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Strengthening of the Agency's technical cooperation activities

Resolution adopted on 4 October 2008 during the tenth plenary meeting

The General Conference,

- (a) Recalling resolution GC(51)/RES/13 on “Strengthening of the Agency’s technical cooperation activities”,
- (b) Bearing in mind that the objectives of the Agency as stated in Article II of the Statute are “to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world” and to ensure that the assistance provided by it is not used “to further any military purpose”,
- (c) Recalling that one of the statutory functions of the Agency is to “encourage and assist research on, and development and practical application of, atomic energy for peaceful uses throughout the world”,
- (d) Considering that the strengthening of technical cooperation activities in the field of – inter alia - food and agriculture, human health, water resource management, environment, industry, knowledge management, and nuclear energy planning and production will substantially contribute to the well-being and help enrich the quality of life of the peoples of the world, and particularly those of developing Member States of the Agency,
- (e) Stressing the importance of nuclear knowledge sharing and the transfer of nuclear technology to developing countries for sustaining and further enhancing their scientific and technological capabilities and thereby contributing to their socio-economic development,
- (f) Aware of the significant number of approved projects without financing (including footnote-a/ projects) in the technical cooperation programme,
- (g) Conscious of the potential of nuclear power for meeting increasing energy requirements in a number of countries, and of the need for sustainable development, including climate protection,

- (h) Also conscious of the need for the internationally recognized standards of safety to be applied in all uses of nuclear technology in order to protect mankind and the environment,
- (i) Recalling previous resolutions favouring innovative educational partnerships - like the World Nuclear University - involving academia, government, and industry, confident that such initiatives can, with Agency and Member States' support, play a valuable role in promoting strong educational standards and building leadership for an expanding global nuclear profession,
- (j) Stressing that the Agency's resources for technical cooperation (TC) activities should be sufficient, assured and predictable (SAP) to meet the objectives mandated in Article II of the Statute and noting that the Director General has issued a report entitled "TC Programme Resources – Sufficient, Assured and Predictable",
- (k) Recognizing that the number of countries and territories requiring technical support has been rising and reached 122 in 2007, and hence that the Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF) target should be set at an adequate and realistic level taking into account the growing needs of Member States,
- (l) Noting the decision of the Board of Governors to set the target for voluntary contributions to the TCF at the level of US \$85 million in each of the years 2009 and 2010 and \$86 million for the year 2011, and that the Indicative Planning Figures for the years 2012-2013 shall be approximately, but not less than, US \$87 million,
- (m) Recalling the decision of the Board of Governors (GOV/2003/48), which was endorsed by the General Conference at its forty-seventh session, that an appropriate balance shall be maintained between promotional and other statutory activities of the Agency, as well as across all major programmes, and that TCF targets shall be negotiated, taking into account the voluntary nature of the contributions to the TCF, based on the changes in the level of the Regular Budget and the price adjustment factor in the corresponding years,
- (n) Taking note of the report of the External Auditor on the Agency's Accounts for 2007 (GC(52)/11), which made reference to the erosion in purchasing power of the TCF due to currency fluctuations, and noting the Board's request to the Secretariat for a report on possible options for addressing this issue,
- (o) Recalling the obligation of some Member States in regard to National Participation Costs (NPCs), noting with appreciation the good record of an increasing number of Member States in their payments of NPCs, which demonstrates the strong commitment of recipient Member States to the TC programme, and recognizing the need to take into account the fact that Member States' national financial regulations and budgetary and fiscal schedules differ,
- (p) Taking note of the subsequent results of the Rate of Attainment mechanism as established by resolution GC(44)/RES/8, noting with appreciation the 95.6% Rate of Attainment level at the end of 2007, and looking forward to reaching the rate of 100%, which is central to reconfirming the commitment of Member States to the Agency's TC programme,
- (q) Recalling that the financing of TC should be in line with the concept of shared responsibility and that all members share a common responsibility towards financing and enhancing the TC activities of the Agency and recognizing the increase in the number of recipient Member States contributing through government cost-sharing,
- (r) Expressing appreciation to those Member States which have contributed to the TCF their full TCF target shares in a timely manner,

