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President: Mr ENKHSAIKHAN (Mongolia)
Later: Mr BERDENNIKOV (Russian Federation)

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The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(54)/INF/7.

Abbreviations used in this record:

ARCAL	Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
Brussels Supplementary Convention	Convention Supplementary to the Paris Convention of 29 July 1960 on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy
BWR	Boiling water reactor
CPF	Country Programme Framework
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
G8	Group of Eight
LEU	low-enriched uranium
New START	New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
Paris Convention	Convention on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
PHWR	pressurized heavy water reactor
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
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
WHO	World Health Organization

7. General debate and Annual Report for 2009 (continued) (GC(54)/4)

1. Mr GARCÍA REVILLA (Peru) said that the Agency's importance to global development and security was increasing year by year. Its activities in the fields of non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful application of nuclear techniques were multiplying and becoming more evident to States and the public.

2. Peru was experiencing a period of sustained economic growth and social development, which meant that not only had its nuclear cooperation requirements increased substantially, but also that it was now in a position to contribute to the Agency's work in the field of peaceful nuclear applications and the international promotion of nuclear security.

3. He stressed the importance of prompt universalization of the non-proliferation regime, concrete steps towards nuclear disarmament, the extension of NWFZs, and the need for dialogue and mutual confidence to address areas of global concern in those fields. The Agency's reliable and professional safeguards work, for which it had received renewed support at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, made an ongoing contribution to international security. His country particularly appreciated the Agency's progressive application of the State level integrated safeguards approach, strengthening of the remote monitoring data centre and the progress achieved on the Enhancing Capabilities of the Safeguards Analytical Services (ECAS) project.

4. Peru valued highly the activities implemented to improve international standards and practices in the field of nuclear safety. Worldwide and regional information networks were useful platforms in that regard, and his country therefore supported the Agency's collaboration with the Ibero-American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies.

5. Peru shared international concerns over the growing risk posed by nuclear and radiological terrorism. It therefore supported the Nuclear Security Plan for 2010–2013 and encouraged the Agency to promote its application, as adapted to the requirements of each region. Peru would contribute actively to that process through international summits aimed at strengthening international cooperation on nuclear security.

6. Peru was convinced of the growing importance of nuclear technology applications for human development and achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. Techniques for diversifying and adapting crops for domestic consumption and for export helped improve food security in a sustainable manner and could contribute directly to Goal 1 — reducing poverty. Peru therefore supported the work of the Joint FAO/IAEA Division of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture on the improvement of crops and products, soil conservation and the use of water resources. Also, it welcomed the priority that the Director General had given to PACT and development of the WHO/IAEA Joint Programme on Cancer Control. The disease had a high mortality rate in developing countries, mainly owing to a lack of adequate diagnosis and treatment. Medical applications of nuclear energy, channelled through technical cooperation programmes, would help to remedy that situation.

7. Nuclear energy applications were now easily accessible and could therefore be incorporated into medium- and long-term national development plans. For the first time, Peru had included plans for a nuclear power plant in its proposed national energy policy (2010–2013), with a view to diversifying its

energy mix and greater emphasis on renewable sources. That would involve close cooperation with the Agency for decades, particularly in the field of training.

8. His country supported the Agency's efforts to address the deficit of radioisotopes for medical and industrial applications, particularly molybdenum-99, and stood ready to assist through collaboration with other countries in the region.

9. Peru was implementing a project to install a cyclotron for the treatment of cancer and cardiac diseases. It had also acquired positron emission tomography equipment for detection and diagnosis and, with the Agency's assistance, had set up a national calibration laboratory that was very useful to the country's medical and industrial sectors. Thanks to the Agency's support, crop improvement projects were being implemented successfully in extreme climate zones. Yields of kiwicha grain, which formed part of the basic diet in the high Andes region, had increased from 1500 to 5000 kg per hectare owing to the development of a variety resistant to salinity and drought. To ensure sustainability of those activities, Peru's cooperation with the Agency over the preceding year had included expert missions, the participation of 85 national specialists in courses and workshops organized by the Agency, and equipment and material purchases totalling US $289 255.

10. Peru's goals in the nuclear field included improving the country's uranium potential, improving industrial irradiation techniques with a focus on agro-industrial applications, ensuring sustainable use of the water resources of coastal aquifers, strengthening radiation safety and introducing nuclear power generation. Peru, in collaboration with the Agency, had recently concluded a national programmatic plan on the application of nuclear energy that covered such areas as health, hydrology, food and agriculture, nuclear safety and radiation protection. Also, the Peruvian Institute of Nuclear Energy (IPEN) had adopted a strategic plan for 2010–2016 with the main focus on the development of a nuclear power plant, the operation of a particle accelerator or cyclotron, the production of fission molybdenum-99 and the use of four cobalt irradiators.

11. In an attempt to expand its international cooperation, his country had continued to host numerous regional training courses for nuclear energy professionals. In November 2010, two such courses would be held in Lima: one on methodologies for the design of technical cooperation projects and the other on radiation protection.

12. As ARCAL celebrated its 25th anniversary, he noted the importance that Peru attached to that regional initiative, which had made a significant contribution to training, research and development in the field of nuclear science and technology in Latin America and the Caribbean.

13. Ms KALA (Estonia), recalling the consensus reached at the recent NPT Review Conference, expressed the hope that the same spirit would prevail at the General Conference. Her country believed it was necessary to build on that momentum and fully implement the commitments made in the final document and the action plan.

14. Estonia acknowledged that promoting nuclear non-proliferation and ensuring the non-diversion of nuclear technologies while advancing the use of nuclear science was a challenging task. It shared the view that Agency safeguards were an essential part of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. Believing that a comprehensive safeguards agreement with an additional protocol was the universal standard for nuclear verification, Estonia had implemented those instruments and supported universalization of the additional protocol.

15. It was important to ensure that the development of nuclear energy took place under the best possible conditions with respect to safety, security and non-proliferation. Estonia remained committed to the Agency's safety standards and called on Member States with nuclear activities to become contracting parties to the relevant safety conventions without delay.

16. The Agency's 'atoms for peace' mandate was in keeping with Estonia's belief that nuclear technology should be developed only for peaceful purposes and in a manner that was safe and secure. Estonia supported further development of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the right of each country to define its own energy strategy. It believed in responsible, sustainable, environmentally friendly, safe and secure nuclear energy production and was seriously considering introducing nuclear power, either through participation in regional nuclear projects or by establishing its own nuclear power plant, in order to help meet its energy needs while honouring its climate related commitments. Estonia understood that such a technically challenging project had to be undertaken carefully, responsibly and in full compliance with the Agency's safety standards and the EU's nuclear safety directive.

17. Estonia was grateful for Agency technical cooperation and TCF support for its national projects on radiotherapy and nuclear medicine. The knowledge and experience gained meant that the country was in a position, in close cooperation with the Agency, to provide training for medical experts from a number of countries.

18. Estonia's CPF for 2010–2015 would be signed during the 54th General Conference and its contents would be available to all Member States. Estonia hoped that others would follow its example in order to promote transparency in that area.

19. Fair access to the Agency's technical cooperation programme would be an effective contribution toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals, which represented collective commitments and responsibilities shared by all. Estonia had fulfilled its obligations to the Agency's Regular Budget in a timely manner and had made voluntary pledges to the TCF, and encouraged others to do likewise.

20. It was a simple truth that, in the pursuit of a more peaceful, more stable, and less weaponized world, every single human being must act responsibly. As Albert Schweitzer had said in his 1954 Nobel lecture: "Only when an ideal of peace is born in the minds of the peoples will the institutions set up to maintain this peace effectively fulfil the function expected of them".

21. Mr RAMIREZ (Dominican Republic) expressed his Government's support for the Agency, whose mandate to promote the safe and peaceful use of atomic energy helped the international community defend its fundamental values. He congratulated the Agency on its success in ensuring that nuclear science and technology were used to the benefit, rather than the detriment, of humanity.

22. The technical cooperation programme was a fundamental tool that allowed developing countries to acquire the necessary knowledge to use nuclear techniques. The Agency's activities in that regard contributed substantially to meeting energy needs, improving health, combating poverty, protecting the environment, developing agriculture, managing water resources and optimizing industrial processes. Thus, they helped to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, in particular the goals to end hunger and malnutrition, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, and ensure environmental sustainability.

23. The Dominican Republic's CPF identified specific contributions that nuclear technology could make to meeting national priorities. National and regional projects being implemented in the country by the Agency contributed significantly to developing infrastructure, promoting productivity and competitiveness, meeting basic needs, reducing poverty, building capacities and ensuring environmental sustainability. He thanked the Agency for its ongoing support for such activities.

24. He underlined that Agency projects in his country had strengthened the radiotherapy services of national cancer hospitals. The Director General deserved special recognition for his initiative to attach priority to combating cancer in 2010. The Dominican Republic hoped that the initiative would result in

an increase in resources for tackling the problem, which had taken on worrying dimensions in recent years, and that the Scientific Forum held alongside the General Conference would promote the further contribution of nuclear technology to cancer diagnosis and treatment. In particular, his country appreciated the Agency's support, through PACT, for the adoption of national cancer control plans.

25. Technical cooperation had enabled his country to improve its logistical and human capacities for sustainable aquifer management, to secure drinking water supplies in rural communities and to develop optimal strategies for soil conservation and the life extension of dams. The Agency had also provided support for the creation of a centre for nuclear research and applications, which would offer nuclear analytical services to public and private institutions.

26. The Agency provided essential assistance to developing Member States in their consideration of the feasibility of the nuclear power option with a view to meeting the pressing need to diversify their energy mix, to reduce their dependence on oil and to release fewer contaminating gases into the atmosphere. The Agency's planning tools had been very useful to the Dominican Republic in studying energy supply and demand models in the context of development of its national energy plan.

