

General Conference

GC(55)/OR.9

Issued: December 2011

General Distribution

Original: English

Fifty-fifth regular session

Plenary

Record of the Ninth Meeting

Held at Headquarters, Vienna,, on Friday, 23 September 2011, at 10.15 a.m.

President: Mr FERUTA (Romania)

Contents

Item of the agenda ¹		Paragraphs
20	Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East	1–55
21	Israeli nuclear capabilities	56–116
–	Report on the Scientific Forum 2011	117–119

¹ GC(55)/25.

Abbreviations used in this record:

DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review and Extension Conference	Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty

20. Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East (GC(55)/23; GC(55)/L.1)

1. The PRESIDENT said that item 20 had been included in the Conference's agenda pursuant to resolution GC(54)/RES/13. The Director General had submitted the report contained in document GC(55)/23 pursuant to paragraph 13 of that resolution. The matter had been considered by the Board, the preceding week, on the basis of that report. Document GC(55)/L.1 contained a draft resolution submitted by Egypt.
2. Mr SHAMAA (Egypt), introducing the draft resolution, said that its text was identical to that of the resolution adopted at the fifty-fourth session of the General Conference, with only necessary technical updates.
3. It had come to be universally recognized that the application of comprehensive Agency safeguards to nuclear facilities and activities greatly contributed to international peace, security and stability. That was particularly true in regions such as the Middle East, where potentially dangerous tensions persisted.
4. The overwhelming support given by Member States to the draft resolutions on the "Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East" submitted by Egypt at past sessions of the General Conference eloquently testified to that reality. Such support encouraged Egypt to pursue with even more vigour and determination the efforts it had been exerting for several decades to bring about universal NPT adherence in the Middle East and comprehensive Agency safeguards at all nuclear facilities in the region.
5. It remained a source of astonishment to Egypt that some appeared to still hold the view that NPT universality and the global application of comprehensive Agency safeguards were objectives that were desirable only in certain cases and under certain circumstances. Such a position was untenable, as it was diametrically opposed to the spirit and letter of dozens of decisions, resolutions and final documents adopted by a variety of regional and global fora and organizations, including the Agency.
6. Egypt's view was that there were no circumstances under which the application of comprehensive Agency safeguards to nuclear facilities would lead to destabilization or to diminished security. What was a fact, however, was that unsafeguarded nuclear facilities had a persistently destabilizing effect on the region where they were located, thereby preventing confidence from being built.
7. Egypt would continue to rely on the support of those Member States which shared its commitment to the goal of a Middle East where there was no room for unsafeguarded nuclear facilities and activities. It would also continue to launch and to lend its support to initiatives that might lead towards that goal. In that context, Egypt looked forward to the Agency's intensified involvement in and commitment to efforts aimed at turning the Middle East into a comprehensively safeguarded — and therefore safer — region where political differences could not escalate into potential mass destruction.
8. Egypt looked forward to adoption of the draft resolution on the "Application of IAEA Safeguards in the Middle East" without a vote.

9. Mr AZOULAY (Israel) said that his country had long cherished the vision of the Middle East as a zone free of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery systems. However, Israel was situated in a region where security was an issue relevant to its very existence, where threats to annihilate States still prevailed and where forces dedicated to creating internal and regional instability were used by those wishing to prevent the peaceful settlement of disputes.

10. For the vision to become reality, substantial changes had to occur in the Middle East, and those changes had to include recognition of the right of all States in the region to exist, and also the establishment of enduring peaceful relations and good-neighbourliness. Full compliance by the States in the region with their international obligations regarding disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation had to be achieved as well. No amount of endless rhetorical campaigning in international fora would contribute to the realization of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East. A serious attitude, commitment, constructiveness and good faith on the part of all relevant participants were indispensable in the process, which must also emanate from regional partners themselves, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at.

11. For its part, Israel had always pursued a responsible policy of restraint in the nuclear domain, and it had shown its support for positive engagement by its participation in European Union seminars held to promote confidence-building and support a process aimed at establishing a zone free of WMD and means of delivery in the Middle East. In that connection, it should be noted that Israel had been the first State in the Middle East to give its principled consent to the Director General's convening of a forum aimed at learning from the experience of regions where NWFZs had been established — and it welcomed the positive responses received from regional partners and hoped for a constructive approach by all concerned.

12. A new Middle East was evolving, with profound changes taking place in many States of the region. On the positive side, the democratization process might make possible a better atmosphere, conducive to the building of trust among regional parties, but Israel could not ignore the voices that were questioning the achievements of peace accords concluded in the region. With four of the five cases of gross violations of the NPT involving Middle East States, one could not but question the good faith of those States as regards the fulfilment of their international legally binding obligations. In the present state of transformation and turmoil in the Middle East, Israel had to give serious thought to the uncertainties it was facing.

13. The present agenda item had a long history, but for 14 years running, until 2005, it had enjoyed the coveted status of an item leading to the adoption of a consensual resolution. Israel had endorsed that resolution not because of support for the precise language, but because of its principled adherence to the vision of the Middle East as a zone free of WMD and their delivery systems — and because of an understanding with the resolution's principal sponsor, Egypt, that any move to change that language would necessitate dialogue and coordination. Unfortunately, that understanding had ceased in 2006 with the introduction of unilateral changes by Egypt, whose action had clearly indicated that "Israel-bashing" was more important for some.

