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President: Ms MACMILLAN (New Zealand)

Later: Mr DAVIES (United States of America)

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Abbreviations used in this record:

AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
AIDS	acquired immune deficiency syndrome
ARCAL	Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EU	European Union
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
INIS	International Nuclear Information System
LDC	least developed country
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
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PATTEC	Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
PET	positron emission tomography
R&D	research and development
SIT	sterile insect technique
SQP	small quantities protocol
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
WHO	World Health Organization
WWER	water cooled water moderated reactor (former USSR)

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

1. Ms KJAZIMI (The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) said that living in a world under threat from nuclear terrorism and other acts involving nuclear material was a reality. Hence, the Agency's role was crucially important. Recognizing that the primary responsibility for security rested with Member States, her country had adhered to instruments that aided international efforts to strengthen non-proliferation, nuclear verification and export control. The preceding week, her country's Parliament had ratified the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management.
2. The fact that her country was eligible to receive support under the EU Joint Action IV agreement proved that it would play an active role in the implementation of the EU Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. Missions carried out by European Union and the Agency had identified the country's needs with respect to further improvement of physical protection of nuclear applications, border control management and the necessary legal and regulatory infrastructure.
3. The independent Radiation Safety Directorate, with the Agency's assistance, had made significant progress in building capacity for effective radiation protection and nuclear safety. Of particular importance were its efforts to establish a central storage facility for low- and intermediate-level radioactive waste. Further assistance would be required to make the facility fully operational.
4. The Agency's Department of Technical Cooperation had provided significant assistance in the implementation of her country's national technical cooperation programme. The Department should maintain its primary role of responding to Member States' needs as identified in their CPFs. The 2010–2015 CPF for her country was in its final stage of revision. The current national technical cooperation programme focused on human health, agriculture and food safety, nuclear knowledge management and strengthening the capabilities of radiation safety services. Application of nuclear technologies in the field of human health was still considered to be of utmost importance. To prove its commitment, the Government had contributed €4 million to the project on establishing a PET centre, for which Agency support was crucial.
5. As a result of successful cooperation with the Agency, some of the country's institutions had already been acknowledged as centres of excellence and training centres and were ready to welcome experts from the region for future training programmes. Her country had also hosted many Agency events under the regional technical cooperation programme and hoped to continue such activities in the future.
6. In spite of severe economic conditions, her country's Government had always met its obligations to the Agency's Regular Budget and had provided significant extrabudgetary contributions to the TCF.
7. Ms RODRÍGUEZ MANCIA (Guatemala) said that the authorities of her country had specifically requested that she comment on the job done by the Director General over the preceding twelve years and pay tribute to his dedication and his tireless efforts to achieve the Agency's goals. He had worked hard so that all countries could benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in its

various applications, for the good of humanity and the development of nations. The well-deserved Nobel Peace Prize which he had shared with the Agency bore testimony to his great efforts and had had an impact on the most vulnerable populations through the creation of the IAEA Nobel Cancer and Nutrition Fund. She conveyed to him the affection and gratitude of the Government and people of Guatemala and expressed support for the new Director General.

8. Guatemala actively supported all initiatives promoting disarmament and non-proliferation, those being fundamental principles of its foreign policy. As a party to the Tlatelolco Treaty, Guatemala was part of the first densely populated nuclear-weapon-free zone on the planet. It had a safeguards agreement in force with the Agency and an additional protocol. The latter had been signed during the Director General's official visit to Guatemala in 2001. In addition, all of the domestic requirements were being fulfilled under the Guatemalan Constitution to ratify the CTBT as early as possible.

9. Her country firmly believed in the inalienable right of all States to have access to nuclear energy and its peaceful uses, but along with that right came certain obligations, such as the obligation to comply with the Agency's safeguards regime. In that connection, she called on all countries which did not yet have safeguards instruments in force to sign them without delay so that the Agency could fulfil its mandate, and she called upon those which did have them to facilitate their full implementation.

10. Guatemala recognized the Agency's fundamental role in the fields of verification, nuclear safety and technical cooperation, the three pillars of the organization's Statute, and it stressed the need for balance among those pillars.

11. The demand for nuclear energy for peaceful uses, especially among developing countries facing increasing challenges which far exceeded their technological and financial capabilities, made it essential that Agency technical cooperation receive greater financial resources so that programme implementation was assured, predictable and sufficient. It was therefore becoming increasingly urgent that technical cooperation no longer depend on voluntary contributions.

12. The technical cooperation programme for Guatemala contributed to the country's social and economic development, complementing to a large extent the efforts of the Government to advance its social agenda.

13. Two new projects had been approved for Guatemala in the 2009–2011 cycle, one on strengthening of cancer therapy and the other on support for development of human resources and nuclear technology.

14. In addition, work continued on establishing a laboratory for nutrition diagnosis and evaluation in connection with chronic diseases in Guatemala and Central America. Projects were also under way in agriculture to enhance the nutritional value of grains.

15. The medfly programme centre based in Guatemala had received fellows from various parts of the world, contributing to efforts to eradicate the medfly. Guatemala's efforts to develop its own human resources had benefited greatly from the country's participation in the training programmes offered by the Agency in a variety of areas.

16. Guatemala appreciated the enormous contribution made by the Agency in promoting nuclear energy which was one of the cleanest low-cost sources of energy. It therefore welcomed the fact that the topic of the Scientific Forum that year had been energy and development.

17. Efforts to connect the electricity grids of Mexico and Central America were quite advanced, and Colombia had joined those efforts. The Agency should consider regional approaches as a way of achieving greater benefits for countries in that area.