27. The National Energy Commission and the Government of the Dominican Republic were very pleased to celebrate the 25th anniversary of ARCAL. The Agreement had brought multiple benefits to Latin American countries and set a good example of successful regional cooperation. Since ratifying the Agreement in 2008, the Dominican Republic's participation in ARCAL had increased considerably and it was now participating in around 20 projects in such diverse areas as: development of a drought-resistant variety of rice, evaluation of groundwater potential, evaluation of the toxicity of marine algae, and energy planning, as well as human resource training in electronic instrumentation, non-destructive assay and food irradiation. The 11th meeting of the ARCAL Technical Co-ordination Board, held in the Dominican Republic in June 2010, had identified the region's priorities for the next project cycle and addressed other topics of interest, such as how ARCAL and nuclear technology could help Haiti to overcome the devastating effects of the earthquake that had occurred there.

28. Preventing the use of nuclear material for weapons of mass destruction, malicious acts or terrorist purposes and protecting the public and the environment from radiation risks were matters of prime importance. The Agency's safety, security and safeguards activities to reduce the risks associated with the use of atomic energy would help to provide an appropriate framework for nuclear energy development.

29. The Agency's strengthened verification system provided assurances of the peaceful use of nuclear material. As indicated at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, Agency safeguards were a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. At that Conference, the National Energy Commission had announced the entry into force of the Dominican Republic's additional protocol, which was an important tool for the Agency to provide credible guarantees that nuclear material was not being used for weapons purposes.

30. His Government took note of the Agency's activities to strengthen cooperation on nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety and welcomed, in particular, the measures adopted to promote the safe transport of nuclear material and the consultations held between shipping and coastal States. As a coastal State on the transit route for such shipments, the Dominican Republic was keen to ensure that they were conducted as safely as possible.

31. The Dominican Republic had made efforts to strengthen its radiation protection and safety infrastructure from an institutional and regulatory point of view, thus allowing the country to benefit safely from nuclear applications, to contribute effectively to the international community's efforts to ensure radiation safety and security, and to address the threats posed by nuclear terrorism and illicit trafficking in nuclear material. His Government thanked the Agency for the support it had provided in

that regard, especially through staff training on radioactive source management, on final disposal of disused sources, including the construction of a nuclear bunker donated by the United States of America, on response to radiological incidents and emergencies, and control of illicit trafficking in nuclear material. In addition, the Dominican Republic was drawing up a national plan focusing on the various aspects of nuclear security, for which it hoped to receive the Agency's assistance.

32. In the preceding three years, the Dominican Republic had accelerated its process of adhering to international instruments related to the safe and peaceful use of nuclear energy. It had acceded, inter alia, to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident, the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and was implementing the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

33. Nuclear energy had been one of the most transcendental discoveries in history. The Agency's work to ensure that nuclear technology was a source of progress, rather than destruction, was highly valued by the international community and he reiterated his country's support for its three pillars of activity, namely science, safety and safeguards.

34. Mr BANERJEE (India) noted that limited fossil fuel reserves, environmental concerns and economic considerations had led to a resurgence of global interest in nuclear energy, with a number of countries setting up their first nuclear power plants and others expanding existing nuclear power programmes or extending the life of ageing plants.

35. According to conservative projections, global nuclear power generation was expected to reach about 500 GW(e) by 2030. Large scale nuclear power generation required both technological and institutional solutions for economics, safety, environment, waste management, infrastructure, proliferation resistance and sustainability, and the Agency's activities were contributing significantly to addressing those issues.

36. One such high impact programme was the International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO), which India believed strongly should become an integral part of the Agency's regular programme and be fully supported through the Regular Budget. India would continue to support INPRO.

37. The global nuclear renaissance had largely been the result of major investments made by industry over the decades to enhance the safety of nuclear energy. The Indian parliament had recently passed the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Bill, which would go a long way towards increasing public confidence and creating a predictable environment in which vendors could participate in India's nuclear programme.

38. The International Nuclear and Radiological Event Scale (INES), which was celebrating its 20th anniversary, was very useful for communicating the safety significance of nuclear and radiological events to the general public in a consistent and simple manner. India had adopted INES from its inception and had participated actively in its evolution.

39. Nuclear power was particularly important in India, since the availability of electricity would act as an instrument of economic growth. A recent study had estimated that nuclear power would need to provide about half of India's electricity generation capacity in order to go most of the way to eliminating the country's dependence on imported energy resources while achieving developed status.

40. India remained committed to the three-stage nuclear programme formulated by Dr Homi Bhabha, founder of India's nuclear programme. India attached high priority to the adoption of a closed fuel cycle and the use of thorium, given its relatively limited uranium reserves and large

thorium deposits. Water cooled reactors, fast breeder reactors and thorium-based power generation remained the key elements of India's sustainable nuclear programme.

41. The country's nuclear power programme placed emphasis on safe and reliable power plant operation, reducing the gestation period for new projects and adding capacity. The nuclear power sector had accumulated more than 322 reactor years of safe operation. The total installed nuclear power capacity was currently 4560 MW(e) with a total of 19 operating reactors, including two new 220 MW(e) units in Rajasthan. The replacement of all the coolant channels and feeders in the PHWRs at Kakrapar and Narora had been completed and construction of the Kaiga Unit 4 PHWR had been completed and it was ready for fuel loading. Three reactors in India had had uninterrupted runs of more than 400 days.

42. Construction in cooperation with the Russian Federation of two 1000 MW(e) light water reactors at Kudankulam was nearing completion and work on two indigenous 700 MW(e) units in Rawatbhata (Rajasthan) and Kakrapar (Gujarat) had started.

43. The 500 MW(e) Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) was at an advanced stage of construction. The spent mixed carbide fuel from the Fast Breeder Test Reactor (FBTR), with a burnup of 155 GWd/t, had been reprocessed in the Compact Reprocessing Facility for Advanced Fuels in Lead Cells (CORAL). The fissile material had then been refabricated as fuel and loaded back into the reactor, thus closing the fast reactor fuel cycle.

44. India was using established indigenous technology to expand its uranium enrichment capacity to partially cover the requirements of its light water reactors. Setting up an adequate reprocessing capability had been an important element of India's closed fuel cycle based programme, and the country had recently begun engineering work on an integrated nuclear recycling plant with facilities for both reprocessing of spent fuel and waste management.

45. Approval had been granted in principle for energy parks at five coastal sites, each to be populated with a number of water cooled reactors to be constructed through international cooperation. India was thus poised to expand its installed nuclear power capacity to about 60 GW(e) by 2032. International cooperation would assist in meeting immediate requirements and bridging the deficit in the coming decades through operation of the closed fuel cycle.

46. India was self-sufficient with regard to heavy water, zirconium alloy components and other materials and supplies for PHWRs. A new zirconium complex had been commissioned for the production of reactor grade zirconium sponge. The Nuclear Fuel Complex at Hyderabad manufactured fuel assemblies for PHWRs, BWRs and fast breeder reactors. The country had extensive capabilities in uranium mining and mineral processing. The uranium deposit at Tumallapalle, where a new mine had been opened, promised to yield about three times more than originally estimated. India was aggressively prospecting for uranium using modern geophysical techniques, some indigenously developed. It was also interested in working with international partners in developing uranium mining opportunities abroad.

47. Indian PHWRs offered a variety of options for countries looking for cost-competitive and proven small and medium size reactor technologies, with the Nuclear Power Corporation of India currently offering 220 MW(e) and 540 MW(e) units for export. Indian industry was ready to play a bigger role in the country's own nuclear programme and was on the way to becoming a competitive international supplier of special steels, large size forgings, control instruments, software and other nuclear components and services.

48. The Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership, currently being established, would provide a forum for joint activities with international partners.

49. India was pleased that the focus of the 2010 Scientific Forum was cancer, where nuclear techniques had an important role to play in both detection and treatment. The Tata Memorial Centre in Mumbai, a leader in cancer treatment and research, conducted several training programmes in collaboration with the Agency and RCA for countries in the Asia and the Pacific region. A national cancer grid was being set up connecting a number of hospitals with the Tata Memorial Centre. About 30 continuing medical education webcasts were relayed each year.

50. PACT helped channel resources and expertise to needy and developing countries. An indigenously developed Bhabhatron teletherapy unit, donated to Vietnam by India under PACT, had been inaugurated in April 2010, and India had taken the decision to donate two more units, including one to Sri Lanka.

51. The hybrid nuclear desalination demonstration plant at Kalpakkam, where multistage flash evaporation and reverse osmosis processes were used to produce 6.3 million litres per day, was one of the largest such units in the world.

52. India also continued to use nuclear science to increase agricultural productivity. Two new mutant lentil varieties had been announced for commercial cultivation, bringing to 39 the total number of mutant crop varieties developed at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre using nuclear techniques.

53. There had been a number of recent achievements in the area of research and development. A real time online decision support system had been set up at Narora Atomic Power Station to provide guidance to emergency managers for making quick decisions based on the projected impact of accidental releases from the plant. The synchrotron radiation source at Indore had become fully functional, with several beam lines set up for experiments. India's first industrial scale enriched boron production facility based on exchange distillation had been commissioned at Talcher and a similar facility based on ion exchange chromatography had been commissioned for Manuguru.

54. A new impetus was urgently needed to further advance nuclear technology for the benefit of all humanity. The Agency would need to increase its efforts towards innovative and appropriate technology solutions to satisfy the world's growing energy needs while protecting the environment.

55. Mr EGLAJS (Latvia) said that his country appreciated the impartial and objective advice which the Agency gave Member States concerning the establishment of an appropriate legal and regulatory framework and ensuring the highest standards of safety and security.

56. Technical cooperation was crucial and the increased emphasis on knowledge management had further increased the importance of regional projects in sharing experience, exchanging opinions and finding the best possible approaches to problems. Latvia had submitted four national projects for the next technical cooperation cycle, three related to knowledge management and information exchange. Latvia's Country Programme Note (CPN) had been elaborated in consultation with stakeholders with a strong interest in technical cooperation projects. Invitations to submit project proposals had been sent to private and State institutions, thereby involving a wide range of stakeholders in the process. Also, regional projects would allow Latvia to provide expertise to other countries, and his country would be contributing to the exchange of nuclear knowledge by hosting training courses during the next cycle.