14. That unsatisfactory situation had persisted during the General Conference's 2007 and 2008 sessions. Then, in 2009, Israel and Egypt had, under the auspices of the United States of America and the European Union, engaged in discussions aimed at a consensus on the resolution. Those discussions had created a glimmer of hope that the sides would once again reach a common understanding and agree on a text, but because of Egypt's determination to retain paragraph 2, directed against Israel, a consensus had not been achieved. That paragraph figured in the draft resolution submitted in 2010, and it figured once again in the draft resolution now before the General Conference. Had Israel's neighbours truly wished a consensus to be achieved once again, they would have approached Israel directly.

15. For its part, Israel, which remained committed to dialogue, stood ready to join in adoption of the 2005 resolution text in order to recreate the spirit of consensus. In the present circumstances, however, its position obliged it to request separate votes on paragraph 2 of the draft resolution in document GC(55)/L.1 and on the draft resolution as a whole.

16. Mr SHAMAA (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), expressed support for the draft resolution contained in document GC(55)/L.1 and said that NAM was still committed to its principled position regarding the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East. It strongly believed that stability could not be achieved in a region where a continuing massive imbalance in military capabilities, due particularly to the possession of nuclear weapons, allowed one party to threaten its neighbours and others in the region.

17. NAM, which considered that the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East would be a positive step, leading towards the objective of global nuclear disarmament, continued to favour the establishment of such a zone in accordance with the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions.

18. NAM, which was convinced that the effective and efficient application of Agency safeguards promoted greater confidence among States, considered that achieving universality of comprehensive Agency safeguards in the Middle East was a necessary step towards the establishment of an NWFZ there.

19. NAM welcomed the fact that its member States party to the NPT had concluded comprehensive safeguards agreements with the Agency in fulfilment of their obligations under NPT Article III.1 as non-nuclear-weapon States.

20. All States in the Middle East region except Israel were parties to the NPT and had accepted comprehensive Agency safeguards. NAM regretted Israel's continued insistence that the issue of comprehensive Agency safeguards could not be addressed in isolation from the regional peace process; there was no automatic sequence linking the application of comprehensive safeguards at all nuclear facilities in the Middle East to the prior achievement of a peace settlement.

21. NAM also regretted the fact that the Director General had not been able to make further progress, pursuant to resolution GC(54)/RES/13, as regards the application of comprehensive Agency safeguards covering all nuclear activities in the Middle East. The situation was unacceptable, and all Member States should cooperate in rectifying it. In the promotion of Agency safeguards in the Middle East, top priority should be accorded first to achieving the universality of comprehensive Agency safeguards there.

22. NAM, which welcomed the fact that the Director General had "continued to encourage the development and consideration of relevant new ideas and approaches that could help to move his mandates forward" and the fact that he would "continue with his consultations in accordance with his mandate regarding the early application of comprehensive Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities in the Middle East region", would like him to brief Member States regularly on the results of his future efforts.

23. The NAM member States party to the NPT, recalling the resolution on the Middle East adopted in 1995 by the NPT Review and Extension Conference, welcomed the fact that the 2010 NPT Review Conference had "endorsed the practical step that the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the co-sponsors of the 1995 Resolution, in consultation with the States of the region, will convene a conference in 2012, to be attended by all States of the Middle East, on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the States of the region, and with the full support and engagement of

the nuclear-weapon States.” NAM noted that the 2012 conference would take “as its terms of reference the 1995 Resolution.”

24. NAM had noted with appreciation the Director General’s recent efforts to develop “an agenda and modalities which will help to ensure a successful forum on the relevance of the experience of existing NWFZs, including confidence-building and verification measures, for establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East.” Also, NAM had noted that, in his report contained in document GC(55)/23, the Director General stated that those efforts had been welcomed by many States and that he had written “to all Member States inviting them to take part in the Forum to be held on 21–22 November 2011 at IAEA headquarters in Vienna.” For the Forum to be successful, its agenda should reflect the consensus within the international community on the importance of establishing an NWFZ in the Middle East. Accordingly, NAM would like the Director General to continue consultations with all Member States on arrangements conducive to the Forum’s being a constructive contribution to achievement of the objective of the establishment of an NWFZ in that region.

25. NAM, which was fully committed to supporting the Director General’s efforts in implementing resolution GC(54)/RES/13, expected all Member States of the Agency to support those efforts.

26. Mr GASHUT (Libya) said that he was speaking on behalf of the new Libya, a country committed to transparency, mutual respect and peaceful coexistence and to full compliance with all the international treaties to which it was a party.

27. More than 15 years had elapsed since the NPT Review and Extension Conference had, in 1995, adopted a resolution concerning the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East. In 2010, however, the NPT Review Conference had decided to convene, in 2012, a conference that would bring together all States of the Middle East with a view to implementing the 1995 resolution and creating a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in that region. Libya welcomed the steps being taken by the international community to create such a zone.