18. Discussion was taking place at national level of Guatemala's CPF, which would identify existing needs and strengths with a view to taking fuller advantage of opportunities for cooperation with the Agency. Work was in progress at national level to strengthen coordination among institutions, and the work of the National Liaison Officer, intensifying efforts to make the opportunities offered by the Agency for technical cooperation more widely known to the public, academia and the private sector. Her country was grateful to the Agency for the cooperation it had provided.

19. Having taken part that year in the informal discussions on the future of the Agency, Guatemala firmly believed there was a need to work towards a consensus in the discussions in order to strengthen the Agency to face the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead. Guatemala remained willing to participate constructively in that process.

20. Mr STACEY MORENO (Ecuador) said that the multilateral system and its resolutions had to be strengthened in order to tackle the challenges and threats facing humanity arising from a lack of mutual trust, rifts caused by the reorganization of world power and the pressing need for fairer, more balanced social and economic development to consolidate the peaceful coexistence of nations. Over half a century had elapsed since the Agency's first General Conference and, during that time, the international community had witnessed the positive development of an organization that worked actively and tirelessly for nuclear non-proliferation, safety of nuclear facilities and activities, and expansion of the benefits of nuclear applications, particularly in developing countries. However, it still had a long way to go to meet fully its objectives, ensuring that nuclear technology — rather than causing destruction or concern — was accessible to all as an effective tool for combating poverty and promoting sustainable human development.

21. Ecuador promoted peace and universal disarmament, condemned the use of weapons of mass destruction and was committed to nuclear non-proliferation. It belonged to the world's first densely populated nuclear-weapon-free zone and rejected any non-peaceful nuclear programme, and it supported any proposals and efforts aimed at reducing nuclear arsenals.

22. Given the potential consequences of accidents or malicious acts involving nuclear material, radioactive sources and nuclear technologies, States had to make every effort to control them. That was not only a national responsibility, but a commitment shared by the international community.

23. His country was in favour of an international regime for the safe transport of radioactive material that covered liability for damage to human health and the environment, and economic loss that could occur in the event of an accident or incident. It was also very important to have prior, transparent and clear communication among States on shipments, especially by sea. Dialogue between shipping and coastal States should continue, as it was of mutual benefit.

24. Ecuador recognized the Agency as the competent authority to verify and ensure compliance with safeguards agreements, so as to prevent the diversion of nuclear knowledge, technology and material for non-peaceful purposes. It was important to strive for universal application of the Agency's safeguards system, including by those countries currently outside the regime. Adherence to the NPT should not be considered merely as an option, but as a priority for the international community to guarantee global and regional security. There was also a need to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and Ecuador urged all countries to adopt the measures required to facilitate the suggested approach to that issue and promote the forum on it recommended by the General Conference in 2000.

25. His country maintained a principled position on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. It firmly believed in the inalienable right of all States party to the NPT to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination, provided that they complied in a full and transparent manner with their obligations under the non-proliferation regime. Diplomatic

dialogue was very important for finding a peaceful and lawful solution to international conflicts. Ecuador rejected the adoption of unilateral measures of force outside the multilateral United Nations system and international law.

26. Given the expansion of nuclear power, the demand for nuclear fuel cycle services, and the related proliferation risks, all options for assuring nuclear fuel supplies needed to be examined in depth. Ecuador was willing to support the most viable initiatives that were proliferation-resistant and allowed countries to benefit from the use of nuclear power.

27. Ecuador's Constitution included a vision for an energy mix that relied less on fossil fuels and aimed at use of cleaner energy, also taking into consideration the nuclear option. The devastating effects of climate change had forced all countries to rethink their development models. Ecuador had presented an initiative that involved leaving around 900 million barrels of crude oil untouched in the subsoil of the Yasuní national park, thus preventing environmental contamination with 410 million tonnes of carbon. That initiative would help combat global warming, and protect an area that was home to tribes living in voluntary isolation and had one of the highest biodiversity levels in the world.

28. Ecuador had proposed building a development strategy that was more inclusive and non-exploitative to eradicate poverty and ensure a decent life for all human beings, in which the nuclear renaissance would play an important role. Lasting security could not be achieved without sustainable human development. Technical cooperation was the means by which modern States and international bodies contributed to the progress of humanity. One of the areas in which Ecuador had received technical cooperation from the Agency was nuclear medicine, in the form of cancer diagnosis and treatment equipment, so it was very interested in the benefits of PACT. The country also valued agricultural projects on improvement of seed varieties, use of fertilizers and aquifer characterization, whose results had been extremely positive. In the 2009–2011 programme cycle, the Government would expand the use of nuclear technology in industry, especially in the oil, mining and agro-industrial sectors, with the collaboration of the Agency and a sizeable financial contribution from the country.

29. As part of its restructuring process, Ecuador had given special attention to the national competent authority for nuclear energy, which was reflected in the high level of project implementation and the sector's growing capacities.

30. Special thanks were owed to the Agency's Incident and Emergency Centre and the French Government for their timely and efficient humanitarian support in treating an Ecuadorian citizen who had suffered serious radiation exposure but who had now recovered.

31. Ecuador attached special importance to ARCAL and appreciated the efforts made by the Department of Technical Cooperation to strengthen it.

32. Mr QUIÑONES (Dominican Republic) said that science was one of the main motive forces for progress and the well-being of humanity. Nuclear applications played a prime role in finding solutions to problems affecting humanity, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy could be found in practically all spheres of life. The Agency's efforts to promote and develop such applications, transfer technology to Member States, elaborate safety standards for nuclear activities and verify the peaceful use of nuclear material were of fundamental importance if nuclear science was to be a source of progress.