- (s) Recognizing that the effectiveness of the due account mechanism depends on its consistent application to all Member States, and taking note of the Director General's report on the application of the mechanism as contained in document GOV/INF/2008/6,
- (t) Expressing concern that some Member States do not contribute their full TCF target shares or do not contribute to the TCF at all,
- (u) Emphasizing the importance of the TC activities of the Agency, the financing of which should be guaranteed by, inter alia, results-based budgeting and the appropriate use of the Regular Budget in supporting and implementing those activities,
- (v) Recognizing that human capital planning and development of human resources, expert services, fellowships, training courses and appropriate equipment supply continue to be important components of TC activities to ensure impact and sustainability,
- (w) Taking note with appreciation of the different activities carried out by the Secretariat in implementing the Technical Cooperation Strategy, including holding regional meetings for planning purposes, carrying out Country Programme Frameworks (CPFs) and thematic planning, efforts to ensure that projects meet the national priorities of Member States, and encouraging technical cooperation activities, particularly through technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) and regional resource centres, partnerships in development, greater outreach, and in-house coordination, in line with the Technical Cooperation Management Principles (SEC/NOT/1790: Annex 1),
- (x) Stressing that CPFs are non-legally-binding documents and are subject to revision as Member States priorities evolve, and recalling that they are developed by Member States in cooperation with the Secretariat with the objective of facilitating an understanding of the real needs of developing Member States and of promoting TCDC,
- (y) Reiterating the need to strengthen technical cooperation activities and to continuously enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the TC programme in accordance with the requests and needs of Member States, and emphasizing that all measures taken in this regard should also preserve and enhance the ownership of TC projects by recipient Member States,
- (z) Appreciating that the TC programme contributes to the achievement of national goals for sustainable development in TC-recipient Member States, particularly in developing countries and the least developed ones,
- (aa) Noting the report of the UN Secretary General's High Level Panel on System Wide Coherence of November 2006, which proposed the establishment of a "Delivering as One" approach for the development, financing and delivery of country programmes by all UN system organizations which may have a possible impact on the TC programme in many areas, including resource mobilization, while noting the relationship between the Agency and the UN system and the nature, character and specificity of the TC programme, noting that there are pilot countries implementing this exercise on a voluntary basis,
- (bb) Recognizing that national nuclear and other entities are important partners in the implementation of TC programmes in Member States and in promoting the use of nuclear and related technologies for achieving national development objectives, and recognizing also in this regard the role of the National Liaison Officers,
- (cc) Taking note with appreciation of the activities being developed by the Agency in the field of nuclear knowledge management, and particularly of the initiatives being emphasized by the TC programme in assisting national nuclear and other entities to enhance the basic infrastructure

in this field, including safety aspects, and to further improve their capacity for self-reliance and sustainability,

(dd) Taking note also of the efforts, through – inter alia – the TC programme, towards the voluntary reduction and return of highly enriched uranium (HEU) fuels of nuclear research facilities, and

(ee) Noting the new structure of the Department of Technical Cooperation and its initiatives, such as the Project Cycle Management Framework, emphasizing the need for assessing their impact on, inter alia, enhancing coordination, programme planning and the quality of programme delivery as well as increasing the implementation rate, and also noting the Secretariat's statement that the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) would have no negative impact on the delivery and implementation of the TC programme,

1. Requests the Secretariat to continue to facilitate and to enhance the transfer of nuclear technology and know-how among Member States for peaceful uses as embodied in the Agency's TC programme;
2. Urges Member States to make every effort towards facilitating the process for setting the TCF targets;
3. Stresses the need for the Secretariat to continue to work, in consultation with Member States, towards establishing means, including mechanisms, that would achieve the goal of making TC resources sufficient, assured and predictable (SAP);
4. Requests the Director General to resume and to further develop and facilitate cost-sharing, outsourcing and other forms of partnership in development by reviewing and amending or simplifying, as appropriate, relevant financial and legal procedures and by developing a model arrangement and agreement for these partnerships, to assure that their objectives are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic & Timely (SMART);
5. Requests the Secretariat to continue working with Member States, within relevant regions and regional cooperative agreements, in identifying regional resource centres or other qualified institutes, and formulating guidelines for the use of such centres and in developing and refining SMART partnership mechanisms in the context of enhancing regional and interregional cooperation;
6. Further requests the Director General to continue to take account of the views of the General Conference when requesting Member States to pledge and pay their respective shares of the TCF targets and to make timely payments to the TCF;
7. Encourages Member States to pay in full and on time their voluntary contributions to the TCF, encourages Member States to pay their NPCs on time, and requests those recipient Member States which are in arrears in Assessed Programme Costs (APCs) to meet this obligation,
8. Stresses the need to strengthen TC activities and to continuously enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the TC programme in accordance with the requests and needs of Member States in all areas of concern;
9. Requests the Secretariat to ensure that the commencement of projects within a national programme will take place upon the receipt of at least the minimum payment of the NPCs and, in this regard, that preparatory activities will not be affected before this occurs and that, in the event of a failure to pay any second installment falling due during a biennium, funding for a core project in the next biennium will be suspended until full payment is received;

