

# General Conference

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## Fifty-fifth regular session

# Plenary

## Record of the First Meeting

*Held at Headquarters, Vienna, on Monday, 19 September 2011, at 10.10 a.m.*

**Temporary President:** Mr ENKHSAIKHAN (Mongolia)

**President:** Mr FERUTA (Romania)

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**Abbreviations used in this record:**

AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
AIPS	Agency-wide Information System for Programme Support
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
Assistance Convention	Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency
AU-PATTEC	African Union's Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Early Notification Convention	Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GIF	Generation IV International Forum
HEU	high-enriched uranium
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
IPSAS	International Public Sector Accounting Standards
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
Joint Convention	Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management
Joint Division	Joint FAO/IAEA Division of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture
LDC	least developed country
LEU	low-enriched uranium
LWR	light-water reactor

**Abbreviations used in this record (continued):**

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
R&D	research and development
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
WWER	water cooled water moderated reactor

## – Opening of the session

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT declared open the 55th regular session of the General Conference.
2. In accordance with Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, he invited the delegates to observe one minute of silence dedicated to prayer or meditation.

**All present rose and stood in silence for one minute.**

3. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT said that, at its previous session, the General Conference had adopted many forward-looking decisions as a result of constructive consultations among delegates, with expert input from the Secretariat. As President of the General Conference during that session, he was grateful for the support which he had received, and he had no doubt that the same constructive spirit would prevail during the current session.
4. Since the previous General Conference session, a number of events that would have a great impact on the Agency and the international community as a whole had taken place. First and foremost, the Fukushima accident had demonstrated how devastating Mother Nature's powers could be. The accident had been a wake-up call, for there was no guarantee that such a mega-disaster would not be repeated.
5. The Director General and the Secretariat were to be commended for assisting the Government of Japan and keeping the Agency's membership abreast of the evolving situation at and around the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station.
6. Despite the accident, the projections of future use of nuclear power remained high, since the interest in pursuing the nuclear power option remained high — especially in nuclear power newcomer countries — owing to the increasing global demand for energy for development and to the environmental challenges of climate change.
7. The Action Plan on Nuclear Safety prepared by the Director General at the request of the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety held in June, which was before the General Conference for endorsement, envisaged important measures whose implementation would no doubt help greatly to strengthening safety at nuclear facilities worldwide.
8. Through its activities relating to nuclear science, technology and applications, the Agency was doing much to — inter alia — help in combating cancer and trypanosomosis and promote the use of nuclear techniques in hydrology. It could do still more if the resources of the TCF were greater. In that connection, the support being provided through the Peaceful Uses Initiative was very welcome.
9. The Agency had an important role to play in promoting nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, as reflected in decisions and resolutions of other United Nations bodies, the General Conference and the NPT Review Conferences. At its current session, the General Conference could take decisions that would help to create favourable political conditions for convening an international conference in 2012 on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. In that connection, the understanding reached by the Director General with the States concerned on the holding of a forum in November on experience of possible relevance to the creation of an NWFZ in the Middle East was to be welcomed.

10. He looked forward both to a successful General Conference session and to a successful forum.

## **1. Election of officers and appointment of the General Committee**

11. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT invited nominations for the office of President of the Conference.

12. Mr DAVIDOVIĆ (Bosnia and Herzegovina), speaking on behalf of the Eastern Europe Group, proposed Mr Feruta (Romania).

13. Mr Feruta (Romania) was elected President by acclamation.

14. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT congratulated Mr Feruta on his election and wished him every success in his task.

### **Mr Feruta (Romania) took the Chair.**

15. The PRESIDENT said he viewed his election as President of the General Conference at its fifty-fifth regular session as a reflection of appreciation for Romania's contribution to the Agency's work over the years. In fulfilling his important task, he would work closely with Member States, regional groups, the Director General and the Secretariat.

16. As Governor from Romania on the Board he had been involved in the successful efforts to put together, under tight financial constraints, an ambitious programme for 2010–2011 and to formulate the Medium Term Strategy for 2012–2017. In the course of those exercises, he had gained a profound insight into the activities of the Agency and had enjoyed a rewarding interaction with the Secretariat's dedicated staff. Thanks to that experience, he could testify to the fact that the confidence placed by Member States in the Agency, with its "Atoms for Peace" mandate, was well justified.

17. The Agency was helping to create the foundations for Member States' nuclear power programmes, playing a key role in ensuring that the highest safety, security and non-proliferation standards were met. Also, it was playing an increasingly important role in areas such as food security (for example, through the FAO/IAEA Division of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture), human health (for example, through PACT) and water resources management.

18. The current session of the General Conference was taking place in a changed environment following the natural disaster and nuclear accident in Japan. He sympathized deeply with the people and Government of Japan and greatly admired the determination that they had displayed in very difficult circumstances.

19. The accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station had highlighted the need to strengthen the nuclear safety framework. A timely extraordinary conference convened by the Director General in June had paved the way for a vigorous reaction by Agency Member States. At its current session, the General Conference was asked to endorse an Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. That document by no means marked the end of the process of acting upon the lessons learned from the Fukushima accident; it represented the first decisive step of an what would be a long-continuing effort. The Agency had the expertise necessary in order to reassure the international community that all nuclear activities were being conducted in a safe and secure manner.

20. Later in the week, at the initiative of the UN Secretary-General, Member States would meet in New York, in the margins of the General Assembly, to address issues pertaining to nuclear safety from a somewhat political perspective. In his view, the General Conference had a responsibility to complement the political discussions that would be taking place in New York with a report on the result of the deliberations that had been taking place during the past eight months within the Agency framework, and he therefore expected the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety to be endorsed by the General Conference in time for it to contribute to the meeting in New York. He believed that, by endorsing the Action Plan in time, the General Conference would increase the prominence of nuclear safety on the agenda of the international community.

21. At the present important juncture, the Agency's Member States must demonstrate that the Agency could continue making a solid contribution to international peace and security. He was confident that that would be the message at the end of the current session of the General Conference, and he would spare no effort in seeking consensus on all the issues before the Conference. In doing so, he counted on the support of Member States in recapturing the "Spirit of Vienna".

22. Pursuant to Rules 34 and 40 of the Rules of Procedure, the Conference had to elect eight Vice-Presidents, a Chairperson of the Committee of the Whole and five additional members of the General Committee, resulting in a General Committee of 15 with himself as its Chairperson. However, since at the current session the Chairperson of the Committee of the Whole was to be from the Far East group, which customarily had one representative on the General Committee, as Vice-President, it would be necessary to suspend Rules 34 and 40 in order to have seven Vice-Presidents and six additional members in a Committee of 15.

23. He took it that the General Conference wished to suspend Rules 34 and 40.

24. It was so agreed.

25. The PRESIDENT proposed that the delegates of Australia, Costa Rica, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malta, Nigeria, the Russian Federation and the United States of America be elected as Vice-Presidents, that Ms Yparraguirre (Philippines) be elected as Chairperson of the Committee of the Whole, and that the delegates of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Germany, Lebanon, Sudan and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela be elected as additional members of the General Committee.

26. The President's proposals were accepted.

27. The PRESIDENT further proposed that the General Conference take up items 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7 of its provisional agenda, in that order, pending receipt of the General Committee's recommendation on the agenda.

28. The President's proposal was accepted.

## **2. Applications for membership of the Agency** (GC(55)/10, GC(55)/12 and GC(55)/13)

29. The PRESIDENT drew attention to documents GC(55)/10, GC(55)/12 and GC(55)/13 containing applications for membership by the Commonwealth of Dominica, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Kingdom of Tonga, respectively. The applications had been endorsed by the Board of Governors, which had also submitted, in the same documents, three draft resolutions for adoption by the General Conference.

30. He took it that the Conference wished to adopt the three draft resolutions by acclamation.
31. It was so decided.
32. The PRESIDENT congratulated the Commonwealth of Dominica, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Kingdom of Tonga on being approved for membership of the Agency.
33. Mr BOUNTEUM (Lao People's Democratic Republic), speaking under Rule 30, expressed gratitude to the Director General, the Board of Governors and the delegates to the General Conference for accepting his country's application to become a member of the Agency. The Lao People's Democratic Republic, an LDC, was committed to the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy, especially in the areas of public health, agriculture and environmental protection, and it looked forward to receiving support from the Agency as it pursued its aim of overcoming its LDC status by 2020.
34. Mr MONTEJO (Philippines), speaking on behalf of the delegates of ASEAN countries, congratulated the Lao People's Democratic Republic on being accepted for membership of the Agency.

