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President: Ms MACMILLAN (New Zealand)

Later: Mr BERDENNIKOV (Russian Federation)

Mr EL AMIN (Sudan)

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Abbreviations used in this record:

| | |
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| AFRA | African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology |
| ARCAL | Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean |
| CPPNM | Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material |
| CTBT | Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty |
| CTBTO | Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization |
| DPRK | Democratic People's Republic of Korea |
| EU | European Union |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations |
| HEU | high-enriched uranium |
| INES | International Nuclear and Radiological Event Scale |
| INPRO | International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles |
| INSServ | International Nuclear Security Advisory Service |
| IPPAS | International Physical Protection Advisory Service |
| IRRS | Integrated Regulatory Review Service |
| Joint Convention | Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management |
| LEU | low-enriched uranium |
| MDG | Millennium Development Goal |
| NPCs | national participation costs |
| NPT | Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons |
| NPT Review Conference | Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons |
| NSF | Nuclear Security Fund |
| Nuclear Safety Convention | Convention on Nuclear Safety |
| NWFZ | nuclear-weapon-free zone |

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

| | |
|----------|---|
| OECD/NEA | Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| PACT | Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy |
| R&D | research and development |
| RCA | Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific) |
| SAGSI | Standing Advisory Group on Safeguards Implementation |
| SAL | Safeguards Analytical Laboratory |
| SSAC | State system of accounting for and control of nuclear material |
| TCF | Technical Cooperation Fund |
| WHO | World Health Organization |

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

1. Ms DRÁBOVÁ (Czech Republic) commended the outgoing Director General, Mr ElBaradei, on his accomplishments over the previous twelve years, and congratulated his successor, Mr Amano, on his appointment.
2. The Czech Republic continued to attach great importance to the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime and to enhancing nuclear security worldwide. The universal adoption and implementation of comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols – the current verification standard – remained essential. Her country attached high priority to updates of Annex II to the additional protocol to reflect the technical progress made in nuclear civil trade, and stressed the importance of the Zangger Committee in updating the clarification of requirements of Article III.2 of the NPT.
3. In accordance with EU accession conditions, the Czech Republic had completed its internal procedures regarding the entry into force of the trilateral safeguards agreement and its additional protocol. Her country recognized the need for the Agency to maintain and further strengthen its capability to provide credible and timely analysis of safeguards samples. It had already offered the Agency its capacities in that regard and would also be making a voluntary contribution to support the upgrading of the nuclear material laboratory as part of the modernization of the Safeguards Analytical Laboratory.
4. The Czech Republic had been sharing with other countries the valuable experience it had gained from the successful completion in 2007 of the repatriation of spent HEU within the framework of the Global Threat Reduction Initiative. It also continued to support the safe repatriation of spent nuclear fuel from the Vinča RA Research Reactor in Serbia to the Russian Federation, and had pledged to make available the last portion of its US \$ 1 million contribution by April 2010.
5. Nuclear power provided some 40% of the electricity generated in the Czech Republic, and the operators and agencies involved had always strived to ensure the highest achievable level of nuclear safety. The sharing of experience and best practice through the Agency was crucial in achieving the requisite safety levels, and she commended the Agency for its efforts to cooperate with other relevant organizations in formulating or improving the safety standards. The Czech Republic particularly appreciated the broad collaboration between EU Member States, relevant EU institutions and the Agency in nuclear safety matters. The Agency's safety principles and recommendations, together with the Convention on Nuclear Safety, had constituted the basis for a new legally binding EU Directive establishing a Community framework for the nuclear safety of nuclear installations recently adopted under the Czech presidency of the EU.
6. The technical cooperation programme was an essential tool for the further development of participating Member States. A number of Member States were developing more of a partnership with the Agency with respect to the technical cooperation programme, and the different development needs of individual regions were being recognized. Her country, for example, was actively participating in the development of the technical cooperation strategy for the Europe region, which sought to outline a basic vision of the technical cooperation programme in the region as well as the means of achieving the main strategic objectives. The Czech Republic had always fully supported the technical cooperation programme; it continued to pay its contributions to the TCF and its NPCs in full and on

time, and co-financed its single national project. Furthermore, over the previous 12 years, it had provided voluntary contributions of almost US \$ 4 million to support activities in other Member States through the technical cooperation programme, as well as other programmes, including the NSF and PACT.

7. Mr BÖCK (Austria) congratulated Mr Amano on his appointment and commended Mr ElBaradei for his work over the past 12 years as Director General. During his outstanding service, the Agency had made a major contribution to peace, security and safety as well as to the promotion of health and prosperity. The Director General had repeatedly reminded the international community of the need to address the root causes of major crises and to focus on the wellbeing of the human family. Austria fully supported the resolution conferring on Dr ElBaradei the title of Director General Emeritus of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

8. Nuclear disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons should be in the common interest of all members of the international community. As a non-nuclear country, Austria greatly valued and supported the Agency's vital role with regard to the NPT regime. It would continue to support all efforts aimed at strengthening and universalizing the safeguards system, including the additional protocol, and at making the Agency fit to tackle the growing challenges in the area of nuclear non-proliferation and safety.

9. The many challenges to the NPT that persisted should not be underestimated. Austria reiterated the appeals by the Swedish Presidency of the European Union regarding the resumption of Agency work in the DPRK, the clarification of questions related to the nuclear activities of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the provision of relevant information by the Syrian Arab Republic.

10. Significant progress needed to be made at the 2010 NPT Review Conference in New York. Although the third session of the Preparatory Committee in May 2009 had raised hopes for a productive Review Conference in 2010, it had also demonstrated how much work still needed to be done politically and diplomatically to achieve the kind of agreements and commitments that would genuinely strengthen the non-proliferation regime and provide a basis for building security in a world free of nuclear weapons. Austria would play an active role in the Review Conference. It would support initiatives aimed at making substantial progress in nuclear disarmament, at institutionally strengthening nuclear non-proliferation, promoting NWFZs and establishing a fair global system that effectively controlled the nuclear fuel cycle. All those efforts should ultimately reduce the current international mistrust over national nuclear programmes.

11. In recent years, Austria had participated actively in the debate on multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle, presenting a working paper entitled "multilateralization of the nuclear fuel cycle: increasing transparency and sustainable security" during the debate on the issue in the Board of Governors in June. The proposal for the establishment of a LEU bank under Agency control was an ambitious project and a good first step forward in a process eventually leading to the full multilateralization of the nuclear fuel cycle. The framework proposed by Austria would ultimately result in a more comprehensive implementation of Article IV of the NPT, in which the benefits of all stages of the nuclear fuel cycle would be available on a fair and equal basis to all States that sought them.

12. Safety and security awareness were essential for the construction of nuclear power plants. Therefore, delays in the completion of nuclear power plants should be acceptable if more time was required to make the plants safer and more secure. Austria welcomed the Agency's support in assisting regulatory authorities in Member States in the design and construction phase, thus upgrading the overall safety of new reactors. Compliance by all Member States with the provisions and obligations of the relevant safety conventions constituted an important goal. The global nuclear community must

also focus on the challenges that national regulatory authorities were currently facing to ensure that safety and security kept pace with emerging technologies. The development of technical systems should however be a matter for the industrial sector, which had gained more than 50 years of experience.

13. Higher prices for nuclear power could be seen as a sign of that some of the external costs of nuclear energy were being absorbed. Austria favoured the full internalization of all costs related to nuclear power, including the disposal of spent nuclear fuel, decommissioning and, most importantly, unlimited nuclear liability.

