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President: Ms MACMILLAN (New Zealand)

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¹ GC(53)/24.

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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
Bangkok Treaty	Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
HEU	high-enriched uranium
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
Joint Convention	Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management
LEU	low-enriched uranium
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PATTEC	Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
Rarotonga Treaty	South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
Treaty of Semipalatinsk	Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia
WWER	water cooled water moderated reactor (former USSR)

5. Arrangements for the Conference

(a) Adoption of the agenda and allocation of items for initial discussion

1. The PRESIDENT said that, following a discussion in which some delegations had expressed reservations, the General Committee had recommended that the agenda for the current session consist of all the items on the provisional agenda set forth in documents GC(53)/1 and Corr.1 and Add.1 and 2. It had recommended that the items listed in documents GC(53)/1 and Add.1 and 2 be taken up for discussion as indicated in those documents. The Committee had recommended that the order of items be as set out in those documents; the item listed in document GC(53)/1/Add.2 should be taken up after item 22 “Amendment to Article VI of the Statute”.

2. The General Committee’s recommendations were accepted.

(b) Closing date of the session and opening date of the next session

3. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee had recommended that the Conference set Friday, 18 September 2009, as the closing date of the fifty-third regular session and Monday, 20 September 2010, as the opening date of the fifty-fourth regular session.

4. The General Committee’s recommendation was accepted.

8. General debate and Annual Report for 2008 (resumed) (GC(53)/7)

5. Mr MUSYOKA (Kenya) commended the outgoing Director General, Mr ElBaradei, on his excellent leadership of the Agency over the previous decade and congratulated the incoming Director General, Ambassador Amano, on his appointment and wished him every success in his task.

6. Kenya strongly supported the right of all States to have full use of nuclear technology and scientific applications in accordance with the NPT, and reaffirmed the basic, inalienable right of all States, without discrimination, to use atomic energy for peaceful purposes. His country would be concluding a comprehensive safeguards agreement, additional protocol and a small quantities protocol in the near future, and intended to bring those instruments into force as soon as possible with a view to promoting the universalization of the NPT.

7. The Agency’s technical cooperation activities in Kenya continued to contribute significantly to the Government’s efforts to develop the nuclear science and technology infrastructure. A draft Country Programme Framework for the period 2011–2016, had been submitted to the Agency. In addition to the 12 national projects that were being implemented, Kenya was participating in 35 regional and interregional projects covering areas including human resources development, human health, agriculture and livestock production, industrial applications, energy planning, radiation protection and radioactive waste management. Furthermore, as a result of human capacity development and radiation detection equipment, Kenya’s competent authority had enhanced its regulatory measures and had opened additional regional offices. Kenya would continue cooperating with the Agency with a view to maintaining the International Basic Safety Standards.

8. He commended the Agency for its continued efforts to strengthen nuclear safety and security in the transport of radioactive sources and waste management. Kenya was at an advanced stage in installing radiation portal monitors at the main seaport of Mombasa to screen for illicit radioactive and nuclear materials. Collaboration with development partners had also assisted in the establishment of a continuous training programme for border personnel.

9. Kenya had allocated US \$7 million for the ongoing construction of a central radioactive waste processing facility, which would include an interim storage facility for disused conventional radiation sources and other radioactive materials. Development partners were invited to support the implementation of the project.

10. Kenya was committed to pursuing the nuclear option to address its energy needs and had held an energy conference for stakeholders in October 2008 where nuclear energy had been recognized as a viable option in the country's energy mix. It was seeking the Agency's assistance for the development of nuclear power plants in order to generate an extra 1000 MW in the immediate future.

11. In the field of nuclear science and applications, Kenya welcomed the high priority attached to agricultural and livestock development in Africa. Tsetse and trypanosomosis continued to pose a threat to Kenyan communities and were a constraint to livestock production. Kenya therefore welcomed the steps taken towards formalizing the collaborative framework in support of PATTEC. The release of test sterile male tsetse flies in the Lambwe Valley was underway with a view to establishing the first tsetse-free zone in Kenya under PATTEC. The mutation breeding technique was being extended to crops such as bananas and cassava, and he thanked all Member States and the specialized agencies involved for their contributions in that regard.

12. With regard to PACT, Kenya commended the Agency for its role in establishing comprehensive cancer control programmes at six demonstration sites, one of which was in Africa, and for its intention to establish one more site in Africa. However, more demonstration sites should be set up, particularly in Africa, and Kenya would appreciate being earmarked for such a site. His country was grateful for the support it had been given for the radiotherapy services at the Kenyatta Hospital and the Nyanza General Hospital and looked forward to a continuing partnership in that regard.

13. In view of the need to enhance skills development in the area of nuclear science and technology, the University of Nairobi was in the process of adopting a master of science programme in line with the AFRA harmonized syllabus. Kenya welcomed the Agency's technical support in that connection.

14. Partnership between Kenya and the Agency had resulted in the establishment of a secondary standards dosimetry laboratory. He appealed for support in order to equip the laboratory with a cobalt-60 calibration system. Kenya also sought support for the strengthening of human capacities and the provision of equipment to expand the application of radioisotope technology.

15. The development of nuclear technology for peaceful applications should be considered as a matter of high priority since it could, in the long run, help to strengthen the socio-economic development of developing countries. Having emphasized the importance of the Agency's technical cooperation programme, he said that his Government pledged its full share of the TCF target for 2010.

16. Mr YOUNIS (Egypt) said that during Mr ElBaradei's tenure as Director General, the Agency had achieved major advances in all areas of its mandate. Egypt was proud that the Agency's performance over the past 12 years under the leadership of one of its nationals had led to the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Agency and Mr ElBaradei. He also assured the incoming Director General, Mr Yukiya Amano, of Egypt's full support.

17. It was now more than half a century since Egypt had recognized the potential of nuclear energy and its applications for economic and social development and for environmental protection if properly

used. Over the years it had cooperated closely with the Agency in expanding peaceful uses of nuclear energy in Egypt. It had benefited from technical cooperation projects in areas such as the training of human resources to ensure the optimum operation and use of the country's research reactors. The Agency continued to assist Egypt in supporting food security through gamma irradiation for the production of high-yield crop mutants, applying nuclear techniques to the cultivation of desert land, developing plant varieties that were adapted to desert conditions, and using radiation processed hydrogels for agricultural applications because of their high capacity to absorb water and hence to enhance water retention by sandy soil.

18. Studies of the impact of climate change were required to obtain accurate information for decision-making on the sustainable management of water resources. The Agency had assisted the countries of the Nile Basin, including Egypt, in improving understanding of groundwater behaviour with a view to its rational management. Egypt was also involved in Agency projects based on the use of isotope techniques.

19. In October 2007 President Mubarak had announced that a strategic decision had been taken to build a number of nuclear power plants and that the first one would be built in cooperation with international partners and the Agency. He had instructed the Government to elaborate an integrated national strategy focusing on renewable energy sources and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Agency had assisted in training the necessary human resources and establishing the requisite infrastructure. A draft law regulating the country's nuclear and radiological activities had been reviewed by Agency experts and would shortly be enacted and, in June 2009, an international company had been hired to provide consultancy services in connection with the building of the first nuclear plant. Egypt would continue to cooperate with the Agency to ensure transparency and in the short term would seek its assistance in completing studies concerning site selection, basic operational steps and training of human resources.

20. As a State belonging to the Arab region and the African continent, Egypt had opened up its facilities and laboratories and shared its expertise relating to peaceful uses of nuclear energy with other Arab and African States. It supported AFRA projects, which made a tangible contribution to the economic and social development of the peoples of the African continent and helped to alleviate their sufferings.