57. Effective measures to combat terrorism and prevent terrorists from acquiring nuclear, biological chemical and radiological weapons were of the utmost importance. The Agency was actively involved in that area and its role in joint efforts to ensure international security was increasing. Member States should attach the highest priority to strong national and internationally coordinated export controls in order to combat illicit trafficking in and the procurement of nuclear technologies and materials as well as the threat of proliferation of such materials by non-State actors. Activities under the Global Threat Reduction Initiative, implemented in cooperation with the United States Pacific Northwest National

Laboratory were noteworthy in that regard. The Latvian regulatory body would be hosting a security awareness seminar and physical protection workshop in October 2010. As a party to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, Latvia urged States which had not yet acceded to do so.

58. Agency safeguards were an essential part of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and Latvia strongly supported strengthening their effectiveness and efficiency. Not all States party to the NPT had fulfilled their obligation to bring comprehensive safeguards agreements with the Agency into force. Latvia welcomed the progress made at the recent NPT Review Conference and the action plan which had resulted therefrom.

59. Given the recent increase in interest in developing nuclear power, Latvia called attention to the need for countries to adequately inform their neighbours regarding the siting of nuclear installations. Latvia had faced situations in 2009 and 2010 where the exchange of such information had not been handled in the best way. The views of neighbouring countries should be taken into consideration and all issues of concern should be resolved through negotiation before starting the construction of any facility.

60. Latvia appreciated the Agency's enormous efforts and its professionalism in working for the peaceful use of nuclear energy despite the challenges it faced, especially in the sphere of nuclear verification.

61. Mr GERŽINA (Slovenia) said that his country had welcomed the Director General's set of priorities for the year under review. It applauded raising awareness concerning the problem of cancer in developing countries to a higher political level and noted that Slovenian experts from the Institute of Oncology in Ljubljana had already become involved in PACT. So-called green diplomacy was one of his Government's priorities and it supported the Geological Survey of Slovenia in joining the IAEA Water Availability Enhancement (IWAVE) programme.

62. Strengthening the Agency's safeguards system was critical to reinvigorating global non-proliferation efforts. Implementing safeguards was the Agency's core mission and it could not be accomplished without Member States' cooperation and their continuous support of all aspects of safeguards, including evolution of the safeguards system to address contemporary challenges. Slovenia was deeply concerned that, according to the latest reports by the Director General, some countries were still failing to comply with Security Council and Agency resolutions or their comprehensive safeguards agreements under the NPT, or were not cooperating with the Agency in other ways. Slovenia urged them to do so. As a member of SAGSI since 2009, Slovenia was willing to help in that regard.

63. A comprehensive safeguards agreement together with an additional protocol should be considered the universal verification standard. It was encouraging that there were more than a hundred additional protocols in force, and Slovenia urged Member States which had not brought a comprehensive safeguards agreement into force or were hesitant to conclude an additional protocol to do so without delay.

64. The successful outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference had demonstrated that the States Party collectively desired a positive result and it was reassuring that the review process had been strengthened and confidence had been restored in the viability of the Treaty after nearly a decade of neglect. While the final document contained useful benchmarks for assessing implementation of the Conference's recommendations, that by itself would not guarantee success. More efforts were needed to reinforce the three pillars of the NPT: disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

65. The Agency's work in the area of nuclear security was critical in order to prevent, detect and respond to nuclear terrorism. Risk reduction and security improvements were important elements of the Agency's nuclear security programme. Slovenia welcomed the Agency's efforts to assist Member States in improving the security of nuclear facilities and other locations where radioactive substances were used or stored, and during transport.

66. In December 2009, Slovenia had deposited its instrument of ratification of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, thereby becoming party to 14 of the 16 United Nations counter-terrorism conventions and protocols, including the amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

67. Multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle could significantly contribute to energy security and non-proliferation and discussions on such approaches needed to continue in order to push that process forward. Slovenia strongly believed that the Agency could play an important role in that process by providing advice and technical knowledge and stressed that participation in assurance supply mechanisms should be voluntary.

68. Slovenia was fully committed to supporting the Agency's technical cooperation activities. In the past year Slovenia had hosted regional workshops, training courses, meetings and seminars and had trained Agency fellows from a number of developing countries. Since 2006, Slovenian experts had also been active in the demanding Vinča Institute Nuclear Decommissioning (VIND) programme to assist Serbia in decommissioning nuclear facilities.

69. Slovenia had always closely monitored and supported the Secretariat's efforts to improve and strengthen nuclear and radiation emergency preparedness and response in Member States and worldwide. Slovenian organizations had offered to share resources with the growing membership of the Response Assistance Network (RANET). In July 2010, his Government had adopted the revised nuclear or radiological emergency plan which, inter alia, introduced a user-friendly web-based system for major stakeholders to exchange information and documents. The strategy of pre-distribution of potassium iodine tablets in the nuclear power plant emergency planning zone had also been agreed.

70. On the national legislative front, the new law on protection against ionizing radiation and nuclear safety and the law on third party liability and insurance had reached the final stage of preparation. The texts had been agreed among all the stakeholders and would be fully consistent with the latest protocols to the Paris and Brussels Supplementary Conventions. Secondary legislation had incorporated most of the Western European Nuclear Regulators' Association (WENRA) reference levels into Slovenian legislation.

71. One of Slovenia's main goals was the continued safe operation of its existing nuclear facilities. The Krško nuclear power plant had maintained an excellent operating record while supplying almost 40% of the country's electrical power. It had operated without any automatic or manual reactor trips since 2005. The programme for the next periodic safety review had been approved and the relevant activities were in progress. In 2009, the plant had applied for a design lifetime extension to 60 years and, in that context, an independent safety evaluation by an international team had been prepared.

72. The feasibility of a new nuclear power plant in Slovenia as an affordable, reliable, safe and low-carbon source of energy was still being considered. Slovenia believed that nuclear power could be an answer to the challenges of climate change and energy security. The coming years would probably see a significant increase in the use of nuclear power, which remained a viable option for Slovenian energy policy both now and in the future. Slovenian nuclear related organizations were interested in taking part in the renaissance in nuclear power production.

73. In December 2009, the Government had passed a decree approving the site for a low and intermediate level radioactive waste repository in the vicinity of the Krško nuclear power plant and the Slovenian Agency for Radwaste Management planned to start construction in about two and a half years. The site would also be used for storage of all the institutional waste generated in Slovenia.

74. Slovenia believed that the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management were efficient instruments for maintaining a high level of nuclear safety worldwide although, strictly speaking, they were incentive instruments. The national reports for fifth review meeting of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, to be held in April 2011, were ready and had been made available to the Contracting Parties.

75. In conclusion, he reiterated Slovenia's full support of the Agency and its activities and thanked the Director General and the Secretariat for their impartial, professional, competent and devoted work.

Mr Berdennikov (Russian Federation) took the Chair.

76. Mr POTTS (Australia) said that his country had been proud to take the lead, together with Japan, in establishing the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (ICNND) and thanked the Secretariat and Member States for their support of that initiative. The Commission had made a major contribution to advancing debate on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, in particular at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, and to the global shift in attitudes over the past two years to a near-universal commitment to a world without nuclear weapons. The Commission's report on eliminating nuclear threats had proposed a comprehensive action agenda based on 76 recommendations for policies and actions to be taken in the short, medium and long term to achieve the goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

77. Australia welcomed the positive outcomes of the NPT Review Conference and noted in particular the contribution of the Vienna Group of Ten, a group of like-minded States, chaired by Australia, with a strong commitment to assist the NPT review process by producing text on issues concerning safeguards and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

78. The formation of the Asia-Pacific Safeguards Network (APSN) had been announced by Australia at the 2009 General Conference and launched on 1 October 2009. Its inaugural meeting in Bali in June 2010, hosted by Dr As Natio Lasman, Head of the Indonesian Nuclear Energy Regulatory Agency (BAPETEN), and co-chaired by Mr John Carlson, Director General of the Australian Safeguards and Non-Proliferation Office (ASNO), had been attended by representatives from 19 safeguards organizations and ministries in ten countries, the Agency and the European Commission. Australia thanked APSN members for their contributions and the Government of Indonesia for hosting the inaugural meeting. Australia looked forward to working with the Agency, the European Commission and the members of APSN to develop its full potential. The APSN statement of principles had been published in document INFCIRC/769.

79. Over the 30 years of its existence, the Australian Safeguards Support Programme (ASSP) had worked closely with many other support programmes, most notably those in the United States of America, United Kingdom, Germany, Japan and the Republic of Korea. The Australian programme had contributed substantially to the effectiveness of Agency safeguards through analytical services for environmental sampling, the original work on remote monitoring systems and training. In the area of analysis and conceptual work it had contributed most notably through its participation in SAGSI and development of the physical model that guided the Agency's safeguards approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle. Australia looked forward to continuing that work.

80. Australia reiterated its call for those NPT States which had yet to fulfil their obligations under the Treaty to bring into force comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol to do so without delay. Australia had long supported universalization of the NPT and encouraged those States which had not signed and ratified the Treaty to do so as soon as possible.

81. The major technical challenge faced by the safeguards system was to ensure credible verification by providing confidence that safeguards were effective in detecting both the misuse of declared facilities and the existence of undeclared facilities. Australia had been the first State to sign an additional protocol and the first to ratify one. A comprehensive safeguards agreement with an additional protocol helped States assure others of the peaceful intent of their nuclear activities. Every State benefited from efforts to make the safeguards system as effective as possible, and the additional protocol was an essential part of those efforts.

82. Compliance with Agency safeguards obligations was not voluntary. Under the NPT, non-nuclear-weapon States had made a commitment not to use nuclear energy for nuclear weapons purposes and Agency safeguards played an essential role in verifying that commitment. All must respect that commitment and hold States accountable for safeguards violations.

