international cooperation.

111. The efforts undertaken within the AFRA programme had helped to strengthen technical cooperation among Member States and to develop national and regional human resources in the area of nuclear science and technology, and should be further encouraged. The programme provided an ideal framework for the countries involved to develop and strengthen their national capacities. Côte d'Ivoire, for its part, was committed to enhancing its cooperation and to greater involvement of its national institutions in the AFRA programme.

8. Election of members to the Board of Governors (resumed) (GC(52)/8 and 23)

112. The PRESIDENT recalled that the vacant seat on the Board of Governors for 2008–2009 for the Middle East and South Asia still remained to be filled.

113. Mr KUMAR (India), speaking on behalf of the members of the Middle East and South Asia group said that the Syrian Arab Republic had withdrawn its candidature for the vacant seat in the interest of maintaining consensus and facilitating the work of the General Conference. Thus there was now consensus among the members to propose Afghanistan as the candidate for the vacant seat.

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

115. Afghanistan was duly elected.

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

116. Mr LAMINE (Niger) said that his country, as a uranium producer, reaffirmed its total commitment to the Agency's objectives of preventing the use of nuclear energy for military purposes and ensuring that nuclear energy for peaceful purposes was used in the safest possible way. Niger participated actively in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear techniques and strengthening the related international legal framework. It was committed to working closely with the Secretariat and all Member States in the interests of peace, security and prosperity.

117. Recognizing the importance of non-proliferation, nuclear safety and security, and radiation protection, Niger had invited the Agency to organize ISSAS and IRRS missions to assist it in setting up an SSAC and in helping mining companies, the customs service, the regulatory authority and all other stakeholders to play their role in implementing Niger's safeguards agreement and its additional

protocol, which had entered into force in 2005 and 2007, respectively. The ISSAS missions had taken place in September 2007 and in February 2008, and the IRRS mission in December 2007. Niger hoped that implementation of the recommendations resulting from those missions would make it possible for the country, with the assistance of the Agency and others, to achieve its national and international objectives of non-proliferation and radiation protection for the public and environment.

118. Niger welcomed the Agency's activities in the spheres of human health (particularly cancer control), agriculture, stockbreeding, water resource management, the environment and energy. His country was pleased at the results achieved by various technical cooperation programmes.

119. As part of its programme to improve the national health system, Niger had made efforts to combat cancer, the prevalence of which was growing rapidly in the country. To that end, the Government had committed \$1.8 million to the construction of a national radiotherapy centre for cancer treatment. He hoped that the Agency would continue to provide technical assistance, particularly by training staff and providing expert assistance and equipment, so that the second phase of that vital project for Niger could reach completion. In its effort to combat poverty and to improve the quality of life of those suffering from cancer, his country had been providing free treatment for gynaecological cancers since 2007.

120. Niger was one of the world's largest producers of uranium and was currently experiencing a resurgence in related activities. The country was committed to developing its mining sector while respecting human health and the environment. Niger attached particular importance to the Agency's activities concerning radiation safety, the management of radioactive mining waste, and dosimetry, particularly internal exposure monitoring.

121. His country intended to set up, with Agency support, a national INIS centre, which would mark a major step forward for its management of nuclear knowledge. The centre's mission would be to evaluate, take an inventory of, and reorganize the country's nuclear information system with a view to better use of nuclear technology for Niger's benefit.

122. Niger needed to re-energize its agricultural and stockbreeding sectors, which employed more than 80% of the working population, and thus highly valued the Agency's technical cooperation programmes aimed at increasing agricultural and animal production. The use of nuclear techniques in those fields, and more specifically in improving varieties and animal nutrition, could contribute significantly to addressing the development challenges posed by food security, combating poverty and environmental management. Niger was also hoping to apply isotopic techniques to study the silting up of the river Niger and pesticide use.

123. Niger welcomed Agency assistance through regional and subregional programmes and intended to participate actively in the AFRA programme, from which it had already benefited greatly. With the support of AFRA and under a special programme of Niger's President, a biotechnology laboratory costing \$300 000 was currently under construction.

124. Mr ELWAZER (Palestine) said that soon after its establishment, the Palestinian National Authority had set up the Palestinian Energy Authority, one of the most important divisions of which was the Nuclear Energy and Radiation Protection Department, which promoted the use of atomic energy in the areas of health, environmental protection, agriculture and the water sector.

125. Three technical cooperation projects had been implemented during the period 2007–2008 with a view to strengthening and supporting environmental radiation monitoring, strengthening radiation protection, and training human resources in nuclear science. Agreement had been reached on Agency support for four projects during the 2009–2011 cycle concerning the development of Palestinian national capacities to deal with radiation accidents, support for the development of radiation protection

services, the production of a radiation map of Palestine, and support for the national human resources and nuclear technology programme.