21. Egypt supported the Agency's safeguards and verification activities and emphasized the need to develop arrangements for apportioning the increasing costs of safeguards applications in such a way that States with advanced nuclear programmes made appropriate contributions. The wide gap between the funding of technical cooperation activities, on the one hand, and safeguards, on the other, despite their equal importance as pillars of the Agency's work, raised serious questions regarding priorities and balance in pursuit of the Agency's goals, especially since developing States were required to contribute to the funding of technical cooperation projects.

22. Egypt continued to be concerned about a serious shortcoming in the existing safeguards regime, namely that comprehensive safeguards were not applicable to States that had not acceded to the NPT. Moreover, no serious steps were taken to monitor the five nuclear weapon States' compliance with their disarmament obligations under Article VI of the NPT. The basic aim of the safeguards regime was to promote the universality of the NPT and the application of comprehensive safeguards to all nuclear facilities in every State of the world.

23. Egypt also noted the ongoing attempts to universalize the additional protocol and turn it into the current standard for verification of the non-existence of undeclared nuclear activities. It stressed that the additional protocol was a voluntary instrument and that its implementation depended on a

sovereign decision of the State concerned. No attempt should be made to universalize it until comprehensive safeguards agreements had been universalized.

24. Egypt was concerned about the Agency's continued failure to support the international community in its aim of bringing about nuclear disarmament, although one of the goals contained in the Medium Term Strategy for 2006-2011 was that the Agency should contribute as appropriate to effective verification of nuclear arms control and reduction agreements, including nuclear disarmament, in conformity with Article II of the Statute. He urged all Member States to take serious steps to address the issue.

25. The current situation of the NPT and disarmament regime in the Middle East presented a serious threat to regional and international peace and security. Although 17 years had passed since the General Conference had first adopted a resolution calling on all States in the Middle East to apply comprehensive safeguards, Israel had taken no steps to implement the resolution and the major powers had failed to react. Egypt and all other States in the region were party to the NPT. The anomalous situation was driving the entire region into an arms race, since the fact that only one State possessed a huge destructive arsenal entitled the other States to seek some means of countering the threat.

26. The Agency's credibility depended to a large extent on the seriousness with which its Members addressed the issue of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and the application of comprehensive safeguards to all nuclear installations in the region. The General Conference should reaffirm the Agency's commitment to address the nuclear threat in the Middle East by discussing the draft resolutions submitted under the relevant agenda items in a fair and balanced way.

27. Egypt would again submit a draft resolution concerning the application of safeguards in the Middle East. The consensus thereon had been broken for the past three sessions on non-objective grounds and the draft resolution had been linked to legitimate Arab attempts to have the Conference adopt a resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities. Egypt had amended the text of the draft resolution on the application of safeguards in the Middle East in the light of some of the observations and suggestions made, hoping thereby to secure a consensus once again.

28. Mr KIRIENKO (Russian Federation) commended outgoing Director General ElBaradei, whose efforts and successes over the previous 12 years had received worldwide recognition. He congratulated incoming Director General Amano on his appointment and assured him of Russia's full support.

29. For over half a century, the Agency had been recognized as the international centre for cooperation in the nuclear field. In the light of the new challenges and threats facing the world community, the Agency's role as the only international organization ensuring the necessary balance between the peaceful use of atomic energy and compliance with nuclear non-proliferation standards was increasing.

30. The development of nuclear power in close cooperation with the Agency was one of the priorities Russia had identified for the modernization and technological development of its economy. Specific projects included the further improvement of WWER technology and the development of infrastructure for a new technological platform for atomic energy based on fast reactors and closure of the fuel cycle. Using its experience in the area of sodium cooled fast reactors, Russia was building a high power fast reactor and manufacturing mixed oxide (MOX) fuel. Work to master controlled fusion was continuing and Russia was one of the ten countries involved in the ITER (International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor) project at Cadarache, France.

31. At the same time, Russia attached importance to the development of fundamental science, and was involved in establishment of the international Facility for Antiproton and Ion Research at

Darmstadt. In July 2009, his Government had decided to sign the Framework Agreement for International Collaboration on Research and Development of Generation IV Nuclear Energy Systems.

32. The number of intergovernmental agreements signed by the Russian Federation on cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy was increasing. In the previous two years alone, Russia had concluded some 40 international agreements and in 2009 with Japan, Jordan, Belarus, Nigeria, Turkey and Mongolia. Two light water reactors had been constructed in China with support from the Russian Federation; two units were under construction in India and agreement had been reached for the construction of a further four units; the building of a nuclear power plant in Iran was nearing completion, and the construction of two units in Bulgaria had begun. The Baltic nuclear power plant project in Kaliningrad was an integrated international project that would address not only Russian but also European energy issues. Russia looked forward to transparent and mutually beneficial cooperation with its foreign partners in all areas of the peaceful utilization of atomic energy, in strict compliance with all international legal norms.

33. Given the growing role played by nuclear power and the introduction of new industrial and power generation capacity in the nuclear area, the Agency's monitoring and verification activities would increase. The technical means available to the Agency in that regard should correspond with the increase in the number of facilities subject to safeguards. Russia welcomed the Agency's efforts to implement integrated safeguards and would continue to promote the further strengthening of the safeguards system by financing the national safeguards support programme.

34. Much was being done to prevent nuclear weapons and materials from falling into the hands of terrorists and, in that connection, he drew attention to the efforts of the Agency to strengthen the nuclear security regime worldwide. Russia supported the implementation of the Agency's Nuclear Security Plan for 2006–2009 and the new Plan for 2010–2013. His Government was planning to make an extrabudgetary contribution of \$1.5 million to the Nuclear Security Fund in 2010, and \$1 million annually between 2011 and 2015.

35. Russia attached importance to the Agency's technical cooperation activities and intended to pay in full its voluntary contribution to the TCF. In 2008, it had contributed a further 240 million roubles to the project on improving the design safety of the Armenian nuclear power plant.

36. His country strove to meet the highest safety regulation levels for the use of nuclear power in accordance with international conventions and Agency recommendations. In 2009, Russia would for the first time host an Agency mission to evaluate the activities of the regulatory authorities.

37. The Russian Federation intended to assist Ukraine in enhancing safety at the site of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant and in expediting the plant's decommissioning. To that end, it would be paying \$10 million into the EBRD's Nuclear Safety Account and \$7 million into the Chernobyl Shelter Fund.

38. The work to return to the Russian Federation HEU from research reactors of Soviet design and construction was continuing. As of 1 September 2009, more than 470 kg of fresh HEU from 12 countries had been returned to Russia, as well as 415 kg of spent HEU from Romania, Latvia, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Uzbekistan, Hungary and Kazakhstan. In 2009, intergovernmental agreements had been signed with Romania, Serbia and Poland. That very day, 500 kg of spent HEU fuel — theoretically sufficient for 7–8 nuclear weapons — had arrived at a Russian port from a research reactor in Poland for conversion into LEU. Moreover, the following day a contract would be signed in Vienna for the return to Russia of spent nuclear fuel from the Vinča research reactor in Serbia.

39. Russia was continuing its efforts in the area of non-proliferation. In 2008, it had shutdown two plutonium-producing reactors, and another one was planned for spring 2010. In accordance with the HEU-LEU agreement, Russia would be destroying 500 tonnes of weapons-grade uranium by 31 December 2013, of which some 370 tonnes of uranium enriched to more than 90% had already been downblended.

40. The development of nuclear power in many countries raised the question about the assured supply of nuclear fuel. From an economic point of view, building the capacity to fabricate nuclear fuel was an extremely costly process. The problem could most effectively be resolved with the Agency playing a central role with respect to multilateral approaches to the fuel cycle. Russia would continue to support the Agency's activities, and would work with other interested countries to that end.