### **3. Message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations**

35. Mr DUARTE (United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs) read out the following message:

"I am pleased to send greetings to all the participants in this IAEA General Conference.

"Your meeting comes at an important time. Since March, the international community has been focused on responding to the horrendous tragedy at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in Japan. At the UN, I commissioned a system-wide study on the accident's implications. Later this week, I will convene a High-Level Meeting on Nuclear Safety and Security in New York to consider that study and all related issues. I hope this will be an occasion to build political support and momentum at the highest level for ongoing international initiatives in this area.

"I had the moving experience of personally travelling to Japan last month to show my solidarity with the people of Fukushima. I met with high-level officials and high school students, government ministers and displaced families. I saw the devastation and sensed the continuing fear. At the same time, I was deeply impressed by the resourcefulness, resilience and resolve of the Japanese people, who are already planning for a better future.

"The situation in Fukushima demonstrated all too clearly that major nuclear accidents do not respect national boundaries; they are a matter of international concern and global public interest.

"I remain grateful to Director General Amano and the entire IAEA staff for their swift and professional response to the accident, their follow-up efforts and their valuable contribution to the UN system-wide study. I welcome the outcome of the IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety and the development of an Action Plan.

"I hope this General Conference can adopt that forward-looking Plan so that it can serve as a basis for international efforts to improve nuclear safety. I also welcome Japan's initiative, in cooperation with the IAEA, to convene a high-level meeting on the issue in late 2012.

"For my part, I am determined to exert all possible efforts to prevent any future tragedies at a nuclear facility. I am seeking new ways to enhance cooperation among international

organizations, particularly in the areas of emergency response and information sharing. I have also emphasized the need to strengthen the capacity of the IAEA to promote nuclear safety and nuclear security.

“Your discussions can maintain the political momentum, which should build at this week’s High-Level Meeting and gain further strength through future events, including the Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul next year.

“You have a broad range of issues on your agenda, including the all-important challenges of strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime, enhancing the safeguards system and promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, while also furthering the goal of global nuclear disarmament as mandated in the IAEA Statute.

“In 2011, initial steps were taken to carry out the measures agreed to at last year’s Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, including the action plan on the Middle East. I welcomed the Second Conference of the Nuclear-Weapon States on Confidence Building Measures towards Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, as well as measures by non-nuclear-weapon States to achieve the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

“I wish you great success in your work to advance progress on these issues, which are critical to the safety and security of generations to come.”

#### **4. Statement by the Director General**

36. The DIRECTOR GENERAL said that the most important single item on the Agency’s agenda since the previous General Conference session had been the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station in Japan, which had caused deep public anxiety throughout the world and damaged confidence in nuclear power.

37. The accident had been caused by an earthquake and tsunami of unprecedented severity, which had struck the east of Japan on 11 March 2011. The Agency’s Incident and Emergency Centre had gone into action immediately, working around the clock to advise Japan and to share information with all Member States. A few days after the accident, he had travelled to Japan and offered the then Prime Minister, Naoto Kan, the Secretariat’s full support, stressing that Japan needed to demonstrate the highest transparency in its handling of the accident.

38. In June 2011, he had convened a Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety, which had adopted a Ministerial Declaration aimed at strengthening nuclear safety, emergency preparedness, and the radiation protection of people and the environment worldwide. The Ministerial Conference had been chaired by the Resident Representative of Brazil, Ambassador Antonio Guerreiro, who had skilfully steered the work that had led to the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration.

39. The Ministerial Declaration had formed the basis of the Agency’s first-ever Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, which had just been approved by consensus by the Board of Governors and was before the General Conference for endorsement. Compared to the arrangements that had been in place before the Fukushima Daiichi accident, the Action Plan represented a significant step forward in strengthening nuclear safety. The Secretariat would immediately start to fulfil its responsibilities under the Action Plan, and he hoped that all Member States would do likewise. The most important thing

was to ensure transparency, build confidence and meet the high expectations of the public. It was actions not words that counted.

40. The Agency's present assessment of the situation at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station was that the reactors were essentially stable. The expectation was that the cold shutdown of all the reactors would be achieved as planned. The Secretariat would continue to provide every possible assistance to Japan. Continuing full transparency on Japan's part would also be important.

41. The tenth anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States had been marked the previous week. In the wake of the attacks, the Agency had significantly expanded its nuclear security programme to help States protect nuclear and other radioactive material and associated facilities against malicious acts.

42. As the Nuclear Security Report 2011 showed, the number of States participating in the Agency's Illicit Trafficking Database (ITDB) programme was continuing to grow. It now stood at 113. In the year to 30 June 2011, 172 incidents had been reported to the ITDB. Fourteen had involved activities such as unauthorized possession and/or attempts to sell or smuggle nuclear material or radioactive sources. A further 32 incidents had involved the theft or loss of nuclear or other radioactive material. Incidents of that nature demonstrated that security weaknesses continued to exist and must be addressed.

43. Member States needed to be reminded once again that, six years after its adoption, progress towards the entry into force of the Amendment to the CPPNM remained slow. As adherence to the Amendment could significantly reduce the risk of nuclear material falling into the wrong hands, he would like to see the parties to the CPPNM accelerating its entry into force. A Treaty Event would be held that week to promote universal adherence to, and support for, multilateral treaties for which the Agency was depositary, including the Amendment to the CPPNM.

44. Following the Fukushima Daiichi accident, there had been speculation that the expansion of interest in nuclear power observed in recent years could come to an end. However, it was now clear that there would actually be continuous and significant growth in the use of nuclear power in the next two decades, although at a slower rate than previously projected. The number of operating nuclear reactors in the world was expected to increase by about 90 by 2030 according to the Agency's low projection, or by about 350 according to its high projection, from the current total of 432 reactors. Most of the growth would occur in countries that already had operating nuclear power plants, such as China and India.

45. In countries that were considering introducing nuclear power, interest remained strong despite the Fukushima Daiichi accident. Most of those countries were proceeding with plans to add nuclear power to their energy mix, with the Agency's assistance; a few countries had cancelled or revised their plans, while others had adopted a "wait and see" approach. The factors that had contributed to the growing interest in nuclear power before the Fukushima Daiichi accident had not changed; they included the increasing global demand for energy, concerns about climate change, volatile fossil fuel prices and the desire for energy supply security.

46. In December 2010, the Board had approved the establishment of an IAEA Low Enriched Uranium Bank, to be funded by voluntary contributions from Member States. In July 2011, Kazakhstan had submitted a proposal for hosting the LEU bank and offered two sites for consideration. Discussions were under way with the Government of Kazakhstan with a view to finalizing a decision on a site.

47. In March 2011, the Board had approved the request of a number of Member States for a mechanism that would provide assurances of supply of enrichment services and of LEU for use in nuclear power plants.

48. A guaranteed LEU reserve had been created by the Russian Federation at the International Uranium Enrichment Centre in Angarsk and had been available for Member States since February 2011.

49. In the area of food and agriculture, one major success story deserved special mention: the elimination of the deadly cattle disease rinderpest, the first animal disease ever to be eliminated. It was a momentous achievement of enormous economic benefit to many developing countries; the net benefit in Africa alone was estimated at more than one billion US dollars a year. Together with FAO, the World Organisation for Animal Health, the African Union and other partners, the Agency had played an important part in eliminating the highly contagious viral disease. Its role had included making available affordable diagnostic techniques and training veterinary staff. All delegations were invited to attend the Agency's Rinderpest Freedom Celebration to be held the following day.

50. The biennial progress report on PACT was before the Conference for review. PACT, now in its sixth year, remained among the Agency's most successful programmes and was receiving extensive support from Member States. Between September 2009 and September 2011, US \$21.6 million had been mobilized to improve cancer control in developing countries.

51. The 2011 Scientific Forum, starting the following day, would focus on the use of nuclear techniques in the management of water resources. Ministers and officials from a number of countries and renowned international experts would discuss key water-related issues facing the world today.

