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Atoms for Peace

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Fifty-sixth regular session

Plenary

Record of the First Meeting

Held at Headquarters, Vienna, on Monday, 17 September 2012, at 10.15 a.m.

Temporary President: Mr FERUTA (Romania)
President: Mr BARROS OREIRO (Uruguay)

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[1] GC(56)/19.

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The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(56)/INF/9.

Abbreviations used in this record:

Assistance Convention	Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
CTBTO	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Early Notification Convention	Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
FMCT	fissile material cut-off treaty
G8	Group of Eight
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
ITER	International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor
LEU	low-enriched uranium
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
New START	New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
NPT	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
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PWR	pressurized water reactor
R&D	research and development

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
SAL	Safeguards Analytical Laboratory
SQP	small quantities protocol
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
UN	United Nations
WANO	World Association of Nuclear Operators
WWER	water cooled water moderated reactor (former USSR)

– Opening of the session

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT declared the 56th regular session of the General Conference open.

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 welcomed the participation of many ministers and senior officials from Member States. Their presence enhanced the standing of the Agency as the foremost forum for international cooperation on the peaceful and safe use of nuclear energy.

4. During the preceding year, the Agency and Member States had achieved tangible progress.

5. The 2011 General Conference had taken place in an exceptional context. It had unanimously endorsed the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety requested by the June 2011 Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety. The Agency was playing a central role in that connection. In particular, progress had been made in assessing safety vulnerabilities of nuclear power plants, strengthening Agency peer review services, improving emergency preparedness and response capabilities and reviewing Agency safety standards.

6. He commended the Agency for its dedicated work in helping Member States improve the nuclear security framework, and Member States for renewing their commitment at the Nuclear Security Summit to strengthening nuclear security, thus reducing the threat of nuclear terrorism and preventing unauthorized acquisition of nuclear material.

7. In 2012, the Agency had continued to provide the international community with objective and independent verification of States' safeguards obligations. There was general agreement on the need for effective safeguards in order to deter and detect the use of nuclear material for proscribed purposes, and there could be no short cuts in that regard.

8. By strengthening nuclear safety and security and the safeguards regime, the Agency could increase public confidence in nuclear energy, which remained vital for many countries. Despite the economic crisis and changed circumstances, in 2012 work had started on the construction of a new nuclear power plant.

9. Humanity still faced major challenges as regards food security, health, management of water resources and the need for a cleaner and safer environment. In that connection, he welcomed the continuous efforts by the Agency to assist Member States which did not have access to nuclear technologies, which efforts the Director General had placed at the core of the Agency's activities.

10. He also welcomed the Agency's efforts to consolidate technical cooperation. Romania had learned a lot from interacting with the Agency in developing its civilian nuclear programme. The technical cooperation programme facilitated free access to the peaceful uses of atomic energy, transfer of nuclear technology, development of research, application and utilization of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, and sharing of knowledge on nuclear technologies among Member States.

11. In closing, he expressed his strong conviction that the Agency would continue to maintain sustainable in-house capacity in all relevant areas in order to fulfil its statutory responsibilities, as

envisaged under the Medium Term Strategy 2012–2017. He thanked the Director General and the Secretariat for the support they had given him during his presidency of the 55th General Conference.

1. Election of officers and appointment of the General Committee

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

13. Mr RIVERA MORA (El Salvador), speaking on behalf of GRULAC, proposed Mr Barros Oreiro (Uruguay).

14. Mr Barros Oreiro (Uruguay) was elected President by acclamation.

15. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT congratulated Mr Barros Oreiro on his election and wished him every success in his task.

Mr Barros Oreiro (Uruguay) took the Chair.

16. The PRESIDENT extended his heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims of the recent attacks in Libya, which his country had condemned, and appealed for peace.

17. The true objective of the Agency was to make the world better and safer for all. All Member States should work to that end, on the basis of mutual respect.

18. He thanked the outgoing President for his efforts and GRULAC for supporting Uruguay's candidacy. He felt honoured to have been appointed President of the General Conference, which he saw as a reflection of Uruguay's commitment to implementing the Agency's statutory objectives.