10. Further requests that the Secretariat continue exploring, in consultation with Member States, the possibility and practicability of paying NPCs in kind and, in this context, find efficient ways of accurately valuing in-kind contributions pending the implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS);
11. Requests the Secretariat to make every effort to apply the due account mechanism to all Member States equally and efficiently and to inform the Board about the application of the mechanism to Member States as appropriate;
12. Stresses the need to strengthen TC activities, including the provision of sufficient resources, and to continually enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the programmes and their management, and requests the Secretariat to continue to further refine the Technical Cooperation Strategy 2002 Review (GOV/INF/2002/8) in consultation with all Member States, taking into consideration the increasing number of Member States requesting TC projects;
13. Requests the Secretariat to continue its efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of TC management by, inter alia, ensuring that the components of TC projects, e.g. training, expertise and equipment, are readily available to Member States requesting them, and requests also that the supply of equipment to Member States meet international quality standards;
14. Requests the Secretariat to explore ways of giving an update on the progress of TC programme implementation in between annual TC reports;
15. Requests the Secretariat to play a more proactive role in seeking resources to implement footnote-a/ projects and encourages Member States to show more flexibility in the use of their extrabudgetary contributions in order to enable the implementation of more footnote-a/ projects;
16. Also requests the Director General to pursue, in consultation with Member States, efforts to strengthen the TC activities of the Agency through the development of effective programmes with well-defined outcomes aimed at promoting and improving the scientific, technological, research and regulatory capabilities of TC-recipient Member States, account being taken of the infrastructure and the level of technology of the countries concerned, by continuing to assist them in their peaceful, safe, secure and regulated applications of atomic energy and nuclear techniques in the fields of – inter alia – (a) food and agriculture, human health, industry, water resource management, environment, knowledge management and biotechnology, and (b) nuclear energy planning and production for those States pursuing nuclear power as a component of their sustainable energy mix, through relevant areas of importance as identified by Member States;
17. Requests the Director General to continue consultations and interactions with interested States, the competent organizations of the United Nations system, multilateral financial institutions, regional development bodies and other relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental bodies to ensure the coordination and optimization of complementary activities, and to ensure that they are regularly informed about the developmental impact of the TC programme, whilst aiming at achieving sufficient, assured and predictable resources for the TC programme;
18. Requests the Director General to help interested Member States to obtain relevant information on (a) the role of nuclear power in mitigating GHG emissions, guided by the objective of sustainable development, and (b) the role of radiation and nuclear technology in mitigating polluting gases (FGs and GHGs), in managing agricultural and industrial wastes and effluents, and in improving water security, with particular emphasis on the use of electron beams and isotopes, and, where appropriate and requested by Member States, to assist in the preparation of potential TC projects;

19. Requests the Secretariat to continue within the framework of the TC programme, to work actively to render assistance to the most affected countries in mitigating the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster and establishing prerequisites for the sustainable development of the affected areas;
20. Requests the Director General to make every effort to ensure, where relevant, that the Agency's TC programme contributes to the promotion of key areas identified in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, and further requests the Director General to keep Member States informed of the Agency's activities in this regard;
21. Emphasizes the need to understand the marketplace for nuclear technology and to further develop mechanisms and best practices for working with the private and the public sector;
22. Requests the Director General to promote, within the framework of the TC programme, activities supporting the self-reliance, sustainability and further relevance of national nuclear and other entities in Member States, particularly in developing countries, including encouraging regional and interregional cooperation on this issue;
23. Underlines the importance of consultations between the Secretariat and Member States on the support for and implementation of activities under regional cooperation agreements or other regional cooperation arrangements, and emphasizes also the need for complementarity between the regional cooperative agreements and regular regional projects, and notes the recommendations of SAGTAC in this regard;
24. Encourages the Secretariat to continue implementing the Programme Cycle Management Framework (PCMF) in phases and to make it user-friendly so that Member States may use the tools effectively, and to take into account, in designing and implementing subsequent phases, difficulties experienced and concerns of Member States, including lack of adequate equipment and IT infrastructure;
25. Requests the Secretariat to establish a specific procedure to facilitate Member States' requests for participation in programmes like the WNU Summer Institute, subject to the availability of resources; and
26. Requests the Director General and the Board of Governors to remain seized of this matter and further requests the Director General to report to the Board of Governors periodically and to the General Conference at its fifty-third (2009) regular session on the implementation of this resolution highlighting significant accomplishments of the prior year and indicating goals and priorities for the year to come under an agenda item entitled "Strengthening of the Agency's technical cooperation activities".