126. The situation in Palestine made it difficult to implement projects supported by the Agency, especially with respect to expert visits and the delivery of equipment. Moreover, the Israeli occupation authorities imposed closures of Palestinian territory which made it impossible for students, especially those from Gaza, to obtain permits for travel outside Palestine. The blockade of Gaza had turned it into the world's biggest prison. Palestine had been divided up into discontinuous enclaves and Palestinians had to contend with more than 600 roadblocks. The worst hit area was that surrounding Jerusalem. The city's character had been transformed and its Muslim and Christian holy places were threatened.

127. Notwithstanding those circumstances, the Nuclear Energy and Radiation Protection Department had implemented a number of projects. However, it had been unable to organize regular workshops because of the closures, the lack of equipment and, above all, the shortage of experts. He therefore called on the Agency to persist in its efforts to remedy the situation. Palestine hoped for further cooperation in environment protection and training in dealing with radiation and nuclear accidents, especially since part of its territory was only 40 kilometres from Israel's Dimona nuclear reactor. It constituted a major threat to the Palestinian people and the environment because of its age and the repeated occurrence of nuclear accidents.

128. There was an urgent need for all countries in the Middle East, especially Israel, to apply comprehensive Agency safeguards to their nuclear activities as a confidence-building measure and a step towards strengthening international peace and security and creating a NWFZ. The Arab States strongly supported the non-proliferation regime. The draft resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat was supported by a large number of delegations participating in the Conference. He warmly thanked the member States of NAM and the Organization of the Islamic Conference for their support for the inclusion of the corresponding agenda item and called on the Conference to discuss it and adopt the draft resolution.

129. Israel's failure to implement comprehensive Agency safeguards and to agree to the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East was an insurmountable obstacle to comprehensive peace and a threat to the peoples of the region. He therefore urged the international community to compel Israel to sign the NPT.

130. The President of the Palestinian Authority had announced a preliminary plan for national reconciliation and the establishment of a Government of national unity, which would hold parliamentary and presidential elections and reorganize the Palestinian security system with Arab support.

131. Mr TÓTH (Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization) said that the purpose of the Commission, which now had 180 members, was to promote the entry into force of the CTBT and establish a global verification regime to monitor compliance with its provisions. Nine more countries still had to ratify the CTBT for it to enter into force, and almost 150 had ratified it to date.

132. The Commission was making all the necessary preparations to ensure that the verification regime would be ready from the first day of implementation of the CTBT, which was no small task. The system itself was to comprise 337 facilities in 89 countries, each hosting a diverse range of recording equipment using four key technologies. The system would be operated and maintained continuously by nearly 500 operators around the globe. The Global Communications Infrastructure (GCI) would relay recorded data through six geostationary satellites back to Vienna in real time. A team of experts at the International Data Centre (IDC) would analyse incoming information and

compare it to Treaty-specific timelines, while Member States and institutions across the globe could view the data simultaneously in possibly the most open verification democracy of its kind. Should the need arise, an on-site inspection team could be sent to survey an area of approximately 1000 km² for a potential nuclear blast.

133. A number of important steps had been taken to build the verification regime. Nearly 70% of the International Monitoring System (IMS) had been certified and, by the end of 2008, 250 facilities would be transmitting data back to the IDC in Vienna. During the current mid-term cycle, the number of facilities in operation had tripled and all the key technologies of the verification system had been developed. The event in the DPRK had underscored the importance of increasing the number of noble gas stations, which would have doubled by the end of 2008. Had the new stations with improved geographical saturation been in place at the time of the DPRK event, the readings would have been 50 times higher than those recorded in 2006.

134. The Commission's migration to the new GCI platform was virtually complete, and GCI II was now relaying data across the globe. The volume of data transmitted from monitoring facilities to the IDC had tripled in recent years, and the daily volume of data products provided to CTBT States Parties had doubled. Software improvements had led to the delivery of more detailed and significantly higher quality data products. As the benefits derived from those products had expanded, so had access to them. More than 1000 authorized institutions in over 100 countries had direct access to the data generated by the IMS, and those data were proving to be increasingly useful, not just for verification, but also in civil and scientific applications. For example, the Commission's system was the fastest, most reliable and highest quality provider of data to international and national tsunami warning centres. Data provision arrangements had just been signed with Japan, the Philippines and Australia, and similar arrangements would soon be signed with Indonesia and other countries. The regime had led to a new standard of verification, representing democracy in the verification of multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation instruments. The Commission had initiated an international scientific studies project in cooperation with the international scientific community with the objective of assessing the capability of the verification system and exploring whether the scientific community could provide additional tools to further improve data analyses. The project would be concluded in 2009, with a conference held in June for all participants.