41. The 2007 Russian initiative to establish, together with Kazakhstan, an International Uranium Enrichment Centre (IUEC) at the Angarsk Electrolysis Chemical Complex was continuing and in 2008 the Enrichment Centre had been granted all the required licences and authorizations. Armenia had joined in 2009 and Russia had received notice from Ukraine about its intention to join.

42. Work was continuing on building up an LEU stockpile of two 1000 MW reactor loads with the Agency's agreement, to be kept at the IUEC. At the March and June 2009 meetings of the Board of Governors, Russia had put forward its own initiative to establish a reserve of LEU for the supply of LEU to the Agency for its Member States. That initiative, based on Article IX of the Statute, did not infringe the rights of Member States to develop their own manufacturing capacities concerning the nuclear fuel cycle, and did not impose any conditions. An assured supply met the concerns of those who did not want to make themselves entirely dependent on the political situation. The Russian proposal was independent and did not go against, or compete with, other initiatives that had been put forward.

43. INPRO was a good example of successful international cooperation. Following the publication, at the end of 2008, of the INPRO methodology for innovative nuclear energy system assessment, the second phase of the project was now in progress. Russia appreciated the Agency's budgetary support for INPRO and called on all INPRO participants to share in its direct financing. For its part, the Russian Federation would contribute 23 million roubles to INPRO each year from 2008 to 2012.

44. Ms KARLSSON (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the candidate countries the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Croatia, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, the EFTA countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine that associated themselves with the statement, congratulated the incoming Director General on his election. The European Union was deeply grateful to the outgoing Director General for his outstanding performance and leadership.

45. Recalling the Agency's "Atoms for Peace" mandate and drawing attention to current challenges in the area of nuclear proliferation and compliance, she said that the European Union was fully committed to the NPT as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

46. The outcome of the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference was encouraging. The European Union had presented a set of forward-looking proposals on all three pillars of the NPT for possible inclusion in an action plan to be adopted by the Review Conference.

47. The European Union reaffirmed the competence of the Security Council, as the final arbiter of international peace and security, to take appropriate action in the event of non-compliance with NPT obligations, including safeguards agreements. As an essential part of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the Agency's comprehensive safeguards agreements, together with additional protocols, constituted the current Agency verification standard and all States that had not done so should bring into force safeguards agreements without delay and sign, ratify and implement an additional protocol.

48. The fact that, after six years of intensive efforts and despite some progress made, the Agency was still unable to give assurances as to the exclusively peaceful nature of the nuclear activities of the Islamic Republic of Iran was cause for serious concern. Iran must comply with all relevant Security Council and Agency Board of Governors resolutions and restore confidence in the peaceful nature of its nuclear activities. The ratification and prompt implementation by Iran of the additional protocol it had already signed would be an important step in that direction.

49. While the international community recognized Iran's right to develop and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, it needed to be sure that it complied with its NPT non-proliferation obligations. The fact that Iran continued to block substantial cooperation with the Agency and refused to answer a long list of outstanding questions was deplorable. Iran should comply fully with all its international obligations, including implementation of the revised Code 3.1 of the Subsidiary Arrangements General Part, and give the Agency continued and complete access to the Arak heavy water reactor in order to enable design information verification. She commended the Director General and the Secretariat for their impartial efforts in that regard and urged Iran to cooperate in a transparent manner. Furthermore, it urged Iran to engage in talks to find a negotiated solution to the current crisis and take up the invitation by China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States of America in that regard.

50. The European Union was seriously concerned over the developments in the DPRK. Provocative actions, such as the nuclear test announced in May 2009 and the recent statement about uranium enrichment and plutonium weaponization, undermined regional stability and represented a threat to international peace and security. She urged the DPRK to return by the six-party talks immediately and without preconditions. The DPRK should abandon and completely dismantle any nuclear weapons related programme in a prompt, transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner and comply with all international obligations fully, unconditionally and without delay. Taking note of the Director General's report on the application of safeguards in the DPRK of 30 July 2009, contained in document GC(53)/13, she said it was regrettable that the DPRK had prevented the Agency from implementing its ad hoc monitoring and verification activities since April 2009 and urged the DPRK to allow the Agency to resume its work. The European Union called for international cooperation in resolving the crisis and for the prompt and universal implementation of Security Council resolution 1874 (2009).

51. The European Union remained unconvinced of the completeness and correctness of the declarations by the Syrian Arab Republic under its comprehensive safeguards agreement. Syria should provide the Agency with full information, supporting documentation and access to all relevant sites. It should also sign and ratify the additional protocol as soon as possible so as to strengthen international confidence in the peaceful nature of its nuclear activities.

52. A major challenge for the Agency was to respond to the increased interest in nuclear energy in several countries, triggered by concerns linked to the security of energy supplies and to climate change. All countries had the right to define its own energy strategy and the Agency played a key role in assisting States new to nuclear energy to ensure the legal, safe, secure and proliferation-resistant use of nuclear power. The establishment of the Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review (INIR) was a useful development in that regard.

53. The European Union attached importance to a high level of nuclear safety worldwide. International cooperation and adoption of the relevant international conventions were vital in that context. Cooperation with the Agency was also crucial as the Agency's comprehensive set of safety standards were fundamental. Member States that had not done so should accede to the relevant safety conventions without delay. The European Union supported the Agency's efforts to strengthen the global nuclear safety framework and had dedicated some €570 million for the period 2007-2013 for that purpose.

54. The Council Directive establishing a Community framework for the nuclear safety of nuclear installations adopted in June 2009 set out obligations for Member States that built on those established under the Agency's Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Safety Fundamentals. It required Member States to establish and maintain a national nuclear safety framework; it enhanced the role and independence of national regulatory authorities; it confirmed that the primary responsibility for nuclear safety rested with license holders; and it required a high level of transparency and regular independent safety assessments. Thus, the European Union had become the first region in the world to give binding legal force to key aspects of international nuclear safety standards. The European Nuclear Safety Regulator Groups (ENSREG) would continue its efforts to strengthen nuclear safety in the region.

55. She commended the Agency for its work to prevent and combat nuclear terrorism, including the steps taken to fund nuclear security activities through the Regular Budget. The European Union strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction supported those efforts at the regional level. The Union was among the main contributors to the Nuclear Security Fund and had earmarked €300 million for chemical, biological, nuclear and radiological risk mitigation in third countries under its new Instrument for Stability. She welcomed the newly adopted Nuclear Security Plan for 2010–2013 and called on all Member States to give financial or in-kind support to the Nuclear Security Fund in order to facilitate implementation of the Plan.

56. Closer cooperation was required among governments, international organizations and such initiatives as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) and the World Institute for Nuclear Security (WINS), to prevent and respond to nuclear and radiological terrorism. Further initiatives might be needed. The European Union welcomed the high-level summit on global nuclear security scheduled for March 2010, which should send a positive signal to the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

57. In the area of nuclear technology, the Agency should continue to pursue programmes aimed at improving safety, non-proliferation and waste management and projects assisting interested countries in applying nuclear technology in the areas of health and research. Continued support must be provided to research on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Safety, waste management, radiation protection, and the safety and efficiency of advanced technology, as well as international cooperation in those fields relied on competence and know-how across the nuclear sector.

58. The Agency's technical cooperation programme was of vital importance, especially for developing countries. Nuclear applications for treating diseases, making crops resistant to disease, increasing crop yields, insect pest control and improved livestock were impressive examples. The European Union was a major contributor of the programme, which relied on sufficient financial resources. All States, including beneficiaries, should contribute to it. Governments should prove their commitment to projects by putting in place the necessary infrastructure. She noted with concern the decline in the rate of implementation of the technical cooperation programme in recent years.