14. With regard to emergency preparedness and response, he said that the position of non-nuclear countries bordering nuclear countries should be fully recognized. However, that was scarcely reflected in the Agency's documents on nuclear power programmes. In Austria's view, the responsibility for emergency response should not end at national borders, but should be a common effort at transboundary level.

15. The Third Review Meeting of the Joint Convention, held in Vienna in 2009, had shown that a large number of facilities worldwide undertaking decommissioning activities continued to be underfunded. Such a situation, together with the problem of securing the safe final long-term disposal of spent nuclear fuel called into question the sustainability of the nuclear power sector.

16. The Agency's safeguards system was an indispensable part of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. The level of assurance obtained, however, depended on the scope of authority States were prepared to assign to the Agency. Repeated cases of clandestine nuclear programmes that could not be detected by traditional safeguards measures had demonstrated the need for a stronger safeguards system. It was of the utmost importance for the Agency to be able to draw safeguards conclusions regarding the peaceful use of all nuclear material wherever it was located. The majority of NPT non-nuclear-weapon States with comprehensive safeguards agreements had brought an additional protocol into force. That provided the Agency with a sound basis for the implementation of integrated safeguards and for further refining the integrated safeguards system. However, progress remained slow: a number of important goals relating to the implementation of the additional protocol could only be realized once universality had been achieved. Austria strongly advocated adherence to the additional protocol and considered the conclusion of an additional protocol by non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT a legal obligation.

17. It was important for the Agency to be able to maintain both the quantity and quality of its analytical services if it was to sustain an efficient and effective safeguards system, and he highlighted the importance of the work undertaken at the Safeguards Analytical Laboratory in Seibersdorf. Austria was pleased that the voluntary contributions already pledged for the project on enhancing the capabilities of analytical safeguards would facilitate the process of redeveloping the Seibersdorf site in the near future. Austria was demonstrating its commitment to that undertaking by providing more than 60,000 square meters of land.

18. With its special focus on monitoring, verification and assistance, the Agency helped to strengthen Vienna as a centre of competence for the interrelated issues of security and development. Over the previous 50 years, the Agency had contributed to a whole range of development projects through its technical cooperation programme. Austria recognized the vital importance of those activities and would continue to support the TCF in 2010.

19. There was much evidence that nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear safety and security would continue to demand a high and increasing level of international cooperation in the years to come. It was crucial for the Agency to be fully equipped and funded to fulfil its important tasks in that regard.

20. Mr FAHMI (Iraq) congratulated Mr Amano on his election to the office of Director General, and thanked the outgoing Director General, Mr ElBaradei, for his outstanding service to the Agency throughout his tenure.

21. The Government of Iraq greatly appreciated the Agency's assistance to all Member States, especially developing countries, in areas such as human health, the environment, industry, agriculture and water resources, and its support for the safe use of nuclear energy and for scientific and technological development.

22. In April 2009, his Government had decided to establish a National Atomic Energy Agency composed of representatives of relevant Iraqi ministries and institutions. The Agency's mandate consisted in proposing national policies for peaceful applications of nuclear energy and a national programme for the development of qualified human resources to work in national institutions that used nuclear technology. It would also offer scientific advice to the country's decision-making bodies.

23. The department that dealt with radioactive waste processing and management at the Ministry of Science and Technology had been modernized to assume responsibility for addressing the problem of radioactive waste present in numerous parts of Iraq and for dealing with the waste that would be generated by the cleaning-up of destroyed installations and sites operated under the previous nuclear programme or by the elimination of radioactive pollution in southern regions of the country. The Iraqi Government strongly commended the Agency's work under the technical cooperation programme in support of Member States, especially its role in cleaning up contaminated nuclear sites. However, it would appreciate greater and more extensive Agency cooperation in eradicating radioactive waste. It needed stronger support in ridding the Iraqi environment of all types of radioactive contamination and in using nuclear technology to trace an estimated 25 million landmines that were scattered throughout the country. Their existence was a major impediment to agricultural development in a large part of the country and claimed a large number of human victims each year.

24. The Iraqi Government also commended the Agency's humanitarian role, as reflected, for example, through PACT. His country would appreciate greater assistance in the early detection and treatment of cancerous tumours in order to reduce the mortality rate, especially among children, which had risen in recent years for a number of reasons, particularly the pollution of the Iraqi environment and the limited means available to specialized medical centres. He expressed gratitude to all countries that had expressed their willingness to assist Iraq under the PACT Programme.

25. Water scarcity was another major problem in Iraq, as was water pollution, which had increased to dangerous levels in recent years. The Government hoped that the Agency would step up its activities in that area, which would be given high priority in the future development plans of developing countries.

26. His Government supported the Agency's efforts to ensure that nuclear energy was used only for peaceful purposes and to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, especially in the Middle East. It reaffirmed the importance of comprehensive safeguards regime, which should be applied to all States without exception. It was imperative for Israel to accede to the NPT and to place all its nuclear installations under full-scope Agency safeguards as a basic step towards confidence-building among the countries of the region and the achievement of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace.

27. His Government also supported all international activities, both legislative and technical, aimed at combating nuclear terrorism, especially action to control and prevent the proliferation of radioactive sources, illicit trafficking in nuclear material and radioactive sources, increased surveillance of border crossings and strengthening of nuclear material accounting systems.

28. The Iraqi Government had taken steps to sign an additional protocol and the CTBT, and both instruments were currently before the Iraqi Parliament for ratification. Specialized committees were studying the question of accession to the CPPNM, the Joint Convention, the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. They were also studying the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. It was hoped that the entire process would be completed by early 2010. During 2009, the Government had enacted a law concerning the Iraqi National Non-Proliferation Regulatory Authority, an independent authority to ensure compliance with Iraq's obligations under non-proliferation instruments.

29. Mr HERNÁNDEZ GARCÍA (Spain) said that his Government attached priority to the efforts to strengthen the non-proliferation regime, and drew attention in that regard to the Spanish safeguards support programme, which was financed through extrabudgetary contributions.

30. Spain welcomed the impartiality, independence and professionalism shown by the Director General and the Agency in their attempts to clarify the nature of Iran's nuclear programme. It also appreciated their repeated calls for a negotiated solution, rather than confrontation. Spain joined others in urging the Iranian authorities to comply with United Nations Security Council resolutions, demonstrate greater transparency, cooperate with the Agency and implement the additional protocol, in order to restore international confidence in the peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme.

31. The authorities of the DPRK had recently embarked upon a dangerous course. His Government supported the international calls urging the DPRK to return to the six-party talks, comply with United Nations Security Council resolutions, return to the NPT, and revoke its decisions to expel Agency inspectors and to rehabilitate previously dismantled nuclear installations.

32. Spain also called upon the Syrian Arab Republic to cooperate fully with the Agency in order to restore international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme.

33. Given that the most effective response to the threat of nuclear proliferation was the swift and universal implementation of additional protocols, his delegation remained concerned that 12 years after the adoption of the Model Additional Protocol, that instrument had not yet entered into force in 104 States, and that 26 States parties to the NPT had not even concluded a comprehensive safeguards agreement. The Agency must continue its efforts to promote the rapid and universal application of those instruments. That being said, his country was pleased to note that integrated safeguards were already being implemented in 26 countries. The application of integrated safeguards to all States with safeguards agreements and additional protocols in force would streamline the system and save human and financial resources, which was particularly important in times of budgetary restraint. Spain was committed to working with the Agency and the European Commission with a view to introducing integrated safeguards in the Member States of the European Union before the end of 2009.