19. A year and a half had passed since the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, and he took the opportunity to express solidarity with the Government and people of Japan and to acknowledge the efforts that country and the Agency had made to come to grips with that major environmental challenge.

20. The Medium Term Strategy 2012–2017 provided a clear and well defined framework which the Agency was implementing successfully with the help of Member States, thereby facilitating increased attention to areas of priority importance for achieving sustainable development, such as food security, health, water resources, energy and the environment, in particular in developing countries.

21. The Agency had been implementing an extensive technical cooperation programme aimed at assisting global development, including achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The concept of a 'green economy' had received additional impetus in the wake of the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. Issues relating to sustainable development were at the forefront of work programmes.

22. The Agency continued to focus on the issue of global nuclear safety, which was becoming ever more prominent. Hence the importance of a well structured action plan setting out goals and the steps to be followed, and of keeping Member States informed of progress in that regard.

23. With the help of the General Conference, the Agency had been able to continue to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy throughout the world. It should resolutely pursue its efforts in that

regard, thereby strengthening international peace and security, with the firm support of all Member States.

24. Pursuant to Rules 34 and 40 of the Rules of Procedure, the Conference had to elect eight Vice-Presidents, a Chairman 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 Chairman.

25. He proposed that the delegates of Australia, Canada, Costa Rica, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Spain and Sudan be elected as Vice-Presidents, that Mr Shukri of Saudi Arabia be elected as Chairman of the Committee of the Whole, and that the delegates of Austria, Estonia, France, the United States of America and Zimbabwe 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(56)/8, 9 and 18)

29. The PRESIDENT drew attention to documents GC(56)/8, 9 and 18 containing applications for membership by the Republic of Fiji, the Republic of San Marino and the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago 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 Republic of Fiji, the Republic of San Marino and the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on being approved for membership of the Agency.

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

33. Ms KANE (United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs) read out the following message:

> "I am pleased to send greetings to the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency.
>
> "It has been an eventful year since your last session, marked by extraordinary challenges that were transformed into fruitful opportunities for progress.
>
> "The Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster in March 2011 was an immense tragedy that sparked a global response. The international community came forward with aid to the victims and came

together to address the broader concerns about nuclear security and safety. The United Nations convened a High-Level Meeting on Nuclear Safety and Security in September last year, followed by a Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety in Vienna. I welcome plans to hold another ministerial conference in Fukushima itself — a setting that will provide a stark reminder of the stakes.

"In the field of nuclear security, the Communiqué adopted this past March at the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit included a welcome reaffirmation of the essential responsibility and central role of the IAEA in strengthening the international nuclear security framework. It also recognized the value of the IAEA Nuclear Security Plan for the years 2010 to 2013.

"We are also aiming for progress on the critical issue of nuclear terrorism. On 28 September, I will convene a United Nations High-level Meeting on Countering Nuclear Terrorism, which I hope will contribute to strengthening the rule of law in this field.

"With respect to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, one of the highlights of the 2010 NPT Review Conference was the agreement to convene a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, an initiative for implementing the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East.

"I congratulate the IAEA for convening last November's forum on such a zone, which was an excellent opportunity for participants from the Middle East and other interested parties to learn from the experiences of such zones in other regions.

"I commend Director General Amano and his staff for the fine work they have been doing. The IAEA and the UN Secretariat enjoy a close partnership which provides a solid foundation for future progress in achieving our common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

"Please accept my best wishes for success as you address the challenging issues on your agenda."

4. Statement by the Director General

34. The DIRECTOR GENERAL said that the Agency's founding fathers had been people of great foresight. When they had approved the Agency's Statute in 1956, the world had faced very different challenges from those of today, but the Statute had been framed in a way that ensured that the Agency was more relevant than ever, nearly 60 years later.

35. Today, the Agency was making important contributions to tackling fundamental global problems identified in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and at the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. It was helping countries use nuclear energy safely and securely, and the Agency's inspectors monitored the world's nuclear facilities in order to verify that nuclear material was being used exclusively for peaceful purposes.

36. Technical cooperation was a high priority for the Agency because it helped meet basic human needs. The Agency was in a unique position within the United Nations system. It was the only organization with expertise in nuclear technologies and it helped its Member States gain access to those technologies. Its specialist laboratories supported its activities, developing innovative technology and providing training.