52. The 50th anniversary of the IAEA Environment Laboratories in Monaco would be celebrated at the end of that month. The Laboratories had made an outstanding contribution to the protection of the oceans and seas by developing advanced analytical methods and reference materials for assessing marine radioactivity and pollution.

53. The Agency's technical cooperation programme provided essential support to Member States in every region. New resources for the programme had risen to \$127.7 million in 2010 from \$112.2 million in 2009. Nuclear safety was the largest area of activity within the programme, followed by human health, and food and agriculture. About \$20 million had so far been received under the Peaceful Uses Initiative (PUI) launched the previous year; he was grateful to all the countries that had contributed to the PUI and would like to see other countries in a position to do so contributing.

54. Through the technical cooperation programme, Member States were addressing national development priorities in fields where nuclear techniques offered advantages over other techniques or could usefully supplement them. For example, Agency technical cooperation projects were helping to combat child malnutrition, to support breastfeeding programmes and to address child mortality from preventable water-borne diseases.

55. As the 2011 Scientific Forum was focusing on water-related issues, he wished to give two examples of important projects concerned with water. In Latin America, unique information on seven coastal aquifers was being obtained through a regional isotope hydrology project; thanks to the project, Argentina and Uruguay, for example, had identified zones that were appropriate for developing wells and zones where further exploitation should be discontinued. In Africa, a regional project involving the use of small-scale irrigation technology and the application of sound criteria for the better use of water and fertilizer had shown that drip irrigation increased crop yields while economizing on irrigation water by up to 30% compared to traditional methods; there was tremendous interest on the part of smallholder farmers eager to adopt the technology.

56. With regard to nuclear verification, the fact that 110 countries now had additional protocols in force was very encouraging. The additional protocol was essential for enabling the Agency to provide credible assurances not only that declared nuclear material was not being diverted from peaceful uses, but also that there were no undeclared nuclear material and activities in a country. He strongly hoped that the remaining States being called upon to conclude an additional protocol would conclude one soon.

57. The efforts of the Agency to improve the analytical capabilities and the security of its laboratories had made excellent progress.

58. The Clean Laboratory Extension had been operational for several months, having been completed on time and slightly under budget; it greatly increased the Agency's ability to independently analyse environmental samples for safeguards purposes and made the Agency a leader in the field of particle analysis.

59. Recently, the ground-breaking ceremony had taken place for a new Nuclear Material Laboratory which, when completed in 2014, would provide the Agency with a modern capability for the analysis of samples collected from all points along the nuclear fuel cycle. However, for the new Nuclear Material Laboratory to have a minimum core capability, a further 22 million euros were required, in addition to the generous extrabudgetary contributions already received from several Member States. He would like to see other Member States in a position to do so making extrabudgetary contributions.

60. He had continued to report regularly to the Board of Governors on the implementation of Agency safeguards, including in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Syrian Arab Republic.

61. As far as the safeguards issues on the agenda for the current session of the General Conference were concerned, his report on the application of safeguards in the DPRK provided a historical overview and an update on recent developments of direct relevance to the Agency. As the Agency had not been able to implement any safeguards measures in the DPRK since April 2009, its knowledge of the present status of that country's nuclear programme was very limited. The DPRK's nuclear programme remained a matter of serious concern, and recent reports about the construction of a new uranium enrichment facility and an LWR in the DPRK were deeply troubling. It was important that the DPRK comply fully with its obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions, come into full compliance with the NPT and cooperate promptly and fully with the Agency, which had an essential role to play in verifying the DPRK's nuclear programme.

62. In September 2000, the General Conference had tasked the Director General with making arrangements to convene a forum in which participants from the Middle East and other interested parties could learn from the experience with NWFZs already established in other regions. As consultations with Member States had shown that conditions were now favourable for the holding of such a forum, he had invited all Member States to one that would be held in Vienna on 21 and 22 November 2011. He was pleased to announce that the Resident Representative of Norway, Ambassador Jan Petersen, had accepted his invitation to serve as Chairperson.

63. The accounts of the Agency for 2010 had received an unqualified audit opinion, and it was expected that the accounts for 2011 would also receive one. That would be a noteworthy accomplishment in view of the simultaneous implementation in 2011 of IPSAS and of phase I of AIPS.

64. Considerable time and effort had gone into the preparation of the programme and budget for 2012–2013. It had not been business as usual; securing proper funding for the Agency at a time of Member States' growing demands for its services and tight constraints on Member State finances had required careful balancing. The Secretariat had worked hard to identify and eliminate lower-priority

activities and to improve efficiency. However, a reasonable increase in resources would clearly be needed in the coming years in order to meet new and expanding demands for assistance from Member States in nuclear safety and other areas.

65. Earlier that year, he had established a Director General's Office for Policy (DGOP). The DGOP was carrying out functions previously carried out by the former Office of the Director General and the former Office of External Relations and Policy Coordination, and a high-level strategic planning function had been added. The change had helped to ensure a sharper focus on implementing the policy set by the Board of Governors and the General Conference and on the general management of the Secretariat.

66. Mr David Waller, Deputy Director General for Management, would shortly retire after nearly 19 years in that key position. He had already had a distinguished career in the United States of America as Legal Counsel to President Ronald Reagan and Assistant Secretary for International Affairs at the Department of Energy before coming to the Agency in January 1993. Since then, he had served three Agency Directors General with distinction. He had greatly valued Mr Waller's loyalty, wisdom and profound institutional memory, was extremely grateful to him and wished him continued good health and success in future.

67. The Government of Austria had continued to be an exemplary host to the Agency. He was particularly grateful for the excellent facilities provided by Austria and for its strong support, most recently in refurbishing the Agency's laboratories at Seibersdorf.

## **6. Contributions to the Technical Cooperation Fund for 2012** (GC(55)/22)

68. The PRESIDENT said that on 7 June 2011 the Board of Governors had recommended a figure of \$88 750 000 as the target for voluntary contributions to the TCF for the year 2012. The table in document GC(55)/22 showed the contributions that each Member State would need to make in order to meet its share of that target.

69. The early pledging and payment of contributions to the TCF greatly helped the Secretariat in planning the Agency's technical cooperation programmes, and all delegations that were in a position to do so, but had not done so yet, were urged to notify the Secretariat during the current session of the contributions that their governments would be making to the TCF for 2012.

70. He would report at the end of the session, under a later agenda item, on the contributions that had been pledged up to that time. He hoped to be able to report favourably on the percentage of the 2012 target figure already pledged.

## **7. General debate and Annual Report for 2010** (GC(55)/2)

71. Mr CHU (United States of America), having thanked the Director General for his outstanding leadership, read out the following message from President Obama:

“On behalf of the United States, please accept my best wishes for a successful IAEA General Conference. This year’s meeting takes place against the backdrop of the severe earthquake and tsunami that struck Japan in March and the devastating accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station that followed. Along with the international community, the United States will continue to stand by and support our Japanese friends as they recover from this crisis.

“The tragic events at Fukushima make clear that nuclear energy, which holds great promise for global development and as a carbon-free source of power, also brings significant challenges to our collective safety and security. Going forward, we must rededicate ourselves to the principle that, when pursuing nuclear energy, safety and security must be our highest priority. The United States supports the efforts of Director General Amano to enhance nuclear safety worldwide and to elevate the vital role of the IAEA on this front. We also support strengthening the IAEA’s role in increasing nuclear security around the world.

“We must aim for a future in which peaceful nuclear energy is not only safe, but also accessible by all nations that abide by their obligations. We must safeguard against any possible diversion or misuse of nuclear energy, whether by nations or terrorists, and ensure nations that violate their obligations face consequences. For those that play by the rules, we are committed to building new frameworks for cooperation that accelerate nuclear energy assistance and lower the risks of proliferation. The approval of an IAEA nuclear fuel bank, to which the United States has committed \$50 million, and the launch of the IAEA Peaceful Uses Initiative, to which the United States has committed another \$50 million, will strengthen the foundation of the international non-proliferation regime.

“Next year in Seoul, the Republic of Korea will host the Nuclear Security Summit, building on the summit I convened last year to secure the world’s vulnerable nuclear materials. Sharpening the focus on nuclear security is essential to prevent nuclear terrorism. As a further step, we must ensure a robust dialogue among safety and security experts and work to build on the synergies between the two.