34. His Government welcomed the activities of the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security aimed at improving the physical protection of nuclear materials, installations and high-activity radioactive sources. It fully supported the Nuclear Security Plan for 2010–2013, and made a significant contribution to the NSF. His country attached particular importance to the proper functioning of an integrated national system that ensured the security of the nuclear industry and related activities and helped prevent the illicit trafficking and use of nuclear and radioactive materials. Spain would continue cooperating with other Member States in the fight against nuclear terrorism and illicit use of radioactive materials, as it had done since joining the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. It called upon the Agency to publish comprehensive nuclear security guidelines and to continue to promote the ratification of the amendment to the CPPNM.

35. With regard to nuclear safety and radiation protection, he said that the Ibero-American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies was an excellent example of sustainable regional

cooperation, which was self-financed but benefited from the Agency's indispensable support. It could provide an excellent model to promote cooperation between neighbouring countries in close cooperation with the Agency.

36. An international conference on control and management of inadvertent radioactive material in scrap metal had been held in Tarragona from 23 to 27 February 2009 with the participation of over 250 experts from 63 countries. Given the global nature of issues linked to the management and control of orphan sources, it could be useful to develop an international legal instrument or agreement to standardize criteria and procedures. Following the Conference, a workshop had been held in Tarragona in which a proposal made by the Nuclear Regulatory Authority of Argentina concerning a strategy for the prevention, detection and response to orphan sources in scrap metal had been discussed.

37. Spain, in cooperation with the Agency and the Nuclear Safety Council, had also held an international workshop on lessons learned from the Integrated Regulatory Review Service in Seville from 3 to 4 November 2008. The programme established by the Agency for such missions was reviewed and possible improvements discussed. His Government considered IRRS missions to be of great benefit, and would continue to support their implementation.

38. Spain would, together with France and Italy, continue to act as regional coordinator for the activities conducted in the Mediterranean region in connection with the action plan developed concerning problems associated with delays and denials of shipment of radioactive materials.

39. Spain had participated actively in the revision of the Agency's International Nuclear Event Scale User's Manual, and was taking the necessary steps in order to use the Nuclear Event Scale domestically as a means of communicating information to the general public.

40. Spain attached importance to the Agency's technical cooperation activities, and continued to pay its full share of the target. It also financed projects to assist countries in Latin American and North Africa in improving their regulatory infrastructures through the Nuclear Safety Council and the Research Centre for Energy, Environment and Technology. His country also provided experts, and offered training courses, fellowships, and scientific visits, and would continue participating in the Agency's efforts to improve the seismic safety of existing nuclear installations.

41. The ARCAL Agreement would be celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary in 2009. The Research Centre for Energy, Environment and Technology cooperated closely with ARCAL and would be actively involved in the modification of the Regional Strategic Profile. His country encouraged the Agency to maintain its active cooperation with ARCAL.

42. Turning to the nuclear sector in Spain, he said that there were eight units in operation at six sites with an installed capacity of 7 728 MW. In 2008, 18.4 % of the country's electricity had been generated using nuclear power, illustrating the important role of nuclear energy in Spain's energy mix.

43. The process to select a location in Spain for a centralized temporary storage facility for spent fuel and high-level waste was still ongoing. A public hearing would be conducted in the autumn during which municipalities could express interest in hosting the facility. In October 2008, a facility for very low level waste at El Cabril had become operational. The facility would facilitate the management of large volumes of such waste, generated mainly during the dismantlement of nuclear power plants.

44. In closing, he thanked the outgoing Director General for his independent, impartial and tireless efforts over the previous 12 years to ensure the Agency's effective contribution to peace, security and the welfare of humankind. He also congratulated the Director General designate on his election and assured him of Spain's full support.

Mr Berdennikov (Russian Federation), Vice-President, took the Chair.

45. Mr MOHAMAD (Malaysia) said that his country remained troubled by the lack of significant progress on nuclear disarmament, and by the perennial problem of inadequate funding for the Agency. Recalling that a war had been launched against Iraq despite the fact that the Agency and the United Nations had provided impartial and factual information pointing to the absence of weapons of mass destruction in that country, he stressed the need to ensure that the Agency remained the sole agency for monitoring and verifying compliance with safeguards obligations. That was even more of an imperative as more countries looked to nuclear power development as a means of meeting growing energy demands and mitigating the effects of climate change. The Agency must be allowed to function without undue impediment — political or otherwise — since its credibility depended on its continued independence.

46. In the area of nuclear technology applications, there was a need for a dramatic increase in funding to enable the Agency to assist developing Member States with their socio-economic development, in line with respective national priorities.

47. He agreed that it was necessary to recognize the link between security and development, and to address the root causes of instability and insecurity, including poverty, poor governance and endemic conflicts, so as to help to remove the temptation for countries to seek weapons of mass destruction. The more developed Member States should provide greater assistance, particularly in the form of funding, for the Agency to assist the developing Member States to enhance global peace and security, while facilitating the development of those States.

48. Malaysia emphasized the basic and inalienable right of States to develop research, production and use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, without any discrimination and in conformity with their respective legal obligations. A clear distinction should be drawn between the legal obligations of Member States arising out of safeguards commitments, and their voluntary commitments. States should not be penalized for not adhering to their voluntary commitments.

49. Malaysia welcomed the recent positive developments that had enabled the Agency to acquire a better understanding of the nuclear programme in Iran. In Malaysia's view, Iran had extended its fullest cooperation to the Agency in accordance with its national obligations in order to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue, and the international community should now move forward. A long-term, peaceful and mutually acceptable solution could be found only through diplomacy and continued dialogue. Malaysia welcomed the Iranian initiatives to promote greater transparency, and encouraged Iran to continue its cooperation with the Agency to resolve the remaining outstanding issues.

50. The Agency should also be allowed to resolve the issues pertaining to the implementation of the safeguards agreement in the Syrian Arab Republic without interference and undue pressure from any third party. Any States with information leading them to conclude that the installation in Syria had been nuclear-related should provide such information to the Agency immediately. Malaysia condemned any act of aggression against any nuclear installation or any installation alleged to be nuclear related, which constituted a flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter.

51. Malaysia agreed that it would become increasingly difficult to call upon non-nuclear-weapon States to renounce nuclear weapons in perpetuity and accept new measures to strengthen non-proliferation if the nuclear-weapon States continued to modernize their arsenals. Malaysia advocated multilateral approaches towards the disarmament of weapons of mass destruction, and had consistently called for the establishment of a nuclear weapons convention.

52. Malaysia agreed that the responsibility for nuclear security rested entirely with the Member States themselves and that the Agency should provide assistance in that regard only upon request. Care

should be taken to ensure that there was no disproportionate focus on perceived threats to nuclear security that could result in unjustifiable denials of shipments of vital radioisotopes. His country also cautioned against linking the increasing global interest for nuclear energy to an increased perception of a threat to nuclear security. States interested in the use of nuclear energy for power generation should not be stereotyped.

53. His country highly appreciated the Agency's efforts in helping Member States to build their technical capacities for the development of nuclear technology and applications, and had benefitted in a number of areas including industry, health and agriculture. It had consistently paid in full and on time its financial contributions to the Agency, and urged other Member States to do likewise.

54. Malaysia was open to the use of nuclear energy as a fuel option for the future, and was taking steps to assess its preparedness in that regard in accordance with relevant Agency recommendations, safety standards and guides. Although an infrastructure development plan for nuclear power was also being prepared, the specific decisions on nuclear power projects would be subject to a new national energy policy for the period 2010–2030, which was being elaborated. His country was also developing a national nuclear policy that would serve as a guide for further development of both power and non-power applications. Some of the main elements covered included research and development of nuclear and related technologies; development of a comprehensive national nuclear legislative and regulatory framework; human capital development; transparent, accurate and timely dissemination of public information; and international cooperation.