135. In September 2008, a team of trained inspectors had gone to Kazakhstan to conduct the first integrated field exercise of its kind under the concept of on-site inspection. The exercise had provided a unique opportunity for the Commission to test most of the major elements of its on-site inspection regime. Two hundred participants had been deployed on the former nuclear weapon test site of Semipalatinsk, an area roughly the size of a small country. They had taken over 50 tonnes of equipment to be tested over 30 days in the field. Mock negotiations had been conducted, technical procedures had been practised, and integrated analysis had been performed on location. A wide range of equipment and technologies had been thoroughly put through their paces. Radionuclide surveys, ground and aerial gamma arrays, environmental sampling and passive seismological monitoring had been carried out. Many valuable lessons had been learned, and the field exercise would contribute significantly towards achieving on-site inspection readiness by the time the CTBT entered into force.

136. Instead of talking about separate components of the verification regime, it was now possible to talk about an integrated system, functioning in a holistic way. However, much work remained to be done. Many of the stations to be completed were the most difficult ones for technical, financial and political reasons. Sustaining the investments already made was proving to be a significant challenge as operation and maintenance issues emerged. In addition, the financial situation dictated substantially the realities of what could be achieved.

137. A ban on nuclear testing was more necessary than ever and there were compelling reasons to establish the CTBT. A nuclear energy renaissance was expected and the predicted annual growth of nuclear energy over the next 20 years would raise a number of issues that would need to be addressed, such as ensuring a system for access to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes that was fair, secure, safe and safeguarded. There would be an increase in the number of countries, facilities, institutions and individuals managing a wider array of sensitive nuclear fuel cycle components, and significantly more fissile material, making it more difficult than ever to differentiate between prohibited and permitted nuclear activities. Conclusions as to whether nuclear energy was being used for peaceful or non-peaceful purposes would be based more on political than technical grounds.

138. The promotion of nuclear energy had to go hand in hand with a strengthening of the non-proliferation and disarmament regime, which had been weakened in recent years. The CTBT, together with other necessary measures, could help to strengthen it. The CTBT was the last and most visible legal and technical barrier to the development of nuclear weapons and it could keep the non-proliferation and disarmament regime from unravelling in the twenty-first century. In the context of an increasingly complex global security environment, such challenges could not be ignored. They had to be regulated and faced collectively if they were to be overcome.

139. The CTBT was essential in the fight against proliferation and the achievement of nuclear disarmament. Not only was it an important measure in its own right, but it also had the potential to act as a catalyst for progress in other crucial areas of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The 2010 NPT Review Conference would be an important step with regard to bringing the CTBT into force, as a demonstration of the international community's commitment to non-proliferation and disarmament. The entry into force of the CTBT was just around the corner; the corner simply had to be turned.

19. Implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement between the Agency and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (GC(52)/L.4)

140. The PRESIDENT said that, because the draft resolution contained in document GC(52)/L.4 had only been tabled that day, some delegations had raised objections pursuant to Rule 63 of the Rules of Procedure. For that reason he suggested postponing discussion of the agenda item until the subsequent day.

141. It was so decided.

20. Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East (GC(52)/10/Rev.1, GC(52)/L.1 and L.6)

142. The PRESIDENT said that the item had been included on the agenda pursuant to resolution GC(51)/RES/17, adopted by the General Conference the preceding year. In accordance with operative paragraph 11 of that resolution, the Director General had submitted the report contained in document GC(52)/10/Rev.1. Also before the General Conference was document GC(52)/L.1 containing a draft

resolution submitted by Egypt and document GC(52)/L.6 containing amendments thereto proposed by Israel.

143. Mr FAWZY (Egypt), introducing the draft resolution, said that the document had been prepared in support of the Agency's work in the field of safeguards, pursuant to Article III of the NPT. The General Conference and the NPT Review Conferences had assigned high priority to the accession of all the States in the Middle East to the NPT and to the placement of all the nuclear activities in the region under full-scope safeguards. When the Treaty had been extended indefinitely in 1995, a resolution on the Middle East had been adopted by the international community expressing concern at the continued presence of unsafeguarded nuclear facilities in the region, which undermined the effectiveness of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the credibility of the safeguards regime as a whole.