“Through these efforts, and many others that involve the IAEA and its Member States, we will succeed in shaping a future where nuclear energy is both safe and secure. Thank you and best wishes for a successful meeting.”

72. Harnessing the energy of the atom for peaceful and productive uses while guarding against the most destructive weapons ever known presented a crucial challenge that no nation could face alone, and the Agency was central to international efforts in meeting that challenge. The four priorities of President Obama’s nuclear agenda were: the safe and peaceful use of nuclear energy; strengthening the non-proliferation regime; nuclear disarmament; and nuclear security.

73. Nuclear power would continue to be an important part of the energy mix of the United States and many other countries. In fact, its importance was growing in the face of a changing climate, increasing energy demand and a struggling global economy. At the same time, the Fukushima disaster was a reminder that nuclear safety and security required continued vigilance.

74. All nations had a responsibility to learn from Japan’s experience. In the United States, a Nuclear Regulatory Commission task force had completed an initial 90-day review of the Commission’s regulatory oversight and safety standards, provided insights from the Fukushima accident and made recommendations for enhancing reactor safety; the recommendations were being considered by the Commission.

75. In June, Member States had pledged to re-examine nuclear safety standards, emergency preparedness plans and incident response capabilities — activities in which the Agency had a critical

role to play. At the same time, his country, which looked forward to implementation of the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, considered that the central role of national regulators and of plant operators in achieving safety objectives should continue to be recognized.

76. The Fukushima accident had highlighted the need for a global nuclear liability regime to compensate accident victims and for a stable legal environment in support of nuclear power's expansion. In other words, it was time that the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage entered into force.

77. In addition, further Member States should become parties to international instruments such as the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Early Notification Convention and the Assistance Convention.

78. His country, which was encouraging discussion within the International Framework for Nuclear Energy Cooperation on — inter alia — the issue of nuclear fuel services, favoured expanded and reliable access to fuel supplies, through the commercial marketplace and public-private partnerships, for peaceful nuclear programmes. The IAEA LEU Fuel Bank, the United Kingdom mechanism for assured supply and the Russian fuel reserve at Angarsk were important fuel supply mechanisms.

79. The United States had recently announced the availability, for countries pursuing peaceful nuclear programmes, of a reserve of LEU created by the downblending of 17.4 metric tons of surplus HEU from its nuclear weapons stockpile. The initiative in question would help to promote nuclear power generation in a manner consistent with his country's non-proliferation and disarmament commitments.

80. The adopted measures fell within the new international framework that President Obama had called for in Prague in 2009. Next, the United States would encourage commercial nuclear industry companies to join together, subject to appropriate laws and regulations, in providing reliable access to both front- and back-end fuel cycle services to any country with nuclear reactors — an arrangement that would dramatically reduce the need for countries to develop indigenous enrichment and reprocessing technologies.

81. Also, in order to ensure that many Member States had access to the peaceful benefits of the atom, his country had in 2010 pledged \$50 million for the IAEA Peaceful Uses Initiative, and with Japan as a partner it was seeking further pledges. It was grateful to those other countries which had already made pledges.

82. Promoting the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy must go hand in hand with strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime through more efficient and more effective international safeguards. However, the Secretariat could not strengthen that regime without adequate resources and the support of the Agency's Member States.

83. That was why the United States was making a voluntary contribution of more than \$85 million, over and above its contribution towards the 2011 Regular Budget, in support of technical cooperation, safeguards, nuclear safety, nuclear security and non-power peaceful applications of nuclear energy.

84. That was why his country, through its Next Generation Safeguards Initiative and its safeguards support programme, was helping to modernize Agency safeguards and encouraging the transition to a robust, information-driven system.

85. That was why his country would like to see all States bringing into force and fully implementing comprehensive safeguards agreements along with additional protocols. Only if they did would the Agency have the authority necessary in order to fully meet its verification responsibilities. In that connection, the eight States that had brought additional protocols into force since the previous session of the General Conference were to be congratulated.

86. To maintain the credibility and effectiveness of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, all States should honour their Agency safeguards obligations. However, the Islamic Republic of Iran was continuing, in violation of its Agency safeguards obligations, to engage in denial, deceit and evasion. Time and again it had refused to satisfy legitimate concerns about the nature of its nuclear programme, selectively rejecting Agency requests for access to and information about its nuclear facilities. A manifestation of its provocative behaviour had been its recent decision to begin installing centrifuges at an underground facility near Qom. Iran had initiated the construction of that facility secretly, notifying the Agency only because it had been discovered — two years previously — to be constructing the facility. It had stated that the facility would be used for enriching uranium to near 20%, claiming that the enriched uranium was needed in order to fuel its existing research reactor or future reactors for which the ground had yet to be broken. Expanding its enrichment capacity to such an extent and moving underground constituted a significant provocation, and brought Iran still closer to being able to produce weapons-grade uranium — raising serious doubts about the peacefulness of its intentions and about its willingness to build trust and confidence.

87. Iran's Government had a choice: it could comply with its obligations and restore international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear activities, or it could face deepening isolation and growing international censure.

88. The Board of Governors had been right to report the Syrian Arab Republic to the Security Council for safeguards violations. Syria should now cooperate fully with the Agency. Also it should sign and promptly bring into force an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement.

89. As to the DPRK, the path would be open to the resumption of talks, to improved relations with the United States and to greater regional stability if it demonstrated, through actions, that it was committed to being a constructive partner. The DPRK needed to take meaningful and irreversible steps towards denuclearization, honouring its international obligations, returning to the NPT fold and re-accepting Agency safeguards.

90. The Board of Governors had taken strong action by reporting non-compliance by the DPRK, Iran and Syria to the Security Council. Unless the international community now sent a strong message that violations of nuclear non-proliferation obligations would not be tolerated, regional and global stability and the non-proliferation regime would be undermined.

91. A key element of the non-proliferation regime was his country's shared commitment to fulfilling its NPT Article VI nuclear disarmament obligations. Since the General conference's previous session, the United States had taken bold steps towards fulfilling those obligations. Under the New START Treaty, which had entered into force in February, Russia and the United States would reduce the number of deployed warheads to the lowest level since the 1950s — a reduction of about 85% from the dark days of the Cold War. The United States was committed to reducing, in a step-by-step process, the overall number of nuclear weapons and to pursuing a future agreement with Russia for broad reductions in all nuclear weapons — strategic, non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed.

92. In addition, Russia and the United States had brought into force a landmark agreement to each dispose of at least 34 metric tons of surplus weapons-grade plutonium. The Agency had a unique role to play in helping to implement the agreement's verification regime, and was working closely with the Secretariat on defining that role.

93. Furthermore, his country and the other NPT nuclear-weapon States were continuing to discuss nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, transparency and verification.

94. His country, which shared a commitment to bringing the CTBT into force by strengthening its verification regime, was committed to ratifying the CTBT.

95. The United States, which was aggressively pursuing a disarmament agenda, would like to see others doing the same. A start could be made with the launching of long-delayed negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty — a treaty crucial for the achievement of shared disarmament and non-proliferation objectives.

96. The international community must continue to cooperate in preventing nuclear terrorism, one of the most immediate and extreme threats to global security. The United States was grateful to the many countries that had participated in the 2010 Nuclear Security Summit and were living up to their commitments.

97. Since that historic event, tremendous progress had been made. For example, many States had undertaken to establish centres of excellence for training and capacity-building in the field of nuclear security, and the United States had: removed approximately 400 kilograms of HEU and plutonium — enough material to make more than 15 nuclear weapons — from several other countries; downblended 700 kilograms of HEU from civil nuclear programmes to LEU, making it unsuitable for use in nuclear weapons; and, in cooperation with its partners, deployed radiation detection systems to 19 transit sites worldwide, continued to improve security at nuclear facilities, and worked on increasing information-sharing among police and security services to counter nuclear smuggling.

98. The United States, which welcomed the revision of the Agency's nuclear security guidance document "The physical protection of nuclear material and nuclear facilities" and the strengthening of the recommendations made in it, looked forward to cooperating with other Member States and the Secretariat in implementing the recommendations. His country also looked forward to the Nuclear Security Summit that was to be held in the Republic of Korea in 2012.