59. The European Union remained firmly convinced of the potential benefits of multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle, supported the establishment of an LEU bank under Agency

supervision, and would contribute up to €25 million to the project once the conditions and modalities had been approved by the Board of Governors.

60. Other initiatives on multilateral mechanisms, which could provide back-up mechanisms to interested countries while the market was functioning well, included Germany's Multilateral Enrichment Sanctuary Project (MESP), the United Kingdom's Nuclear Fuel Assurance and the multilateralization of the nuclear fuel cycle by Austria. The Board of Governor's debate on assurance of supply had revealed different views on the implementation of existing proposals. Constructive answers to the questions and doubts expressed could and should be found and she invited all interested parties to engage in further dialogue and consultation to achieve a satisfactory outcome.

61. Governance was another major challenge facing the Agency. Member States had high expectations with regard to defining the long term strategy, reconciling objectives and resources and striving for management excellence. European Union Member States were participating actively in discussions on the future of the Agency and were encouraged by the developments in that area.

62. Mr OMER (Sudan) commended the Director General, Mr ElBaradei, on his indefatigable support during his tenure for the right of States to benefit from peaceful applications of nuclear energy in all areas. He also assured the incoming Director General, Mr Yukiya Amano, of Sudan's staunch support.

63. Sudan was fully committed to the fulfilment of all its obligations under the relevant international instruments that it had ratified. It urged other parties that had acceded to those instruments to ratify them speedily in order to foster a climate conducive to peace and sustainable development. Sudan was also in the process of ratifying the Pelindaba Treaty on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa.

64. Sudan supported the Agency's efforts to enhance the safety and security of radiation sources. It was currently drafting a law on atomic energy based on the Agency's guidelines. The law would make a clear separation of the regulatory authority from the various users of radiation. A single authority would monitor all radiation practices and would be empowered to discharge its mandate effectively and efficiently.

65. Sudan had conducted a successful trial in using mobile hot cells in the disposal of spent radioactive sources of categories 1, 2 and 3, and to condition the sources so that they could be safely stored. He thanked the Agency and South Africa for their valuable assistance in ensuring the success of the experiment.

66. Sudan was keenly interested in using nuclear power for electricity generation and trusted that the Agency would support its plans in that regard. The Ministry of Energy and Mining had established a national commission to prepare the necessary studies and to propose appropriate arrangements for the use of nuclear energy to generate electricity in Sudan. A special unit to implement the project had been set up in the Ministry, and a national strategy for building a power reactor and training the necessary human resources had been elaborated. Sudan was cooperating with the Agency on the building of a research reactor for the purpose.

67. Sudan appreciated the Agency's growing support for technical cooperation activities, especially those pertaining to nuclear science and technology and their applications. There was an urgent need for joint action to boost the Agency's programmes in the area of water management, production of drinking water using small and medium sized reactors, and PACT, and to support the African Union campaign to eradicate the tsetse fly and all the Agency's activities aimed at developing innovative nuclear technology.

68. He was pleased to announce that Sudan had completed the drafting of its Country Programme Framework for the period 2009–2013 and that it would be signed during the General Conference.

69. The AFRA agreement could boast many achievements in the areas of food security, health care and the development of human resources. AFRA also helped to implement regional projects supported by the Agency. He hoped for continued cooperation and coordination in that regard.

70. Sudan drew the attention of the Agency and all its Member States to the need to allocate more financial resources to the technical cooperation programme, which was no less important than the Agency's other programmes concerning safeguards, verification and disarmament. He welcomed the statement in the Annual Report that greater balance would be sought between the Agency's various activities, depending on the circumstances and on Member States' aspirations to develop their capacity for peaceful applications of nuclear energy.

71. While Sudan commended the Agency's role in promoting international peace and security, it urged the international community to pursue policies based on justice and equality and to refrain from applying double standards. In that context, he reaffirmed the principle that all States without exception were entitled to obtain and develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. That right could not be curtailed or treated as a bargaining chip under any circumstances. Sudan firmly believed in the importance of the Agency's role under its Statute in developing international cooperation in the area of nuclear energy in accordance with its Member States' priorities.

72. Everyone was aware of the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East. The Arab States were deeply concerned about Israel's nuclear programmes, which were not subject to Agency safeguards and which posed a major threat to peace and security in the region. His delegation called on Israel to accede forthwith to the NPT and to place all its nuclear installations under Agency safeguards.

73. Sudan commended the Syrian Arab Republic on its continued cooperation with the Agency in the interests of ensuring closure of its file. It condemned the Israel's military attack on the Dair Alzour facility, which constituted a flagrant breach of the Charter of the United Nations and of international legal norms.

74. Sudan supported efforts to pursue constructive dialogue with the Islamic Republic of Iran in order to reach a fair closure of the case. It reaffirmed States' right to develop their national capabilities to strengthen the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

75. The whole world feared and sought to contain nuclear proliferation. But there was, in his view, an even greater danger: a concept of science that was associated with the city of Vienna in which the General Conference was being held. The philosopher Ernst Mach, a member of the Vienna Circle, had defined science as essentially the description of experience. The inductive science movement that Mach represented rejected everything that was not ascertainable through experience. It was also known as logical positivism, a school of scientific thought that divorced science from metaphysics, ethics and religion.

76. In support of their approach to science, they had invented the concept of verifiability, while their rivals had espoused that of falsifiability. A group headed by Rudolf Carnap had been a leading proponent of inductive logic and Carl Hempel had subscribed to the deductive-nomothetic model. They had all focused on developing an independent scientific order that was divorced from metaphysics, ethics and religion and relied solely on experience, mathematics, logic and perhaps language. The positivists had given up searching for the truth and had opted instead for conjectural analysis. As they were prominent scientists and philosophers, social scientists and students of ethics

had begun to follow the same path. It was a paradigm under whose shadow people were still living today.

77. Yet the importance of ethics and religion was now crystal clear. The liars and corrupt students of inductive logic, who had cast off all religious and moral constraints and whose scientific system was based on conjecture rather than on truth, had destroyed entire countries in some cases, expunged reality in others, and spoken with forked tongues about nuclear proliferation.

78. It was time for the Agency to take action not only against nuclear proliferation but also in favour of a scientific order based on truth rather than conjecture. It was time to replace the school of thought led by Mach and the Vienna Circle with the quest for truth. As the Agency needed to base its important message on ethics and morals, the bodies it established to offer advice or assistance and to organize inspections should perhaps be composed not only of natural scientists but also of social scientists and even religious scholars. The only way of combating the evils of science and benefiting from its achievements was by integrating it into a deeper and broader system that linked heaven and earth and was based on truth and harmony.

79. Mr HÓNIG (Hungary) having congratulated the President on her election, expressed appreciation for the efforts and achievements of the outgoing Director General, Mr ElBaradei, and congratulated his successor, Mr Amano.

80. The Agency's work and the NPT were at the heart of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The Agency's safeguards system had played a key role in international efforts to meet the challenges of proliferation. To that end, Hungary urged all Member States to ratify and implement a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol.

81. With regard to current proliferation challenges, his country joined the international community in condemning the recent underground nuclear test explosion in the DPRK. Another concern was the Islamic Republic of Iran's continued refusal to fulfil all its obligations under relevant Security Council resolutions and to show transparency in clarifying remaining doubts about the true nature of its nuclear programme. Hungary supported the efforts of the international community to find a diplomatic solution to the issue.

82. The Agency's ever-growing challenges now included the nuclear renaissance as more and more countries declared their intention to embark on nuclear power programmes. His own Government had passed a decision paving the way, through the preparation of an environmental assessment and a study of energy markets and needs, for expansion of the Paks nuclear power plant. In addition, the Hungarian Atomic Energy Authority had decided that it was feasible to extend the life of the existing four units at the plant.