33. The President of the Dominican Republic had stressed the importance of promoting the development of nuclear science and technology to ensure the well-being and sustained development of the population. The Agency's technical cooperation programme had helped the country to develop its capacities in that field. Thanks to the national authorities' interest in promoting and diversifying the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and supporting technical cooperation with the Agency, the country

had been able to increase its participation in national and regional projects and had hosted many Agency regional courses and activities, thus enhancing its staff training opportunities in areas of fundamental interest for its development.

34. Ongoing Agency projects in the health field in the Dominican Republic focused on strengthening radiotherapy services in national cancer hospitals. The Government recognized the importance of PACT and appreciated the mission sent to the country in October 2008 which had contributed substantially to the development of an integrated national cancer control strategy.

35. Agency technical cooperation would help the country improve its logistical and human capacities for the sustained management of aquifers, to assure drinking water supplies for rural communities and develop optimal strategies for conserving soil and extending the useful life of dams.

36. Agency support for the creation of a nuclear applications and research centre would allow the Government to have access to a nuclear analytical techniques service centre for public and private institutions.

37. In the energy field, the Agency provided invaluable assistance to developing countries in weighing up the appropriateness or feasibility of the nuclear power option, given the pressing need to diversify the energy mix, reduce dependence on oil and decrease emissions of polluting gases into the atmosphere.

38. Agency assistance with strengthening the national nuclear and radiation safety infrastructure was also essential for the safe use of nuclear applications in the country.

39. The Government thanked the Department of Technical Cooperation, particularly Ms Cetto and the Division for Latin America, for their valuable support for and commitment to constantly extending and improving the scope and sustainability of technical cooperation projects. In June 2009, his Government had been delighted to sign a CPF setting the short- and medium-term priorities of the technical cooperation programme in the Dominican Republic in the areas of health, radiation protection and nuclear safety, water resources management and environmental protection, energy, agriculture, industry and national capacity building. The document, which had been drawn up in accordance with the Government's vision for national development, would allow nuclear applications to make an even greater contribution to socio-economic development. The new President of the National Energy Commission, Mr Ramírez, hoped to continue promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in the country. During his time as Secretary of State and President of the Commission, Mr Fernández Zucco had made a valuable contribution in that regard, and his dynamism and commitment to the issue had allowed the country to make considerable progress.

40. His country's CPF objectives included the implementation of binational projects with Haiti. Nuclear energy could help considerably in resolving problems affecting the two countries occupying the same island, particularly in the areas of health, energy, environment and water resources. The Agency's support would be appreciated in designing mechanisms to allow the two countries to cooperate more closely.

41. With respect to regional cooperation, the Dominican Republic attached great importance to ARCAL as the main instrument for nuclear cooperation in the region, and it had applied to host the regional meeting of the ARCAL Technical Co-ordination Board in 2010. It appreciated the Agency's support for ARCAL, and the support provided by the Spanish Research Centre for Energy, Environment and Technology. The Dominican Republic had hosted several meetings for ARCAL regional projects in 2009.

42. The Agency's efforts to prevent the use of nuclear material for the construction of weapons of mass destruction or for terrorist acts, and to protect the public and the environment from the dangers

posed by radiation were of fundamental importance for international peace and security. Aware as it was of the importance of international cooperation in that regard, in recent years his Government had signed an additional protocol and ratified the CPPNM and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. In June 2009, the country had expressed its support for the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and the supplementary Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources.

43. The Dominican Republic supported the Agency's activities aimed at strengthening the participation of Caribbean countries in international initiatives related to the safe and peaceful use of nuclear energy. In February 2009, an Agency regional seminar on nuclear safety, security and safeguards had been held in Santo Domingo, attended by over 50 representatives from 22 countries of the Caribbean region. In October 2009, the country would also host a regional training course on the security of radioactive sources.

44. His Government supported the international community's efforts in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation aimed at ridding the world of the serious threat posed by nuclear weapons. The country was party to the NPT and the Tlatelolco Treaty and was committed to the principles enshrined in those instruments. The Agency's verification measures, which provided assurances of the peaceful use of nuclear material, were important and the Dominican Republic therefore supported the Agency's safeguards regime as strengthened by the additional protocol.

45. Mr DIALLO (Burkina Faso) said that the General Conference was being held against a backdrop of heightened awareness of the need for the international community to establish world peace, as evidenced by the high-level meeting held in Berlin on 15–16 July 2008 to discuss security and cooperation. Establishing a global security structure could bring hope and should provide citizens of the world with greater opportunities to improve their living conditions. The world was facing threats which not even the strongest States could overcome or control on their own, such as terrorism, the proliferation of weapons, including small arms, climate change, large-scale pandemics and food insecurity. The list was far from exhaustive, but those threats could imperil globalization.

46. The emergence of those challenges, and the need to tackle them through integrated strategic action within the United Nations system, called for a new era of responsibility, a new path of multilateral cooperation. More than ever before, the Agency needed the backing and support of all its Member States to face those new challenges, and it needed to put in place a verification regime that was both robust and effective.

47. The Director General, in his address to the South African Institute of International Affairs in July 2009, had argued that the events of recent years had put the non-proliferation programme under greater strain than ever before. The challenges remained numerous and the international community needed to continue to strive to strengthen the non-proliferation regime, of which the NPT was the cornerstone.