55. Malaysia had organized the International Nuclear Conference 2009, which it hoped had given the Agency a more objective understanding of the actual situation in Malaysia, with a view to the design of a proper technical assistance plan for the country. It welcomed the first nuclear knowledge management mission, which had been conducted in Malaysia in July. His country had also hosted an Agency meeting on developing and strengthening nuclear safety and security infrastructure in Asia and that Pacific in May 2009.

56. Lastly, Malaysia expressed its appreciation to the outgoing Director General, Mr ElBaradei, for his admirable and professional service over the previous 12 years, and congratulated his successor, Mr Amano, on his appointment.

57. Mr KAKODKAR (India) expressed his country's gratitude to the outgoing Director General for his outstanding leadership of the Agency over the previous 12 years, and congratulated the Director General designate on his appointment.

58. The role of atomic energy was now more relevant than ever before. Nuclear power had the potential to provide a large sustainable source of clean energy that could address the development aspirations of a large part of humanity. However, concerns regarding safety, proliferation and security, as well as uncertainty about assured fuel supplies needed to be addressed in a holistic manner before nuclear energy could meet its full potential. There was an urgent need for effective action to provide the underdeveloped areas of the world with access to means of development, and to reduce carbon dioxide emissions in order to contain human conflict and prevent climate-related disasters. The Agency and its Member States had a major responsibility in reaching universally applicable solutions accessible to all.

59. The importance of nuclear power had been recognized by his country since its independence in 1947. India's comprehensive atomic energy programme covered the entire fuel cycle for uranium, plutonium and thorium-based fuels, and was governed by the long-term objective of energy independence using the country's vast thorium resources. There were several benefits of the thorium fuel cycle, particularly in heavy water reactors, in terms of proliferation-resistant nuclear energy production and efficient fissile plutonium disposal, which might be of interest to other countries. The

300 MW(e) advanced heavy water reactor being developed in India was mainly a thorium-fuelled reactor with several advanced proven passive safety features. It could be managed with a modest industrial infrastructure within the reach of developing countries, and offered enhanced intrinsic proliferation-resistant characteristics. A new version of the advanced heavy water reactor that used LEU as well as thorium fuel had been designed recently. The reactor had significantly lower requirement of mined uranium per unit of energy produced compared with most current generation thermal reactors, and could meet the requirements of next generation systems in countries with small grids.

60. With regard to the disposal of high-level radioactive waste, he said that there was a need to develop partition and transmutation technologies that reduced the radioactive half-life of waste to a level where most of the radioactivity was lost within a practical time frame. Although intense research and development was necessary, that goal could be achieved, given current levels of development and understanding.

61. India remained committed to making a significant contribution to the growth of nuclear energy globally within the framework of the Agency. Drawing attention to some of the other achievements of the Indian nuclear power programme, he said that the En-masse feeder replacement for RAPS-2 had been completed with the highest levels of safety, using entirely indigenously developed technology. Construction of three 220 MW(e) pressurized heavy water reactors had almost been completed, and two 1000 MW(e) light water reactors and one 500 MW(e) prototype fast breeder reactor were in advanced stages of construction. The unit size of Indian pressurized heavy water reactors had been further increased to 700 MW(e), and plans had been made to install a series of such units in the country. As India's indigenous nuclear programme was set to accelerate, India looked forward to mutually beneficial cooperation with other Member States of the Agency. It was currently reformulating its plans for larger scale programme implementation taking advantage of emerging new possibilities. Results had already been achieved, and RAPS-2 was the first operational pressurized heavy water reactor in India that used imported natural uranium.

62. India had always attached the highest importance to INPRO, and drew attention to the need for all Member States to pool resources and experience in the best interests of humankind. However, one of the biggest limitations to the expansion of nuclear power was the lack of qualified human resources. India was willing to work with friendly developing countries to address that issue and ensure success in intensifying the use of nuclear energy.

63. To mark the end of the centenary year of Dr Homi Bhabha, the founder of India's atomic energy programme, an international conference on the peaceful uses of atomic energy would be held in New Delhi at the end of the month. He thanked the Agency for supporting that event.

64. Mr ZNIBER (Morocco) commended the outgoing Director General, Mr ElBaradei, for his efforts to promote peace and security in the world, and congratulated his successor, Mr Amano, on his appointment.

65. Morocco welcomed the opportunity to discuss the future of the Agency and noted that one of the challenges facing the Agency was the availability of financial resources. The Agency should be given all the financial resources it required in order to carry out its increasing tasks. It should also strengthen its cooperation with other international organizations.

66. Morocco had always advocated complete disarmament, a world free of nuclear weapons, and the development of a credible verification system under the auspices of the Agency. It welcomed the opportunity to co-chair, with France, the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in New York on 24 and 25 September 2009, and called for the rapid entry into force of the CTBT.

67. As a party to the NPT, Morocco regretted the fact that no progress had been made over the years regarding the implementation of the resolution concerning the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East. Israel's persistent refusal to accede to the NPT constituted a serious obstacle to the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and to the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region. He appealed to the international community to consider, in a fair and equitable manner, the concerns associated with the deployment of nuclear weapons in the Middle East, and called on the General Conference to debate the issue.

68. Morocco attached particular importance to the technical cooperation programme, which was an important vehicle for technology transfer, and contributed to the socio-economic development of Member States. Some 15 projects were being implemented in Morocco in the 2009–2011 cycle in areas such as health, agriculture and industry. Two years earlier, the first Triga Mark II research reactor had become operational in Morocco, opening up extensive opportunities for cooperation at the international and regional levels, particularly through AFRA.

69. The future of nuclear power and its acceptance by the public were to a large extent dependent on safety considerations, and he emphasized the importance of trained human resources in that connection. Since 2002, Morocco had provided high-level safety and security training for French speaking experts from Africa, with a view to enhancing the safety culture. The National Centre for Nuclear Energy, Sciences and Technology, which provided the training, was one of five designated regional training centres.

70. Morocco was seeking to set up an international training centre in the field of nuclear sciences and technology applications. It called upon the Agency to provide greater financial assistance for postgraduate education in that field.

71. In keeping with a basic principle of its foreign policy, Morocco supported South-South cooperation with a view to promoting safety, security and peace in the region. In December, Morocco would be hosting a meeting aimed at promoting the Joint Convention among the Arab States.

72. Morocco welcomed the Agency's efforts in the area of nuclear security, in particular through the development of programmes, such as missions to evaluate national infrastructure and nuclear safety requirements, and called on the Agency to continue providing assistance in that regard to developing countries. His country appreciated the development of the Nuclear Security Plan for 2010 – 2013, and called upon Member States to contribute to its implementation through the provision of voluntary contributions.

73. The threat of nuclear terrorism was a subject to which his country attached particular importance. Morocco had hosted the first meeting of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, and thanked the Agency for organizing a seminar concerning prevention of illicit trafficking of nuclear materials in June.

74. Morocco's new national energy plan provided for alternative energy options, including the nuclear power option. The development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes should go hand in hand with nuclear safety and security measures and non-proliferation guarantees. However, such measures should not be used as a barrier to the transfer of technology for peaceful purposes. Access to nuclear technologies for exclusively peaceful purposes was an inalienable right, fully recognized in the NPT.

75. Lastly, he called upon those Member States that had not yet done so to deposit their instruments of acceptance so that the amendment to Article VI of the Statute, which sought to increase representation on the Board of Governors, could enter into force as soon as possible.