99. Nuclear energy lay at the intersection of two of the world's most pressing issues: the energy and climate challenge and the nuclear proliferation and terrorism threat. Mindful that immediate action was vital, two and a half years previously President Obama had laid out an ambitious agenda for securing vulnerable nuclear material around the world and moving towards a world without nuclear weapons while promoting peaceful nuclear power. Albert Einstein had once said, "Through the release of atomic energy, our generation has brought into the world the most revolutionary force since prehistoric man's discovery of fire." By working together, the international community could ensure that the revolutionary force was used for peace and prosperity, not death and destruction — for bringing about a brighter and more secure future for the present generation and future generations.

100. Mr HOSONO (Japan) said that the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, operated by the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO), had been triggered by the Great East Japan Earthquake and the resulting tsunami, gravely harming his country.

101. Japan, a nation lacking rich energy resources, had embarked on nuclear power generation in 1963. Since then, it had made great R&D efforts in the areas of nuclear power safety and security, had developed advanced nuclear technologies and had established a large nuclear industry. The accident had therefore come as a severe shock to the Japanese people.

102. Japan was now engaged in the process of restoration following the accident, and it was profoundly grateful for the assistance provided and the solidarity shown by other Member States and by the Secretariat and other organizations.

103. His country greatly appreciated the leadership being demonstrated by Director General Amano, who had himself visited the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station following the accident, in steering the Secretariat's efforts to ensure that lessons learned from the accident were drawn upon in the enhancement of nuclear power safety and security. Those efforts included the dissemination of information about the accident, the dispatching of radiation monitoring teams, the organization of an

international fact-finding mission and the preparation of a draft Action Plan on Nuclear Safety that had been approved by the Board of Governors during the previous week.

104. Japan, which would do all in its power to help implement the Action Plan, was committed to overcoming the consequences of the accident as early as possible, investigating the causes of the accident, and sharing the lessons learned with the rest of the international community. The lessons learned would no doubt be useful to the Agency in its future efforts to further strengthen nuclear safety.

105. In the Declaration adopted at the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety in June, it had been stressed that Japan should continue to provide information about the accident. Japan itself considered it important that such information be accurate and be provided swiftly. Accordingly, his Government had the previous week submitted to the Agency a report on progress since June, when it had submitted an initial report. Participants in the General Conference's current session were invited to attend a briefing session on that report later in the day.

106. The sustained efforts to stabilize the reactors and the spent fuel pools at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station were proof of the dedication of the on-site workers, who were every day carrying out emergency tasks under exacting conditions. At the same time, those efforts were being greatly supported by international assistance, including the provision of advice and of equipment such as radioactive water treatment systems and remotely controlled robots.

107. Thanks to such invaluable assistance, the situation at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station was steadily improving. His Government and TEPCO were doing their utmost to complete step 2 of their roadmap and bring the release of radioactive materials under control and significantly lower the radiation dose level. The aim was to achieve cold shutdown by the end of 2011.

108. The reactors were moving towards cold shutdown thanks largely to the installation of a circulating water injection cooling system that was recycling the processed highly radioactive water. Stable cooling conditions had already been achieved in the case of the spent fuel pools.

109. His Government had assumed responsibility for improving the situation of the on-site workers through better radiation exposure management and health care arrangements.

110. With a view to addressing mid- and long-term challenges such as the removal of spent fuel, his Government was engaging in the training of experts in conjunction with the facility operators.

111. Further difficult challenges, unforeseeable at present, would no doubt arise, but he was convinced that Japan would overcome them thanks to the efforts of the on-site workers and the support being provided by the international community.

112. In its initial report to the Agency, submitted in June, his Government had made it clear that one of the lessons learned from the accident was that there was a need to upgrade Japan's administrative structure for nuclear safety regulation. Mindful of the reference in the Declaration of the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety to further strengthening the authority of nuclear regulatory bodies and the reference in the Action Plan to the effective independence of such bodies, his Government had decided to separate the regulatory function from the promotional function in the nuclear field by creating, with effect from April 2012, a Nuclear Safety and Security Agency as part of the Ministry for the Environment; the new agency would result from the integration of the Nuclear Safety Commission into the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency, which would be separated from the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. It was hoped that the creation of the new agency, with sole responsibility for nuclear regulation, would boost safety culture in the nuclear field.

113. In addition, his Government intended to establish a stronger crisis management system and to tighten up Japan's nuclear safety regulations.

114. Against that background, Japan was looking forward to hosting an IRRS mission in 2012.

115. As its name indicated, the new agency would be in charge not only of nuclear safety but also of nuclear security. Through it, Japan would continue to make improvements in the area of nuclear security, taking account of the relevant Agency documents and of lessons learned from the accident. Further arrangements designed to prevent and counter terrorist attacks on nuclear facilities would be introduced and terrorism-related information exchange with security authorities in other countries would be promoted. Capacity-building at Japan's Integrated Support Center for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Nuclear Security would continue.

116. Against that background, Japan believed that it would be able to contribute to the success of the Nuclear Security Summit to be held in March 2012.

117. In October, Japan would host an Agency decontamination mission, and decontamination work would be carried out by Japanese experts in cooperation with experts from abroad. Another high priority was the carrying out of health checks on local residents.

118. In the course of discussions on the Action Plan, Japan had proposed strengthening and promoting the Agency's safety standards and expanding the role of Agency safety assessment missions, including peer reviews. Its proposals were reflected in the 12 main actions that were envisaged in the Action Plan and that Japan would make every effort to implement.

119. In 2012, at the high-level conference to be organized by his Government and the Secretariat, Japan would present the results of a comprehensive review of the safety situation at its nuclear power plants and describe the nuclear safety measures being taken.

120. The Agency was the sole international organization with expertise relevant to all issues associated with nuclear energy, not only nuclear safety and security. Those issues included nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, in which Japan was extremely interested.

121. In conjunction with the 66th session of the General Assembly, Japan would convene a third meeting of foreign ministers within the framework of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative, the aim being to further promote the implementation of the action plan agreed upon at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Japan would continue to lead international efforts to bring about "a world without nuclear weapons".

122. Japan welcomed the fact that the United States and Russia had agreed to irreversibly subject certain weapons-grade plutonium no longer needed for military purposes to Agency verification, and it hoped that the other nuclear-weapon States would follow suit.

123. The DPRK nuclear issue was a threat to peace and security in East Asia and in the world as a whole. Also, it presented a serious challenge to the NPT regime. The DPRK's uranium enrichment programme constituted a clear violation of Security Council resolutions and ran counter to the Joint Statement of 19 September 2005 emanating from the Six-Party Talks. It was important that the international community continue to strongly urge the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons as called for in resolutions of the Security Council. In that connection, Japan greatly appreciated the comprehensive report on the issue submitted earlier in the month to the Board by the Director General.

124. With regard to the Iranian nuclear issue, it was indispensable for the Islamic Republic of Iran to allay all the suspicions of the international community and win its confidence. Japan would continue

to act in concert with the rest of the international community in seeking a peaceful, diplomatic settlement of the issue.

125. With regard to the Syrian nuclear issue, Japan hoped very much that the Syrian Arab Republic would cooperate fully with the Agency and that the relevant facts would be clarified.

126. Japan greatly appreciated the convening by Director General Amano of a forum on experience of possible relevance to the creation of an NWFZ in the Middle East, scheduled for November 2011. It hoped that the forum would facilitate the convening of a conference to be held in 2012, on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of all weapons of mass destruction.

127. Japan welcomed the increase during the previous year in the number of States with additional protocols in force and the fact that a safeguards agreement together with an additional protocol was becoming the international safeguards standard.

128. Japan, which had been hosting sessions of the Asian Senior-Level Talks on Non-Proliferation, was helping the Agency's Secretariat to promote the entry into force of additional protocols and also helping to enhance analytical capabilities at Agency laboratories.

129. Japan welcomed the activities of the Agency in tackling issues such as water shortages and cancer therapy delays in developing countries. It would be sending hydrology experts to attend the 2011 Scientific Forum ("Water Matters: Making a Difference with Nuclear Techniques"), and it was coordinating regional cooperation in Asia in the area of radiology.