48. Non-proliferation should mean all States committing themselves to complying fully with the provisions of the NPT and adhering fully to the CTBT. The 2005 NPT Review Conference had failed to produce a consensus document, but it had provided an opportunity to reaffirm the importance of the NPT. Burkina Faso hoped that the 2010 NPT Review Conference would make real progress.

49. Africa served as a good example in that area, as almost all African countries had adhered to the Pelindaba Treaty which had come into force in July 2009. Burkina Faso counted on the international community to help preserve that achievement and assist Africa to look to its future by investing its resources in sustainable development.

50. His country supported the universalization of safeguards and reiterated its commitment to the Agency's safeguards system. It called on others who had not yet done so to adhere to the relevant instruments. Burkina Faso had approved the modification to the SQP in February 2008, thus achieving full adherence to Agency safeguards, which was a clear indication of its desire to use nuclear energy for socio-economic development.

51. At national level, his country had strengthened structures regulating the peaceful use of nuclear energy. In 2007, it had established two institutions: the Technical Secretariat for Atomic Energy and the National Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Authority. The former promoted the peaceful use of nuclear energy, while the latter was responsible for regulating its use to protect the health of the population and the environment. The establishment of those institutions had been followed by a seminar for members of the Government, relevant State bodies and civil society on the role the atom could play in the socio-economic life of the country and on the security and safety measures which needed to be implemented. The Government of Burkina Faso appreciated the technical assistance it had received from the Agency in organizing that event, and in implementing a national capacity-building programme for radiation protection under its CPF for 2007-2011.

52. It was clear that the aforementioned institutions would not be able to achieve their respective goals without a national nuclear information programme in place. The establishment of the national INIS centre, with the assistance of the Agency, aimed at addressing that issue.

53. Technical cooperation was one of the main activities of the Agency. Burkina Faso welcomed the positive impact of such cooperation. Since joining the Agency, Burkina Faso had been involved in a number of regional projects relating to power, health, nutrition, water and the environment.

54. It was participating in a tripartite Model Project with Mali and the Agency on combating of trypanosomosis using the SIT, which programme had been strengthened with the advent of PATTEC. The 51st General Conference had decided to strengthen Agency support for that project.

55. Malaria was another scourge which seriously hindered the socio-economic development of sub-Saharan countries. The efforts made by the Agency to address that problem were greatly appreciated. Thanks to them, it had been possible to demonstrate that dietary supplements of vitamin A and zinc could reduce malaria incidence by over 30%. That important result had been publicized in the media owing to its great socio-economic significance. It had prompted the Agency to turn the national project in question into a regional project, including Mali, Ghana and Cameroon.

56. He commended the Agency's efforts to combat cancer through PACT. Establishing a partnership with the WHO would be a great asset, particularly for developing countries, in the fight against cancer.

57. His country was conscious of the efforts made by the Agency to meet the growing energy needs of developing countries. Those efforts should continue, focusing on energy demand planning projects and taking into account capacity building. An evaluation of energy sources in West Africa showed that nuclear power would be the most credible option in 2030, along with hydroelectric and solar power. Action was needed to develop and build strategic partnerships in order to realize that goal. The region had the third largest uranium reserves in the world.

58. Burkina Faso was also keen to promote education and research in nuclear science and technology, strengthen radiation safety and security, and improve knowledge of groundwater resources and the management of air quality in cities.

59. Finally, he thanked those States that had supported his country's election to the Board of Governors.

60. Mr MIFSUD (Malta) said that his country looked forward to a successful outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and was encouraged by the outcome of the third session of the Preparatory Committee. Malta called on States that were not parties to the NPT to join as non-nuclear-weapon States as soon as possible.

61. The role of the Agency in ensuring that States complied fully with their safeguards obligations under the NPT was an integral and indispensable part of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. Thus, the Agency had to be provided with the tools it needed to detect and deter the diversion of nuclear material for illicit use.

62. Malta was of the view that a comprehensive safeguards agreement together with an additional protocol constituted the current Agency verification standard. It urged States to bring into force comprehensive safeguards agreements, as required under the NPT, without delay. It also called on all States that had not yet done so to sign and ratify an additional protocol as soon as possible.

63. The continuing uncertainty surrounding the nature and scope of the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran was a matter of serious concern. Despite some recent modest progress, after six years the Agency was still unable to provide assurances regarding the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. Malta hoped that, in the coming weeks, steps would be taken to rebuild confidence between Iran and the international community. Implementation of the additional protocol would be an important step in the right direction.

64. His country was also concerned by the actions taken by the DPRK whose recent nuclear test made the early entry into force of the CTBT a matter of even greater urgency. Malta hoped that significant progress would be made in that regard in the coming months. It urged the DPRK to return to the six-party talks and to resume cooperation with the Agency without delay. In the interests of regional and global security, the DPRK should abandon its nuclear weapons programme in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner.

65. As more and more countries considered adding nuclear power to their energy mix, the need for the highest standards of nuclear safety was self-evident. A decision by a State to exercise its right to develop nuclear energy required that it did so in a safe and secure manner. Safety and security remained primarily the responsibility of the States themselves. However, Malta applauded the important role played by the Agency in supporting Member States' efforts to enhance their safety and security infrastructures. In developing new or expanded nuclear energy programmes, the strictest safety standards must be assured.