37. When he visited Member States, he always tried to see Agency projects in action. The people he met — farmers and fishermen, scientists and scholars — expressed great appreciation for the work of the Agency. It was touching to see how much impact the Agency's work could have on individual lives. When he saw the distinctive blue Agency logo at the project sites, he felt as if he was among family. To cite just one example, when he had visited a laboratory in Peru he had been offered a cup of purple-coloured juice. He had thought it was grape juice, but in fact it had been made from a new type of corn which had been developed using radiation-induced mutation techniques with support from the Agency. The juice had been delicious. That had been just one of several hundred Agency projects which had helped improve and increase food production in dozens of countries.

38. Cancer in developing countries was high on the Agency's agenda. That subject was also his personal passion. He planned to strengthen PACT and wished to establish a cancer training centre at the Agency's laboratory complex in Seibersdorf within the coming few years that would provide specialist training for health professionals from Member States.

39. The nuclear applications laboratories in Seibersdorf covered many areas and were doing pioneering work related to human and animal health, food security and safety, agriculture and environmental monitoring. However, they were obsolete and outdated. Space was severely limited and the equipment was not well adapted to current needs. It was time to bring the nuclear applications laboratories up to the latest international standards. His goal was to carry out a complete modernization within a few years so those laboratories could offer even better services to Member States.

40. He hoped that the 2012 Scientific Forum on food would make Member States more aware of the important contribution nuclear techniques could make in increasing food production, combating pests and diseases of crops and animals, and making food safer.

41. Thanks to the Peaceful Uses Initiative, there was an increase in the resources available for technical cooperation projects, but the need for assistance was great. He asked all Member States to pay their contributions to the TCF in full and on time.

42. Nuclear power remained the best known peaceful application of nuclear energy. When he had become Director General in 2009, the talk had been of a nuclear renaissance. Then the Fukushima accident had happened, raising fundamental questions about the future of nuclear energy throughout the world. Eighteen months after the accident, it was clear that nuclear energy would remain an important option for many countries. The latest projections showed a steady rise in the number of nuclear power plants in the world over the coming 20 years. Most of the new nuclear power reactors that were planned or under construction were in Asia. Established users such as China, India, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation were planning significant expansions of their programmes, and developing countries were continuing to show keen interest in nuclear power. The United Arab Emirates had recently become the first country in 27 years to start building its first nuclear power plant, and Vietnam and Bangladesh were among those with advanced plans to build their first power reactors. In recent years the Agency had devoted more staff and resources to helping newcomer countries. Its work to establish an Agency LEU Bank in Kazakhstan continued to make progress.

43. The Fukushima accident had taught a very important lesson: that a much more intensive focus on nuclear safety was needed. Nevertheless, nuclear energy offered many benefits: it could help improve energy security, reduce the impact of volatile fossil fuel prices, mitigate the effects of climate change and make economies more competitive.

44. The safe management and disposal of radioactive waste and spent fuel remained key issues. In particular, no long-term disposal facility had so far become operational for nuclear spent fuel.

However, good progress had been made in a number of countries, including Finland, Sweden and France. In August 2012 he had visited the ONKALO facility in Finland where a repository for the final disposal of spent fuel was being built deep underground. He had gone down 420 metres. The site was very impressive. The progress that was being made in that area deserved to be better known.

45. The International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century to be held in St Petersburg in the Russian Federation in June 2013 would provide a valuable opportunity to consider nuclear power's long-term contribution to sustainable development.

46. At the 55th regular session of the General Conference, the Fukushima accident had been uppermost in everyone's minds. The Agency had provided practical assistance to Japan and had shared information openly and transparently with governments and the public. Now, well into the post-accident phase, the focus was on implementing the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety and progress had been made in many areas. The content of Agency expert peer review services to Member States had been expanded to include the first lessons learned from the accident. Peer reviews involved assessments of plant safety, regulatory effectiveness, or emergency preparedness and response. Possible safety weak points at nuclear power plants had been identified and were being addressed. A systematic review of Agency safety standards had been undertaken, taking into account lessons learned from the Fukushima accident. A series of international expert meetings focusing on different technical issues had been launched, and the Agency had continued to support Member States in their efforts to enhance the international legal framework for nuclear safety. The Fukushima Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety, organized by the Government of Japan and the Agency, would take place in the Fukushima Prefecture in December 2012, and at it the Agency would be presenting a report outlining the conclusions of the international expert meetings held so far. It would also be preparing a comprehensive report on the Fukushima accident to be finalized in 2014.