83. Regrettably, certain States continued to be in breach of their safeguards obligations. Iran continued to act in violation of binding Security Council resolutions and requirements of the Board of Governors. Australia remained deeply concerned that Iran was not cooperating fully with the Agency in its investigations, especially with respect to the possible military dimensions of the country's nuclear programme. Security Council resolution 1929 (2010), which imposed wide-ranging new sanctions on Iran, reflected the international community's deep concerns about that country's nuclear programme. Australia urged Iran to comply with Security Council resolutions, engage with the Agency to resolve all issues and demonstrate conclusively the peaceful intent of its nuclear programme.

84. Australia supported the Agency's efforts to engage with Syria to clarify a number of unresolved issues about its nuclear activities, including the construction of a nuclear reactor with DPRK assistance, and urged Syria to resolve those issues and comply fully with the Agency's requests under the proposed action plan.

85. The DPRK continued to be in non-compliance with its safeguards obligations and defy Security Council resolutions. Australia urged the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner and comply with its NPT and Agency safeguards obligations.

86. Australia had long supported the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. It was critical for all States in the Middle East to comply fully with their non-proliferation obligations in order to build mutual confidence and security in the region. It was important to build on the positive momentum of the recent NPT Review Conference and focus on implementing its agreed outcomes, including the agreement to convene a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. At such a critical juncture, Australia encouraged all States to avoid actions that might disrupt progress towards reaching that important goal.

87. Australia continued to work closely with its regional neighbours and the Agency on nuclear safety and security. As a major uranium producer and exporter holding some 30–40% of the world's uranium resources, Australia was committed to the safe and environmentally sound mining, processing and transport of uranium and was proud of its strong record in those areas. As a sign of that commitment, Australia had established the Friends of Responsible Uranium Mining (FoRUM), an informal Vienna-based contact group for existing and prospective uranium mining countries as a means of exchanging views and experience on best practices in uranium mining. In that context,

Australia was once again hosting a side event during the General Conference on "Uranium Production Cycle: Future Needs and Challenges".

88. Noting that denial of shipment had been a factor in the global shortage of key medical radioisotopes such as molybdenum-99 over recent months, he stressed the importance of international efforts to address the issue of timely and reliable transport of radioactive materials. In that regard, he noted that Australia's LEU-fuelled OPAL reactor had operated for 266 days at full power from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010, thus providing a strong basis for the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation's (ANSTO) LEU-based molybdenum production facility to achieve routine operation and to work on increasing production capacity to help meet global demand.

89. Australia supported the activities of the Asian Nuclear Safety Network and the important role it was playing in Southeast Asia by fostering interaction among States planning to introduce nuclear power as well as those operating existing research reactors. Australia looked forward to the round-table discussion during the current General Conference session on enhancing collaboration among global and regional networks.

90. Australia reaffirmed the right of Member States to use nuclear energy peacefully in accordance with their international obligations. Australia shared its expertise, equipment and personnel in the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology through ANSTO, an Agency collaborating centre for neutron scattering applications, and was consistently ranked among the top contributors to the Agency's TCF.

91. Mr ABDULLATIF ABDULLA (Bahrain) said that the Agency's action to ensure that nuclear energy was used only for peaceful purposes and to promote nuclear safety played an extremely important role in the context of national, regional and international efforts to use nuclear energy for electricity generation, seawater desalination, improved health services and sustainable development. The world as a whole also depended on successful Agency action to avert the threat of nuclear terrorism and to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

92. Since joining the Agency, Bahrain had taken resolute steps to use nuclear energy in support of national development goals, to strengthen regional cooperation and to establish the requisite legislative and technical infrastructure. It had also expanded the scope of its international obligations in respect of nuclear safety and continued to support action to strengthen the non-proliferation regime.

93. Bahrain had signed a comprehensive safeguards agreement in 2007 and had recently signed an additional protocol. Also, it had acceded to a number of international instruments such as the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the amendments thereto, the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident, and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

94. Bahrain had set up a national commission, based on international standards, to deal with all issues pertaining to peaceful uses of nuclear energy in the Kingdom. All relevant ministries took part in the commission's work. In that context, he thanked the Agency for its ongoing technical and legal assistance.

95. Bahrain was proud of current efforts among the Member States of the Gulf Cooperation Council to promote peaceful uses of nuclear energy in cooperation with the Agency. He was also proud of Arab cooperation in using nuclear energy to achieve development goals as part of the Arab nuclear energy strategy for the period 2010–2020.

96. The Arab States relied heavily on the action taken by the Agency to apply effective safeguards in the Middle East region pursuant to General Conference resolution GC(50)/RES/16, with the aim of creating a NWFZ in the Middle East region. He also referred in that connection to General Conference

resolution GC(53)/RES/17, adopted on 18 September 2009, in which the Conference had expressed concern about the Israeli nuclear capabilities and called on Israel to accede to the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards. Bahrain emphasized the need for action to ensure the effective implementation of that resolution.

97. Bahrain welcomed the outcome of the Nuclear Summit held in Washington, which had agreed on a work plan for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. It also welcomed the outcome of the NPT Review Conference, which had called for the convening of a regional conference in 2012 on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Bahrain urged all concerned to take positive steps to ensure the success of the conference.

98. His country greatly appreciated the steps taken by the Agency to enhance the effectiveness of the safeguards regime. It hoped that real progress would be made in the area of nuclear disarmament and that all States would be persuaded to accede to the NPT so that it became a universal instrument.

99. Bahrain emphasized the right of every State to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and welcomed the statement by the Islamic Republic of Iran that it was committed to maintaining the peaceful character of its nuclear programme. He stressed the importance of full transparency, fulfilment of all the Agency's requirements and compliance with the provisions of the NPT with a view to dispelling all doubts regarding Iran's nuclear programme.

100. Ms RASI (Finland) affirmed that safeguards and verification were prerequisites for the peaceful use of nuclear energy by Member States. Finland strongly supported increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Agency's safeguards system. Comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols thereto should be brought into force promptly and implemented by all non-nuclear-weapon Member States.

101. Agency integrated safeguards had been implemented for two years in Finland and the experience had been encouraging, with a 60% reduction in Agency inspections in the first full year, namely 2009.

102. Further synergies between safeguards, safety and nuclear security would be welcome. Preliminary design information for new nuclear facilities was required to be submitted without undue delay, but it would be cost-effective to address both safeguards and security in the design of such facilities. Finland, which had already incorporated that idea in its legislation with positive results, suggested that the introduction of safeguards in the design phase of nuclear facilities should be a requirement in Agency safety standards. Another area where the Agency's efficiency and effectiveness could be improved would be through better cooperation with State systems of accounting for and control of nuclear material (SSACs).

103. Nuclear power would remain a major component of Finland's energy mix. Finland, a small country very dependent on energy, had had nuclear power plants in operation since the late 1970s. Its safety record was good and its performance indicators excellent. The country's fifth nuclear power plant unit, a 1600 MW European pressurized water reactor (EPR), was currently under construction in Olkiluoto. The share of nuclear power in electricity power generation would be increasing to around 40%, making Finland a fairly large user of nuclear power in relative terms.

104. In the spring of 2010 the Finnish Government had taken a decision in principle, later ratified by Parliament, to proceed with two more nuclear power plant units, and the Government would be dealing with construction licence applications in due course. Those decisions would shift Finland dramatically in the carbon emission-free direction and would ensure the country's self-sufficiency in electricity production for the first time in several decades.

105. Nuclear waste management was an important issue, and a clearly defined waste management policy, openly declared by the Government and including solid financing arrangements defined in the nuclear legislation, was essential.

106. Finland's fuel cycle was of the 'once-through' type. National legislation viewed spent nuclear fuel as radioactive waste and required its disposal in Finnish bedrock. Since the decision in principle in 2000, industry and the regulator had been working to implement the spent fuel final disposal project. The nuclear waste management company, Posiva, was making active preparations to submit an application for a construction license in 2012. The Onkalo underground rock characterization facility, which was planned to be part of the final repository, had started operation in 2004, and spent fuel disposal was scheduled to start in 2020.

107. Member States and the Agency should strengthen and coordinate efforts to ensure that countries embarking on nuclear power programmes developed sound safety infrastructures. Despite the Agency's central role in that area, prime responsibility for the safe and secure use of nuclear power lay with the licensed operators and strict regulation by national authorities was important. The Agency should give them advice and support, and the vendors should ensure safe design and high quality construction. It could not be expected, however, that international or foreign organizations would assume the responsibilities of the national actors. In that context, Finland underlined again the importance of a strong national safety culture and a strong and independent national regulatory authority which enjoyed the public's confidence. Finland continued actively to share with other countries its experience in building national infrastructure and ensuring the safety of nuclear power plants.

108. Finland had ratified the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism in 2009 and, having completed the required amendments to national legislation, was ready to deposit its instrument of ratification of the amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. Finland called for early ratification by all States of those two conventions, which would strengthen the global nuclear security regime.

109. The Agency continued to play a key role in supporting Member States in their fight against nuclear terrorism. Finland had provided financial and in-kind support to the Agency's nuclear security activities and she announced that it was making another voluntary contribution to the Nuclear Security Fund.

110. The President of Finland had participated in the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington in April. The commitments undertaken by the Summit participants were very relevant to and supportive of the Agency's work in the area of nuclear security. In future, the work of both forums should be complementary and mutually reinforcing.

111. Finland had always paid its contribution to the Regular Budget in full and on time and also, in recognition of the importance of the Agency's technical cooperation programme, its share of the TCF target; it called upon all Member States to do likewise. The demand for technical cooperation activities related to the introduction of nuclear power was increasing, particularly regarding safety. It was important that the Agency was able to meet that demand and that technical cooperation modalities were developed further. Efforts should be made to find the most efficient way to transfer knowledge and technology, with emphasis on long-term capacity building.