66. The possibility of malicious acts employing nuclear material remained a continuing threat that required constant vigilance. His country appreciated the important role played by the Agency in assisting States to control nuclear material and radiation sources, protect nuclear facilities and strengthen border controls. Illicit trafficking of sensitive nuclear material posed an enormous challenge in the area of non-proliferation. Malta supported measures that enhanced the capabilities of States to prevent and respond to illegal acts involving nuclear and other radioactive material. It had become the 107th Member State participating in the illicit trafficking database programme. It was also taking steps to ratify the amendment to the CPPNM.

67. As a coastal and leading maritime flag State, Malta viewed with serious concern the increase in incidents of piracy and armed robbery at sea. It supported recent efforts to address that new threat at the global as well as regional level.

68. The Agency's technical cooperation programme continued its sterling work in various sectors, addressing development needs in some of the world's poorest countries. His country benefited from technical cooperation in a number of fields and participated in several regional programmes in areas

ranging from human health to the preservation of cultural heritage artefacts. With Agency assistance, Malta's public health services had also been extended in the field of cancer treatment and medical imaging, which would culminate in the establishment of a new specialized oncology centre. Malta also welcomed the initiative of the Secretariat to prepare a strategy for technical cooperation in Europe.

69. Mr BARROS OREIRO (Uruguay) said that his country based its international activities on the guiding principles of the Charter of the United Nations and was therefore proud to be one of the first countries to be involved in the 'Delivering as One' initiative. Uruguay continued to follow the Agency's work with great interest and made every effort to collaborate in activities that promoted the uses and benefits of atomic energy.

70. In July 2009, his country had hosted the meeting of the ARCAL Technical Co-ordination Board, when it had assumed the presidency of that body. It was also about to assume the presidency of the Board of ARCAL Representatives.

71. Uruguay was committed to nuclear verification and non-proliferation. It also hoped that synergies could be found between radiation safety and security and recognized the need to increase international cooperation in those areas. However, unnecessary obstacles should not be created for countries that had proven themselves to be trustworthy.

72. In accordance with the recommendations of his Government's preliminary study on the possible establishment of a nuclear programme for electricity generation, a commission had been created that was responsible for coordinating the first milestone in the Agency publication entitled *Milestones in the Development of a National Infrastructure for Nuclear Power* (IAEA Nuclear Energy Series No. NG-G-3.1). The commission had been active since March 2009 and comprised politicians and technical staff not only from the Government, but also from the four political parties with parliamentary representation. He thanked the Agency for the assistance it had provided in that regard through various regional technical cooperation projects. He also expressed support for the efforts of those countries that had developed initiatives to assure the non-discriminatory supply of nuclear fuel.

73. Uruguay remained eager to develop its cooperation with the Agency and had been implementing a number of projects with it since 2000. New projects to be implemented related to: the development of PET facilities, R&D laboratories and radiopharmaceutical production for the diagnosis of cancer and Alzheimer's disease; determination of antibiotic and pesticide residues in food exports; increasing profitability in dairy production through appropriate methods and the rational and sustainable use of genetic resources; preparatory programmes for introducing irradiation techniques; the commissioning of a linear accelerator to treat cancer patients; the establishment of a secondary standards laboratory for calibration in radiotherapy; and use of high-dose-rate brachytherapy in public health. Uruguay had been paying regularly its voluntary contributions to the TCF to ensure that the Agency could meet its objectives.

74. In his country, 75% of nuclear technology used was for medical applications — for both diagnosis and treatment. The remaining applications were in industry, agriculture and the environment. Radiation safety was thus a priority, with intensive work being implemented in that area under the Agency's technical cooperation programme. A technically independent national regulatory authority had been approved and consolidated by law. There had been continued improvement in safety with regard to medical exposure, both for patients and health care professionals. The Government had approved a national radiological emergency plan and Uruguay was one of only three countries in Latin America that had adhered to and ratified the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. The country had passed by decree a national strategy for safe management of radioactive waste, being one of only three Latin

American countries to have such a strategy. It had also ratified the additional protocol and had been applying integrated safeguards since January 2009.

75. The Agency was facing considerable challenges as a result of the evolving political and international security situation, and the need to provide technical and financial support to countries wishing to achieve sustainable development through extensive cooperation programmes related to nuclear energy. The organization needed to continue to play a decisive role in the universalization of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, non-proliferation, banning of nuclear testing and nuclear disarmament. It must fulfil the mandate conferred upon it by Member States in the areas of safety and security, technical cooperation and safeguards, working independently, transparently and efficiently. The Agency would continue to be at the centre of international nuclear cooperation, but it had to be protected.

76. The level of support developing countries expected from the Agency, principally in the area of technical cooperation, was of particular relevance in the light of the global economic crisis and the Millennium Development Goals.

77. Illicit trafficking in nuclear material could only be addressed if all States acted together to prevent the theft, diversion and use of nuclear material and technology. Uruguay was firmly committed to peace and nuclear disarmament, which was why it had signed the Tlatelolco Treaty in 1968.

Mr Davies (United States of America) took the Chair.

78. Mr ZOGRAFOS (Greece) said that his country fully supported the Agency's continually expanding nuclear safety and security programmes and welcomed the Nuclear Security Report 2009. It also looked forward to the implementation of the Nuclear Security Plan 2010–2013.

79. Since the preceding year, Greece had participated in the review meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, demonstrating full compliance with its obligations. It had also ratified the Additional Protocol to the Convention on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy in August 2009. It followed the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and had implemented it, together with the European Union Council Directive on the control of high-activity sealed radioactive sources and orphan sources, in its national legislation. Greece was implementing a comprehensive nuclear security system and contributed its experience to the Agency's efforts in that area by hosting fellows and regional training courses.