28. Mr POURMAND TEHRANI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that more than three decades had elapsed since the idea of establishing an NWFZ in the Middle East had first been put forward. It had been put forward by Iran in 1974 as an important disarmament measure in the Middle East region and had led to a United Nations General Assembly resolution. Since 1980, the General Assembly had each year adopted a resolution on the issue by consensus, demonstrating global support for the promotion of peace, security and stability in the Middle East through the realization of an NWFZ. Iran, having ratified all major treaties relating to weapons of mass destruction, supported the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

29. It was regrettable that, notwithstanding global attempts to establish NWFZs, particularly in the Middle East, 30 years later no progress had been made towards realization of that aim owing to the intransigent policy of the Zionist regime. Owing to that regime’s non-adherence to the NPT and, more importantly, its refusal to place its unsafeguarded nuclear facilities under the Agency’s verification system, the aspiration of the countries in the region to establish an NWFZ had not been realized. Moreover, that regime’s irresponsible behaviour cast serious doubt on the possibility of one being established in the near future.

30. The Zionist regime was the only country in the region that was not a party to the NPT. Despite repeated calls by the international community, such as the resolution on the Middle East adopted in 1995 at the NPT Review and Extension Conference and related resolutions of the General Assembly, the Agency and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, that regime, confident of the political and military support of the United States of America, had neither acceded to the NPT nor placed its nuclear facilities under full-scope Agency safeguards. It had not even declared its intention to accede

to the NPT. Its clandestine nuclear activities seriously threatened regional peace and security and endangered the non-proliferation regime.

31. Unfortunately, the imposed inaction of the United Nations Security Council over several decades as regards the well-documented nuclear weapons programme of the Zionist regime had given that regime the audacity to acknowledge explicitly its possession of nuclear weapons. The regime's clandestine development of nuclear weapons not only violated basic principles of international law, the Charter of the United Nations, the NPT and numerous General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, it also clearly defied the demands and concerns of the overwhelming majority of United Nations member States and obstinately disregarded repeated appeals by the international community for Israel to renounce nuclear weapons and accede to the NPT. The Zionist regime was the only obstacle to the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East. Peace and stability in the region were unattainable while its nuclear arsenal continued to threaten the region and the rest of the world.

32. As a State party to the NPT, Iran was fully committed to its international undertakings and believed that the NPT was the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Universal adherence to the NPT, particularly in the Middle East, would effectively ensure the establishment of an NWFZ in the region. Pending the realization of such a zone in the Middle East, no country in the region should acquire nuclear weapons, or permit the stationing within its territory or under its jurisdiction or control of nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices, and countries in the region should refrain from actions that ran counter to the letter and spirit of the NPT and of other international resolutions and documents relating to the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East. It was a matter of regret that, while no practical measure was being taken to contain the threat posed by the Zionist regime as the real source of nuclear danger in the Middle East, Iran, a party to the NPT and the initiator of the idea of the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East, was under tremendous pressure to renounce its inalienable right to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

33. The Director General had stated in his report on the "Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East" contained in document GC(55)/23 that all States in the Middle East except for Israel were party to the NPT and had undertaken to accept comprehensive Agency safeguards.

34. Iran therefore firmly believed that an agreed plan of action and a timetable for achieving universality of the NPT, especially in the Middle East, should be a top priority on the agenda of all States party to the NPT, especially the nuclear-weapon States. Pressure should be brought to bear on the Zionist regime to eliminate its nuclear weapons and to accede to the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards in order to pave the way for the realization of the long-sought goal of the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East and the achievement of peace and security in the world.

35. Mr MARSÁN AGUILERA (Cuba) said that the international community had repeatedly called during the past few decades for the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East as a prerequisite for the achievement of peace and stability in the region. The establishment of such a zone depended on the accession of Israel to the NPT and the placing of all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards.

36. Israel should accede to the NPT without further delay. Moreover, the United States Government should be transparent about the equipment, materials and other forms of assistance it provided to Israel in the nuclear field.

37. Cuba, which was concerned about the Director General's failure to achieve any progress towards the implementation of resolution GC(54)/RES/13 concerning the "Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East", hoped that the forum in November 2011 on the relevance of the

experience of existing NWFZs for the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East would contribute to the achievement of that goal, which was of the utmost importance for peace and stability in the world as a whole.

38. The PRESIDENT noted that the representative of Israel had requested that a separate vote be taken on operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution contained in document GC(55)/L.1.

39. At the request of Mr Shamaa (Egypt), a roll-call vote was taken.

40. New Zealand, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

41. The result of the vote was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Holy See, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Vietnam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: Israel.

Abstaining: Botswana, Canada, Colombia, India, Marshall Islands, Nigeria, Palau, Senegal, Uganda, United States of America.

42. There were 111 votes in favour and 1 against, with 10 abstentions. Operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution was adopted.

43. Mr PATNAIK (India), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation had abstained because it believed that operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution introduced matters extraneous to the Agency.

44. The PRESIDENT noted that the representative of Israel had requested that a separate vote be taken on the whole of the draft resolution contained in document GC(55)/L.1.

45. At the request of Mr Shamaa (Egypt), a roll-call vote was taken.

46. Mongolia, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

47. The result of the vote was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and

Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Holy See, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Vietnam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Botswana, Canada, Colombia, Israel, Marshall Islands, Palau, Uganda, United States of America.

48. There were 113 votes in favour and none against, with 8 abstentions. The draft resolution was adopted.

49. Mr DAVIES (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation's decision to abstain had not been taken lightly. It reflected the belief of the United States that the discussion of Middle East safeguards in the General Conference should proceed on the basis of dialogue, respect and consensus. While consensus had been achieved on resolutions concerning Middle East safeguards at previous General Conference sessions, the present text had regrettably not been negotiated among all States in the region. His delegation hoped for a return to a consensus approach at the next session.