76. Mr ENKHBAT (Mongolia) expressed his country's deep appreciation to the outgoing Director General for his many years of outstanding service to the Agency, and congratulated Mr Amano on his appointment.

77. His country, which highly appreciated the Agency's valuable support, was embarking upon a new phase in the development of its peaceful nuclear activities, having adopted a State policy and an action plan on uranium utilization and nuclear energy. The Nuclear Energy Law, which had entered into force in August 2009, regulated all issues pertaining to the exploitation of radioactive minerals, nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, nuclear and radiation safety and security, and protection of the population from the negative impacts of ionizing radiation. A nuclear energy agency had also been established by his Government. Mongolia had begun to implement recommendations made by Agency expert missions with a view to identifying possible multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle, and was satisfied with the results of missions carried out in that connection.

78. Mongolia had indicated its continued interest in the technical cooperation programme to the Director General during his visit to Mongolia in April. In view of the increasing incidence of cancer morbidity and mortality in his country, Mongolia sought the assistance of the Agency and other international donor agencies in order to improve quality and accessibility of cancer services, and build up diagnostic and treatment capacity. Mongolia also benefited greatly from its involvement in the Agency and the RCA, and wished to expand its cooperation with the Agency in order to reflect its increasing needs in the areas of uranium development, the introduction of nuclear energy and nuclear technology transfer. He thanked the Agency for its efforts to strengthen its technical cooperation activities with Mongolia, and noted that his country had, notwithstanding its financial difficulties, made a pledge to the TCF in recognition of the value of technical cooperation activities to its development efforts.

79. Mongolia fully supported the Agency's safeguards and verification activities, and highly commended the Agency's efforts in that regard. His country remained committed to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, and was working to ensure the success of the forthcoming NPT Review Conference. In April, it had hosted the first meeting of focal points of nuclear-weapon-free zones, at which a joint statement for the 2010 NPT Review Conference had been adopted.

80. With regard to his country's nuclear-weapon-free status, he said that Mongolia had held a trilateral meeting in Geneva with Russia and China to consider a draft trilateral treaty that would define Mongolia's status at the international level. He hoped that the treaty, which would institutionalize Mongolia's status, could be concluded shortly.

Mr El Amin, (Sudan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

81. Mr DÍAZ (Mexico) thanked the outgoing Director General for his invaluable work over the previous twelve years and congratulated the Director General designate, with whom Mexico looked forward to working.

82. The Annual Report for 2008 provided an overview of the challenges the Agency had faced. It was important that the Agency continue to maintain a balance among the three pillars of its work. It must also continue to ensure the safety of the various peaceful applications of nuclear energy for the benefit of humankind.

83. Mexico welcomed the improvements in monitoring the implementation of the technical cooperation programme and supported the development of a single information system. The results of programmes should be assessed according to the national and regional impact of projects rather than by the funds spent. His country particularly supported the efforts made to strengthen the programme and departmental management procedures with a view to achieving development targets established

by the international community, and noted that it was contributing to the attainment of the MDGs in areas such as nutrition, maternal health and water resources management.

84. The project to improve water resources management at Guanajuato using isotope hydrology was progressing well, and local authorities had contributed some US\$ 2 million for its implementation. In addition, the programme to increase the power of the two reactors at the Laguna Verde Nuclear Power Plant from 650 to 770 MW(e) over the coming two years was progressing satisfactorily. In accordance with the Agency policy of promoting regional associations to improve the use of research reactors, Mexico's National Nuclear Research Institute had signed the agreement of the parties of the Caribbean Research Reactor Coalition in September 2008.

85. Mexico welcomed the work of the Agency in 2008 on promoting and supporting the global nuclear safety and security regime. His country supported the Agency's activities aimed at securing nuclear materials and facilities and radioactive sources and at strengthening States' legislation and regulations as part of the measures to prevent nuclear terrorism.

86. Mexico had received an INSServ mission in December 2008, which had visited the major ports and airports where the majority of goods entered the country. Mexico welcomed the assistance provided by the Agency to help Member States strengthen their capacity for effective border controls in order to prevent the illicit import and export of nuclear and other radioactive materials.

87. His country welcomed the Agency's publication of guides on various subjects and would continue to contribute through comments and experts to the preparation of further documents in the safety standards series. Mexico also participated in the illicit trafficking database, with the National Commission on Nuclear Safety and Safeguards acting as the national contact point. His Government had also asked the Agency for assistance in installing detection equipment for use during the Pan American Games in 2011.

88. It was regrettable that States had not achieved the non-proliferation objectives set out in international instruments, in particular the NPT. The risk of proliferation would be greatly reduced by significant progress towards total disarmament in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible way. The United Nations Security Council Summit on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Nuclear Disarmament on 24 September 2009 would provide a further opportunity to raise the issue of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. He urged those countries that had not yet acceded to the NPT to do so, and appealed to all States party to that Treaty to comply fully with their obligations.

89. The Agency's efforts to develop a safeguards system that ensured compliance with the nuclear non-proliferation regime would be in vain if it were not backed by the political will of States. Mexico was in full compliance with its safeguards obligations and supported all the Agency's efforts to ensure an effective, efficient and universal safeguards system. His country was grateful to the outgoing Director General for his work in the area of verification and urged all countries to demonstrate their cooperation and support to those activities.

90. Mexico reiterated its call for the resumption of the six-party talks to promote the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and to bring the DPRK back into the NPT regime. It welcomed the Islamic Republic of Iran's recent cooperation with the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and Germany and encouraged the Government of Iran to work actively with the Agency in order to clarify the outstanding issues and to provide assurances of the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme.

91. Following difficult negotiations, the Board of Governors had approved the Agency's programme and budget for 2010. Consideration should be given to how the tasks entrusted to the Agency were to be funded. For example, the signing by more States of an additional protocol,

although desirable, would lead to verification costs. The expansion of the nuclear industry in various countries would also have financial implications. The operation and application of international safeguards and their funding should be reviewed to ensure that the financial load was distributed fairly in a way that also took account of the benefits countries derived from their nuclear industry.

92. Like many developing countries, Mexico attached importance to the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The international community must find the balance between ensuring security and providing for the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information in accordance with Article IV of the NPT. It was now necessary to make new commitments that could go beyond the letter of that Treaty. Confidence must be built on the basis of genuine commitments that would enable an effective response to the threats that had emerged in recent times.

93. Ms RASI (Finland) expressed her delegation's gratitude to Mr ElBaradei for the outstanding manner in which he had carried out his tasks over the past 12 years. She also conveyed her Government's congratulations to the incoming Director General, and assured him of Finland's full support.

94. Well-functioning verification and safeguards were a prerequisite for public confidence in the use of nuclear energy in the longer term. It was important to ensure that the Agency could continue its professional and impartial work in safeguards implementation and had sufficient financial and other resources for its verification activities in the future. Finland was strongly in favour of strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of the Agency's safeguards system. Comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols, which constituted the current verification standard, should be brought promptly into force and implemented in all Member States.

95. In Finland, the experience gained from the implementation of integrated safeguards, which had started about one year previously, had been most encouraging. The requirement for Finland to provide the Agency with extensive information on all aspects of its nuclear fuel cycle had proved less burdensome than expected, and after the preparation of the first declaration, updating it had been straightforward. The Agency had been given broader rights to access facilities and to use advanced verification technologies without any problems, and the overall number of annual Agency inspection missions to Finland had decreased by about 60 %. Finland would welcome and support the further use of state-of-the-art verification technologies to provide quick and reliable results. It was also in favour of the Agency taking more practical steps to enhance cooperation with the SSAC.