83. Hungary's report to the Third Review Meeting of the Joint Convention had been well received, with some of its field activities being hailed as best practice. He called upon all Member States which had not yet done so to accede to the Joint Convention.

84. With regard to progress on Hungary's national radioactive waste repository to store low level and intermediate level waste from the Paks nuclear power plant, he reported that the above-surface facility had been completed in 2008 and the first underground disposal chambers should be ready by late 2010. Another achievement in radioactive waste management was that a consignment of highly enriched spent fuel from the Budapest research reactor had been returned to its country of origin in 2008. He thanked the Agency and the generous supporters of the programme for their assistance with that project.

85. An audit of the Hungarian National Institute of Oncology by the Agency's Quality Assurance Team for Radiation Oncology (QUATRO) had shown that significant updating of equipment was

required. Following the team's recommendations, a new irradiation laboratory had now been installed. It was hoped that, after the planned second phase of upgrading, the Institute would qualify as an internationally accepted reference institute.

86. In 2008, Hungary had participated in a regional project to analyse samples of Danube river water using isotope measurement techniques in order to determine water quality and areas of pollution. A new regional project to follow up on that success was being proposed for the next technical cooperation cycle. In future Hungary wished to continue its participation in technical cooperation activities as a beneficiary and also, to reciprocate the goodwill it had experienced in previous years, as a provider of experts and expertise to share its accumulated knowledge. In conclusion, he said that his country was continuing to provide training in the field of safeguards inspection under its safeguards support programme.

87. Mr BOUOUNY (Tunisia) commended the Director General, Mr ElBaradei, on his outstanding performance during his tenure and on his determination to maintain the Agency's independence and enhance its role in all the areas covered by its mandate. He was also confident that the incoming Director General, Mr Yukiya Amano, would address the many challenges facing the Agency with the requisite impartiality and professionalism.

88. Tunisia attached great importance to nuclear energy and technology, especially their applications in areas such as electricity generation at a reasonable cost, promotion of food security, boosting of agricultural output and the production of safe drinking water while preserving the environment. His country had launched studies aimed at building a nuclear plant for electricity generation in cooperation with the Agency some decades previously and hoped to finalize the project by 2020. All data produced to date by the feasibility study confirmed that the project would produce major economic returns and would serve the national interest.

89. Tunisia was aware of the importance of ensuring safe management and strict supervision of nuclear reactors, guaranteeing compliance with the technical and legal standards and norms pertaining to the international safeguards regime, providing for the safety and security of radioactive sources and for transport and waste safety, bearing in mind the risks of nuclear terrorism, and of establishing a civil liability regime for nuclear damage based on recognized international standards.

90. Tunisia was currently preparing a programme aimed at developing human resources, supporting regulatory activities, which would be kept separate from the provision of services, and establishing a national nuclear safety authority. There were also plans to establish a national nuclear energy agency to promote different applications of nuclear energy, in particular the planned electricity generation plant. A legal and supervisory regime based on international standards was also being designed to ensure compliance with relevant obligations. It was hoped to finalize the basic components of the regime within a reasonably short period and to begin implementing it after reviewing its content either with the Agency or in the context of bilateral cooperation arrangements.

91. Tunisia had recently taken steps to ratify the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, the Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the amendment to Article VI of the Agency's Statute. The ratification procedure was likely to be completed before the end of 2009. Other relevant international instruments would be ratified as soon as the requisite legal and practical framework for their implementation had been established.

92. Tunisia had signed its Country Programme Framework for 2008–2012 at the beginning of 2009. It hoped that it would lead to further productive cooperation with the Agency on priority projects. During the current year the Agency had funded 18 national projects. In addition, Tunisia had participated in the implementation of 44 regional projects in Africa and 3 interregional projects.

93. His country had pledged its share of the target contribution for 2010 to the TCF. It had also taken steps to pay all other amounts due to the Agency, including almost all of its outstanding contributions in respect of technical cooperation projects under the old system. He called on other Member States to pay their contributions to the Agency's budget within reasonable time limits so that it could implement its programmes under the best possible circumstances.

94. Tunisia hosted the Arab Atomic Energy Agency, which espoused the same goals as the International Atomic Energy Agency and fostered close cooperation among Arab States in pursuit of those goals and of their joint interests. At their summit in Doha in 2009, the Arab leaders had reaffirmed the right of Arab States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and had adopted an Arab nuclear energy strategy covering the period until 2020. The Arab Atomic Energy Agency would begin to implement the strategy in 2010. He reaffirmed the importance of the cooperation agreement (INFCIRC/25/Add.6) concluded between the two Agencies in 1990 and emphasized the desirability of stepping up cooperation and implementing joint projects.

95. Tunisia supported all initiatives aimed at nuclear disarmament. It was regrettable, however, that despite repeated calls for the creation of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, in the Middle East, that important goal had not yet been achieved. It would remain unattainable until comprehensive safeguards agreements were implemented by all States in the region without exception and all nuclear installations were placed under Agency safeguards.

96. Mr PRODAN (Ukraine) said that his country supported the Agency's efforts to strengthen cooperation among States in preserving knowledge and experience in nuclear energy, nuclear safety and the enhancement of regulatory capacities. It also fully supported the Agency's efforts as regards preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and implementing safeguards. Ukraine, which fulfilled rigorously its international obligations under its safeguards agreement and additional protocol, reiterated its firm position that the Agency's priority should be to universalize comprehensive safeguards. Implementation of Agency safeguards in countries conducting intensive nuclear activities required the Agency's particular attention.

97. Ukraine shared the international community's deep concern over recent developments in the DPRK. It appealed to Pyongyang to fulfil its existing commitments fully and without delay and to abide by the relevant resolutions of the General Conference and the Security Council. While acknowledging Iran's right to use nuclear energy peacefully, Ukraine supported the Agency's efforts to provide assurances about the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. Iran's transparent and prompt cooperation with the Agency was essential in order to close the Iranian nuclear dossier. The investigation of the Syrian nuclear issue required that all the Member States involved cooperate actively within the framework of the Agency.

98. Ukraine called upon all Member States to do their utmost to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the diversion of nuclear technologies for military purposes. Ukraine took positive note of the Agency's assistance to governments in meeting their international non-proliferation obligations, particularly under Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006). In view of the increasing threat of nuclear proliferation, Ukraine supported calls for an early start of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty. His country greatly appreciated the Agency's efforts to prevent illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive materials and its position in favour of strengthening the security regime for nuclear materials. For its part, Ukraine was actively implementing the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and he announced that it would also follow the Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources. More extensive international cooperation was needed to reduce the global threat of terrorism involving nuclear and radioactive materials. In that connection, his Parliament had ratified the amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of

Nuclear Material in 2009, and he called on other States which had not yet done so to ratify the Amendment without delay.

99. Safety performance indicators for Ukrainian nuclear power plants had remained at a high level, in keeping with national and international standards. With the Agency's assistance, Ukraine was continuing to improve its relevant domestic legislation and to strengthen the capacities of its national regulatory body. He underscored the progress made in implementing the European Commission-IAEA-Ukraine joint project on safety evaluation of Ukrainian nuclear power plants under the memorandum of understanding on cooperation in the field of energy between the European Commission and Ukraine. The Agency's missions were a further efficient tool for enhancing the security and safety of Ukraine's operating nuclear facilities. In addition, he was glad to report that Kiev had hosted the 15th annual international forum of heads of regulatory authorities of countries operating WWER-type reactors.

100. Ukraine took a positive view of the International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Energy in the 21st Century held in Beijing under the Agency's auspices, which, inter alia, had addressed the issue of establishing a global nuclear safety network. He commended the Agency's Response Assistance Network and its Incident and Emergency Centre and said that Ukraine considered it a positive development that 23 countries, including Ukraine, had already joined the Illicit Trafficking Database.