112. Regarding the content of the technical cooperation programme, projects should be fully within the Agency's terms of reference and based on national development strategies. Fully recognizing the important role of non-power applications for technical assistance, Finland hoped that the Agency would continue to develop more cost-effective and sustainable methods and partnerships with other organizations, such as WHO and FAO.

113. Mr HAMER (Netherlands) said that a number of important events had taken place over the preceding year. After a decade of deadlock, the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime had received new impetus with the adoption of Security Council resolution 1887, the signing of the New START Treaty, the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington and the consensus outcome of the NPT Review Conference. All States now had the responsibility to build on those results and seize the opportunity to improve multilateral cooperation and strengthen the non-proliferation regime.

114. Despite the achievements, the non-proliferation regime continued to face many grave challenges, including the DPRK's ongoing defiance of the international community regarding its nuclear weapons programme, Iran's lack of cooperation in allowing the Agency to verify the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme, outstanding questions about Syria's nuclear programme, and the danger of nuclear material falling into the hands of terrorists and other non-State actors. As a member of the Board of Governors, his country would continue to take an active part in shaping the future of the Agency and the way it dealt with the challenges and opportunities before it.

115. The Netherlands fully supported the right of States to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, but with that right came responsibilities. States must ensure that their development of nuclear energy met all the necessary non-proliferation requirements. The Agency's safeguards system was essential in that regard. A comprehensive safeguards agreement together with an additional protocol constituted the current verification standard and the Netherlands called on all Member States which had not done so to conclude, ratify and implement both those instruments. Only with an additional protocol in place could the Agency verify that no nuclear material was being diverted to non-peaceful purposes. The safeguards system needed to evolve constantly in order to keep pace with technological developments and allow the Agency to perform its verification activities with the greatest possible efficiency and effectiveness. His country therefore supported the introduction of integrated and information-driven safeguards. In addition, in order to guarantee the integrity of the NPT and the Agency's inspection regime, a strong policy against non-compliance was required. Specific cases of non-compliance needed to be addressed.

116. All States had an interest in maximizing the security of nuclear material. The Netherlands warmly welcomed the results of the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington and was committed to implementing the resulting work plan and agreements. His country took its nuclear security responsibilities very seriously and made good use of the Agency's services in that regard. It had received three International Physical Protection Advisory Service (IPPAS) missions that had reviewed all the nuclear installations in the country and made valuable recommendations. A fourth mission planned for 2011 would evaluate how those recommendations had been implemented. In November 2010, in close cooperation with the Agency, the Netherlands was organizing a seminar for senior managers and high-level officials in the Dutch nuclear field to increase their awareness of nuclear security issues.

117. The Nuclear Security Fund was pivotal to improving nuclear security and should therefore be part of the Agency's Regular Budget, not just supported by a few donor countries. Until that came about, his country — which had made substantial unconditional donations to the Fund for several years and had pledged another €750 000 for the next three years — called upon all Member States to contribute to it generously and without conditions.

118. The shortage of molybdenum-99 supplies was cause for serious concern. The high-flux reactor in Petten was the world's second largest producer of radioisotopes for medical use, meeting 30% of worldwide demand and used to treat 24 000 patients every day. In 2008, gas leakages had been observed in the primary cooling system of the reactor. Given the worldwide need for radiopharmaceuticals, and with extra leak monitoring and strict safety measures in place, the operator had been granted a special temporary licence by the Dutch Government, approved by an Agency

safety mission, to keep operating the reactor for one year. A detailed repair plan had been prepared in close cooperation with a team of Agency experts and the repair work had been carried out from February to July 2010, replacing faulty pipe parts and taking action to prevent similar problems in the future. Radioisotope production had resumed in September 2010.

119. As a strong supporter of the Agency's technical cooperation activities, the Netherlands had pledged its full target share to the TCF for 2011. Through its technical cooperation programme, the Agency could make a real contribution to such global issues as health, food, water and the environment, and help achieve sustainable national and international development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. However, with a view to making the most of the funds available, the management and transparency of the programme needed to be improved and brought into line with established United Nations standards. Also, cooperation with relevant international organizations should be intensified. The least developed countries needed to be better represented in the technical cooperation programme as they had the greatest socio-economic development needs. In addition, the programme's statutory and policy framework for safety, security and safeguards should be fully implemented to prevent unnecessary risk to the health of the public, workers and patients, or to the environment. The danger of material ending up in the wrong hands also had to be addressed.

120. The growing interest in nuclear power led to a need for secure access to and supply of nuclear fuel. The Netherlands supported multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle and welcomed the recent agreement between the Agency and the Russian Federation to establish a reserve of LEU in Angarsk. A number of other countries had made further proposals that could help States exercise their right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It was time to move forward in the debate on that issue and the Netherlands would work actively with all parties concerned to that end.

121. The increasing urgency of climate change and the scarcity of energy sources had obliged his country to think about nuclear energy in its future energy mix. Three scenarios had been prepared and sent to parliament and a new Government would have to decide whether to build nuclear power plants in the Netherlands.

122. Mr AL-SALLAL (Kuwait) said that international socio-economic development called for a major increase in the energy supply over the coming decades. As nuclear energy was deemed to be a supplementary rather than an alternative source of energy, the decision to opt for nuclear energy depended on national policies, which were in turn determined by needs, aspirations and capabilities.

123. Kuwait had entered a new stage in its relationship with the Agency. The Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, had instructed the Government to elaborate an integrated national strategy for the development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy in order to diversify energy sources. The Council of Ministers had therefore decided in March 2009 to establish a National Commission on Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy based on Agency recommendations under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister. Kuwait had since engaged in consultations with major nuclear States and was cooperating with the Agency on using nuclear energy for electricity generation, seawater desalination, capacity-building and the development of relevant national institutions. Kuwait's national institutions looked forward to engaging in further close consultations with the Agency concerning action to meet the expected increase in average energy consumption during the coming decade.

124. Kuwait participated with great interest in meetings between experts from the Member States of the Gulf Cooperation Council and Agency experts with the aim of implementing a joint programme on peaceful uses of nuclear energy. A great deal had been achieved during the past three years and Kuwait looked forward to further cooperation in the years ahead.

125. The technical cooperation programme was a cornerstone of the Agency's capacity-building activities and for the transfer of nuclear technology to developing countries. Kuwait had long attached great importance to technical cooperation activities and had warmly welcomed the signing in December 2009 of a CPF agreement with the Agency covering the period 2009–2013. Moreover, Kuwait had ranked first in 2009 in terms of its rate of implementation of the technical cooperation programme, attaining a rate of more than 95%. It looked forward to further constructive cooperation with the Agency in the areas of training, technical support and the safe use of radioactive material. Kuwait also appreciated the Agency's technical cooperation efforts on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific region, especially the organization of regional workshops and training courses.

126. Kuwait attached great importance to the safety and security of radioactive sources and nuclear material. It was essential to apply the relevant rules and guidelines aimed at controlling movements of such material. Kuwait had taken note of the Director General's Nuclear Security Report 2010 and the Agency's Nuclear Security Plan. It had adopted a national integrated nuclear security plan in April 2010 and notified the Agency of the plan and of a work plan for 2011–2012 involving various national sectors and institutions. Kuwait had agreed with the Agency to hold a training workshop on advanced equipment for the detection of radioactive materials.

127. Kuwait welcomed the increase in international involvement in data collection for the Illicit Trafficking Database programme and had itself begun to participate in the programme in 2009. It urged the Agency to coordinate with Member States that were building nuclear facilities in their territory in order to ensure that they exercised caution and took all necessary safety measures in their facilities and nuclear programmes. The Agency should continuously verify compliance by the authorities of the countries concerned with safety procedures and urge them to accede to the Convention on Nuclear Safety.

128. Kuwait was following developments with respect to the safeguards agreement of the Islamic Republic of Iran. While it affirmed the right of all States to produce and develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in accordance with the provisions of the NPT, it called on the Islamic Republic of Iran to cooperate more closely with the Agency, and to respond to its queries in order to dispel any fears and doubts concerning the nature of its nuclear programme and to resolve pending issues. It further called on all the parties concerned to step up diplomatic efforts to resume the dialogue and negotiations in the interests of security and stability in the Middle East region and the world as a whole.

129. The safeguards system, as a cornerstone of the Agency's work and of the non-proliferation regime, enjoyed the support of most countries in the world. Kuwait urged all States that had not yet signed a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the Agency to do so, and encouraged States that had signed such an agreement to proceed with the signing of an additional protocol. All States Party to the NPT should abide by their obligations under the Treaty and under their safeguards agreements, and should work closely with the Agency in resolving any doubts regarding their programmes through constructive and transparent negotiations and dialogue.

130. The Agency should redouble its efforts to verify that all nuclear installations and programmes throughout the world served peaceful purposes. Kuwait attached great importance to the application of Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities in the Middle East region. It noted with deep regret that, although all States in the region were party to the NPT and were committed to the application of its provisions, Israel persisted in its refusal to sign the NPT and to place its installations under comprehensive Agency safeguards, thereby impeding the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East. Its attitude undermined security and stability in the region and hence also in the world as a whole.

131. The General Conference had adopted a resolution entitled "Israeli nuclear capabilities" at its preceding session and the 2010 NPT Review Conference had adopted a final document in which it called for the convening of an international conference in 2012 on the creation of a NWFZ in the Middle East. Kuwait supported such important international efforts to achieve the universality of the NPT and called on Israel to accede to the Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon State and to place all its nuclear installations under comprehensive Agency safeguards.

132. In view of Israel's intransigence, Kuwait supported the submission of a draft resolution entitled "Israeli nuclear capabilities" to the current session of the General Conference and urged Member States to adopt the resolution in order to achieve the universality of the NPT and to rid the Middle East of nuclear weapons.