96. Work on building an underground final disposal facility in Finland for spent nuclear fuel was at an advanced stage, and high priority being given to the development of a safeguards system for a geological repository for spent fuel. The implementation of safeguards in a new type of facility was necessary at national and international level. Her delegation was pleased to note that the Agency had drafted integrated safeguards approaches for the spent fuel encapsulation plants and for the repositories, and that major progress had been made in devising an integral safeguards approach to the repository.

97. Interest in the use of nuclear power was growing, and the challenges facing the Agency in all its activities had increased accordingly. Finland had more than 30 years of experience in the operation of nuclear power plants and a reliable safety and performance record. A new unit was under construction to add to the four existing nuclear power plant units, and three companies had submitted applications to build a new nuclear power plant unit. A decision in principle, taken by the Government and endorsed by the Parliament, was needed before the actual construction of the new plant could begin.

98. Nuclear power would play a significant role in the energy mix of Finland well into the future, and was expected to meet more than 35 % of the country's electricity needs. Finland aimed to achieve

a diversified and sustainable energy mix, and the share of renewables was now close to 30 % of energy consumption. The promotion of renewable energy, energy efficiency and self-sufficiency was an important part of Finland's energy strategy.

99. Public acceptance of nuclear power needed to be earned every day, and was to a great extent related to nuclear safety. Any major plant damage anywhere in the world could have a major impact on public acceptance. Continued safe operation of nuclear power was necessary, and there could be no exception in any Member State. The Agency was a major player in those efforts; with so many countries planning to introduce nuclear power, its role would become even more important. Member States and the Agency should strengthen and coordinate their efforts to ensure that countries embarking on nuclear power programmes developed sound safety infrastructures. Notwithstanding the Agency's central role in contributing to conditions that permitted the safe and secure use of nuclear energy, ultimately responsibility lay with national authorities and operators. The Agency could not be expected to assume the responsibilities of national authorities. Finland underlined the importance of a strong national safety culture and an independent national regulatory authority that enjoyed public trust. It continued to actively share with other countries its experience in building national infrastructures and making the arrangements needed to ensure the safety of nuclear power plants.

100. Finland appreciated the Agency's work in developing modern safety standards and was ready to continue providing expert resources to that end. It was a party to all international safety conventions and had participated actively in their review meetings. Her delegation called on all countries to accede to the safety conventions and apply the relevant obligations in full.

101. Her delegation underlined the importance of the nuclear waste management issue and noted that the Finnish nuclear waste management and disposal programme had progressed over time. A clearly defined waste management policy and sound financing arrangements set out in nuclear legislation were essential.

102. The Finnish fuel cycle was based on the once-through option. In accordance with national legislation, spent nuclear fuel was considered to be radioactive waste which must be disposed of in bedrock. The lengthy site selection and concept development, including environmental impact assessments, had resulted in a plan for a final disposal in Olkiluoto. The nuclear waste management company Posiva was conducting an extensive programme to prepare for the submission of an application for a construction licence in 2012. The construction of an underground rock characterization facility, which was to operate as part of the final repository, had started in July 2004. At the end of August 2009, the facility's access tunnel had nearly reached final repository depth. Fuel disposal was scheduled to start in 2020.

103. Her delegation welcomed the progress made in the field of nuclear security. With regard to the amendment to the CPPNM, Finland had completed the necessary amendments to national legislation and was ready to deposit its instrument of ratification. It called for an early ratification by all States of the amendment to the CPPNM and of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism so as to strengthen the global nuclear security regime. Finland supported the Agency's important role in the fight against nuclear terrorism, and would be making another voluntary contribution to the NSF.

104. An IPPAS mission had visited Finland in June 2009, and many of the useful recommendations made by the review team were being implemented. Finland recommended those missions to other Member States as an effective way of obtaining guidance on enhancing the physical security of nuclear materials and facilities and radioactive sources.

105. Finland recognized the importance of the Agency's technical cooperation programme. It had always paid its contributions to the regular budget and its share of the TCF target in full and on time,

and called on all Member States to do likewise. The Agency must be able to respond to the increasing demand for technical cooperation activities relating to the introduction of nuclear power, particularly in the area of safety. Accordingly, technical cooperation must be developed further: the most efficient ways of transferring knowledge and technology should be utilized, and emphasis should be on long-term capacity building.

106. Projects under the technical cooperation programme should be in conformity with the Agency's terms of reference and based on national development strategies. Finland recognized the important role of non-power applications relating to technical cooperation and assistance. It urged the Agency to continue to elaborate more cost-effective and sustainable methods and partnerships with other organizations, such as WHO and FAO to ensure that the different areas of expertise of other international organizations were put to the service of recipient countries in a coordinated, effective and sustainable manner.

107. Mr HAMER (Netherlands) commended the leadership and dedication displayed by the outgoing Director General, and pledged his country's full support to Mr ElBaradei's successor, Mr Amano.

108. It was a challenging time for the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The ongoing efforts by the DRPK to produce nuclear weapons, Iran's lack of cooperation in allowing the Agency to verify the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme, and the outstanding questions regarding Syria's nuclear programme, as well as the danger of nuclear material falling into the hands of terrorists and other non-State actors were matters of grave concern which required action. However, the call by United States President Obama for a world without nuclear weapons had inspired a new international effort to create a strengthened non-proliferation regime.

109. There was scope for further strengthening of the Agency's safeguards system. A comprehensive safeguards agreement together with an additional protocol constituted the verification standard. He called upon all Member States to conclude, ratify and implement those two instruments. The verification powers granted to the Agency under an additional protocol were essential for building trust and thus contributed to enhanced nuclear cooperation. A strengthened nuclear safeguards system benefited everyone. However, merely strengthening safeguards was not enough: a strong policy against non-compliance was essential in order to guarantee the integrity of the NPT and the Agency's inspection regime.

110. Nuclear terrorism was one of the biggest threats to international security. He welcomed the initiative of the United States to host a nuclear security summit in 2010. The summit should aim to achieve maximum synergy between existing international instruments and avoid duplication. His country had hosted the fifth plenary meeting of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism in June 2009. An international exercise on the prevention of nuclear terrorism was planned for later in the year. The Agency was fully involved in both events.

111. The Nuclear Security Fund was an important instrument for improving nuclear security. Multilateral cooperation would maximize the efficiency and hence the effectiveness of international efforts. The Fund should eventually be financed from the Agency's regular budget but, until then, all Member States, not just a few donors, should contribute to it. His own country had pledged a further donation of €250 000 for 2010.

112. An IPPAS mission had visited the Netherlands in June 2009 and had reviewed the national regulatory body and all nuclear installations in the country. A follow-up mission would take place in 2010 to consider the implementation of the recommendations and suggestions. A regional training course for security regulators would be held later in 2009, in collaboration with the Agency and the European Nuclear Security Regulators' Association, which, it was hoped, would lead to the establishment of a permanent European training centre.

113. Turning to nuclear science and technology, he said that many previous speakers had voiced serious concerns about the shortage of medical radioisotopes. His country was the second-largest producer of those isotopes, but the relevant reactor had been shut down in August 2008 following technical problems. Because of the global implications of a lengthy halt in production, the operator had requested permission to restart production while repairs were under way. The national regulatory body and an Agency review mission had judged the proposed safety measures to be adequate, and permission had been granted for the reactor to restart operation for one year. Close cooperation between Member States, the Agency and other relevant international organizations was important in order to manage the vulnerable global supply of medical radioisotopes, on which so many patients depended around the world.

114. His Government was pleased to note that the Reactor Institute Delft had been designated an Agency Collaborating Centre, one of 13 throughout the world.