144. Egypt had sponsored a similar draft resolution on many previous occasions. In 2007, Egypt had updated the resolution, after no amendment had been made to it in 14 years and no practical steps had been taken to implement it. Egypt had undertaken intensive consultations on that draft resolution for five months with all the parties concerned, including Israel, with a view to achieving consensus. Unfortunately, Israel and several other parties had refused to join consensus and disregarded the contents of the draft resolution in an attempt to put pressure on the Arab countries in their endeavours to submit another draft resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities. Egypt had unequivocally rejected any linking of those two issues. Israel and other States had requested a vote on Egypt's 2007 draft resolution and the consensus had been broken.

145. New amendments had been introduced to the draft resolution now before the General Conference to meet the concerns of a number of parties and with a view to returning to consensus. The members of the Agency should take responsibility for achieving the goal of placing all the nuclear facilities in the Middle East under Agency safeguards. Egypt called on all Member States to adopt the draft resolution by consensus or, in the event of a vote, to support it to demonstrate their commitment to the Agency and to other international disarmament and non-proliferation forums. To avert the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East, the international community must fulfil its responsibility to deal with all relevant issues in the region in accordance with international law and without double standards. The way in which the General Conference voted on the draft resolution would send a message to the States of the region regarding the seriousness of the international community and the credibility of the nuclear powers when it came to upholding the principles they professed to embrace. He hoped the message would be positive, convincing States that had acceded to the NPT and applied full-scope safeguards to their facilities that they had made the right choice, and reaffirming that the international community, and the nuclear-weapon States in particular, met their commitments and showed their resolve against States that had flouted international disarmament norms and refused to assume any non-proliferation or safeguards commitments.

146. Mr DANIELI (Israel), presenting the amendments to the draft resolution, said that his country had made numerous attempts to reach out to its sponsor in order to find a way to accommodate Israel's position and views in the text and to regain consensus in the Vienna spirit. Unfortunately, those attempts had been unsuccessful, leaving Israel with no choice but to table its amendments officially and bring them to a vote at the General Conference. The amendments were modest but indispensable for his country.

147. The first proposed amendment, adding an operative paragraph after operative paragraph 1, addressed the regrettable situation that non-compliance with legally binding obligations had become widespread in the Middle East. The application of safeguards was a synonym for compliance with obligations and the latest developments in the field of proliferation in the Middle East showed that the issue was one that the international community could no longer ignore.

148. The second proposed amendment, changing the wording of operative paragraph 4, had been imported from a General Assembly resolution. The original wording had been designed to strike the right balance between the various operative paragraphs. Israel, while not in favour of including language imported from the General Assembly owing to the difference in nature of the two forums, was prepared — for the purposes of flexibility — to accept the original wording rather than oppose the inclusion of the paragraph altogether.

149. The third proposed amendment, adding an operative paragraph after operative paragraph 6, was based on the experience of other regions in establishing a NWFZ. It demonstrated the need for mutual recognition, good neighbourliness, mutual acceptance and the normalization of relations. The way to achieve security was to set a final objective, start modestly and proceed carefully, since confidence building was a lengthy process. Resistance to a step-by-step approach was not conducive to achieving the goal of the establishment of a NWFZ.

150. Ms GOICOCHEA ESTENOZ (Cuba), speaking on behalf of NAM, quoted the final declaration of the Movement's 15th Ministerial Conference held in Tehran from 27 to 30 July 2008:

“The Ministers reiterated their support for the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction. As a priority step to this end, they reaffirmed the need for the speedy establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East in accordance with the Security Council Resolution 487 (1981) and paragraph 14 of the Security Council Resolution 687 (1991) and the relevant General Assembly resolutions adopted by consensus. They called upon all parties concerned to take urgent and practical steps towards the fulfilment of the proposal initiated by Iran in 1974 for the establishment of such a zone and, pending its establishment, they demanded on Israel, the only country in the region that has not joined the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) nor declared its intention to do so, to renounce possession of nuclear weapons, to accede to the NPT without delay, to place promptly all its nuclear facilities under IAEA full-scope safeguards according to Security Council Resolution 487 (1981) and to conduct its nuclear related activities in conformity with the non-proliferation regime. They called for the earliest implementation of relevant IAEA resolutions on “Application of IAEA Safeguards in the Middle East”. They expressed great concern over the acquisition of nuclear capability by Israel which poses a serious and continuing threat to the security of neighbouring and other States, and condemned Israel for continuing to develop and stockpile nuclear arsenals. In this context they also condemned the statement made by the Prime Minister of Israel on 11 December 2006, related to the possession of nuclear weapons by Israel. They urged the continued consideration of the issue of Israeli nuclear capabilities in the context of the IAEA, including at the General Conference at its 52nd Session. They were of the view that stability cannot be achieved in a region where massive imbalances in military capabilities are maintained particularly through the possession of nuclear weapons, which allow one party to threaten its neighbours, and the region. They further welcomed the initiative by H.E. Mr. Mohammed Hosni Mubarak, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, on the establishment of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, and in this context, they took into consideration the draft resolution tabled by the Syrian Arab Republic, on behalf of the Arab Group, before the Security Council on 29 December 2003 on the establishment of a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. They stressed that necessary steps should be taken in different international fora for the establishment of this zone. They also called for the total and complete prohibition of the transfer of all nuclear-related equipment, information, material and facilities, resources or devices and the extension of assistance in the nuclear related scientific or technological fields to