101. Equally important were the Agency's activities with respect to radiation safety and radioactive waste management. In its national report under the Joint Convention, Ukraine had clearly demonstrated that it had been using the right methods and was maintaining a high level of safety in that area. Ukraine called on the States that had not yet done so to accede to the Joint Convention without delay. In 2009, Ukraine had adopted a national strategy for radioactive waste management up until 2059, which would ensure the safe management of radioactive waste while incorporating international best practices. In addition, Ukraine was successfully implementing its national nuclear security plan for 2006-2009.

102. Ukraine took note of the Agency's progress in the critical area of efforts to strengthen partnerships with governmental and non-governmental organizations and others in order to attract additional resources and enhance efficiency in carrying out the Agency's statutory mandate.

103. In support of the Agency's expanding research into innovative reactors and fuel cycles, Ukraine had, since 2008, been providing cost-free expert services to INPRO. Also, it had joined the GAINS Project (International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles) and had already initiated some research.

104. Recovery efforts in the aftermath of the Chernobyl accident remained of the utmost importance for Ukraine. Ukraine had allocated a substantial portion of its State budget for that task over the years. In 2009, the Ukrainian Parliament had adopted a national programme for decommissioning the Chernobyl nuclear power plant and transforming the 'Shelter' into an environmentally safe system and was about to start a project on building a new and safe confinement structure over the destroyed Unit No. 4. Ukraine looked forward to continued fruitful cooperation with the Agency in that regard. It welcomed the United Nations interagency action plan on Chernobyl, in particular the planning and coordination workshop on the third decade of cooperation in Chernobyl recovery efforts. That important event had led to the adoption of the United Nations action plan on Chernobyl to 2016.

105. Turning to technical cooperation, he expressed satisfaction with the balanced technical cooperation programme adopted by the Agency for 2009-2016. The Agency deserved high praise for elaborating the document entitled European Regional Profile for 2009-2013, which had been unanimously approved in 2008 by the Member States of the European region and served as a roadmap

for regional cooperation. Considerable progress had been made in implementing Ukraine's national projects on training maintenance personnel and on extending the lifetime of its nuclear power plants. Ukraine was very interested in further work on the new project on strengthening knowledge management in Ukraine's nuclear industry, which was scheduled to be carried out in 2009-2011.

106. Through its active cooperation with the Agency, Ukraine was able not only to benefit from best practices in the development of nuclear energy, but also to share its experience in that field with interested States. As part of the Agency's activities aimed at disseminating knowledge relating to the peaceful application of nuclear technologies, Ukraine intended to continue its active collaboration on the development and implementation of regional programmes addressing non-power applications of nuclear technologies, in particular medical applications and dosimetry, as well as assistance in Chernobyl recovery efforts.

107. Despite global economic difficulties, Ukraine supported the Agency's budget for 2010, which ensured sufficient funding for all of the Agency's statutory functions while not ignoring the need for its further development.

108. Finally, speaking on behalf of the GUAM group (Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) he noted that its members were complying fully with their obligations under their respective comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols. In 2008, the GUAM countries had received assistance through the technical cooperation programme worth more than \$3 million, twice the amount received in 2007. In turn, the GUAM governments regularly provided experts and cost-free services to the Secretariat and organized a wide range of activities under the Agency's auspices. GUAM would work closely with the Agency in the future on high priority national and regional projects.

109. Joint activities by the GUAM countries on cooperation and mutual support in nuclear and radiation safety were continuing and, in that connection, he emphasized the usefulness of technical and political cooperation with all interested countries.

110. Mr MOVSISSYAN (Armenia) said that the recent resurgence of interest in nuclear power could disrupt the sensitive balance of international security. Thus, more emphasis should be placed on the NPT safeguards regime to ensure non-proliferation and the safe and peaceful use of nuclear energy. Armenia was constantly improving its national legislation and complying fully with its international commitments in that regard, including those under its additional protocol.

111. Nuclear power was a key element of Armenia's energy policy. In October 2008, the President had presented three major strategy documents to the National Assembly, of which the most important concerned the construction of a new unit on the site of the existing nuclear power plant. With the assistance of US-AID (United States Agency for International Development), documents on the initial planning of the new unit and on its environmental impact had been drawn up and made public. The WorleyParsons company was currently preparing a feasibility study and an environmental assessment on the basis of those two documents for submission to the Government by the end of September 2009.

112. Armenia's nuclear development programme aimed to upgrade the infrastructure and improve training of personnel, and activities were being undertaken in that regard under the Agency's technical cooperation programme (project ARM/0/006).

113. Since the recommissioning of Unit No. 2 of the Armenia nuclear power plant in 1995, his Government had spent over \$90 million on improving safety levels. He thanked the many donors who had contributed to that work and commended the Agency for its valuable coordination efforts. International experts had helped to assess the seismic resistance of the plant. Modelling of various unexpected incidents and emergencies had shown that the plant was within the design limits for

seismic resistance, and a further round of seismological, volcanological and geophysical assessments was currently under way. Also, work on expanding the existing dry storage facility for spent fuel was ongoing with construction about to enter the third phase. The planned decommissioning of the plant would be financed by a levy on electricity charges and a special government commission had been set up to manage those resources.

114. A joint venture, the Armenian-Russian Mining Company, had been set up in July 2008 for prospecting, mining and processing of uranium in Armenia and preparations for the first prospecting activities were under way. Also, in October 2008, Armenia had joined the GNEP (Global Nuclear Energy Partnership).

115. On the advice of an expert body set up by the Government, the State Nuclear Safety Regulatory Committee, the Armenian Nuclear Regulatory Authority (ANRA), had been accorded higher status. Much work had been done to enhance its activities at the level of upgrading both legislation and staff proficiency. The United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission was providing assistance and support for personnel training, emergency preparedness training, analysis of the second level safety report, and physical protection of nuclear materials.

116. In closing, he expressed his appreciation for the productive collaboration between his country and the Agency. The Department of Technical Cooperation, in particular, had helped to implement a range of national and regional projects in Armenia. He likewise thanked all donors and other partners for their constant support.

117. Mr KHELIL (Algeria) saluted outgoing Director General ElBaradei on his exceptional career, crowned by the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005. For his unflinching commitment in the service of atoms for peace he had been recognized with Algeria's highest honour, bestowed upon him by the President of the Republic, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, at the first High-Level African Regional Conference on the Contribution of Nuclear Power to Peace and Sustainable Development. A worthy representative of Africa and of the developing world, he had made the Agency a globally respected body. The title of Director General Emeritus of the IAEA, with which he had been honoured by the current General Conference, was a unanimous recognition of his inspiring human and intellectual qualities. He offered Algeria's best wishes for Mr ElBaradei's future health and happiness.

118. He also congratulated the incoming Director General, Mr Yukya Amano, wished him success, and assured him of Algeria's support and cooperation.

119. He underscored Algeria's steadfast commitment to the peaceful and safe use of nuclear energy and the crucial importance of international cooperation in support of national development efforts, in respect of which the Agency had a unique role to play.

120. The scientific forum on energy for development that was being held in parallel with the General Conference demonstrated the link between security and development. That was evident in the global resurgence of interest in nuclear power as a clean energy alternative, capable of meeting the growing demand for electricity in developing countries and therefore of attaining the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

121. The international community's recent initiatives in disarmament and non-proliferation boded well for rapid growth of the peaceful applications of nuclear energy and for the success of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Algeria welcomed recent international initiatives aimed at ridding the world of weapons of mass destruction and reinvigorating existing international commitments in that area in order to move beyond the concept of nuclear deterrence.