130. For 2011, besides its contribution to the TCF, Japan would be making special contributions to the Agency totalling more than \$12 million, including \$ 3.5 million for the Peaceful Uses Initiative. Through those special contributions it would be extending its support for Agency projects relating both to nuclear power generation and to non-power applications of nuclear energy.

131. For a safer nuclear future, it was essential to train nuclear experts. Accordingly, Japan had in November 2010 established a nuclear human resource development network, and it was thinking of establishing an international nuclear safety training academy that would — inter alia — upgrade experts' skills and foster international cooperation in making the most of the lessons learned from the Fukushima accident.

132. Japan would overcome the challenges created by the Fukushima accident and move on towards a safer nuclear future, benefiting from the lessons learned and the wisdom of the world at large. In cooperation with other Member States of the Agency, it would fulfil its responsibilities as regards the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy.

133. Mr KIRIENKO (Russian Federation) said that strengthening nuclear safety in the light of the lessons learned from the Fukushima accident was the predominant issue before the General Conference at its current session, at which the dialogue begun in June, at the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety held at the initiative of Director General Amano, would no doubt continue. The Director General and the Secretariat had played an important role in coordinating international efforts in response to the accident, and the Declaration adopted at the Ministerial Conference was regarded by Russia as a long-term strategy for strengthening nuclear safety.

134. During the preceding week, the Board had adopted the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety called for at the Ministerial Conference. The Action Plan reflected proposals for strengthening nuclear safety made by the President of the Russian Federation, Dmitry Medvedev, and put forward officially at the Ministerial Conference. Those proposals related to — inter alia — the amending of the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Early Notification Convention and the enhancing of the Agency's safety standards. Russia was grateful to all those who had supported the proposals.

135. It was for each country to decide for itself whether or not to develop nuclear power, and the international community should respect the decisions taken by individual countries in the matter.

136. The position of Russia's leadership was clear — Russia would continue to develop nuclear power, while taking into account the lessons of Fukushima.

137. Sustained economic growth was impossible without nuclear power, and that was well understood by many countries — including developing ones — concerned about energy supply security. After a pause immediately following the Fukushima accident, further countries were opting to embark upon or continue with nuclear power programmes, with the necessary priority assigned to ensuring safety.

138. The most important immediate task was to make sure that nuclear power in its present state was safe. In Russia, additional safety assessments had been carried out in the light of the lessons of Fukushima, with stress tests conducted at all operating nuclear power plants in order to determine how resistant they were to the impact of extreme natural events with — inter alia — loss of external power and loss of ultimate heat sink. The assessments had shown that the requirements laid down in Russia's nuclear safety legislation were being met.

139. However, such stress tests should not be a one-off measure. Nuclear power plant safety should be checked regularly, and Russia stood ready to cooperate in an international effort to improve stress test methods and in the exchanging of results. It had already agreed on such cooperation with a number of other countries and with the European Union, and it believed that the activities in question should be conducted as openly and transparently as possible in the interests of ensuring confidence in the results.

140. In August, Rosenergoatom, the Russian nuclear power plant operator, had proposed the establishment, at its crisis centre, of a regional crisis centre for the WWER operators in 14 countries. One task of the regional crisis centre would be to conduct joint analyses of stress test results.

141. Nuclear power plant safety could be strengthened considerably through technical improvements such as the combining of active and passive safety systems, an approach already being followed in the case of Generation III+ nuclear power plants. In Russian III+ designs, particular attention was being paid to ensuring safety even in the event of beyond-design-basis accidents through the inclusion of — for example — passive heat removal systems, core melt capture and cooling systems, and double reactor containments. Such design solutions were a feature of all nuclear power plants now being built in Russia — and of the plant that was being built at Kudankulam, India, with Russian assistance and was due to be completed before the end of the year.

142. Further design solutions needed to be found, and they were being sought within the framework of the Agency. With innovative technologies based on the principles of inherent safety, reactors and their fuel could, without large amounts of cumbersome equipment and elaborate automation, ensure safe operation and also meet the demands of sustainability and non-proliferation.

143. Accordingly, Russia was collaborating with China, France, Japan and the United States on the development of fast reactors and closing of the nuclear fuel cycle. An effective instrument in that connection was INPRO, and Russia advocated further strengthening of the interaction between INPRO and the GIF.

144. At the 2010 session of the General Conference, he had proposed the establishment — within the INPRO framework — of an international programme for multilateral cooperation in the field of fast reactors. Russia was prepared to make its Multifunctional Fast Research Reactor available in support of the proposed programme. Interested parties were welcome to attend an international seminar on the

proposed programme to be held at the Research Institute of Atomic Reactors, Dimitrovgrad, in October 2011.

145. In 2010, Russia had announced its intention to establish an assured reserve of LEU under Agency management. The reserve, 120 tons of LEU, had now been established in full accordance with the agreement concluded between Russia and the Agency. It was located at the International Uranium Enrichment Centre in Angarsk and was subject to Agency safeguards. Russia was responsible for all expenses relating to maintenance of the reserve and to the applications of safeguards.

146. Russia, which welcomed the initiative of the United States and a number of other Member States relating to the establishment of an IAEA fuel bank, had proposed that the International Uranium Enrichment Centre supply material of the required enrichment and quality or provide natural uranium conversion and enrichment services. In its view, such a joint approach would facilitate the establishment, under Agency auspices, of a reliable system for the assured supply of nuclear fuel to interested Member States.

147. In its dealings with countries interested in embarking on a nuclear power programme, Russia emphasized the importance of safety and hence the need to establish a sound nuclear safety infrastructure with licensing and monitoring arrangements based on laws and regulations that were in accordance with Agency requirements and recommendations. Vietnam and Belarus were two such countries, and since the General Conference's 2010 session Russia had concluded agreements with them for the construction of power reactors of Russian design. Similar agreements were in the process of being negotiated with Bangladesh and Nigeria, and his country was also involved in bidding for the construction of a nuclear power plant in Jordan. In each case, Russia was ready to provide a complete service, covering the entire life cycle of the facility.

148. On 12 September 2011, the Bushehr nuclear power plant — the first nuclear power plant in the Islamic Republic of Iran — had started supplying electricity to the Iranian grid. The plant, which was the result of cooperation between Iran and Russia, conformed to the highest operational safety standards, and it was under Agency safeguards.

149. In 2010, Russia had proposed a new build-own-operate model for cooperation in nuclear power plant construction, and the first agreement based on that model had already been concluded between Russia and Turkey.

150. The training of nuclear power plant operating personnel was an issue of particular importance for countries embarking on nuclear power programmes. Accordingly, Russia was establishing an international centre for such training at its Central Institute for Advanced Training (CIAT), in Obninsk. In that connection, an agreement on collaboration between the Agency, the CIAT and Rosenergoatom was to be signed that very day.

151. Russia welcomed the establishment of the Regulatory Cooperation Forum, whose aim was to promote communication between, on one hand, nuclear regulators in countries just embarking on nuclear power programmes and, on the other, nuclear regulators in countries where such programmes had been under way for some time.

152. Russia would continue to contribute to the TCF. Also, during the period 2012–2014 it would continue to finance its safeguards support programme. In addition, it would continue to provide financial support for INPRO until 2015. Overall, its expenditures under those headings would increase as from 2012.

153. To assist Ukraine in making the site of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant environmentally safe and stable, Russia had decided to make additional contributions in the amount of 50 million euros to the EBRD'S Chernobyl Shelter Fund and Nuclear Safety Account.

154. Russia, which believed that the Agency could and should help in solving global problems in the security area, welcomed its involvement in the international efforts to make the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. It looked forward to the forum, convened by the Director General for 21–22 November 2011, on the experience with NWFZs in other parts of the world and the relevance of that experience to the Middle East.

155. Mr ABBASI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that 31 years previously the army of Saddam Hussein's regime had mounted a full-scale air, land and sea attack on his country. What was the connection between that military aggression and Iran's "nuclear dossier"?

156. The victory of the Islamic revolution had completely undermined the military, economic and political position of certain nuclear-weapon States in a strategically important region and had led to the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran. At that time, those who had fabricated the Zionist regime were dreaming that the Zionists would achieve their aims in the region by killing innocent Palestinians and occupying their land. In 1979, however, the prayers of all noble people who aspired to heal the wounds of the Palestinians had been heard, and the Iranians, by the grace of God and thanks to their boundless determination, had assumed power based on the freedom-seeking principles of Islam, which promised peace, friendship and defence of the oppressed people of Palestine within the region and throughout the world.