115. Turning to technical cooperation, he said that his country provided technical expertise, specialized equipment and training, and supported R&D on critical development issues. The Agency's technical cooperation activities were an important catalyst for sustainable development. His country had pledged its full share of the target for 2010 and called upon Member States that had not yet made their pledges to do so as soon as possible. He commended the Secretariat on the progress it had made in streamlining the technical cooperation programme, but felt that the programme's effectiveness would be further improved by increasing the coherence between the various projects and activities. That task would be a priority of his country's term on the Board of Governors.

116. An increasing number of States had decided that nuclear power should form part of their national energy mix, which presupposed access to a secure supply of nuclear fuel. That issue must be addressed if nuclear power generation was to develop in accordance with the highest standards of safety, security and non-proliferation. His country had always supported multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle. The proposals made thus far were a valuable contribution to the realization of the right of States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. His country would continue to seek a dialogue with all the parties concerned.

117. His country attached great importance to the discussions on the future of the Agency. It was for Member States to decide on the role and tasks of the Secretariat and the tools it should have at its disposal. However, in view of the resurgence of interest in nuclear power as an energy source, the Agency must have the financial and other resources it needed to fulfil its mandate.

118. In his own country, the increasing urgency of climate change and the scarcity of energy resources made it essential to consider the future place of nuclear power in the national fuel mix. His Government did not expect to make any decisions about the construction of new nuclear power plants during its current term of office. However, it was working on three possible scenarios, ranging from the complete phasing-out of nuclear energy to the commissioning of new power plants, which should help a future government to reach an informed decision.

119. Mr POTTS (Australia) said that Australia had a strong record as a creative and energetic member of the international community working towards improving global peace and security. Its Government, determined to continue in that tradition, had announced that Australia would seek election as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council in 2012, for the term 2013–2014.

120. In the field of non-proliferation and disarmament, Australia had been at the forefront of efforts to reduce the threat posed by nuclear weapons. Australia had rejected the option of becoming a nuclear-weapon State and had signed the NPT in 1970. In the 1990s, the Government had convened the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons and had made a significant

contribution to the negotiation of the CTBT. In 2008, Australia had, together with Japan, established the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament with a view to generating momentum in the global debate on nuclear disarmament and preventing the further spread of nuclear weapons. The Commission's major report, expected by early 2010, would aim to build international consensus in advance of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Australia was also working with others to achieve an outcome from the Review Conference that would reinforce and build on previous consensus. Australia had been chairing the "Vienna Group of Ten", a group of States committed to producing text on safeguards and verification, safety and security, and peaceful uses, to assist the NPT review process.

121. Member States of the Agency had a common interest in ensuring an effective Agency safeguards system. The assurance that the safeguards system was effective, not least in terms of public confidence, was a central part of the NPT, providing the foundation for nuclear trade and cooperation, and was also important to continuing progress on nuclear disarmament. He welcomed the fact that safeguards authorities in the Asia-Pacific region had agreed at a meeting in the Republic of Korea in April 2009 to establish the Asia-Pacific Safeguards Network, which would commence on 1 October 2009. Working closely with the Agency, the Network aimed to improve the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of safeguards implementation in the region through enhanced cooperation via capacity building, professional development and the sharing of experience. The Director General of the Australian Safeguards and Non-Proliferation Office had been elected the first chair of the Network. The Network's Statement of Principles would be circulated as a GOV/INF document.

122. Emphasising the importance of expanding the coverage of Agency safeguards, he encouraged NPT parties that had yet to fulfil their obligations under the Treaty to conclude comprehensive safeguards agreements as soon as possible, and welcomed the conclusion of comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols by the Republic of the Congo, Kenya and Vanuatu. Australia trusted that safeguards coverage would increase through the universalization of the NPT, and encouraged those States that had not signed and ratified the Treaty to do so as soon as possible. Safeguarding all nuclear activities in every State was vital to building a nuclear-weapon-free world.

123. Australia also urged Member States to recognize that the Agency's core mission was to develop and strengthen the safeguards system to meet contemporary challenges. Agency inspectors required the necessary support and authority to fulfil their mission, a goal which Australia promoted with the Agency through the Australian safeguards support programme and through its membership of SAGSI.

124. The additional protocol was an integral part of the contemporary verification standard. Without it, the Agency could not draw conclusions about the absence of undeclared nuclear activities in States. He therefore strongly encouraged all States, particularly those with significant nuclear activities, yet to sign, ratify and implement an additional protocol, to do so as soon as possible. Such action would contribute greatly to global security, and should not be viewed as a burdensome new commitment, bargaining chip, or concession conditional on other States' actions.

125. It was important for States to comply with their safeguards obligations and for Member States to hold each other to account for safeguards violations. Any notion that Agency safeguards were voluntary in character should be rejected. Under the NPT, non-nuclear-weapon States parties had made a binding commitment to use nuclear energy only for peaceful purposes. Safeguards agreements were the means of verifying that commitment and established obligations that were binding in international law.

126. Any additional legal obligations created by United Nations Security Council resolutions were appropriate given the special status of the Agency with respect to the Security Council. Failure to be vigilant in cases of actual or possible non-compliance would erode the credibility of the safeguards

system and the global security architecture it supported. In that context, Australia, while acknowledging some recent instances of cooperation with the Agency, remained deeply concerned that the Islamic Republic of Iran continued to act in violation of binding Security Council resolutions and Board of Governors' requirements, and in a manner inconsistent with its safeguards obligations. He expressed particular concern that Iran had not cooperated with the Agency in addressing information that pointed to possible military dimensions to its nuclear programme, and he encouraged Iran to clarify and resolve those issues with the Agency and to engage in productive dialogue, including on nuclear issues, with the permanent members of the Security Council and Germany.

127. Agency assessments had increased concerns about the likelihood that the Syrian Arab Republic had been conducting undeclared nuclear activities, including construction of a reactor with assistance from the DPRK. Such undeclared activities would be in breach of Syria's safeguards obligations, and its refusal to cooperate fully with the Agency in investigating the issues compounded concerns. Australia supported the Agency's continuing efforts to establish the truth of the matter and urged Syria to cooperate in that regard.

128. Australia profoundly regretted the DPRK's unilateral announcement of withdrawal from the NPT, and that country's non-compliance with its safeguards obligations, its decision to cease all cooperation with the Agency, and its defiance of Security Council resolutions. He urged the DPRK to abandon nuclear weapons and its nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, and to comply with the NPT, its Agency safeguards agreement, and all relevant Security Council resolutions. The Conference must send a clear message to the DPRK that its actions were not acceptable.

129. Australia attached great importance to nuclear safety and security, and worked closely with the Agency and regional neighbours on such issues. As a major uranium producer and exporter, it recognized the importance of implementing best practice standards in uranium mining and processing. Australia had been pleased to host a meeting during the present session of the General Conference concerning prospects and challenges for uranium production. It also attached great importance to the safe, reliable and timely transport of radioactive materials, which had an essential role in medical, scientific and industrial applications, and supported the activities of the International Steering Committee on Denial of Shipments of Radioactive Material. Denials or delays had a serious impact on the shipment of short-lived medical isotopes, and had the potential to significantly exacerbate current supply shortages. Australia hoped to work with the Agency and others to find practical solutions.