50. The United States remained unequivocally committed to the goals of a Middle East region free of all weapons of mass destruction and the universality of the NPT, even though they could not be achieved quickly or in the absence of essential conditions. The absence of such conditions, however, was not an excuse for neglecting dialogue.

51. The United States was also committed to supporting the convening of a regional conference in 2012 in accordance with the relevant recommendation of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. It had been working closely with the United Kingdom, the Russian Federation and the Office of the United Nations Secretary-General, in consultation with States in the Middle East region, to identify a host State and facilitator, and it hoped to complete the process in the near future.

52. The Director General was to be commended for convening a forum, to be held in November 2011, on the experience of regions with NWFZ treaties in force and its potential relevance for the Middle East. His Government hoped that all States in the region would take advantage of the opportunity for dialogue and understanding. Clearly, singling out one country for criticism would impede progress and raise questions as to whether the 2012 regional conference could be conducted in a fair and balanced manner.

53. Mr WYGANOWSKI (Poland), speaking in explanation of vote on behalf of the European Union (EU), said that the EU remained fully committed to universalization of the NPT. While the EU had supported the resolution, it would have preferred to call on all States party to the NPT to ensure compliance with that treaty. The EU would continue to urge all States in the Middle East to conclude and implement comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols. It felt that the resolution would have been stronger if it had included a call for the implementation of such protocols.

54. The EU welcomed the consensus reached at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. The agreement reached on an action plan and a procedure for implementing the resolution on the Middle East adopted in 1995 by the NPT Review and Extension Conference, including the holding of a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, demonstrated the common resolve not only to uphold but also to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

55. The EU, which had in July 2011 held a seminar as a contribution to the process leading to the 2012 conference, had been encouraged by the constructive approach of Member States and was looking forward to the November 2011 forum convened by the Director General.

21. Israeli nuclear capabilities (GC(55)/1/Add.1; GC(55)/18)

56. The PRESIDENT noted that item 21 had been included in the agenda pursuant to a request submitted by the Arab States that were members of the Agency. He drew attention to an explanatory memorandum contained in document GC(55)/1/Add.1 and to document GC(55)/18.

57. Mr EL-KHOURY (Lebanon), speaking on behalf of the Arab States that were members of the Agency, said that all Arab States without exception had adopted a united stance in favour of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, had acceded to the NPT and had approved the initiative aimed at establishing an NWFZ in the Middle East.

58. Israel, on the other hand, had refused to accede to the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards, and it possessed nuclear weapons, as confirmed by impartial reports from a variety of sources. Its attitude rendered peace and security difficult to achieve and was a source of increased tension in the Middle East that could trigger an arms race.

59. The goal of the Arab States in raising the issue of Israeli nuclear capabilities at successive sessions of the General Conference was not only to draw attention to a dangerous situation but also to propose a practical solution, which consisted in adopting a comprehensive approach that took the security of all countries in the Middle East into consideration instead of dealing in a biased and selective manner with each country individually and applying double standards.

60. At its fifty-third regular session, the General Conference had, in resolution GC(53)/RES/17, called upon Israel to accede to the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards. The United Nations General Assembly and Security Council, and NPT Review Conferences, including the one held in May 2010, had also adopted resolutions calling on Israel to accede to the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards as a prerequisite for the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East.

61. With impartial reports confirming that Israel possessed a significant arsenal of nuclear weapons, the Arab States and the international community as a whole could not afford to tolerate the efforts of

Israel to further develop its nuclear capabilities, taking advantage of the lack of any real international pressure aimed at preventing it from doing so. Some countries were doing their utmost to ensure that no light was shed on Israel's nuclear capabilities and to impede the adoption by the General Conference of a resolution that mentioned Israel by name. At the same time, charges were being levelled — without solid proof — against other countries.

62. Some countries had sought to prevent the inclusion of the item “Israeli nuclear capabilities” in the agenda of the General Conference. They had argued, for instance, that the Agency's role was a technical one and that it was inappropriate for the Agency to address political issues. However, the item had been discussed at numerous previous General Conference sessions, and the resolution adopted at the fifty-third session had focused on technical issues that fell within the Agency's mandate, particularly the application of comprehensive safeguards within the framework of the NPT.

63. The argument that a single agenda item concerning the Middle East was sufficient was untenable. It was clear from the content of the draft resolutions on “Israeli nuclear capabilities” submitted at previous sessions and that of the resolutions on the “Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East” that they should be dealt with under different agenda items and that achievement of the goal of the former constituted a necessary step towards achievement of the goal of the latter.

64. Moreover, Israel was not being singled out by the Arab States; it was singling itself out and isolating itself by failing to accede to the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards.

65. In spite of all the arguments adduced, the General Conference had voted in favour of the draft resolution concerning “Israeli nuclear capabilities” at its fifty-third session, thereby demonstrating that the international community recognized the danger that Israel's unsafeguarded nuclear activities and facilities posed for the Middle East and the need to ensure the accession of Israel to the NPT and the placing of all its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards.

66. Regrettably, some States — including nuclear-weapon States — were continuing to claim that they espoused the principle of universality of the NPT while setting aside that principle completely when the question of its applicability to Israel arose, thereby applying double standards and impeding implementation of the General Conference resolutions on “Israeli nuclear capabilities”.