133. Kuwait reaffirmed the inalienable right of all States without distinction to possess and develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. In March 2009 it had pledged a sum of $10 million for the establishment of a nuclear fuel bank under the Agency's auspices. It supported the continuation of a transparent and constructive dialogue aimed at the development of a multilateral approach to the nuclear fuel cycle and the establishment of supply assurance mechanisms, including a nuclear fuel bank that would serve as a last resort for countries wishing to benefit from such fuel. At the same time, Kuwait called on the Director General and the Secretariat to continue studying the proposal and to assist in reconciling different views by submitting a further paper on the matter.

134. Mr EL-KHOURY (Lebanon) said the General Conference was being held shortly after the 2010 NPT Review Conference, which had devoted a separate section of its final document to the Agency and stressed the importance of increasing its financial resources in order to enhance its effectiveness. The Review Conference had also highlighted the Agency's role in promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy and providing technical assistance to States, as well as its role in preventing the diversion of nuclear energy for military and other non-peaceful purposes. Furthermore, the Review Conference had reaffirmed its 1995 resolution on the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East.

135. There had been a significant increase in global demand for nuclear energy, particularly for electricity generation, in the search for sources of energy that could replace or supplement fossil fuels that polluted the environment. As a result, attention was again focused on the issue of nuclear safety and security, especially in countries that were contemplating the use of nuclear energy for the first time. People were becoming increasingly convinced of the need for regional integration of such projects in order to minimize the risks involved and spread the benefits more widely.

136. A long-term solution to the complex problem of nuclear fuel supplies could be found only if a number of basic conditions were met. It was important to avoid the hasty imposition of solutions and mechanisms that might be viewed as an attempt to deprive developing countries of their right to possess enrichment technology. The technical, legal, economic and political dimensions of any solution should be discussed and a balance should be struck between the views of all States concerned, based on the principle of impartiality and agreement on the objectives to be achieved. A further aim was to assure a continuous fuel supply without resorting to political pressure or approaches that were incompatible with standards of fairness and equality.

137. Lebanon commended the Director General on according priority during his first year in office to the PACT programme, without of course neglecting other programmes and pressing needs in the areas of water resources, food security, agricultural pest control, energy and environmental degradation.

138. Lebanon was deeply grateful to the Agency for its assistance under the technical cooperation programme and for the transparency and assiduity it had displayed in seeking the best possible results. His country was, for its part, fully committed to compliance with the Agency's standards and guidelines.

139. Lebanon planned to build a nuclear research reactor in order to develop scientific research on nuclear applications, to train human resources and to create an enabling environment for the projects planned by most States in the region in the areas of electricity generation, seawater desalination and medical treatment. Lebanon had submitted a technical cooperation project under the Agency's 2012-2013 technical cooperation programme for a feasibility study concerning the building of a nuclear research reactor. It was also developing the legal framework required to ensure the safety of all peaceful uses of atomic energy, in accordance with the international instruments it had ratified and the Agency's regulations and recommendations.

140. The issue of Israel's nuclear capabilities was raised at each session of the General Conference and in 2009, for the first time in 20 years, a majority of the Member States had adopted a resolution (GC(53)/17) calling on Israel to accede to the NPT and to place its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards. The Arab States that were members of the Agency had submitted a draft resolution containing the same provisions to the current session of the Conference. He hoped that it would be adopted by the largest possible majority of Member States so that the Agency would again be proved worthy of its statutory mandate, a mandate that had been reaffirmed by the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

141. Lebanon regretted the fact that the Director General had been unable, despite his serious and conscientious efforts, to report any progress in implementation of the preceding year's resolution to the Board of Governors and the General Conference. Concerns regarding nuclear proliferation would therefore persist in the Middle East, and the region's security would remain under threat as long as a single State refused to accede to the NPT and possessed nuclear facilities that were not subject to the comprehensive safeguards regime. The Evans and Kawaguchi report on eliminating nuclear threats had stated that so long as any State had nuclear weapons, others would want them. The peoples of the Middle East were dreaming of the day when they could live, like others, in a region free of nuclear weapons. It was no secret that the Israeli leaders had admitted on numerous occasions that their country possessed nuclear weapons. Moreover, the Evans and Kawaguchi report, which was an impartial document, estimated Israel's arsenal at between 60 and 200 weapons.

142. Lebanon and the other Arab States had reaffirmed a set of basic principles on numerous occasions. Thus, the principle of the universality of the NPT constituted a strategic interest for humankind as a whole which overrode all political considerations and circumstantial interests. All Arab States were party to the NPT and had signed up to the safeguards regime without invoking the Arab-Israeli conflict as an excuse to defer compliance with their obligations. Nuclear weapons could not be perceived as a means of guaranteeing the security of any party. Otherwise the region would be plunged into an unwanted arms race. Non-proliferation efforts should take regional dimensions into account, adopting a comprehensive regional approach in order to achieve security for all parties. Non-proliferation efforts should also address all aspects of the issue. An approach that fell short of the principle of comprehensiveness and universality would obstruct achievement of the goals pursued.

143. Double standards were the antithesis of law. Israel's intransigence, its repeated threats of war and destruction and its encroachment by land, sea and air on the sovereignty of Lebanon rendered it unaccountable and a State above international law. Lebanon reiterated its position that the basis for protecting international peace and security and for ensuring justice and equality among nations was the power of law and not the law of the powerful. International law was a social contract among States and should be respected by all. The peoples of the region would be reassured and their belief in such principles would be restored when serious international pressure was brought to bear on Israel to accede to the NPT and to place its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards. They were the two basic steps required to build confidence and to achieve a NWFZ in the Middle East.

144. Lebanon believed that, in the absence of peace and trust, it was impossible to achieve the development to which the world aspired. An effective and goal-oriented partnership between all members of the international community would serve as a vehicle to promote the peace and development process, a process in which the Agency played a vital role.

145. Mr MANTICA (Italy) said that there had been a number of important developments in the preceding year concerning the Agency. The results of the 2010 NPT Review Conference were particularly positive and it was important to build on that success through implementation of the final document and the action plan. In that regard, the current General Conference could contribute by creating conditions conducive to that end.

146. His country attached great importance to strengthening the international non-proliferation regime, as demonstrated during its G8 presidency in 2009 when the G8 Heads of State and Government had adopted the Aquila statement on non-proliferation, which had continued to attract interest in 2010.

147. Nuclear energy development and access to nuclear technology were a right for all Member States and one of the fundamental objectives of the Agency's work. However, Italy was concerned about recent developments in certain countries. According to the Director General's latest report, Iran was still failing to observe Security Council resolutions and cooperate with the Agency concerning the access and information required to demonstrate the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in the country. Even though Iran's right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes was not being questioned, those problems had to be resolved.

148. Another matter for concern was the lack of positive developments in the DPRK. In accordance with Security Council resolutions, the DPRK must respect its obligations under the NPT and its safeguards agreement. The six-party talks were the appropriate framework for resuming dialogue in that regard.

149. The Nuclear Security Summit in Washington and the resulting communiqué and work plan demonstrated the growing interest in international cooperation in that field. Although important, the application of existing legal documents was not sufficient. It was also important to raise public awareness and train staff. Italy was therefore establishing a school for nuclear security, in collaboration with the Agency and the International Centre for Theoretical Physics in Trieste.

150. Any country developing a nuclear programme had to give absolute priority to the safety of the population and workers. In that regard, the Agency's international safety standards served as a primary reference for Member States and the services offered by the Agency for their application were particularly useful.

151. Italy supported the Agency's activities to develop nuclear energy applications for scientific and medical purposes in the fields of health, food and agriculture, access to energy and water, and environmental protection. It encouraged the Agency to continue its collaboration with the FAO and to develop the activities of its Marine Environment Laboratories in Monaco as a centre of excellence in protection of the marine environment.

152. The 2010 Scientific Forum on cancer in developing countries, being held in the margins of the General Conference, was an important event for strengthening international cooperation in that area. PACT was a good example of the results that could be achieved by such efforts and merited support.

153. He confirmed that, despite financial difficulties, Italy would support the TCF in 2011. The technical cooperation programme needed to focus on priority sectors for the development of the beneficiary countries. Also, activities should be implemented more efficiently. Human resource training and development were a priority if the technical cooperation objectives were to be fully met.

His country therefore continued to support the Agency's training efforts, regularly receiving researchers and scientists from various Member States at its universities and research centres.

154. It was gratifying that an agreement had been reached on the 2011 budget despite a difficult international economic context. Italy, which was about to become a member of the Board of Governors, was committed to helping the Agency achieve its statutory objectives, taking into account the limited resources available and the need clearly to identify priorities. His country had welcomed the Director General's announcement regarding the guidelines for the preparation of the 2012–2013 programme and budget. Given the current financial difficulties, there was a need to identify opportunities for rationalizing costs.

155. On the national front, over the past year the Italian Government had made progress in its nuclear renaissance, establishing an institutional framework for its national nuclear programme. A new national authority for nuclear safety and security had been created and its statute approved in July 2010. Furthermore, Italy had developed a knowledge network in the industrial sector, universities, research centres and public authorities, particularly in the fields of nuclear safety and security regulation and control, radioactive waste management and the dismantling of nuclear facilities. Research related to nuclear power generation remained a priority, as had been highlighted by the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research in the 2010–2012 national programme for research, which had just been adopted. At the same time, the authorities were providing information to the public about the challenges posed by Italy's return to nuclear power. Debate was under way with a view to finding the most appropriate solutions at the local and national level. At the international level, the nuclear renaissance had boosted Italy's cooperation with several countries, including France and the United States of America. The country hoped to strengthen existing partnerships and develop new ones. Also, Italy hoped to benefit from the Agency's expertise and assistance and pledged its continuing support to the Agency in the responsible development of nuclear energy around the world.

156. Mr RÓNAKY (Hungary) said that his country welcomed the current global momentum for disarmament and non-proliferation. The action plan adopted by the 2010 NPT Review Conference clearly demonstrated renewed international commitment to curbing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and Hungary hoped that the General Conference would contribute to that plan's full implementation.