157. The resulting defeat of the Zionists and their supporters and the thwarting of their hegemonic plans had prompted them to set about suppressing the popular revolution in Iran. They had begun organizing media campaigns and military coups, but their plans had been defeated with the help of God and thanks to the wisdom of the founder and leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution.

158. The losers had resorted to war and division of the country as their last weapon, but they had failed yet again, and Iran — even stronger than before — had preserved its territorial integrity. The animosity of certain devious totalitarian countries had manifested itself in different forms, such as the planning of coups, the imposing of war and, more recently, the inventing of a "nuclear dossier" with a view to undermining Iran's peaceful nuclear activities.

159. Where were the international bodies mandated to uphold laws during the tough times of Iran's resistance to the attack from outside? Why had nobody opposed the use of chemical weapons and weapons of mass destruction by Saddam Hussein? Why had the media failed to rouse the world's conscience in support of action to prevent the martyrdom and wounding of almost 100 000 people? Iran had been subject to sanctions during the period of resistance. Allies of its enemy, acting like pirates, had closed off Iran's vital routes, but numerous independent freedom-loving countries had greatly respected the staunch resistance put up by Iran and had sought to assist it.

160. Since then, political stability in the Islamic Republic of Iran had paved the way for scientific endeavour and industrial growth, and a pioneering country logically sought to diversify its energy sources.

161. The peaceful utilization of nuclear energy could yield vast benefits as regards — for example — electricity generation, ionizing radiation applications in medicine, the promotion of scientific research in many areas and enhancement of the capacity of countries to provide specialized services. The leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran were well aware of those benefits.

162. Member States of the Agency and the Director General should not to be influenced by certain countries that possessed and were spreading nuclear weapons and were seeking to prevent other countries from exercising their inalienable rights. Owing to the hostile positions and actions of a few Member States, other Member States, wishing to exercise those rights, were compelled to conduct their peaceful nuclear activities in secret.

163. In an era of shortages in less developed countries, the Agency should act in accordance with its statutory duty to help countries exercise their inalienable rights in the nuclear field by fighting imposed restraints, halting the fabrication of “nuclear dossiers” and sharing acquired knowledge.

164. The trust of the international community in the Agency must be restored and the Agency must not be converted into a centre for preserving the interests of nuclear-weapon States and for imposing restrictions on countries that wished to benefit from peaceful nuclear technology.

165. During the 1970s, the Agency had promoted the manufacture of nuclear explosive devices for peaceful purposes, thereby justifying the killing of thousands of innocent people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the radioactive pollution that had resulted from the testing of nuclear weapons by the countries involved in the nuclear arms race. The relevant Agency documents and publications were well worth reading.

166. Some nuclear-weapon States were trying to control the Agency as they wished to conduct highly polluting tests that would enable them to acquire data paving the way to software hegemony. Thanks to the Agency, they were able to present their nuclear arsenals in their movies and media as the saviour of humanity — its protector against natural and terrestrial attacks.

167. The Agency claimed to be neutral, but, if it was neutral, why had it failed to report on probable clandestine activities on the part of some European countries, or on the deployment of several hundred nuclear warheads jeopardizing the health of the people in Europe or in occupied countries? Why was the Agency silent about the lost nuclear material in the United States? The security and health of Americans and of people in the rest of the world was at risk. A thorough and precise report on that issue should be made available without further delay.

168. The Agency’s selective attitude, especially towards certain developing countries, had paved the way for economic sanctions followed by military attacks on those countries. Three Western countries were the source of such undue interference. Having lost influence in Iran after its Islamic Revolution, they had pioneered the fabrication of Iran’s “nuclear dossier”.

169. The Agency should, pursuant to its mandate, focus on controlling war-mongering by nuclear-weapon States that, whenever they wished, used force or threatened to use it.

170. The Agency should confront the country which, faced with a minor threat, had gunned down a defenceless passenger plane over the Persian Gulf and honoured the commander of the operation with a medal for bravery. The conduct of a country that possessed nuclear weapons and had not fulfilled its obligations under an international chemical convention undoubtedly posed a serious threat to global peace and security and called for urgent action by the international community.

171. The Islamic Republic of Iran had achieved self-sufficiency in terms of expertise in many scientific areas. The intelligence agencies of some countries had therefore, like terrorists, focused on assassinating Iranian experts. Dr Masoud Allimohammadi, Dr Majid Shahryari and Daryoosh Rezaeinejad had already been martyred, and others on the assassination list were experts whose names and addresses were contained, for instance, in United Nations Security Council and European Union sanctions lists. The Agency should clear its name by ceasing to act in a manner that prepared the ground for such terrorist measures. Member States and the Director General should condemn them and thereby prove their goodwill — and they should display courage and take steps to close the Iranian “nuclear dossier”.

172. The Bushehr nuclear power plant was a unique achievement, and it should prompt people elsewhere to show their determination to realize the idea of “nuclear energy for all and nuclear weapons for none”. The Agency, which had supervised the construction and commissioning of the

Bushehr nuclear power plant, now had an opportunity, thanks to that experience, to persuade public opinion of the benefits of safe nuclear energy.

173. Iran expected the Agency to behave more responsibly towards it as regards the Bushehr nuclear power plant and the construction of further nuclear power plants and to increase its scientific and technical cooperation with Iran.

174. Despite all the obstacles placed in its way by certain countries, the Islamic Republic of Iran had mastered the technology of the nuclear fuel cycle and could produce fuel assemblies for research reactors and power reactors. It stood ready to share its know-how with other countries under Agency supervision.

175. The Agency had recently prevented Iranian experts from participating in nuclear safety training workshops under the pretext of restrictions imposed by the Security Council. Such unprofessional conduct could jeopardize health everywhere. Scientific apartheid and the imposition of restrictions on efforts to improve nuclear safety would pave the way for accidents and was incompatible with the aims of the recent Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety. The Agency should not allow political considerations to affect what ought to be technical decisions.

176. His country stood ready to cooperate with the Agency as it had before. It hoped that the Agency would recover its independent identity in the near future and that the Director General and his colleagues would earn credit for the Agency as a non-discriminatory body by taking principled decisions.

177. The Islamic Republic of Iran would use the nuclear capabilities acquired by it solely in order to increase the well-being of Iranians and other peoples. To that end, Iranian specialists could cooperate with Agency teams in controlling and destroying nuclear weapons.

178. If countries wished to negotiate with Iran on nuclear issues, they should examine the performance of the Agency in recent decades. Its decision- and policy-making structure seriously needed to be reformed. The composition, size and authority of the Board reflected the fact that the Statute had been drawn up during the Cold War, and the Statute was not compatible with the present situation in the world. That would be a key issue in Iran's future talks with the Secretariat.

179. Other issues would be how to ensure that all countries could, without discrimination, benefit from the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy and to reassure countries as regards the non-existence of undeclared nuclear material and facilities in nuclear-weapon States.

180. Iran hoped that other Member States would support its approach, with a view to making the world a safer place — a peaceful world without discrimination, where hidden talents might flourish, science advance and prosperity spread.

181. His country was grateful to the Agency staff members — and especially the Agency inspectors — who followed their consciences and reported professionally the real situation with regard to Iran's nuclear programme. Their wise approach was important, as the Agency should be independent in its analyses, reporting and decision-making.

182. Ms KAMAR (Kenya) said that her country deeply sympathized with the people of Japan, who were still suffering from the devastating effects of the earthquake and tsunami that had occurred there. Also, it admired the courage shown by those who were putting their lives at risk in order to stabilize the situation at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station.

183. The Government of Japan and the Secretariat were to be commended on the rapid and well-coordinated interventions in response to the nuclear crisis and on the frequent information updates

issued by them. Her country hoped that the world would continue to be kept up to date regarding the situation and that the lessons learned from the accident would be drawn upon in enhancing the safety of nuclear power plants.

184. Her country welcomed the Director General's report on the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety and the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, and it would like to see all Member States participating in the implementation of the Action Plan.

185. Kenya attached great importance to the Agency's activities in areas such as food and agriculture, human health, water resources management, industrial development, and environmental protection. It also attached great importance to the Agency's safeguards activities.