47. Nuclear safety remained primarily the responsibility of individual countries. It was essential that the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety be implemented in full. Complacency could not be tolerated. The ultimate goal was to make nuclear power as safe as humanly possible everywhere, and to restore public confidence.

48. In recent years, world leaders had given considerable attention to the threat of nuclear terrorism, and they had recognized the Agency's central role as the global platform for strengthening nuclear security. The Agency had trained over 12 000 people in nuclear security over the preceding decade in more than 120 countries, and it had provided assistance at high-profile events such as the UEFA Football Championships. Considerable amounts of HEU had been put into more secure storage, and the Agency's illicit trafficking database was keeping track of thefts or other unauthorized activities involving nuclear and other radioactive material.

49. Despite the enhanced global interest in nuclear security, there was still one important item of unfinished business: ratification of the amendment to the CPPNM which had been agreed in 2005 but had still not entered into force. Its entry into force would make an important difference to global nuclear security, which was a priority for the Agency. The organization was carefully examining ways of maximizing the synergy between nuclear security and nuclear safety. He planned to strengthen the Agency's Office of Nuclear Security in the near future. In July 2013, the Agency would be organizing a high-level international conference on nuclear security.

50. Turning to nuclear verification, he recalled that, when he had become Director General, he had said that full implementation of all safeguards agreements between the Agency and its Member States, and of other relevant obligations, would be the Agency's guiding principle. That remained the case. He had presented regular reports to the Board on safeguards implementation in three countries in particular: the Islamic Republic of Iran, the DPRK, and the Syrian Arab Republic. Each case was

different, but they shared one common feature: each of those countries was failing to fulfil its obligations. Dealing with such cases was one of the major challenges the Agency must confront in the coming years.

51. In the case of Iran, he had been presenting the situation with the utmost clarity since 2010. The Agency continued to verify the non-diversion of nuclear material declared by Iran under its safeguards agreement. However, Iran was not providing the necessary cooperation to enable the Agency to provide credible assurances regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities. Therefore, the Agency could not conclude that all nuclear material in Iran was in peaceful activities. In November 2011, he had reported to the Board that the Agency had credible information indicating that Iran had carried out activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device. He had requested Iran to clarify those issues. Pursuant to the Board of Governors resolution adopted in November 2011 (GOV/2011/69), dialogue had been intensified but no concrete results had been achieved since that point. On 13 September 2012, the Board had adopted a resolution urging Iran to comply fully and without delay with all its obligations under the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council, and to meet the requirements of the Board (GOV/2012/50). The Agency was firmly committed to intensifying dialogue and would continue negotiations with Iran on a structured approach to resolve all outstanding issues. He hoped that agreement could be reached without further delay, to be followed by immediate implementation.

52. He remained seriously concerned about the nuclear programme of the DPRK. That country's statements about uranium enrichment activities and the construction of a light-water reactor were deeply troubling. The Agency had not been able to implement any safeguards in the country since April 2009. He called upon the DPRK to comply fully with its obligations under relevant Security Council resolutions, and with the NPT, and to cooperate promptly and fully with the Agency.

53. With regard to Syria, in May 2011 he had reported that it was very likely that a building destroyed at the Dair Alzour site had been a nuclear reactor which should have been declared to the Agency. He reiterated his request to Syria to hold further discussions with the Agency to address all outstanding questions related to Dair Alzour and other locations.

54. In November 2011, the Agency had been able to host an Agency forum on experience of possible relevance to the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, 11 years after the General Conference had decided to hold such a meeting, which reflected the complex nature of the issue. The forum had provided an opportunity for Member States to engage in a constructive exchange of views on that important issue. However, as his report on the application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East (GC(56)/17) showed, there remained fundamental differences of views among countries in the region on the issue. In those circumstances, it had not been possible to make further progress in fulfilling his mandate from the General Conference in that area. He would continue his consultations.