80. He commended the high priority the Agency gave to the threat of nuclear terrorism. New measures and mechanisms were needed to combat illicit trafficking in sensitive nuclear equipment and technology. Greece had been one of the first to join the Agency's illicit trafficking information system, which had been established in 1995 and now had over 100 members. It participated in the Proliferation Security Initiative and was a member of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. It had also signed the amendment to the CPPNM and had ratified the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. Greek experts also actively contributed to the drafting of new nuclear security standards and practices.

81. The NPT remained the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the continuing success of Agency safeguards depended to a very great extent on political support at the international and regional levels. Greece hoped for a successful outcome to the 2010 NPT Review Conference and supported further strengthening the Agency's role.

82. Many countries were considering the nuclear option, and thus the need for cooperation with the Agency and implementation of its milestones would steadily increase. Robust international standards and independent regulatory authorities were needed.

83. The most effective response to nuclear proliferation and threats to international security was, without question, broader participation in the NPT, the conclusion of comprehensive safeguards agreements and implementation of the additional protocol. Ratification of the CTBT and early drafting of a fissile material cut-off treaty were also important.

84. The Director General's latest report on Iran pointed out once again that country's failure to comply with United Nations requirements and to cooperate fully with the Agency. The Agency was still unable to provide credible assurances regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and facilities in that country, and Iran had still not implemented the additional protocol, nor cooperated with the Agency in connection with the outstanding issues which needed to be clarified in order to rule out any possible military dimension to its nuclear programme. Instead, contrary to United Nations Security Council resolutions, Iran had continued to expand its enrichment activities and work on heavy water-related projects.

85. It was essential that Iran comply with Security Council resolutions and Board requirements and he urged the Iranian authorities to cooperate fully with the Agency, in particular by making a full disclosure of any nuclear weapons-related work and by facilitating Agency verification. Greece called upon Iran to renew diplomatic negotiations with the five permanent members of the Security Council and Germany on the basis of the most recent offer.

86. His country was also looking forward to seeing the Agency fully exercise its mandate in Syria.

87. Greece deplored the DPRK's actions in conducting additional nuclear tests and stepping up its missile programmes, which put at risk all efforts made in the six-party talks to achieve the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. It also found the DPRK's decision to expel Agency inspectors highly deplorable.

88. The linkage between nuclear supply assurances and nuclear non-proliferation had been the subject of major debate since before the beginning of negotiations on the NPT. The urgent need to address that issue, along with the Director General's relentless efforts, had brought closer the idea of establishing an assured supply mechanism to strengthen non-proliferation and meet growing demands. That idea had been highlighted in the joint declaration of the Presidents of the United States and the Russian Federation in July 2009, who had given voice to their vision of an international approach with the ultimate goal of establishing nuclear fuel cycle services to secure the nuclear weapons non-proliferation regime.

89. The centre of such a mechanism, as a short-term solution covering the front end of the fuel cycle, was a fuel bank under Agency auspices which would operate in a non-political and non-discriminatory way applying non-proliferation and other criteria. His country fully supported that plan and, as a member of the European Union, was working for its early implementation. However, it remained to be seen to what extent it would prove a credible solution for the interested parties.

90. The Greek Atomic Energy Commission was recognized as an Agency regional training centre in radiation protection and nuclear security and it organized and regularly hosted the upgraded postgraduate course in radiation protection and the safety of radiation sources, as well as seminars on security issues. An educational technical assistance mission had been organized in November 2008 prior to the signing of a long-term agreement between the Commission and the Agency on the provision of education and training in radiation protection.

91. The European Conference on Individual Monitoring of Ionizing Radiation, organized by the Greek Atomic Energy Commission in cooperation with the Agency, the European Commission and the European Radiation Dosimetry Group, would take place in Athens in March 2010.

92. Finally, Greece considered that the report of the Commission of Eminent Persons on the future of the Agency constituted the cornerstone of members' efforts to meet the challenges the Agency would have to face in the year 2020 and beyond.

93. Mr AL-SHAKAR (Bahrain) said the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bahrain had informed the General Conference at its fifty-first session that his country had joined the Agency because of the importance it attached to the organization's role in promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy and in preventing the production of nuclear weapons or other types of nuclear explosives. Bahrain aspired to make an effective contribution to the Agency and fully subscribed to its principles and goals. It encouraged national efforts to obtain appropriate training and nuclear technology for peaceful applications in all areas that would serve development needs. In addition, it had recently ratified the safeguards agreement it had signed in 2007, and the Cabinet had approved the establishment of a national commission on peaceful uses of nuclear energy in June 2009.

94. The States of the Gulf Cooperation Council had also laid the basis for close cooperation on peaceful uses of nuclear energy, particularly with respect to nuclear and radiation safety, application of nuclear science and technology for power generation, and nuclear verification and security.

95. Bahrain had reaffirmed at a number of international events its strong support, as a matter of principle, for efforts to prevent all forms of nuclear proliferation. It was concerned at the threat posed by continued nuclear weaponization and urged that non-proliferation efforts should go hand in hand with action to bring about complete nuclear disarmament under international oversight.

96. With regard to application of the safeguards regime, his country was strongly of the view that a nuclear-weapon-free zone should be established in the Middle East, including in the Gulf region. It appealed to the international community to rid the Middle East of all weapons of mass destruction as a contribution to international peace and security, and to compel all States that were not party to the NPT to accede to it and place all their nuclear installations and activities under Agency safeguards. The countries of the Middle East lived in fear of Israel's military nuclear arsenal. That country's possession of nuclear weapons and its refusal to comply with international law constituted a threat to peace and security not only in the region but in the world as a whole.