Israel. In this regard, they expressed their serious concern over the continuing development whereby Israeli scientists are provided access to the nuclear facilities of one NWS. This development will have potentially serious negative implications on security in the region as well as the reliability of the global non-proliferation regime.”

151. NAM noted with regret the Director General’s finding that he continued to be unable to make further progress in fulfilling his mandate pursuant to resolution GC(51)/RES/17 regarding the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East. NAM also regretted Israel’s continued insistence that progress in that regard be made contingent upon other developments related to the achievement of peace in the Middle East, rather than contributing to such developments. NAM welcomed the Director General’s finding that there was a consensus that the global nuclear non-proliferation regime would be further strengthened through the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East, and it believed that every effort must be made to translate that consensus into urgent and practical steps.

152. NAM welcomed the Director General’s efforts to develop an agenda and modalities for a forum on the relevance of the experience of existing NWFZs for establishing such a zone in the Middle East. For such a forum to be successful, its agenda should reflect the consensus within the international community on the importance of establishing a NWFZ in the Middle East. NAM welcomed the convergence of views on convening the forum and requested the Director General to continue consultations with Member States of the Middle East to agree upon the agenda and modalities, with a view to convening a productive forum as early as practicable.

153. NAM hoped that the draft resolution presented by Egypt could be adopted by consensus.

154. Mr OTHMAN (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the amendments proposed by Israel added nothing to Egypt’s draft resolution, which affirmed the need for all States in the Middle East to accept the application of full-scope Agency safeguards with a view to building confidence. Israel’s tabling of amendments was a manoeuvre to prevent consensus, which Syria was unable to accept.

155. Ms FEROUKHI (Algeria), expressing her country’s support for the draft resolution submitted by Egypt, said the text was balanced and addressed all the relevant concerns.

156. Ms GOICOCHEA ESTENOZ (Cuba), speaking on behalf of her own country, expressed support for the draft resolution submitted by Egypt, which had been submitted in good time. Israel’s proposed amendments were a delaying tactic intended to complicate the decision-making.

157. Mr SOLTANIEH (Islamic Republic of Iran), also expressing support for the draft resolution submitted by Egypt, said Israel’s proposed amendments were a clear indication that the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East had for years been held hostage to the peace process. They were an attempt to perpetuate a vicious circle, and Iran therefore rejected them.

158. Mr TOUKAN (Jordan) lent his country’s support to the draft resolution submitted by Egypt, particularly its affirmation of the need for the application of full-scope Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities in the Middle East.

159. Ms PETERSEN (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) expressed her country’s hope that the draft resolution submitted by Egypt could be adopted by consensus without amendment.

160. Mr AYOUB (Iraq) said that his country had decided not to propose further amendments to Egypt’s draft resolution, but support it as it stood. Iraq rejected Israel’s proposed amendments.

161. The PRESIDENT proposed that, pursuant to Rule 76 of the Rules of Procedure, the amendments be voted on first.

162. Mr DENIAU (France) requested a short suspension for the European Union to coordinate its position in view of the new situation that had arisen.

163. Mr DANIELI (Israel) requested, pursuant to Rule 72 of the Rules of Procedure, a roll-call vote on each amendment proposed by his country.

164. Mr ZNIBER (Morocco), recalling the General Conference's important responsibilities as regards maintaining, strengthening and promoting respect for the non-proliferation regime, said his country strongly hoped that consensus could be reached on the issue.

165. Mr OTHMAN (Syria) reminded delegates of Rule 63 of the Rules of Procedure regarding proposals and amendments.

The meeting was suspended at 8.20 p.m. and resumed at 8.50 p.m.

166. The PRESIDENT recalled the request made by the delegate of Israel for a roll-call vote on each of the amendments proposed.

167. Mr BERDENNIKOV (Russian Federation), supported by Mr YANG Dazhu (China), said that pursuant to Rule 63 of the Rules of Procedure, voting on the Israeli amendments should be deferred until the following day.