130. Australia was a strong supporter of the Agency's nuclear security programme and had made a further contribution of 450 000 Australian dollars to the NSF in 2009. His country worked closely with the Agency to develop guidance, training courses and security-related missions. In 2009, it had hosted regional training courses on security in the transport of radioactive material and on physical protection of research reactors, and had chaired an Agency meeting on the long-term management of disused and orphan radioactive sources. It also cooperated with its neighbours to identify and secure high-risk radioactive sources and enhance legislation, infrastructure and security culture. Australia looked forward to making a strong contribution to the global nuclear security summit to be convened by the United States of America in 2010.

131. Australia affirmed the right of Agency Member States to enjoy the benefits of peaceful uses of nuclear energy in accordance with their international obligations, and took seriously its undertaking to facilitate the exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for such purposes. Australia held between 30% and 40% of the world's uranium reserves and was a major supplier to the global nuclear power industry. In 2008, it had ranked among the top dozen contributors to the TCF, and contributed extrabudgetary funds to the RCA. The Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) was a designated Agency collaborating centre for neutron

scattering applications and had hosted the second Asia-Oceania Neutron Scattering Association neutron school in August 2009.

132. In relation to the continuing shortage of molybdenum-99, Australia was pleased to report that routine operation of the molybdenum-99 facility associated with its OPAL research reactor had been given full regulatory approval, and commercial production had commenced. ANSTO would be able to supply the domestic market, and was looking to increase production for export in an effort to mitigate the global shortfall. Australia participated in the high-level group established by the OECD/NEA to address the shortage in the longer term and recognized the strong role the Agency could play in that regard.

133. In closing, he expressed deep appreciation of the outgoing Director General's excellent service to the Agency and commitment to improving international peace and the contribution of nuclear technology to economic development, human health and well-being. He also congratulated the incoming Director General, with whom Australia looked forward to working closely.

134. Mr ALHAMADI (Qatar) commended the outgoing Director General on his outstanding performance over the past 12 years, during which the Agency had achieved major advances in all areas covered by its mandate. The General Conference's decision to confer on Dr ElBaradei the title of Director General Emeritus of the Agency was a well-deserved honour. He also welcomed the incoming Director General, Mr Amano, and wished him every success.

135. Qatar had established a national task force to oversee the drafting of special legislation required by the institutions that would manage and organize the country's use of nuclear technology for various civilian purposes. The task force would also ensure that qualified human resources were on hand to run the relevant national institutions. It was hoped to enact and enforce the legislation in the near future.

136. Qatar was currently working on its framework agreement for technical cooperation with the Agency, and hoped to prepare, adopt and implement its framework strategy in 2010 with the assistance of Agency experts. The experts were also applying Agency expertise to the organization of border surveillance in order to guarantee full control over imports and exports of radioactive material.

137. With a view to ensuring full transparency of its activities related to nuclear energy, Qatar had signed a safeguards agreement and a Small Quantities Protocol with the Agency in 2009.

138. At their summit in Doha in 2009, the Arab leaders had adopted a resolution reaffirming the right of the Arab States to use nuclear energy for development purposes as well as an Arab nuclear energy strategy for the period 2010–2020. Basing itself on that resolution, Qatar was focusing on cooperation among the Arab States, through existing national, regional and international institutions, with a view to making full use of their potential and expertise in the area of peaceful applications of nuclear energy in support of national development goals.

139. Qatar was also participating through the Gulf Cooperation Council in the implementation of the detailed studies required to build an infrastructure for peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to implement technical cooperation projects that had been agreed with the Agency. His country looked forward to further cooperation with the Agency in that context.

140. Qatar was deeply concerned about the Agency's continued inability to implement the comprehensive safeguards regime in States that had not acceded to the NPT. The resulting imbalance in the Middle East posed a threat to regional and international peace and security. All States in the region had acceded to the NPT except Israel, which remained outside the NPT regime despite its possession of a nuclear arsenal with huge destructive potential. The situation was a source of instability in the region and encouraged States to seek ways of redressing the imbalance.

141. Unilateral action in the form of attacks on installations in other States prompted solely by suspicions regarding their activities was unacceptable. Any State that possessed data regarding undeclared activities should behave responsibly and make the information available to the Agency so that it could undertake an investigation. The international community could then take appropriate measures to rectify the situation in the light of the highly credible information produced by the Agency.

142. Qatar noted with satisfaction recent steps to launch a dialogue between the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran to settle the Iranian nuclear issue and dispel the tensions overshadowing the Gulf region. His country urged the two States to take the opportunity to resolve all outstanding issues in a spirit of responsibility in order to preclude a confrontation with unpredictable consequences.

143. The time had come to acknowledge that the welfare of humankind lay in cooperation rather than confrontation and in good neighbourliness rather than war. Qatar strongly supported the aim of creating a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, in the Middle East and the implementation of the Security Council, General Assembly and NPT Review Conference resolutions concerning non-proliferation.

144. Mr TÓTH (Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization) said that the Agency was starting a new era with the appointment of the new Director General. He wished Ambassador Amano every success as he prepared to face the many complex challenges that lay ahead. He also paid tribute to the outgoing Director General's many years of outstanding service to international peace and security. As Director General Emeritus of the Agency, Dr ElBaradei would continue to carry his message of peace, and contribute to the realization of the dream of a world free of nuclear weapons.

145. A successful outcome of the forthcoming NPT Review Conference was critical for the continued success of the multilateral nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Progress on the CTBT was one of the areas where consensus could be built in advance of the 2010 Review Conference. The CTBT was a strong complement to the NPT; entry into force of the Treaty would signal a commitment to disarmament, strengthened non-proliferation, and facilitate the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The CTBTO's own high-level conference on facilitating the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty would be taking place on 24 and 25 September with the participation of foreign ministers from some 100 countries, and the final declaration was expected to set out a strategy for the entry into force of the Treaty. The outcome documents of previous Article XIV conferences had always been adopted by consensus, even in the case of the 2005 Conference, which had taken place only a few weeks after the 2005 NPT Review Conference. The CTBT had therefore always been a uniting issue, even at difficult moments for the multilateral non-proliferation regime.

146. The CTBT boasted a near-universal membership: 181 countries had signed the Treaty. The number of ratifications now stood at 149, bringing the Commission closer to the benchmark of 150 ratifications, which was an outstanding achievement. However, 9 of the 44 nuclear technology-capable States were still required to ratify the Treaty before it could enter into force. Although the prospects for the entry into force of the Treaty appeared much more positive than they had in the past, leadership and determined action by the international community were sorely needed to go the last mile.

147. The Commission had built up a one billion dollar verification system, and almost 80% of the International Monitoring System's global monitoring stations were already sending operational-standard data to the CTBTO headquarters in Vienna. The volume of the data transmitted from the stations to the data centre in Vienna had tripled over the last five years. A new global communications infrastructure for relaying that data had been installed, and important advances had been made

concerning processing methods and software. The deplorable test explosions by the DPRK in 2006 and 2009 had proved the reliability of the system. The system had also gained the trust and approval of the scientific community in the context of a 500 scientist-strong scientific studies project.

148. There were several indications that a nuclear renaissance was imminent. More and more States would master the nuclear fuel cycle to satisfy the legitimate growing demands of their economic development, as well as to combat climate change and global warming. The amount of fissile material in circulation therefore would increase significantly, and the international community needed to put in place a robust, reliable and proven protection system. The anticipated nuclear renaissance must go hand in hand with the strengthening of the relevant legal regimes, and with the development of mechanisms to prevent the misuse of fissile material. To that end, he called for the entry into force of a fissile material cut-off treaty, the application of comprehensive safeguards and an additional protocol as the verification standard, tighter export controls, and multilateral fuel assurances. The entry into force of the CTBT was also a logical and necessary step to ensure that current and future nuclear non-proliferation challenges were addressed credibly.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.