122. Interest in the use of atomic energy had been confirmed by the 2nd ministerial conference held in Beijing in April 2009, and by the Agency's and the OECD's predictions of a 66% rise in nuclear

power generation by 2030. The Agency had a key role in ensuring that growth and needed to be given the appropriate resources to face the challenges of the nuclear renaissance. While it was difficult accurately to predict the Agency's development over the next 30 years, it was a fact that 60 developing countries, Algeria among them, had requested Agency assistance in introducing nuclear power generation into their energy mix.

123. The Agency needed to adapt to new trends, including the desire of newcomers to embark on nuclear power programmes. The significant responsibilities of the Agency in that domain would have implications for its management and its Statute. Early ratification of the amendment to Article VI would allow the Board of Governors to grow to reflect the Agency's increasing membership. The Algerian delegation would do its part to ensure that the recommendations of the working group on the future of the Agency up to 2020 and beyond, established by the Chairperson of the Board of Governors, consolidated the feeling of ownership and inclusion of all Member States, and of respect for diversity without discrimination or selectivity.

124. Algeria attached equal importance to all three of the Agency's pillars. Its activities in the fields of technical cooperation, safety and security, and safeguards were necessary for a healthy and balanced Agency, and its contributions to peace and security, to development and combating poverty, and to environmental protection were of equal importance.

125. Progress as regards nuclear safety was encouraging in view of the trepidations that continued to be aroused by nuclear power. States wishing to introduce nuclear power could benefit from the wealth of reactor operating experience worldwide, the stringent safety and efficiency standards that applied, and the advent of ever safer reactors.

126. The increased risk of proliferation of sensitive technologies that a nuclear renaissance might bring with it had not been substantiated scientifically. Nothing could stand in the way of States deriving full benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, nor limit their rights to nuclear fuel cycle options, provided they fulfilled their international obligations.

127. Efforts to promote multilateral nuclear fuel agreements appeared to be part of an approach aimed at bringing about a new division between those who possessed nuclear technology and those who did not. That perception could also lead to a reinterpretation of Article IV of the NPT, which would be unacceptable given the enormous concession made by the non-nuclear-weapon States in joining the NPT.

128. Algeria attached great importance to the Agency's activities aimed at preventing non-State actors from acquiring, gaining access to, or using nuclear materials or weapons. During the 'decade of terrorism', Algeria had fulfilled its nuclear security obligations by preventing nuclear materials and radioactive sources used in health care and industry from falling into the hands of terrorists.

129. Algeria appreciated the Agency's efforts in the areas of nuclear safety and security. Constant vigilance and preventive measures were required owing to the transnational nature of nuclear incidents. The Agency's role in promoting a culture of safety and in helping States wishing to do so to build capacities and strengthen their infrastructure for the regulation and control of radioactive sources deserved special mention.

130. As an institution duly mandated to verify compliance with non-proliferation commitments, the Agency had a unique role to play in maintaining peace and security. Further, the objectivity, impartiality and professionalism with which the Secretariat carried out its verification mission must be shielded from undue interference or pressure, as advocated by the Agency's Statute.

131. Algeria was encouraged that the 'no nuclear weapons' campaign, which echoed its own vision of universal and complete disarmament, was prominent on the international agenda. The removal of

impediments to the work of the Conference on Disarmament brought about during the Algerian presidency, the resumption of negotiations between the United States of America and Russia on reducing their nuclear arsenals, and the commitment of President Obama and the Chinese authorities to ratify the CTBT were positive signs.

132. Another significant and welcome development was the entry into force in July 2009 of the Pelindaba Treaty. As the first to ratify that Treaty, Algeria saw it as a significant confidence-building measure for regional security and a concrete contribution to the efforts toward nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of which the NPT was the cornerstone.

133. Algeria was encouraged that many parts of the world were free of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, as a result of the establishment of the Tlatelolco Treaty, the Rarotonga Treaty, the Bangkok Treaty, the Pelindaba Treaty, and also the Treaty of Semipalatinsk.

134. The international community must make good its commitments to establish such a zone in the Middle East, which was desired by all of the States in the region, but which continued to come up against the steadfast refusal of Israel to join the NPT even though its leaders had publicly acknowledged its possession of nuclear weapons. Algeria urged the international community to act resolutely to irreversibly and verifiably implement the commitments made in Article VI of the NPT and the 13 steps adopted by the 2000 NPT Review Conference, over which Algeria had had the honour to preside.

135. As regards his country's cooperation activities with the Agency, he highlighted Algeria's decision to embark on nuclear power generation. Work on a suitable legal framework had begun in collaboration with the Agency and efforts were under way to elaborate a programme to enhance human resources and build capacities.

136. Reaffirming Algeria's commitment to the AFRA programme, he said support was needed from the Agency and from African partners in order significantly to improve the ability of African countries to benefit from nuclear energy.

137. Along with many other African countries, Algeria was interested in efforts to combat the desert locust. His delegation urged the Agency to pursue its collaboration with FAO, as the General Conference had enjoined it to do, to further develop the use of nuclear techniques for combating pests, especially the desert locust. The establishment of a locust control centre would be especially useful.

138. Mr AHN Byong-Man (Republic of Korea) expressed his appreciation of Dr ElBaradei's outstanding leadership and contribution over the previous 12 years, and congratulated the incoming Director General, Mr Amano, on his appointment.

139. Many countries were turning to nuclear energy as the best foreseeable option to meet growing energy needs while addressing environmental concerns. Infrastructure should be developed to ensure nuclear safety, safeguards and human resources development, as well as a stable supply of nuclear fuel and improved waste management. The Agency's role in that regard was becoming critically important. His Government noted with appreciation that the Agency had undertaken projects to help meet infrastructure requirements in Member States that were considering the use of nuclear power. The Republic of Korea was willing to share its 50 years of experience in the construction and management of nuclear power plants, as well as in education and training. To facilitate that sharing of experience, the Republic of Korea would be holding an international forum on nuclear safety infrastructure in 2010, and trusted that the Agency and Member States would provide support for the organization of that international event.

140. The Agency should designate a “Nuclear Energy Day”, which would provide an opportunity to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and raise public confidence in a technology that was environmentally friendly and safe.

141. International cooperation was essential if the use of nuclear energy around the world was to be expanded. The sharing of information and experience would help to reduce development cost and time, while lowering the chances of failure. One issue that had to be resolved in the Republic of Korea, for example, was the problem of spent fuel from its 20 nuclear power reactors since current capacity for temporary storage would be saturated by 2016. Various options were being considered, including research and development of advanced fuel cycle technologies.

142. His country’s successful construction and operation of nuclear power plants had been made possible because of its strong emphasis on human resources, as well as technical cooperation and training programmes from the Agency and the international community. The Agency’s technical cooperation programme, from which his country had been benefiting since 1961, had made a vital contribution to the improvement of nuclear capabilities in Member States. From 2010, the Republic of Korea would take an active role as a technical cooperation donor country, sharing its experience and knowledge. It would also start providing extrabudgetary contributions in support of training and education efforts, particularly in those countries embarking on nuclear energy.

143. The expanded use of nuclear energy called for an increased commitment to nuclear non-proliferation. In view of the imminent and grave challenges posed by nuclear proliferation, illicit trafficking of sensitive nuclear material, possible nuclear terrorism by non-State actors and non-compliance with safeguards obligations, it was crucial to ensure universal adherence to and compliance with the Agency’s comprehensive safeguards agreement and its additional protocol. The Republic of Korea called upon those States that had not signed and ratified a comprehensive safeguards agreement and additional protocol to do so without any further delay. At the same time, his country called upon the Agency to offer more incentives to States that adhered to their safeguards and non-proliferation obligations.