67. The Arab Group considered that the agenda item “Israeli nuclear capabilities” was no less important than other agenda items as it had a direct bearing on the achievement of security and peace in the Middle East. Allegations to the contrary again demonstrated the application of double standards.

68. Israel had repeatedly refused to cooperate with the Agency in the implementation of resolution GC(53)/RES/17 and all other relevant international resolutions, as attested by the message from the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel to the Director General dated 26 July 2010. Moreover, the Israeli representative had stated immediately after the adoption of that resolution at the fifty-third session of the General Conference that his country would not cooperate in any way in its implementation, and the Israeli Prime Minister had stated after the 2010 NPT Review Conference that he rejected all its decisions concerning the Middle East and would not cooperate in their implementation. The Arab Group considered that the cooperation of Israel in the implementation of resolution GC(53)/RES/17 and all other relevant international resolutions would enhance the prospects of success of any initiative aimed at creating an NWFZ in the Middle East.

69. The Arab Group, which had contributed to the success of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and to the adoption of the decision to hold a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, considered that the current international efforts to establish such a zone were long overdue. The parties concerned should take

serious and speedy action to rid the Middle East of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in accordance with the relevant international resolutions.

70. The Arab Group had refrained from submitting a draft resolution entitled “Israeli nuclear capabilities” at the current session of the General Conference as a demonstration of its goodwill and because the submission of such a draft resolution might be used as a pretext for delay.

71. The Arab Group was grateful to NAM, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the African Group and the Asian Group, which were continuing to support its stance — a stance consistent with the principle of universality of the NPT and with the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East.

72. Mr SHAMAA (Egypt), speaking on behalf of NAM, reiterated its principled position on Israel’s nuclear capabilities: NAM strongly believed that stability could not be achieved in a region where a massive imbalance in military capabilities was continuing to exist, particularly due to the possession of nuclear weapons, allowing one party to threaten its neighbours and others in the region.

73. NAM, which welcomed the fact that its member States party to the NPT had concluded comprehensive safeguards agreements with the Agency in fulfilment of their obligations under Article III.1 of the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States, noted that all States in the Middle East except Israel were party to the NPT and had accepted comprehensive Agency safeguards; and NAM regarded the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East as a positive step towards attaining the objective of global nuclear disarmament and continued to advocate the establishment of such a zone in accordance with the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions.

74. A selective approach to the issue of nuclear capabilities in the Middle East was undermining the viability of the Agency’s safeguards regime. Also, it had resulted in the continuing dangerous presence of unsafeguarded Israeli nuclear facilities and activities, notwithstanding the repeated calls on Israel to subject those facilities and activities to comprehensive Agency safeguards. NAM was gravely concerned about the dire consequences for international security of the acquisition of a nuclear capability by Israel, which posed a serious threat to the security of its neighbours and of other States, and about the continuing provision to Israeli scientists of access to the nuclear facilities of one of the nuclear-weapon States.

75. All Member States should cooperate in rectifying what was an unacceptable situation and achieving the universality of comprehensive Agency safeguards in the Middle East. Implementing resolution GC(53)/RES/17, entitled “Israeli nuclear capabilities”, was a first step towards that end.

76. NAM regretted Israel’s continuing insistence that the issue of Agency safeguards could not be addressed in isolation from the regional peace process. There was no automatic sequence linking the application of comprehensive safeguards at all nuclear facilities in the Middle East to the prior conclusion of a peace settlement. The former would contribute to the latter.

77. NAM continued to want a complete ban on the transfer to Israel of nuclear-related equipment, information, material, facilities, devices and other resources and the provision of other assistance in nuclear-related scientific and technological fields.

78. In a letter attached to the Director General’s report contained in document GC(54)/14, Israel’s Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs had stated that Israel valued the non-proliferation regime, acknowledged its importance and had over the years demonstrated “a responsible policy of restraint in the nuclear domain.” Regrettably, official documents of the Agency were testimony to the contrary. For example, in various resolutions regarding South Africa’s nuclear capabilities adopted by it prior to 1994, the General Conference had recalled General Assembly resolutions dealing with relations between Israel and South Africa in which the General Assembly had, inter alia, strongly condemned the extensive collaboration between Israel and the then racist

regime of South Africa, especially in the military and nuclear fields, in defiance of General Assembly and Security Council resolutions.

79. Mr ZNIBER (Morocco) said that his country believed that universalization of the NPT would help in solving the problem of Israel's nuclear capabilities and that it would also reduce tension in the Middle East and have a positive impact on international peace and security. The establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East would help to reduce proliferation risks and to bring about mutual security for all States in the region.

80. While all other States in the Middle East were parties to the NPT and had accepted the initiative aimed at the establishment of an NWFZ there, Israel regrettably continued to refuse to place all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards.

81. The fact that no draft resolution on "Israeli nuclear capabilities" had been submitted at the current session of the General Conference did not mean that the issue would no longer figure on the Agency's agenda. Rather, the Arab Group was displaying goodwill in the light of international developments, particularly the preparations for the 2012 conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction and for the Forum on Experience of Possible Relevance to the Creation of a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone in the Middle East to be held in Vienna on 21-22 November 2011.