97. His country counted on the Agency to apply effective safeguards in the Middle East, in accordance with General Conference resolution GC(50)/RES/16, as a confidence-building measure and a contribution to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region.

98. The Gulf region had experienced a series of devastating wars over the preceding three decades and did not wish to repeat the experience. In view of the region's vital economic role, those wars had also had a major impact on the global economy. Bahrain therefore reiterated its call for a peaceful solution to the issue of Iran's nuclear programme through dialogue and diplomacy and not military confrontation. At the same time, his country reaffirmed the right of all countries to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in accordance with their Agency safeguards agreements.

99. Bahrain, which had acceded to the NPT in 1988 and to the CTBT in 2004, aspired to participate effectively — together with the other Member States of the Agency — in achieving the objectives of the Statute, namely to enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world, and to strengthen international cooperation in the area of nuclear safety and in protecting present and future generations from the harmful effects of ionizing radiation.

100. Mr MONNET (Côte d'Ivoire) said that his country had developed and implemented, with Agency support, a CPF outlining its main policy directions in the nuclear field. Côte d'Ivoire had been a member of the Agency since 1963 and had centred its cooperation with the organization around the benefits nuclear energy could bring in terms of socio-economic development in such areas as agriculture, animal production and health, and the agro-food industry. Many successful and beneficial projects had been implemented in those areas.

101. Côte d'Ivoire had developed an extensive programme to harness its water and fossil fuel resources to meet its demand for energy. The demand for electricity was growing on the order of 10% a year as a result of industrial development, rising household consumption and exports. At the same time, the water resources available to hydroelectric power dams were unpredictable owing to climate changes, and natural gas supplies were inadequate and expensive. The deficit in the electricity sector was becoming untenable and there were real outage risks. Meanwhile, Côte d'Ivoire was a major player in the West African power pool.

102. The need to find sustainable solutions for social progress, and for meeting the growing energy needs of Côte d'Ivoire and of countries in the West African subregion served by it, had prompted his country's Government to make efforts in two directions: on the one hand, to improve socio-economic welfare by reaping the benefits of nuclear science and technology in the field of human health, animal production and health, drinking water availability and environmental protection; and on the other hand, to move towards nuclear power generation projects as a way to meet the electricity needs of Côte d'Ivoire and neighbouring countries. That solution required mobilizing significant financial resources for infrastructure development, but there appeared to be no alternative to nuclear power that would provide electricity that was clean, abundant and environmentally friendly.

103. Hence, Côte d'Ivoire was increasing its cooperation with the Agency, along the lines defined in its CPF, in response to a growing interest in addressing human development issues, eradicating poverty, protecting the environment, meeting energy needs and developing the mining industry. The Government was seeking to maximize the return on such projects by enacting and strengthening a suitable legal and regulatory framework which would result in the establishment of institutions for managing nuclear activities, and the creation of a national nuclear energy commission and a regulatory authority which would incorporate an effective radiation protection centre, and by making available to the public a radiation therapy and nuclear medicine reference centre.

104. He thanked the Agency for its efforts through PACT to expand the training of doctors and oncologists and mobilize traditional and non-traditional donors. Cancer was a problem in developing countries and the activities of PACT and the WHO augured well for the future of cancer treatment in those countries. His country was grateful for the support it had received and continued to receive in that connection.

105. AFRA had succeeded in consolidating technical cooperation among member States, and in developing national and regional human resources in nuclear science and technology. It played a major role in mobilizing resources and regional expertise to meet the challenges faced by countries in Africa and offered an ideal framework for development, sharing experience and strengthening national capacities. Côte d'Ivoire was committed to collaborating more closely with the programme.

106. His Government had agreed on significant efforts to pay off its assessed programme cost arrears, and the payment of its contribution to the TCF was in progress. Despite the funding difficulties in connection with the crisis recovery programme, 80% of outstanding debts had been paid off, and by the end of 2009 all its debts to the Agency should have been paid off.

107. Côte d'Ivoire was fully committed to the Agency's objectives and would spare no effort to promote the peaceful use of nuclear technology, or to strengthen the non-proliferation regime and

work in close cooperation with the international community to bring about peace, security and prosperity. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation were ongoing tasks and the NPT remained the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. Côte d'Ivoire hoped that, through the negotiations in progress, the international community would move closer to full implementation of that Treaty. It had signed a protocol additional to its safeguards agreement and was determined to ratify and implement it. It had also ratified the Pelindaba Treaty.

108. The international community had been devoting more attention recently to environmental problems and illicit trafficking in toxic and radioactive substances. The Agency should redouble its efforts to assist Member States with radiation protection, decontamination and protection of the environment. Côte d'Ivoire encouraged the Agency to enhance and make more generally accessible suitable techniques for managing environmental risks.

109. The risks of nuclear terrorism remained high and the Agency had an important role to play in that area. Côte d'Ivoire supported all initiatives in that regard and was acting in full awareness of its responsibility to ensure nuclear security within its borders.

110. Mr MOKGOTHU (Botswana) said that the Agency's role in assisting Member States was widely recognized and it had helped many countries to achieve self-reliance in various nuclear applications. At a time when the world was facing challenges such as natural disasters, disease, security threats and economic problems, it was encouraging to note that the Agency's programmes were increasingly recognized as providing viable and sustainable solutions to such problems.