186. The Agency's role in the energy sector had assumed greater significance with the escalation of fossil fuel prices and the unprecedented challenges of climate change. More and more Member States were showing an interest in adding nuclear power to their energy mix in order to meet their development needs.

187. Against that background, Kenya was continuing to meet its financial obligations vis-à-vis the Agency — including the payment of NPCs — on time and in full.

188. Kenya, which attached great importance to the universalization of NPT safeguards agreements and of additional protocols to such agreements, would like to see them concluded and implemented by all States.

189. The Agency's technical cooperation with Kenya was making a significant contribution to its efforts to establish a nuclear science and technology infrastructure. Kenya's CPF for the period 2011–2016 reflected priorities set out in a national development policy document entitled Vision 2030, the highest priority being the introduction of nuclear power into Kenya's energy mix. Her Government had established a Nuclear Electricity Project Committee in order to expedite the process, and comprehensive legislation relating to nuclear science and technology was being developed. Kenya hoped that the Agency and other development partners would assist it in the area of nuclear power human capacity-building.

190. In order to detect illicit movements of nuclear and other radioactive materials, radiation portal monitors had been installed at Mombasa Sea Port and a training programme for border personnel had been set up.

191. As regards the safety of radioactive waste, Kenya's accession to the Joint Convention was imminent, and her Government was fully funding the construction of a central radioactive waste processing facility, which was due for completion in 2013.

192. Kenya, which attached great importance to PACT, had recently adopted a cancer control and prevention strategy for 2011–2016, and it looked forward to assistance in its implementation being provided through the Agency.

193. Kenya was continuing to take a keen interest in the radiation protection of patients and medical staff. In that connection, it was introducing quality assurance controls with a view to improving image quality in diagnostic and interventional radiology.

194. Kenya greatly appreciated the high priority assigned by the Agency to livestock rearing and the support provided by some Member States in that area. At the same time, it considered that there was a need for closer cooperation between the Agency and other development partners in helping to plan and implement sound national and sub-regional AU-PATTEC projects.

195. Kenya, which had been certified by the World Organization for Animal Health in May 2009 as being free of rinderpest, welcomed the global eradication of that disease, which had been due in no small measure to efforts of the Joint Division. Her delegation was looking forward to the Rinderpest Freedom Celebration to be held during the General Conference's current session.

196. Mutation breeding was being tested with bananas and cassava in Kenya within the framework of technical cooperation projects. Farm trials were to be carried out with three cassava mutant clones as of October 2011, with a view to the release of at least one by the end of 2012. Banana mutant clones had been undergoing testing for several years for resistance and tolerance to banana streak, bacterial wilt and nematodes at one of Kenya's public research institutes.

197. As to the use of mutation breeding techniques with wheat, mutant varieties selected for drought tolerance and resistance to wheat stem rust U99 would start undergoing performance trials in 2012; the first mutant variety resistant to wheat stem rust U99 was expected to be released in 2013.

198. Over 100 students had so far been trained in mutation breeding and related disciplines in Kenyan laboratories equipped by the Agency, and Kenya has so far hosted four regional meetings for persons working in the mutation breeding area — meetings attended by persons from over 20 countries.

199. Kenya, which was participating in the regional project "Enhancing the Productivity of High Value Crops and Income Generation with Small-Scale Irrigation Technologies" (RAF/5/058), had, thanks to that project, developed a capability for using nuclear techniques in quantifying water and nutrient use in major cropping systems. It hoped that the project would continue to receive strong support.

200. Kenya, which was currently chairing the AFRA Programme Management Committee, would like to see more being done to support AFRA activities. The University of Nairobi had initiated a Master of Science programme in line with the AFRA harmonized syllabus, and Kenya would welcome Agency support for the programme.

201. The arid and semi-arid climatic conditions in most parts of Kenya, coupled with climate change effects, had led to a decline in surface water resources. Extensive groundwater exploration and exploitation activities were under way in arid and semi-arid areas, and Kenya would welcome support, through the Agency, for enhancement of the isotope hydrology capabilities that it had already acquired thanks to participation in two regional projects.

202. Kenya, which had benefited greatly from participation in the regional project "Promoting Self-reliance and Sustainability of Non-destructive Testing Facilities" (RAF/8/043), aimed to establish a non-destructive testing certification body by 2013.

203. For 2012, Kenya would pay its full TCF target share and make an additional contribution of \$20 000 in support of Agency technical cooperation activities.

204. Mr BESSON (France) said that he would focus on three major challenges currently facing the Agency. The first challenge was to learn the necessary lessons from the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station and to draw on them in ensuring that the world enjoyed the highest possible nuclear safety standards.

205. France welcomed the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, which constituted a complete road map for the responsible development of nuclear power through: frequent nuclear power plant safety audits; the broader pooling of national resources in times of emergency; sound nuclear safety arrangements entrusted in each country to an independent authority with the necessary powers and resources; a robust universal legal framework; a commitment on the part of all stakeholders to cooperation,

transparency and information-sharing; and peer reviews of plant designs and operation and of national safety and crisis management structures, with enhancement of the Agency's capacity to assist.

206. Implementation of the Action Plan should start immediately, and there should be no let-up. For complete implementation by mid-2012, the focus should be on: the stress-testing of all existing power reactors, through peer reviews and with systematic publication of the results under the Agency's supervision; optimizing crisis response capabilities, with off-site resources such as an international rapid action team, and establishing an international crisis management training centre; undertaking to export only technologies that met the highest existing safety standards and only to those countries which fully satisfied the relevant Agency criteria; and internationally certified conformity to the Agency's safety standards before the beginning of construction work.

207. The Director General, who had called on all Member States to move from the Action Plan to actual actions, could count on the full support of France. In its view, the creation of a new system of nuclear governance could not wait until the General Conference's next session.

208. The second challenge was to ensure that full advantage was taken of nuclear power generation complying with the highest safety standards.

209. Every State had the right to make its own energy choices, but a civilian nuclear power programme was — and would remain — a formidable asset in the effort to — at one and the same time — achieve energy security, maintain the purchasing power of individuals and enterprises, create innovative industries and combat global warming. Reducing its carbon dependency and that of Europe as a whole was a categorical imperative for France, which was why it had reaffirmed the position of nuclear power in its energy mix.

210. All States should be able to benefit from nuclear power in the same way as France, which would continue to respond to all requests for cooperation in the nuclear field from States that complied scrupulously with the non-proliferation rules. To that end, it had established the International Institute for Nuclear Energy, which was now fully operational.

211. The third challenge was to fight tirelessly against all attempts to misuse nuclear energy.

212. The proliferation of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery constituted a major threat to peace and security in the world, and it was vital that the international community respond resolutely to proliferation crises.

213. The Iranian nuclear programme posed an unacceptable threat to the non-proliferation regime and to regional stability. The enrichment activities of Iran and its failure to cooperate fully with the Agency were causes of profound concern regarding the real purpose of its nuclear programme.

214. The Director General's latest report on "Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement and relevant provisions of Security Council resolutions in the Islamic Republic of Iran" had referred to the Agency's concerns, based on extensive and comprehensive information, about possible military dimensions to Iran's programme. France was looking forward to considering a follow-up report by the Director General in November.

215. France was convinced that a negotiated solution was still possible, but for Iran the cost of not changing direction quickly would only grow.

216. The DPRK, which was also acting in flagrant violation of its international obligations, should, without delay, permit the return of Agency inspectors and give them access to all its nuclear facilities.

217. The Agency report relating to the Syrian Arab Republic published in June 2011 clearly established that Syria had violated its international obligations. The Syrian Government should cooperate without further delay with the Agency in clarifying its nuclear activities — past and present.

218. France was supporting the actions being taken to strengthen and universalize the Agency's safeguards system, and within the Nuclear Suppliers Group it was pressing for nuclear trade to be subject to rigorous and universal controls.

219. As regards the threat of nuclear and radiological terrorism, coordination of the international efforts being made to strengthen nuclear security was essential for the future peaceful utilization of nuclear energy and should therefore be a top priority for the international community.

220. A strengthened Agency would have a major role to play in the new system of nuclear governance, and France would be steadfast in its support for the Agency in that role.

**The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.**