82. The Agency was the most appropriate forum for resolving the issue of Israel's nuclear capabilities, especially through constructive dialogue with the States of the Middle East, and thereby for facilitating the establishment of an NWFZ there. The 2012 conference would be a first step towards that end.

83. Mr OTHMAN (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his country, which had contributed to all initiatives aimed at creating an NWFZ in the Middle East, had in 2003 launched an initiative of its own, but the initiative had been opposed by some influential States.

84. Israel was the only State in the Middle East that had not acceded to the NPT, and its intransigence in refusing to place all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards not only constituted a serious threat to security and stability in the Middle East but also undermined the credibility of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime.

85. The decision of the Agency's Arab Member States not to submit a draft resolution on "Israeli nuclear capabilities" at the current session of the General Conference was a goodwill gesture whose purpose was to maximize the chances of success of the forum to be held on 21-22 November 2011 and the 2012 conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

86. The international community should pressure Israel into acceding to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State, concluding a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the Agency and eliminating all its stocks of nuclear weapons, and the United Nations should prevent the application of double standards in that connection. The establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East was a prerequisite for peace and stability in that region.

87. Mr QUEISI (Jordan) said that his country, which attached great importance to the Agency's safeguards regime, was of the view that the difficulties of establishing an NWFZ in the Middle East were jeopardizing the stability of that region. In order to pave the way towards the establishment of an NWFZ there, Israel should accede to the NPT and place all of its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards. The States of the Middle East would then be better able to focus on economic and social development instead of being drawn into an arms race that undermined their well-being.

88. Mr MARSÁN AGUILERA (Cuba) said that his country attached great importance to the sensitive agenda item now under discussion as Israel's nuclear capabilities had serious negative implications for regional and international peace and security.

89. Israel should accede forthwith to the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards. The other countries of the Middle East had long been pressing for that with a view to the establishment of an NWFZ there. That goal could not be achieved while a group of countries, especially the United States of America, continued to transfer to Israel nuclear-related equipment, information, material, facilities, devices and other resources and provide it with other assistance in nuclear-related scientific and technological fields.

90. Genuine political will and the elimination of double standards were needed in order to turn the Middle East into a region of peace and security for all. Cuba rejected the double standards espoused by the United States of America and the other countries that were harassing some States in the region for alleged non-compliance with safeguards agreements while continuing to provide nuclear-related assistance to Israel and that were endeavouring by all available means to prevent the adoption by the General Conference of a resolution calling on Israel to accede to the NPT. The United States of America and its allies should be consistent — they should abandon their permissive approach to Israel and require it to destroy, under international control, the nuclear weapons that it seemed prepared to use, if necessary, in executing its plans for the Middle East.

91. Ms FEROUKHI (Algeria) said that her country attached great importance to the mandate conferred on the Agency by Article III.B.1 of the Statute — “to promote peace and international co-operation ... in conformity with policies of the United Nations furthering the establishment of safeguarded worldwide disarmament and in conformity with any international agreements entered into pursuant to such policies” — and to the mandate conferred on the Director General in resolutions in which the General Conference and the Board had affirmed the urgent need for the application of full-scope Agency safeguards throughout the Middle East and had called for the organization of a forum on experience relevant to the creation of an NWFZ there.

92. Algeria was participating in the efforts aimed at universalization of the NPT and of comprehensive Agency safeguards that had been called for by NPT Review Conferences, the General Assembly and the General Conference, particularly in relation to the Middle East, where universal adherence to the NPT and the application of full-scope Agency safeguards in all States were absolutely essential.

93. The forthcoming Forum on Experience of Possible Relevance to the Creation of a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone in the Middle East would be a tentative yet encouraging contribution to the effort to achieve general and complete disarmament, in accordance with the 13 practical steps agreed upon at the 2000 NPT Review Conference, over which Algeria had had the honour to preside. The Forum would provide an opportunity to launch a dialogue on regional security, and particularly on the creation of an NWFZ in the Middle East.

94. As one of the first States to ratify the Pelindaba Treaty, which had entered into force in July 2009, Algeria was greatly in favour of the adoption of such regional confidence-building instruments in support of the achievement of general and complete disarmament. In that connection, it would like to see the nuclear-weapon States fulfilling their disarmament obligations arising out of Article VI of the NPT.

95. The establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East could put an end to the imbalance caused by the existence of unsafeguarded Israeli nuclear facilities — an imbalance unacceptable to the States in the region that were parties to the NPT.

96. Mr AL-HAMMADI (Qatar) said that the Arab Group, which was showing flexibility on the issue now under consideration in order to increase the chances of success of the 2012 conference on the creation of an NWFZ in the Middle East, was very concerned about the fact that Israel had persistently disregarded calls from the majority of States to place all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards and participate in the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in that region.

97. Qatar hoped that the international community would be prepared to take decisive measures to promote peace and security in the Middle East in the light of the outcome of the 2012 conference.

98. Mr POURMAND TEHRANI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that Israel's nuclear capabilities were a serious security concern for the Middle East and the rest of the world. The aggressive practices of Israel and its complete disregard for international norms in defiance of over 100 resolutions adopted within the framework of the United Nations and the Agency showed its complete lack of respect for the international community.

99. Israel's refusal to accede to the NPT and comply with its provisions was the main obstacle to the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East; there was an urgent need for all the nuclear activities of the Israeli regime to be placed under comprehensive Agency safeguards.