55. The number of States with additional protocols in force continued to rise and now stood at 117. That was very encouraging because the additional protocol was an essential tool for the Agency to be able to provide credible assurances that there were no undeclared nuclear material and activities in a country. The number of countries without safeguards agreements in force had fallen to 13. He asked all of them to bring agreements into force as soon as possible.

56. At the preceding session of the General Conference, he had reported on the completion of the new Clean Laboratory Extension at Seibersdorf, on schedule and under budget. Since then, good progress had been made in building a new Nuclear Material Laboratory. When completed in 2014, it would provide the Agency with a modern capability for the analysis of nuclear samples.

57. With regard to the Agency's efforts to improve its own management, he noted that the Agency's Financial Statements for 2011 had been the first which complied with IPSAS and the External Auditor

had delivered an unqualified opinion on them. He intended to improve the Agency's outreach activities to the media and general public by strengthening its public information function. He also intended to improve gender balance further, especially at senior management level.

58. As the Agency prepared the programme and budget for 2014–2015, technical cooperation and nuclear safety and security remained its top priorities. He counted on Member States to ensure that the Agency had sufficient resources to fulfil the many important tasks they had entrusted to it.

59. The work of the Agency covered many very different fields. As Director General, he tried to pursue the organization's multiple objectives in a balanced manner, guided by its basic mandate, which was to contribute to the welfare and security of the world through peaceful nuclear technology, and to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. The Agency should remain first and foremost a technical organization, although its work could have important political implications. It was his belief that the Agency contributed most effectively to addressing challenges when it approached them from a technical perspective. The Agency must be managed as efficiently as possible. That way it would remain an effective organization that truly delivered.

60. In conclusion, he thanked Member States for their steadfast support for the Agency's work, and especially Austria for being a model host country. He also expressed his deep appreciation to all the Agency's staff for their hard work and dedication. The Agency's Member States and its Secretariat could take pride in the achievements of recent years, and he was confident that together they would meet the many challenges that lay ahead.

6. Contributions to the Technical Cooperation Fund for 2013 (GC(56)/16)

61. The PRESIDENT said that, on 5 June 2012, the Board of Governors had recommended a figure of US $88 750 000 as the target for voluntary contributions to the TCF for the year 2013. The table in document GC(56)/16 showed the contributions that each Member State would need to make in order to meet its share of that target.

62. 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 their governments would be making to the TCF for 2013.

63. 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 2013 target figure already pledged.

7. General debate and Annual Report for 2011
(GC(56)/2 and Supplement)

64. Mr SPINDELEGGER (Austria) offered condolences to the victims of the shocking events in Libya in the preceding week.

65. His country supported responsible uses of nuclear science and technology and all efforts to prevent the proliferation of military uses, and it called on all States to work together to create a nuclear-weapon-free world quickly and efficiently.

66. In times of increasing demand for energy, his country felt obliged to voice its concerns regarding the safety and security of nuclear installations, as the protection of the Austrian population and the environment was of paramount importance for the Austrian government. In all cases where nuclear installations might have a negative impact on his country, Austria would use all legal means available to protect its safety interests, including supporting all measures to ensure maximum transparency and participation. A key objective of Austrian nuclear safety policy remained the creation of high and binding safety standards for nuclear power plants and other fuel cycle facilities. Even after, and in spite of the Fukushima nuclear accident, there was still interest in nuclear power in a number of countries. If a country decided to use nuclear power, it had to apply the highest safety, security and non-proliferation standards in doing so.

67. Austria had been home to several distinguished scientists who had worked to harness the atom for peaceful purposes, including the Nobel Prize Laureate Erwin Schrödinger, and Lise Meitner who had refused to bow to political pressure to work on the atom bomb.

68. The current year's Scientific Forum on food highlighted one example of the many peaceful applications of nuclear energy. Other applications included climate science, health and water resources management. Nuclear science could thus make a valuable contribution to addressing the world's pressing social, environmental and development needs.