157. Hungary was concerned that the growing consensus around the ultimate goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons was being offset by overt and covert attempts at the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles by certain countries. Hungary condemned all such attempts and urged the parties concerned to cooperate fully with the international community and, if required, the Agency, on clarifying those matters.

158. Climate change and the extreme weather conditions prevailing in most countries put energy networks under enormous stress and highlighted the need for a secure energy supply. Hungary produced about 40% of its electrical energy using nuclear power and its reliance on nuclear power had increased the previous year when parliament had instructed the Government to start preparations for the construction of new units at the Paks nuclear power plant site. As a result of that decision in principle, the Hungarian Atomic Energy Authority had revised the country's nuclear safety regulations to provide a framework for the regulation of new facilities.

159. The Paks nuclear power plant had continued to operate safely through power uprates which had brought all units to 108% of their previous capacities, and the plant currently provided a total of 2 GW power to the grid.

160. Hungary had continued to share its experience in nuclear safety through project IRA/9/018 to train Iranian nuclear safety inspectors for the safe operation of the soon-to-be operational power plant

at Bushehr. The project had been funded partly by Norway and had been in full compliance with Security Council resolutions. Hungary had thereby demonstrated that it was prepared to cooperate with Iran on nuclear activities that were clearly intended for exclusively peaceful purposes. Iran's nuclear programme, and in particular its enrichment of uranium and production of heavy water, were nevertheless a source of great concern. Hungary urged Iran to promptly and fully implement all relevant Security Council resolutions and return to meaningful negotiations with representatives of the international community on outstanding questions regarding its nuclear programme.

161. The fact that Hungarian nuclear safety, safeguards and security experts were regularly invited to take part in Agency expert missions reflected the excellent and longstanding working relationship between the Agency and the Hungarian nuclear community, including the regulatory body, operators, universities and research institutes.

162. Hungary had already submitted its national report to the Secretariat for the upcoming fifth review meeting of Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety and commended the Agency's work in preparing for that important event.

163. Hungary attached great importance to the Agency's nuclear security programme and the new series of related publications, including the Agency's security fundamentals and its recommendations on nuclear materials and nuclear facilities, on radioactive material and associated facilities, and on nuclear and radioactive material out of regulatory control.

164. Recent developments in the Hungarian nuclear power programme — power uprate, extension of service lifetime and planned expansion of the Paks nuclear power plant — highlighted the importance of radioactive waste management. Construction continued on the national radioactive waste repository near the village of Bátaapáti, where low and intermediate level waste from the Paks nuclear power plant could be safely disposed of at intermediate depth in granite host rock. The above-surface part of the facility, which had been completed in September 2008 and licensed, had begun receiving waste packages for buffer storage. The first underground disposal chambers were being prepared and would start receiving containers in 2012.

165. Hungary continued to take part in the Agency's safeguards support programme, providing training for safeguards inspectors and developing and testing new technologies for safeguards.

166. Significant resources and efforts had recently been dedicated to the establishment and operation of the Analytical Laboratory for Nuclear Materials at the Institute of Isotopes, and that laboratory was in the process of joining the Agency's Network of Analytical Laboratories.

167. New cooperative initiatives were anticipated under the Novel Technologies Project, and Hungary had already offered to take part in evaluation and field testing of the new hand held laser induced breakdown spectroscopy (LIBS) unit.

168. Hungary highly valued the Agency's work in the area of human health. With Agency assistance, cancer therapy centres in the country had been audited, which had helped to highlight the importance of quality control in medical diagnostic and treatment processes and the importance of well-trained personnel. As a result of the audit, the Budapest University of Technology and Economics had started a new master's course in medical physics and there were plans to make it available also in English for interested students from abroad.

169. Hungary appreciated its many years of technical cooperation with the Agency and renewed its offer to reciprocate by sharing its experience with other States through the Agency's technical cooperation programme.

170. Hungary strongly supported implementation of the Strategy for the Technical Cooperation Programme in the Europe region, believing that it would be successful in fostering fruitful cooperation between Member States and the Agency. Hungary's CPF, revised in cooperation with the Agency and signed in early 2010, reflected the country's commitment to cooperate in numerous fields of application of atomic energy and provided a good basis for future cooperation. Hungary continued to believe that the cooperation should be mainly through regional projects as well as bilateral projects with other Member States.

171. The Hungarian Atomic Energy Authority had established a nuclear knowledge management system in 2009 which was expected to reach full capacity in 2011, and the country greatly appreciated the contribution of the Agency's technical cooperation programme to that project.

172. As incoming President of the EU, Hungary was following the changes taking place in the Agency with special attention. Mr Amano had taken over leadership at a difficult time characterized by steadily increasing demand for Agency services and a shortage of available funds due to the economic crisis. The steps that the Director General had taken to help the Agency cope with the financial difficulties while continuing to foster cooperation among Member States were moving the Agency in the right direction, and he assured him of Hungary's full support.

173. Mr COGAN (Ireland) said that his country remained committed to effective multilateralism as the best way of upholding the rule of law, ensuring international peace and security and advancing international cooperation. The Agency played a vital and unique role in promoting safe, secure and peaceful nuclear technologies and the importance of its mission would increase further in the years ahead as new demands, technologies and challenges arose. Ireland remained committed to working with the Agency and its Member States towards common goals.

174. The most significant event of the past year for the Agency had been the positive outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, which offered renewed prospects for realizing the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons and underlined again the importance of ensuring the Treaty's universality.

175. The Conference's final document had strongly reaffirmed the right of States to develop and cooperate on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy within the context of the Treaty. At the same time, it had emphasized the responsibility of States to ensure that any expansion of the use of nuclear energy was done safely, securely and without increasing the risk of proliferation.

176. For the first time in the history of the NPT, a forward-looking action plan had been agreed across its three pillars. The implementation of those plans would be a significant challenge for States over the next five years and it underscored the importance of international cooperation and the key role of the Agency in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

177. Regarding the Middle East, the NPT parties had recognized the importance of a process leading to full implementation of the 1995 resolution that was reinforced by concrete and substantive practical steps, including the convening of a conference in 2012. Discussion of Middle East issues at the current General Conference should aim to advance implementation of that 1995 resolution and actions must be avoided that could damage the positive atmosphere created by the agreement in New York and undermine work towards the conference in 2012.

178. The Agency was a key focal point for strengthening international cooperation on nuclear security. Ireland very much welcomed the impetus given to that issue by the Nuclear Security Summit held in Washington in April.

179. The Agency's work on safeguards and verification was more crucial than ever as it underpinned international confidence and cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It was vital that States met their obligations in that area and that the Agency had the tools and authority to act effectively and

decisively. A comprehensive safeguards agreement with an additional protocol was the necessary verification standard, and Ireland encouraged those States that had yet to adopt them to do so without delay.

180. The renovation and expansion of the Agency's laboratories at Seibersdorf — towards which Ireland had also made a modest contribution — would significantly improve the Agency's verification capabilities.

181. The safeguards regime was facing unprecedented challenges. In May, the NPT States Party had underscored the importance of resolving all cases of non-compliance with safeguards obligations, in full conformity with the Agency's Statute and States' legal obligations.

182. The DPRK must comply unconditionally and without delay with its international obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions and its safeguards agreement and resume full cooperation with the Agency. Ireland called on the DPRK to return to the six-party talks immediately and without preconditions and urged it to abandon and completely dismantle any nuclear weapons related programme in a transparent and irreversible manner.

183. A matter of ongoing serious concern for his Government was that the Agency remained unable to confirm that all nuclear material was in peaceful activities in Iran because that country was not providing the necessary cooperation. Iran should take steps towards full implementation of its comprehensive safeguards agreement and subsidiary arrangements, as well as relevant resolutions of the Board of Governors and the Security Council, and it should work proactively to clarify activities with a possible military dimension. Ireland called on Iran to cooperate fully with the Agency and implement an additional protocol without delay.

184. Ireland greatly valued and benefited from its membership of the Agency. Nuclear technology would impact daily life in increasingly sophisticated ways in the years ahead; already it was playing an essential role in health, agriculture, water management and environmental monitoring. As a result, the Agency would be assuming a wider range of roles and facing more complex challenges.

185. Although it remained Ireland's clear policy not to use nuclear energy for electricity generation, it fully recognized the sovereign right of each country to decide its own energy mix in keeping with international obligations in such areas as safety and environmental protection.

186. Ireland believed firmly in the benefits of a collective and multilateral approach to safety and security and considered that the Agency provided a vital framework for cooperative efforts to build and strengthen the international nuclear safety and security regime.

187. Ireland welcomed and sought to contribute to the culture of learning and continuous improvement fostered by the Agency. Safety standards and practices were best supported and enhanced by international peer review and the sharing of knowledge, both of which were well served by Agency programmes, and by practical assistance to Member States. Such approaches were important for nuclear and non-nuclear States alike, and Ireland was pleased to be able to play a constructive part in that dialogue as a non-nuclear nation.

188. Ireland had significant stakeholder interest in the matter of reprocessing and had long been of the view that it raised real safety and environmental concerns. Radioactive discharges from reprocessing operations into the shared marine environment were of particular concern. His country would continue to support the Agency's work in that area aimed at minimizing the risk and environmental impact of such activities.

189. The Medium Term Strategy provided an important opportunity for States to reflect on the Agency's future work and ensure its ability to meet the challenges ahead. It was important that it

provide strategic vision, practical guidance and clear targets and that it encourage the Agency to reform its management so that the available technical, human and financial resources were used as effectively and efficiently as possible.

190. In the same way, technical cooperation, a key element of the Agency's work, had to be structured and supported to advance the Agency's mandate.

191. Ireland, with Agency involvement, continued to seek to advance the dialogue between coastal and shipping States with a view to ensuring effective communication between them regarding the marine transport of nuclear materials. Attention had recently been given to national and international emergency response measures in the unlikely event of an accident. It was clear that complete information had to be provided in order for national authorities to perform risk assessments for such contingencies.