100. Since 1982, the General Conference had adopted numerous resolutions and decisions in which it had, inter alia, called upon the Israeli regime to accede to the NPT and accept comprehensive Agency safeguards. The failure of the Israeli regime to do so not only jeopardized global security, but undermined the Agency's verification mechanism.

101. All States in the Middle East should accept the application of full-scope Agency safeguards to their nuclear activities as an important confidence-building measure. The 2010 NPT Review Conference had called upon all States in the Middle East that had not yet done so to accede to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States, in order that universal adherence to the NPT might be achieved at an early date.

102. Israel was continuing to ignore international norms and increase its illicit nuclear capabilities, with the assistance of certain nuclear-weapon States that were allowing Israeli scientists access to their nuclear facilities, even though the NPT stipulated that States parties should not provide States that were not parties with assistance which might enable them to produce nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Any increase in Israel's nuclear capabilities meant a still greater threat to peace and security in the Middle East and the world at large, but Israel had been emboldened to the point where Israeli representatives had openly admitted its possession of nuclear weapons.

103. The issue of Israel's nuclear capabilities should remain on the agenda of the General Conference, and the Director General should draw up detailed recommendations for urgent practical steps to encourage Israel to accede to the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards, in order to pave the way for the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East.

104. Mr BADDOURA (Lebanon) said that there had been little progress since the previous session of the General Conference towards the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East. Israel still refused to accede to the NPT and was continuing to cling to the military nuclear option in spite of the constant appeals of the international community. Israel's assertion that it could not accede to the NPT until a comprehensive peace had been achieved in the Middle East was belied by the many other States of the Middle East which had acceded despite the many conflicts in the region.

105. As well as the huge security threat in the Middle East posed by Israel's aggressiveness, the ageing nuclear installations of Israel were a safety hazard — an issue of which the international community had become more aware since the disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in

Japan. The issue was an urgent one and should be on the agenda for the General Conference's next session.

106. The NPT Review and Extension Conference had agreed in 1995 that the NPT should remain in force indefinitely, and the Member States of the Agency had agreed that nuclear energy should be used exclusively in the interests of peace and development. All of them should live up to that ideal.

107. Mr DANIELI (Israel) said that, once again, the General Conference had been exposed to political diatribes from States of the Arab Group and their supporters. The request by the Arab Group to include an item on "Israeli nuclear capabilities" in the Conference's agenda had been especially unfortunate in view of the need for Member States to focus on the lessons to be learned from the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. At a time of great challenges and transformations in the Middle East, were Arab States, in raising the issue of Israel's nuclear capabilities once again, merely seeking to divert attention from their domestic problems?

108. The States in question were the same ones which had prevented a consensus on the "Middle East package" of resolutions since 2006.

109. Israel had not failed to comply with any of its international obligations, under the NPT or any other instrument. However, nothing had been done about the blatant cases of non-compliance with NPT obligations involving some States of the Middle East. The Director General had reported on the covert nuclear reactor built by the Syrian Arab Republic, with the assistance of the DPRK, and more would undoubtedly be discovered about the stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction held by that country and the former Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, and further light was being shed on the Islamic Republic of Iran's activities in pursuit of nuclear weapons. Which country would be next?

110. Israel, which acknowledged the importance of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, had repeatedly stated that it would not be the first country to introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East. The greatest threats to the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the NPT were posed by States which sought to obtain nuclear weapons despite their NPT membership. Thus far, the non-applicability of the NPT in the Middle East had been amply demonstrated by the cases of Iraq, the former Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Islamic Republic of Iran — the situation in the two last-mentioned countries requiring the continued attention of the Agency. Much remained to be done if the aims of the NPT, the States parties to which were expected to refrain from the threat or use of force and work for peace and security, were to be achieved.

111. The Member States with an anti-Israel agenda should not pursue it in the General Conference. That agenda served the narrow interests of some countries, but it harmed the wider interests of the Agency and its professional reputation.

112. The decision of the Arab Group not to submit a draft resolution on "Israeli nuclear capabilities" at the General Conference's current session had been a positive one. However, for there to be genuine trust and confidence in the Middle East the politically divisive agenda item in question should not figure in future General Conference agendas.

113. Mr DAVIES (United States of America) said that Member States should concentrate their efforts on making the Middle East free of all weapons of mass destruction and expressed the hope that the Arab Group's decision not to submit a draft resolution on "Israeli nuclear capabilities" at the General Conference's current session would usher in a new era of consensus.

114. Mr UZCÁTEGUI DUQUE (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that his country, a supporter of the aspirations of the Arab States to create an NWFZ in the Middle East, wished to see Israel renouncing nuclear weapons, acceding to the NPT and submitting all its nuclear installations to

Agency safeguards. In its view, Israel should be denied all access to nuclear-related equipment, material and other resources and all other scientific and technological assistance in the nuclear field.

115. The issue “Israeli nuclear capabilities” should remain a top Agency priority, since Israel’s nuclear programme posed a threat to peace and security, especially in the Middle East, and undermined the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

116. His Government, which deplored the efforts of a certain group of countries to prevent the Agency from verifying Israel’s nuclear activities, would like to see the international community pressing for the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East — a process in which the Agency would play a fundamental role.