69. Over the years, as host country, Austria had been providing in-kind contributions for the Agency's facilities in Vienna and at the Seibersdorf laboratories. It pledged to continue to support the TCF in 2013 by contributing its full share on time.

70. Harnessing the atom for peace also meant preventing its use for military purposes. The world could not afford to add to the existing risks of civil nuclear energy those related to growing global nuclear weapons arsenals and an increasing number of States with nuclear weapon. Alongside the continuous efforts to remove the root causes of nuclear proliferation, it was important to extend the existing non-proliferation tools — in particular the additional protocol to comprehensive safeguards agreements — to all countries, and their implementation must be ensured without any loopholes, thus eliminating any possibilities of breaking away from civilian uses and turning to military ones. There would be a number of hurdles on the way to that goal, but the final commitment must be equally strong for every country.

71. One area of particular concern was the situation regarding the nuclear programme in Iran. It was frustrating and disappointing that uncertainties about the peaceful nature of that country's nuclear programme remained after so many years of negotiations and attention. The tools that were needed to assure the world of Iran's peaceful intentions existed, and he appealed to Iran to allow the Agency to make substantive progress in its verification work with the aim of closing that deeply worrying file soon.

72. The only guarantee against the risk of proliferation of nuclear weapons was their complete elimination. Moreover, the arguments in favour of non-proliferation, and the support of the international community for such measures, depended on credible steps towards nuclear disarmament. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation had to go hand in hand. The catastrophic accidents at Chernobyl and Fukushima had demonstrated clearly that, in the nuclear field too, if something could go wrong, it would go wrong; and with nuclear weapons one could not afford to wait until something went wrong, as the humanitarian costs would be overwhelming. There was no justifiable reason why the whole world should continue to be exposed to such a risk. The path to a world without nuclear weapons might be complex and difficult but reason demanded that that path be taken. Legal instruments, like the NPT, and strong institutions, like the Agency and the CTBTO, that could help in that endeavour already existed, and there was growing global support for nuclear disarmament and the goal of a world without nuclear weapons. There was also hope that the countries of the Middle East might be able to start a process aimed at the creation of a zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in that region, and there was no reason why such a project should not be extended to the whole world.

73. Mr WANG Yiren (China) said that, over the preceding year, the Agency had conscientiously carried out its mandate under its Statute, maintaining balanced development of its two major tasks of promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy and preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. It had achieved fruitful results in various fields, especially in the aftermath of the Fukushima nuclear accident. In that connection, the Secretariat had immediately activated the international nuclear emergency response mechanism and had played an irreplaceable role in providing Member States with updated information to facilitate an accurate assessment of the situation. He commended the timely convening by the Agency of the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety in June 2011. The declaration adopted at the Conference and the subsequently approved IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety had become essential guidance documents for the international community's efforts to strengthen nuclear safety. The effective implementation of the action plan had played an important role in restoring global confidence in nuclear power development. The Agency had once again been widely recognized by the international community for its leading role and professional competence in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy and international cooperation in the nuclear field.

74. Nuclear safety was the lifeline of nuclear energy development. His Government had always attached great importance to nuclear safety and preparedness for and response to nuclear emergencies. After the Fukushima accident, it had launched the national nuclear emergency coordination mechanism, had closely monitored developments, taken effective response measures, and had organized a comprehensive safety inspection of all nuclear facilities. In June 2012, the Government had released a comprehensive safety inspection report on civilian nuclear facilities, and the 12th five-year plan for nuclear safety and 2020 vision, soliciting public comments and suggestions. On 6 September 2012, the nuclear safety plan had been approved by the State Council. In addition, his Government would continue to strengthen nuclear safety and nuclear emergency infrastructure, improve legislation and regulatory systems, expand management teams, and step up training and R&D efforts, thus demonstrating its firm commitment to developing nuclear power in a safe and efficient manner.