144. While the Republic of Korea had expanded its use of nuclear energy, it had also consistently prioritized the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. That, however, could not be said of the DPRK’s development of nuclear weapons, which was an unacceptable act of provocation that threatened peace and stability in north-east Asia and undermined the foundation of the international non-proliferation regime. The Republic of Korea appreciated the international community’s condemnation of the DPRK’s second nuclear test through the adoption of Security Council resolution 1874 (2009) and the implementation of extensive sanctions against the DPRK. He trusted that the resolution would continue to be implemented faithfully through close international cooperation and stressed that the DPRK nuclear issue must be resolved in a peaceful manner through the six-party talks. The Agency had an important role to play in the denuclearization process, and his country hoped that the Agency would resume its monitoring and verification efforts at the earliest possible date.

145. The Republic of Korea was committed to complying with international treaties, standards and guidelines related to nuclear safeguards, safety and security, and to strengthening cooperation with the international community. Also, it complied fully with international safety standards and requirements for nuclear power plants and had undergone an Agency OSART (Operational Safety Review Team) review. In celebration of the 30th anniversary of Kori-1, the first nuclear power plant his country, the Government had organized a special safety review team to examine, in a comprehensive manner, the safety of the 20 nuclear power plants in operation in the Republic of Korea.

146. Ms PETERS (South Africa) said that humanity was facing a number of major challenges with regard to sustainable food production, health and security. Of critical importance was the availability

of the energy resources required to foster sustainable development and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In that regard, the Agency was well placed to assist Member States in their efforts to meet those challenges.

147. With regard to non-proliferation, she said that South Africa welcomed the entry into force of the Pelindaba Treaty. Those African States that had not yet acceded to the Treaty should do so as soon as possible.

148. She recalled that, at the fifty-second session of the General Conference, South Africa had shared its concerns regarding the inability of the international community — particularly developing countries and the African continent — to achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. It was imperative to coordinate efforts aimed at achieving those Goals across the world. A clear focus on their implementation would accelerate efforts to reinforce existing commitments in the field of development.

149. With regard to climate change, she hoped that the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) conference to be held in Copenhagen in December would make appropriate decisions based on the socio-economic needs of developing nations.

150. Her country was committed to nuclear energy as part of its energy mix and intended to build industrial capacity in order to achieve that goal. To sustain nuclear generating capacity, a cabinet-level committee would be established to coordinate the implementation of South African policy in that regard, which also included a number of strategic initiatives to prepare South Africa for nuclear energy expansion. The Nuclear Energy Corporation of South Africa (NECSA) was carrying out several feasibility studies covering key aspects of the nuclear fuel cycle, with emphasis on achieving a secure fuel supply for future national energy needs while remaining economically viable and competitive in the global market. To ensure that the studies reflected fuel cycle considerations, relationships had been developed with all the main international players in fuel cycle services. Meanwhile, progress was being made in establishing laboratories and facilities to consolidate local skills and technologies, and to re-establish fuel cycle operations in South Africa.

151. The SAFARI-I reactor core had been converted to using LEU as fuel, which was an indication of her country's commitment to the responsible and sustainable use of nuclear technologies. Moreover, substantial progress had been made in developing the technology required to manufacture LEU target plates for isotope production.

152. NECSA was helping to address the worldwide shortage of radioisotopes by increasing the production of molybdenum-99. Through NECSA, South Africa was now also represented on a special OECD committee that was considering ways of stabilizing global supplies of molybdenum-99.

153. The resurgence in uranium mining combined with the expansion of the nuclear energy programme was expected to result in an acute shortage of skilled labour, and her country was grateful to the Agency for its continued support in providing technical training and fellowship programmes.

154. It was important to build self-assessment capability in the African region in order to encourage greater cooperation among its regulatory bodies. In that regard, she was pleased to report that her country had been instrumental in creating a forum of nuclear regulatory bodies in Africa and had hosted its second meeting in South Africa on 26 March 2009.

155. Noting the importance of international collaboration on matters of mutual interest with regard to nuclear safety regulation, she said that South Africa's national nuclear regulator was to host the forthcoming International Conference on Effective Nuclear Regulatory Systems in Cape Town from 14 to 18 December 2009.

156. South Africa advocated the active involvement of young people in the nuclear sector as they helped to spread the message about peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The South African Young Nuclear Professional Society, which was affiliated to the International Youth Nuclear Congress, had recently won the bid to host the International Youth in Nuclear Congress in South Africa in July 2010.

157. The issue of gender equality had been high on South Africa's agenda for many years. In 2004, the Minister of Minerals and Energy had launched a programme entitled "Women in Nuclear South Africa", thus creating a forum for exchanges between women from different nuclear institutions. It aimed to promote a broader understanding of nuclear technology, safety and non-proliferation and advance the empowerment of women in the nuclear field.

158. The President had established a Ministry of Women, Children and Persons with Disabilities. As a partner in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), South Africa had signed a binding protocol on gender and development in August 2008 in order to provide for the empowerment of women, eliminate discrimination and achieve gender equality and equity through the development and implementation of gender responsive legislation policies, programmes and projects. It included 23 targets, one of which was to ensure that women occupied 50% of decision-making posts in the public and private sectors by 2015.

159. Turning to the safety of national nuclear facilities, she said that her country had now begun the second 10-year safety review of its Koeberg nuclear facility, which had been in operation for the past 25 years.

160. Nuclear waste management, particularly with regard to high level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel, was now regulated by the National Radioactive Waste Disposal Institute Act (Act No.53 of 2008). South Africa would continue to participate in international conventions, such as the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention. At the Third Review Meeting of the Joint Convention held in May 2009, South Africa's first national report had been well received.

161. AFRA would continue to take the lead in realizing the vision of the Pelindaba Treaty. Experts from the South African nuclear industry had continued to assist the Agency in its technical cooperation and skills transfer activities on a wide range of topics, especially as part of AFRA programmes. A total of 44 expert missions had been conducted at the Agency's request, primarily to countries in Africa, the Middle East and south-east Asia.

162. In May 2009, South Africa had hosted a nuclear security delegation from the Agency in order to determine the country's nuclear security needs with regard to the 2010 football world cup tournament. South Africa was grateful to the Agency for its continued support and assistance at a time when the country was preparing to host such an important public event.

163. South Africa considered it important to strengthen the Agency's safeguards system. Verification remained an effective tool for building confidence in the safe and secure use of nuclear applications. In that regard, the additional protocol was a highly effective instrument, as it provided assurances regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities, especially in Member States with significant nuclear activities. It was incumbent upon all States with nuclear technical capabilities to build confidence and provide assurances that their nuclear capabilities were being used exclusively for peaceful purposes.

164. With regard to the DPRK, she said her country shared the concern expressed by other Member States regarding the termination of the Agency's monitoring and verification activities there. South Africa urged DPRK to allow the Agency's inspectors to carry out monitoring and verification activities. South Africa has consistently called upon DPRK to terminate any nuclear weapons

programme, return to the NPT as soon as possible, sign and ratify the CTBT, and place all its nuclear facilities and materials under comprehensive Agency safeguards.

165. With regard to Iran, she said her country was encouraged by the increased cooperation between the Agency and that country. She urged Iran to cooperate fully with the Agency and implement the binding resolutions adopted by the Security Council. At the same time, Iran must be allowed to develop nuclear technology for peaceful applications in accordance with the letter and spirit of the NPT. She hoped that the readiness of the parties to initiate talks would lead to substantial discussions aimed at resolving the issues surrounding Iran's nuclear programme.

166. South Africa had the highest regard for the exemplary work and achievements of the Director General and Agency over the past 12 years, and welcomed the incoming Director General.

The meeting rose at 6.45 p.m.