168. Ms GOICOCHEA ESTENOZ (Cuba), speaking on behalf of NAM and supported by Mr FAWZY (Egypt) and Mr MOHAMAD (Malaysia), said that the Conference should take action on the draft resolution at the present meeting.

169. Mr BERDENNIKOV (Russian Federation) reiterated that Rule 63 of the Rules of Procedure clearly indicated that the Israeli amendments could not be put to the vote now.

170. Mr SOLTANIEH (Islamic Republic of Iran) appealed to the delegate of the Russian Federation to withdraw his objection so that a decision on the text could be taken.

171. The PRESIDENT said that, in accordance with established practice, the word "consideration" in Rule 63 should be understood to include voting.

172. Mr BERDENNIKOV (Russian Federation) said that, while not seeking to challenge the President, he would like clarification of the President's interpretation of the Rules of Procedure.

173. Mr RAUTENBACH (Director, Office of Legal Affairs) said that, in accordance with established practice, the term "consideration" should be interpreted to include voting. If "consideration" meant merely "discussion", the last sentence of Rule 63 would be repetitive.

174. Mr BERDENNIKOV (Russian Federation) said that in his many years at the Agency he had not been aware of any such practice.

175. Mr HORVATIC (Croatia) said that, according to his understanding of Rule 63, the presiding officer should have the latitude to decide on how to proceed.

176. The PRESIDENT said that, exercising his discretion under Rule 63, he would rule that the Conference should proceed to vote as requested by the delegate of Israel under Rule 72 of the Rules of Procedure. In the absence of any objection, he took it that his ruling was acceptable.

177. It was so agreed.

178. The PRESIDENT said that the Conference would proceed to a roll-call vote on each of the three amendments proposed by Israel in document GC(52)/L.6 to the draft resolution contained in document GC(52)/L.1. The first amendment concerned the addition of a new operative paragraph after operative

paragraph 1, reading: “Calls upon all States in the region of the Middle East to comply with their international obligations and commitments relating to safeguards, and to cooperate fully with the IAEA”.

179. Israel, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

180. The result of the vote was as follows:

In favour: Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Holy See, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America.

Against: Algeria, Angola, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Chile, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Ghana, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Vietnam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

Abstaining: Argentina, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Burkina Faso, China, Cote d'Ivoire, Iceland, India, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Madagascar, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Russian Federation, Turkey, Uganda, Uruguay, Zambia,

181. There were 46 votes in favour and 38 against, with 22 abstentions. The amendment was adopted.

182. The PRESIDENT invited the General Conference to proceed to a roll-call vote on the second amendment proposed by Israel, which was to replace “Further calls upon” with “Invites” in operative paragraph 4.

183. Botswana, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first. In the absence of a representative of Botswana, the voting started with Brazil.

184. The result of the vote was as follows:

In favour: Colombia, Ethiopia, Georgia, Israel, United States of America.

Against: Algeria, Angola, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Chile, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Ghana, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Vietnam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

Abstaining: Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Cote d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Holy See, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation,

Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Zambia.

185. There were 5 votes in favour and 38 against, with 64 abstentions. The amendment was rejected.

186. The PRESIDENT then invited the General Conference to proceed to a roll-call vote on the third amendment proposed by Israel, which was to add a new operative paragraph after operative paragraph 6, reading: "Emphasizes the importance of the peace process in the Middle East in promoting mutual confidence and security in the region, including the establishment of a NWFZ."

187. Eritrea, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first. In the absence of a representative of Eritrea, the voting started with Estonia.

188. The result of the vote was as follows:

In favour: Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Holy See, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay.

Against: Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Chile, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Vietnam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

Abstaining: Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, Colombia, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Iceland, India, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Madagascar, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Panama, Russian Federation, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Uganda, Zambia.

189. There were 45 votes in favour and 34 against, with 28 abstentions. The amendment was adopted.

190. Mr OTHMAN (Syrian Arab Republic) speaking in explanation of vote, said his country had voted against the amendments because the draft resolution submitted by Egypt covered the concerns of countries of the region and indeed of the entire world. The idea that States in the Middle East should be called upon to comply with their international obligations and commitments relating to safeguards was surprising, coming from a country that had not even signed a safeguards agreement. If the objective was to strengthen mutual confidence in the region, the way to do so was by first establishing a NWFZ and then to continue the peace process.

191. Mr AMANO (Japan) said his delegation had abstained in the voting on the amendments because of the lack of time following their distribution, preventing him from receiving instructions from his capital.