75. The Fukushima accident had once again triggered broad discussion and deep reflection on the use of nuclear energy. Countries had an increasingly profound and rational understanding of nuclear energy development. Nuclear power was technically proven and a safe form of energy that could be applied on a large scale. As such, it remained an essential energy option for many countries in their energy development strategy. The global momentum of nuclear power development had not changed fundamentally after the Fukushima nuclear accident. China's development strategy focused on energy conservation, optimization of energy mix, and increased use of clean energy through the development

of nuclear power. In the annual government work report issued in March 2012, the Chinese Government had reiterated its commitment to a policy of safe and efficient development of nuclear power to optimize its energy mix. In April 2012, a new Chinese-designed unit had begun operation at Quinshan Phase II nuclear power plant. To date, the country had 15 nuclear power units in operation with an installed capacity of 12.53 GW(e). All units had maintained a good record of operation, and their main performance indicators were in line with advanced international standards. 26 units were currently under construction with an installed capacity of almost 30 GW(e). It was expected that, in 2015, China would reach the 40 GW(e) target ahead of the schedule established in the medium- and long-term nuclear power development plan.

76. To achieve the safe and sustainable development of nuclear energy, his country had continuously increased investment in basic nuclear science research and advanced nuclear technology development in order to enhance nuclear safety through technical innovation. For over 40 years, since the early 1970s, China had maintained its activities in R&D and design and construction of nuclear power plants. Efforts had also been made to summarize the country's development experience and learn from international mature technologies. On that basis, and in accordance with Agency safety standards, China had developed indigenous PWR technology in line with third-generation nuclear power safety, technical and economic indicators, and the relevant designs had been improved by incorporating the lessons from the Fukushima accident. A thematic exhibition on innovative nuclear power technology in China was being held during the General Conference and he invited all delegates to visit it.

77. As part of its independent innovation efforts, China had actively participated in international cooperation by joining international projects such as INPRO, GIF and ITER, thus contributing to R&D on next-generation nuclear energy technology.

78. The security of nuclear material and nuclear facilities was critical to the development of nuclear energy. The international community was increasingly concerned about the threat of nuclear and radiation terrorism. The Agency had established a Nuclear Security Guidance Committee to promote the formulation of guidance documents such as the Nuclear Security Fundamentals, and had been providing nuclear security advisory services to Member States to help strengthen their nuclear security systems.

79. Nuclear security was of utmost importance. His country's President had attended the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit in March 2012 where he had expounded China's policy and proposals on nuclear security issues. He had stressed, in particular, the importance of improving global nuclear security by deepening international exchange and cooperation. The Chinese State Council had approved the construction proposals of the newly established State Nuclear Security Technology Centre and preparations were proceeding well. China would seek to transform the Centre into a regional centre of excellence, and would cooperate and interconnect with other centres, to enhance nuclear security in the region. It also supported the leading role of the Agency in the field of nuclear security and would continue to contribute to the Nuclear Security Fund.

80. Promoting the wide application of nuclear energy and nuclear technology through technical cooperation was an important statutory mission of the Agency. Over the years, through its technical cooperation programme, the Agency had made a remarkable contribution to economic and social development in developing countries. As an active supporter of and participant in the programme, China paid its TCF contributions in full and on time and provided support within its means for the smooth implementation of technical cooperation projects. In April 2012, It had hosted the 34th meeting of national RCA representatives and the RCA 40th anniversary exhibition.

81. For years, the Agency had made a tremendous contribution to preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and safeguarding world peace. His country had always supported international nuclear non-proliferation efforts and the Agency's safeguards activities. It was party to all major international non-proliferation mechanisms, had established a system for domestic control of nuclear material and exports, and would support efforts to enhance the Agency's safeguards verification capacity.

82. China had always supported the Agency's role in the settlement of sensitive nuclear issues. In dealing with the Iranian and DPRK nuclear issues, the Agency should maintain its objectivity and fairness and promote the solution of problems through diplomacy and dialogue. His country stood ready to work with all parties concerned to promote the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the proper settlement of the Iranian nuclear issue, upholding the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and maintaining regional peace and stability.