– **Report on the Scientific Forum**

117. The PRESIDENT, recalling that the theme of the Scientific Forum 2011 had been “Water Matters: Making a Difference With Nuclear Techniques”, invited the Chairperson of the Scientific Forum 2011, Ms Ruiz Fernández, to present the report on it.

118. Ms RUIZ FERNÁNDEZ (Chairperson of the Scientific Forum 2011) presented the report, which is reproduced in the Annex.

119. The PRESIDENT thanked Ms Ruiz Fernández for her report and commended her and the Secretariat on the success of the Scientific Forum 2011.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.

IAEA Scientific Forum 2011

“Water Matters: Making a Difference with Nuclear Techniques”

**Report to the General Conference by the Chairperson,
Dr. Ana Carolina Ruiz Fernández**

Mr. President, Director General, Distinguished Delegates,

I am pleased and honoured to be given this opportunity to present to the General Conference my report on the IAEA Scientific Forum 2011, whose theme was *Water Matters: Making a Difference with Nuclear Techniques*.

Among the Millennium Development Goals for 2015, we have to halve the number of people without access to safe drinking water as well as to halve the number of people who suffer from hunger. Although progress has been made, there are still far too many people that do not have access to *clean* water for basic needs.

In many coastal regions, human subsistence depends on the exploitation of marine resources. However, climate change and pollution are compromising the health of our oceans.

Having focussed on cancer control last year, the Director General decided that he would give priority in 2011 to another major global challenge, the global water crisis. Thus, in this year’s Scientific Forum, the challenges related to water availability, the optimization of water use for food production and the protection of the oceans, and also how nuclear techniques can help, were addressed by a wide range of participants from national, regional and international organizations, and by beneficiaries of IAEA-supported technical cooperation projects.

During the opening session, the Director General stressed, in reference to the title of this year’s Scientific Forum, that “water matters”. He highlighted that there is virtually no area of human activity that does not depend on water. It is vital for human health, for agriculture, for industrial production, and for technological development.

The Director General was joined by a very distinguished panel each member of which gave examples of the necessity for sound science to underpin sound water management decisions.

In the session “**Making Water More Available**”, the panellists underlined that the world is experiencing a “global water crisis” and that more needs to be done.

Capacity is a real problem. Too few countries have sufficient capacity to characterize their water resources, and it is estimated that the number of water professionals must be increased by up to 300% in some parts of the world.

Groundwater will be increasingly used to address the growing demand for water, yet most countries do not have sufficient information about their water resources. The new IAEA Water Availability Enhancement (IWAVE) project is an important step to address this problem. Monitoring is essential for making sound water management decisions. Programmes such as the IAEA’s Global Network of Isotopes in Precipitation (GNIP) and national networks are extremely important to maintain and expand.

In the session “**Tackling Water Scarcity and Saving Water in Agriculture**”, the panellists indicated that agriculture currently uses an average of 70% of available fresh water for irrigation. By 2050 the global population will reach 9 billion, with an anticipated 50% increase in the demand for water to meet food demand. Thus, increased water use efficiency in agriculture will also be required. This was addressed by participants in an IAEA TC project involving 19 African countries who have worked to implement small-scale irrigation systems, supported by nuclear techniques, to make sure that every drop of water leads to greater yields.

The 47-year-old FAO/IAEA partnership has been highly successful in improving water management in agriculture. The normative work of FAO is being complemented by capacity-building activities of the IAEA. This and other partnerships should be expanded.

In the session “**Protecting our oceans**”, the panellists highlighted the transboundary nature of global issues affecting the marine environment. While research has considerably advanced in the last 50 years, we still do not fully understand the complex processes related to global change; information is needed in order to develop appropriate marine policies. Nuclear techniques are often the only or the most efficient approach for addressing these needs.

One example is that of the outbreak of harmful algal blooms where the public needs to be warned in time to avoid socio-economic losses. Nuclear techniques, such as the Receptor Binding Assay, are most effective for providing an early warning system for such outbreaks..

In the absence of long-term series of environmental data, sediment cores are the only way to obtain information needed in order to understand global changes to the marine environment and predict the consequences. In one TC project highlighted during the Forum, 12 Caribbean Member States received capacity-building and technical support in the use of radionuclides to make historical reconstructions of environmental changes. Through this they gained an understanding of the relevance of land-based sources of pollution and their impacts on the marine environment. Such success stories can be replicated.

The panellists and other participants made clear the importance and urgency of responding to the global water crisis. This will become even more severe with increasing global change. Three factors were identified for improving responses to the crisis:

1. **Credible and timely scientific data to support decision-making.** Nuclear techniques are very effective, often cheaper and more accurate than traditional methods to provide information needed for management.
2. **More effective communication among end-users, scientists and supporting agencies to maximize impact.** It is not enough to generate data. It is imperative to be able to communicate results to the public, and that scientists and end-users participate jointly in the design and implementation of water management policies and programmes. Mutual outreach to communicate scientific results and necessary management responses should be a high priority.
3. **A stronger strategic framework for cooperation and synergies through collaborative partnerships should be established.** It is important that UN agencies and programmes that are working on water issues work closely together. Partnerships between all stakeholders and end-users, particularly Member State institutions, should be enhanced.

In conclusion, the Scientific Forum showed the significant capabilities that have been established in several Member States. However, more still needs to be done in order to optimize capabilities to use nuclear science and technology for a better planet!