192. Mr BERDENNIKOV (Russian Federation) said his delegation had been forced to abstain during the voting on the amendments over a procedural issue. He regretted the fact that the voting had not been postponed so that all delegations might obtain instructions from their governments.

193. Ms GOICOCHEA ESTENOZ (Cuba) said that her delegation had voted against the amendments, which it saw as dilatory and obstructive. Cuba vehemently opposed in particular the call

on all States in the region to comply with their international obligations and commitments relating to safeguards. Israel was the only country in the Middle East that did not have a safeguards agreement and thus the only country in that region not covered by that wording. That was an affront to morality.

194. Mr JAFFEER (Sri Lanka) said his delegation had voted against the first two amendments in accordance with the common position reached among the members of the NAM. On the third amendment, his delegation had abstained, owing to what it saw as a convergence of views.

195. Ms FEROUKHI (Algeria) deplored the lack of consensus on the draft resolution submitted by Egypt. Algeria had voted against the amendments proposed by Israel because the original draft was balanced and took full account of concerns about regional security in the Middle East. The vote attested to the persisting discord between Member States on the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East and the establishment of a NWFZ there. It highlighted the amount of work still to be done to arrive at a common view on those matters, which directly affected the collective security of countries in the region and the Agency's mission, in particular with respect to countries that had not signed the NPT. Concerning the third amendment, she said that adding the reference to the peace process only threw fire on the flames and exacerbated a politicization of the Agency that some had already deplored. That was not the intention of the original text proposed by Egypt.

196. Mr YANG Dazhu (China) said his delegation, which had supported the Russian Federation's call for a postponement, had abstained during the voting on the amendments because they had been distributed at such a late hour before the voting that he had not had time to get instructions from his capital.

197. Mr SOLTANIEH (Islamic Republic of Iran) said the reason why his delegation had voted against the first amendment was because it conveyed the message that the country in the region that was not a party to the NPT was not called upon to do anything. The voting on the second amendment proved that most of the international community had serious concerns and called upon Israel to join and apply the NPT.

198. Mr STACEY MORENO (Ecuador) and Mr HIGUERAS RAMOS (Peru) said their delegations had voted against the amendments because they added nothing of substance to the excellent original text proposed by Egypt.

199. Mr ELDIN ELAMIN (Sudan) said his delegation had voted against the amendments because the original text was a balanced one and the additions voided it of its content. They allowed Israel to avoid joining the NPT and continue to hold the peace process hostage, as it had been doing for decades.

200. The PRESIDENT invited the General Conference to proceed to take a decision on the draft resolution contained in document GC(52)/L.1, "Application of IAEA Safeguards in the Middle East", as amended.

201. Ms FEROUKHI (Algeria) proposed the addition, after the new operative paragraph 2 that had been inserted by the first Israeli amendment, of another new paragraph, reading: "Calls upon all States in the region to accede to nuclear non-proliferation conventions".

202. Mr AL-SAUD (Saudi Arabia), Ms GOICOCHEA ESTENOZ (Cuba), Mr OTHMAN (Syrian Arab Republic), Mr ZNIBER (Morocco), Mr SOLTANIEH (Islamic Republic of Iran) and Mr MOHAMAD (Malaysia) supported the proposal by the representative of Algeria.

203. Mr LÜDEKING (Germany) asked for clarification of the wording.

204. Ms FEROUKHI (Algeria) said she could be flexible about the exact wording and location of the additional text she had proposed. The main idea was to restore the balance and clarity of the text

following the adoption of the new operative paragraph 2, which made no sense as Israel was not party to the NPT.

205. Mr DANIELI (Israel) said the concerns expressed by the delegate of Algeria were already covered in the text. The new operative paragraph 2 spoke of compliance with international commitments and the former operative paragraph 3 (now 4) referred to adherence to international non-proliferation regimes. He therefore opposed the Algerian proposal, which only disrupted the balance in the newly amended text.

206. Ms FEROUKHI (Algeria) did not agree that the idea she wished to include was well reflected in the paragraphs cited by the representative of Israel and pressed for the adoption of her proposal, which had been supported by several countries.

207. Mr TOUKAN (Jordan), and Ms PETERSEN (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), Mr BEN AYED (Tunisia) and Mr ASSAIDI (Yemen) supported the proposal made by Algeria.

208. Mr DENIAU (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said it would be preferable to see the proposal in writing. He requested a suspension of the meeting for consultations.

209. Mr KUMAR (India) said that Rule 63 of the Rules of Procedure should be applied, thereby giving delegates 24 hours to see how the Algerian proposal fitted in with the newly amended text.

210. Mr FAWZY (Egypt) said the 24-hour rule had already been waived for certain amendments; he hoped the same approach would be applied to the Algerian proposal.