111. In an effort to meet its obligations as a Member State of the Agency, Botswana had joined the NPT, had signed a safeguards agreement and an additional protocol, and was committed to the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. The Agency played an important role in promoting and facilitating cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy and was the sole internationally recognized authority for verifying that such activities were not diverted to non-peaceful purposes.

112. The Agency had provided Botswana with invaluable assistance and support in the form of expert advice, monitoring equipment and staff training. Nuclear technology was widely used in various industries in the country and, since it clearly stood to benefit significantly from such technology, efforts were being made to maximize and promote the safe and peaceful uses thereof. His country was grateful for the technical cooperation projects being implemented for the benefit of the population, and for the cordial relationship that it had with the Agency. The benefits derived from the technical cooperation programme bore witness to the relevance of nuclear applications in tackling the challenges facing developing countries.

113. Botswana was making ongoing efforts to control HIV/AIDS, and undertaking research in food and nutrition intervention techniques using stable isotopes with the Agency's assistance. Such endeavours were expected to bear fruit in the near future. The country's CPF was under review in order to make it more focused and align it with National Development Plan 10. Botswana was committed to finalizing the new CPF before the start of the 2010–2011 project cycle so that it could form the basis for new project proposals.

114. Mr NYAPHISI (Lesotho) said that, as a new member of the Agency, his country would do its best to work harmoniously with the organization and contribute to its work. It hoped that the Agency would continue to increase the support available to LDCs to meet their agendas for peace security and prosperity through nuclear technology applications relating to food security, health, water resources management, energy and the environment.

115. It was essential to strive for a world free of nuclear weapons and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in order to ensure a better future for current and future generations.

116. Lesotho was in the process of concluding its additional protocol and had also recently amended its SQP. It encouraged all States to do likewise.

117. Mr TZOTCHEV (Bulgaria) said that full compliance with the NPT, transparency in nuclear programmes, and a universal non-proliferation regime backed by strong safeguards were essential for the peaceful use of nuclear energy. His country considered a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol to be the current standard for Agency verification and it supported the strengthening, universalization and strict implementation of multilateral non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament treaties. As one of the first countries to have signed and ratified the additional protocol, Bulgaria called for its universalization.

118. Bulgaria was deeply concerned at the DPRK's decision to withdraw from the NPT and resume work on the production of high-enriched uranium, and at the recent tests carried out by that country. It called for continued efforts to find a diplomatic solution to that problem within the framework of the six-party talks.

119. Recognizing the importance of nuclear-weapon-free zones in strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and regional peace and security, his country welcomed the entry into force of the Pelindaba Treaty and was in support of making the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

120. While it respected the inalienable right of every country to develop nuclear programmes for peaceful purposes, Bulgaria was deeply concerned over the lack of transparency shown by Iran in connection with Agency verification activities and called on that country to restore the international community's confidence in the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme. Iran's ratification and implementation of the additional protocol it had already signed would be a major step in the right direction.

121. The preceding two years had been important ones in the development of the nuclear power sector in Bulgaria, with the completion in 2007 of the modernization programme for Units 5 and 6 of the Kozloduy nuclear power plant. An Agency mission had been invited to assist Bulgarian experts in evaluating the results of the programme, in the interests of ensuring transparency and independent expert evaluation. The experts had been impressed by the number and complexity of the activities carried out under the programme, and the excellent results of the review had given Bulgaria confidence that the combined efforts of the regulator and the operator to improve safety were proving successful.

122. Another important issue for Bulgaria was construction of new nuclear plants. The licensing process for the Belene nuclear power plant was under way, and the Bulgarian Nuclear Regulatory Agency was finalizing its review of the technical design, the safety analysis report and the probabilistic safety assessment. Bulgaria had been seeking broad international support in that process through requests for assistance from relevant international organizations, chief among them the Agency. To support the Bulgarian regulator in evaluating the probabilistic safety assessment, a preliminary mission and an expert mission had been conducted by the Agency in February and May 2009 and the final report had been submitted to the Bulgarian authorities in June 2009. He thanked the Agency for the promptness and effectiveness of its assistance to the Bulgarian regulatory authority in its licensing activities. Leading European technical support organizations were providing good support in connection with the intermediate safety analysis report on the new build, assisting the Bulgarian regulator with the quality and adequacy of documentation, compliance with Bulgarian laws, international standards and good practices, and additional research into and verification of certain safety aspects.

123. The 16th annual meeting of the forum of State nuclear safety authorities of countries operating WWER type reactors had been held in Bulgaria in July 2009. The main objective of the meeting had been to exchange experience and information, and it had been attended by regulators from every country operating or constructing WWER type reactors, and by Agency observers. Each member of the forum had had the opportunity to report on salient national issues and developments in nuclear regulation and safety, which had been followed by a peer discussion. Bulgaria appreciated the Agency's support for the forum, which it believed would have an overall positive impact on regulatory activities.

124. Technical cooperation had always been and would remain an important part of the Agency's activities. Bulgaria, as a member of the European Union, was considering its changing role within the technical cooperation partnership and was trying to define a new strategy and mechanisms for future cooperation. His country shared the view that cooperation among countries in the region should be based on exchange of information and know-how at regional level, rather than the procurement of tools for responding to individual national needs only. The main task for Europe was to promote knowledge sharing and best practice within the region, and Bulgaria was ready to continue providing experts and training facilities. In light of the fact that funding for technical cooperation should be assured, sufficient and predictable, Bulgaria paid its annual contribution to the TCF fully and on time and had pledged its next contribution during the current General Conference.

The meeting rose at 10.10 p.m.