192. As the burden on the Agency increased in the years to come, it was incumbent on Member States to ensure that it had the political, technical and financial support it needed to carry out its responsibilities. It was equally incumbent on the Agency to improve the efficiency, efficacy, cost-effectiveness and transparency of its structures and practices.

193. Ireland appreciated the manner in which the Director General had advanced the Agency's key agenda during his first year in office and would continue to support his, and his staff's, unstinting efforts and professionalism.

194. Mr RISTORI (European Commission) said that three important events in 2010 — the International Conference on Access to Civil Nuclear Energy in Paris, the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington and the NPT Review Conference in New York — had demonstrated political recognition of the global trend of renewed interest in the civil use of nuclear energy. Those events and the recent nuclear arms reduction agreement between the United States of America and the Russian Federation had increased global security and had addressed the main concerns surrounding the use of nuclear energy.

195. Cooperation between the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) and the Agency had intensified in recent years. In addition to the traditional cooperation on safeguards, very significant progress was being made in nuclear safety, security and radiation protection. All non-nuclear-weapon EU Member States had finalized accession to the EU safeguards agreement. Joint efforts by the Commission, EU Member States and the Agency had paved the way for the introduction, in early 2010, of integrated safeguards in all the non-nuclear-weapon EU Member States with significant nuclear installations. Furthermore, the Commission supported the Agency's safeguards system with over 40 projects.

196. As regards nuclear safety, the Commission had received strong Agency support in the preparation of its directive on the subject, which had been adopted in 2009 with the support of all 27 EU Member States and the European Parliament, thus making the EU the first major regional actor to give legal force to the main international nuclear safety standards, including the Agency's Fundamental Safety Principles. At the aforementioned Paris conference, Commission President Barroso had called for those international safety standards to be made binding worldwide. In August 2010 the Commission had submitted, on behalf of Euratom, the 5th Euratom Report for 2011 peer review under the Convention on Nuclear Safety.

197. April 2011 would mark the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl accident. Ukraine was still working to clean up the Chernobyl site and international solidarity would be essential in order to raise the funds needed to complete the major ongoing projects. The successful European Commission-IAEA-Ukraine joint project to evaluate the safety of Ukrainian nuclear power plants had

provided a wealth of experience to all parties and was a model for similar evaluations in other countries.

198. Reporting on relevant events in the area of nuclear security and non-proliferation, he said that the EU was committed to implement fully the results of the recent NPT Review Conference. In that context, the Commission invited Iran to cooperate with the international community and become a member of the Convention on Nuclear Safety.

199. The Commission's Instrument for Stability (IfS) provided the legal basis and funds for cooperation in relation to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risk mitigation. A major contribution under that fund was earmarked for the LEU bank proposed by the Agency.

200. In addition, accession by all EU Member States and Euratom to the amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material was progressing well.

201. In the area of radiation protection, the Commission had undertaken to transpose the 2007 recommendations of the International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP) into the Euratom basic safety standards legislation, which created an opportunity for consolidation of that legislation into a single act. The Commission's proposal for that act was scheduled to be adopted at the beginning of 2011. Also, the Commission was actively involved in the revision of the relevant international standards in order to ensure consistency and to allow for future co-sponsorship of the international standards by Euratom.

202. Turning to recent developments and challenges for Euratom, he said the importance of nuclear energy in the EU could be seen in the fact that about one third of all nuclear power plants in the world were in Europe. Those 143 plants generated nearly one third of European electricity and two thirds of low-carbon electricity. Nuclear energy was the main source in Europe of low-carbon electricity and the most reliable source of baseload electricity. It was therefore a crucial part of Europe's energy mix and contributed directly to the three main priorities of European energy policy: security of supply, addressing climate change and competitiveness. Earlier in the year, the Commission had put forward its Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, which had been endorsed by the European Council in June 2010. Energy was one of the key priorities and the Commission was preparing a specific EU energy strategy for the period 2011–2020. The Commission was also preparing a new nuclear illustrative programme focusing on the share of nuclear energy that would be needed for a sustainable low-carbon energy mix at the EU level and on the associated financial and investment issues.

203. The Commission was working to put in place the most advanced European legal framework for nuclear energy. The aforementioned nuclear safety directive would be transposed into national laws by July 2011. Following adoption of the directive, Commission President Barroso had announced that by the end of the current year there would be a similar initiative on the safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste. In preparing its proposal, the Commission had been using the same concept of coordination and cooperation with the Agency as it had for the nuclear safety directive. The Commission encouraged non-EU Member States to begin the process of making the basic international standards legally binding.

204. The European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group (ENSREG) was helping the Community to achieve its objectives in nuclear safety and the management of radioactive waste and spent fuel. The Commission strongly supported ENSREG's objectives for the period 2010–2011, noting in particular the Group's commitment to facilitate implementation of the nuclear safety directive and contribute to the development of a similar instrument for radioactive waste management.

205. With the legal initiative on spent fuel and radioactive waste, the EU was aiming to establish a comprehensive European legal and regulatory framework to ensure the highest possible levels of nuclear safety and security. In that context, close cooperation between Euratom and the Agency was of the utmost importance, both within the EU and globally. Joint efforts must continue to improve safety and security in the interest of all nations using or intending to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

206. The European Nuclear Energy Forum (ENEF) sought to foster broad and constructive discussion with all nuclear stakeholders. Its most recent meeting had taken place in May 2010 in Bratislava and the next one would be in 2011 in Prague. In the key area of human resources and training, ENEF had sparked important initiatives, including the European Nuclear Energy Leadership Academy, financed by six European companies, and the European Human Resource Observatory for the Nuclear Energy Sector, run by the Commission's Joint Research Centre. The Commission also welcomed the recent establishment of the European Nuclear Safety Training and Tutoring Institute, a joint initiative of four national technical safety organizations.

207. The Commission was an active participant in major research and development projects. Under its strategic energy technology plan, an industrial initiative would be launched in November to develop prototypes of Generation IV fast neutron reactors.

208. The Commission's sustainable nuclear energy technology platform was enhancing cooperation in nuclear research and the same would be done for all aspects of geological disposal. In the same vein, key EU Member States had established the MELODI initiative to coordinate national and Euratom radiation protection research programmes, particularly in the area of risks from low doses.

209. In the area of decommissioning, a common understanding had been developed by the Commission and EU Member States over the preceding two years for the management of financial resources for the safe decommissioning and management of spent fuel and radioactive waste. Also, the assistance programme for decommissioning of the Bohunice, Ignalina and Kozloduy nuclear power plants was continuing, with the Council extending financial support for Kozloduy until 2013.

210. A variety of legal regimes co-existed within the EU in the area of nuclear liability, and the Commission, in close cooperation with all its external partners including the Agency, was examining the implications of such a 'legal patchwork' and possible improvements at the European level.

211. In August 2010, the Commission had adopted a communication to the European Parliament and to the Council on medical applications of ionizing radiation in which steps were proposed to resolve the urgent issue of shortages in the production of medical isotopes. In that regard, the Commission welcomed the Director General's initiative on the subject of cancer.

212. In conclusion, he said that it was important to continue the momentum of the Paris conference, the Nuclear Security Summit, and the NPT Review Conference and further raise the level of international cooperation. The EU was in a position to help strengthen the NPT regime and contribute significantly to developing global nuclear safety and safety culture.

213. Mr SIRRY (Egypt), exercising his right of reply under Rule 58 of the Rules of Procedure said that, in his statement the preceding day, the representative of Israel had referred repeatedly to Egypt.[2] He had expressed the view that Egypt had apparently lost interest in what he called the "conversion" of the Middle East into a nuclear-weapon-free zone. He must be the only delegate to hold that view because, unlike Israel, which was widely known to pay no more than lip service to the objective of a

[2] See GC(54)/OR.3 paras 113–123.

nuclear-weapon-free Middle East, Egypt's consistent efforts, as well as the concrete and tangible steps it had taken over the years — and continued to take, were extensively and well documented.

214. The representative of Israel had also stated that, for Egypt, the singling out of Israel had been set as a principal goal. It was not anything that Egypt had said or done that had caused Israel to be singled out in the Middle East. Rather it was through its own deliberate choice to remain the only State in the region to continue to operate unsafeguarded nuclear facilities, to reject the NPT and consider accession to it as being "against its best national interest" that Israel had chosen to single itself out.

215. The representative of Israel had further referred to the fact that Egypt had not ratified the Pelindaba Treaty. On that particular count, he was — for a change — correct. Egypt was only a signatory State. What the representative of Israel had conveniently omitted to mention, however, were the following three important and very salient facts. First, Egypt had been entrusted with hosting the signing ceremony of the Pelindaba Treaty in Cairo in 1996. Second, the very text of the Treaty stipulated that "the establishment of other NWFZs, especially in the Middle East, would enhance the security of States Parties to the African NWFZ". And, third, the African Group itself clearly recognized that, while the Pelindaba Treaty had entered into force on 15 July 2009, there remained a need to create the necessary conditions for other African countries to ratify that important Treaty.

216. The representative of Israel had also referred to Egypt in connection with the Safeguards Implementation Report for 2009. He had done so in a manner that demonstrated clearly that he had either not read or understood the Report. Furthermore, and bearing in mind that the Safeguards Implementation Report had been only partially derestricted, the representative of Israel's reference to it in a public meeting had clearly incriminated his country as one of the culprits in the continuing saga of leakages of confidential information, mostly targeting States of the Middle East, that had plagued the Agency for years.

217. Finally, his delegation had taken note of the repeated claim by Israel that it had always demonstrated a responsible policy of restraint in the nuclear domain. The question begged was: What exactly was Israel restraining itself from doing? Beyond Israel's feeble attempt to question Egypt's steadfast commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, the remarks made by the representative of Israel had served only to demonstrate the full meaning of the word "chutzpah".

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.