The meeting was suspended at 10.25 p.m. and resumed at 11.25 p.m.

211. The PRESIDENT said that three documents had been circulated during the suspension: the draft resolution as amended contained in document GC(52)/L.1/Mod.1, the proposal made by Algeria contained in document GC(52)/L.7 and a proposal made by Arab Member States contained in document GC(52)/L.8.

212. He asked the representative of Algeria whether the text contained in document GC(52)/L.7, reading “Calls upon all States in the region to accede to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty”, was an accurate reflection of her proposal to insert a new operative paragraph in document GC(52)/L.1/Mod.1.

213. Ms FEROUKHI (Algeria) said that, while the text was not exactly what she had proposed, following consultations with the Member States that had supported her proposal, it was now the preferred language.

214. Mr DENIAU (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the proposed amendment was redundant as its content was already covered by operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution contained in document GC(52)/L.1/Mod.1. Nevertheless, he would be prepared to accept the wording of Algeria’s original proposal, namely “Calls upon all States in the region to accede to nuclear non-proliferation conventions”.

215. Mr DANIELI (Israel) requested a vote on the Algerian proposal.

216. Ms FEROUKHI (Algeria), responding to a question put by Mr BERDENNIKOV (Russian Federation), said the new operative paragraph would be added after operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution contained in document GC(52)/L.1/Mod.1.

217. Mr FAWZY (Egypt) requested a roll-call vote.

218. At the request of Mr FAWZY (Egypt) a roll-call vote was taken.

219. Turkey, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

220. The result of the vote was as follows:

In favour: Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Holy See, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

Against: Israel.

Abstaining: Canada, Colombia, Georgia, India, Uganda, United States of America, Vietnam.

221. There were 92 votes in favour and 1 against, with 7 abstentions. The proposed amendment was adopted.

222. Ms GERVAIS-VIDRICAIRE (Canada), speaking in explanation of vote, said that she had abstained because the proposal was already covered by operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution contained in GC(52)/L.1/Mod.1. The amendment just adopted meant that a consensus was now impossible.

223. Mr DANIELI (Israel) said that he had voted against a redundant proposal, the content of which was already covered by other paragraphs in the draft resolution.

224. Experience had shown that the applicability of the NPT in the Middle East was at best limited. Three of the four widely recognized cases of non-compliance with legally binding non-proliferation obligations had taken place in States party to the NPT.

225. In January 1993, the Israeli Government had approved a set of long term goals for achieving security and arms control in the Middle East. It had called on all States in the region to establish in the Middle East a mutually verifiable zone free from ground-to-ground missiles and chemical, biological and nuclear weapons. Fifteen years later, Israel had not given up hope that the States of the region would one day engage in a multilateral, cooperative dialogue to that end.

226. In recent years, the Middle East had witnessed significant and dangerous developments regarding nuclear proliferation. Some countries had been developing clandestine nuclear programmes in total disregard of their international obligations and commitments and contrary to their stated policy. The Israeli Government's policy regarding the NPT therefore remained unchanged.

227. Mr ZNIBER (Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Arab Member States which had sponsored the proposal contained in document GC(52)/L.8, expressed regret that the spirit of Vienna had not prevailed in discussions regarding the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East. The sense of unity and generosity that had served successive sessions of the General Conference so well was gradually slipping away, making it even more difficult to create conditions for progress.

228. The draft resolution focused on the universality of the NPT and the nuclear non-proliferation regime, yet one of the amendments proposed in document GC(52)/L.6, and adopted without consensus, had created conditionality between the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East and the peace process. The proposal contained in document GC(52)/L.8 sought to restore a sense of unity among Member States, and he hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

229. Mr DENIAU (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the proposal introduced by the representative of Morocco contradicted the third amendment proposed by Israel in document GC(52)/L.6, which had already been adopted. Israel's proposed amendment was based on the logical truth that a climate of confidence and security needed to be created before a NWFZ could be established. The proposal by the Arab Member States, however, suggested the opposite; that a NWFZ could be established even if there was not a favourable climate to start with. The proposal rendered the draft resolution illogical and contradictory and, furthermore, it appeared to contradict Rule 66 of the Rules of the Procedure. The European Union could not therefore accept it.

230. Mr DANIELI (Israel) requested a roll-call vote on the proposal contained in document GC(52)/L.8.

231. Mr ZNIBER (Morocco) reiterated that he wished the proposed amendment to be adopted by consensus. Given the reactions of Member States to the proposal, he requested a suspension to allow him to consult with the representatives of the Arab Member States.

The meeting rose at 12 midnight.