83. Mr CHU (United States of America) read out the following message from President Obama:

> "To all those gathered for the 2012 IAEA General Conference, please accept my best wishes as you begin your important work. The United States is proud to be a partner in working toward our shared goal of harnessing the peaceful use of nuclear energy even as we confront the danger of the proliferation of nuclear weapons.
>
> "Three years, ago, in Prague, I pledged that the United States would do our part to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons. Since then, we have worked with Russia under the New START treaty to decrease our deployed nuclear warheads to their lowest levels since the 1950s.
>
> "We reduced the number and role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy.
>
> "The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty has been upheld, and at the Nuclear Security Summits in Washington and Seoul, we made important progress in securing nuclear materials. Working with allies and partners, we have also made it clear that treaties are binding, rules will be enforced, and violations must have consequences.
>
> "This conference is an opportunity to build on this progress we have made by ensuring the IAEA has the resources and authority needed to carry out its mandate.
>
> "The IAEA must be able to verify that states are abiding by their safeguards agreements and to sound the alarm when they do not. It must support states in exercising their sovereign responsibility to secure their nuclear material, and it must continue enhancing global nuclear safety, as it has following the tragedy at Fukushima.
>
> "To its credit, the IAEA is playing a stronger role than ever to promote nuclear safety and strengthen safeguards. Programs to keep nuclear materials out of the hands of terrorists are on the rise, and developing states are participating in peaceful nuclear projects at an unprecedented rate. The organization is also helping to foster new frameworks for civil nuclear energy.
>
> "Nuclear safety activities are increasing, as evidenced by the Extraordinary Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety hosted by the IAEA. These significant gains are testaments to the contributions to peace and prosperity made every day by the IAEA.
>
> "As we reflect on these accomplishments, let us continue preparing for the challenges that lie ahead. And as more nations enjoy the benefits of peaceful nuclear energy, let us recommit to our shared long-term vision of a world without nuclear weapons.
>
> "Again, I wish you all the best for a successful conference."

84. In his 2009 speech in Prague, President Obama had challenged the international community to reduce nuclear dangers while ensuring that all countries that followed the rules could benefit from nuclear energy. With a view to achieving his vision of a nuclear-weapon-free world, the President had called for concrete steps to bring increased stability, predictability, and mutual confidence to the international security environment. He had called for steps to strengthen the NPT. In addition, he had called on the international community to ensure that terrorists never acquired a nuclear weapon and had outlined a plan to secure vulnerable nuclear material and facilities around the world.

85. Across the globe there was a pressing demand for new sources of energy. Access to peaceful uses of nuclear energy offered a wide range of benefits for humanity. In August 2012, NASA's Curiosity rover had touched down on the surface of Mars and beamed back to Earth breathtaking images of that planet. The rover was powered by an advanced nuclear power system called the Multi-Mission Radioisotope Thermoelectric Generator. Nuclear technologies also helped power communities and make foods safer, water cleaner and people healthier. The NPT recognized the need for nuclear technology, and the United States would continue to collaborate with its international partners to ensure that countries that played by the rules had access to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

86. The United States had worked to create a new international framework for peaceful nuclear energy which addressed infrastructure development, financing, and comprehensive nuclear fuel services. It supported expanded and reliable access to fuel supplies — working through the commercial marketplace and public-private partnerships — for peaceful nuclear programmes, and it welcomed the steps the Agency had taken in that area. As a last resort, his country also supported fuel assurance mechanisms to avoid supply disruptions such as the IAEA LEU bank, the American Assured Fuel Supply, the Russian LEU reserve at Angarsk, and the United Kingdom nuclear fuel assurances mechanism. Those efforts combined to provide a multi-layered framework to ensure uninterrupted supply.

87. In May 2010, the United States had announced the Peaceful Uses Initiative to expand international support for the Agency's peaceful uses projects by US $100 million over five years, and had pledged $50 million to that effort. His country's contributions had exceeded $21 million towards projects that had benefited more than 120 States. He commended the 12 countries that had joined the Initiative. At the recent United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the United States had also announced it would make available up to $320 000 through the IAEA Peaceful Uses Initiative during the first year.

88. His country was also supporting cutting-edge R&D to advance the next generation of nuclear technologies. Over the preceding four years, the Department of Energy had invested $219 million in research grants at more than 70 universities.

89. In order to enhance public confidence in nuclear power, the international nuclear safety regime must be improved and strengthened. He commended the efforts of the Agency and its Member States in implementing the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, and in drawing further lessons from the Fukushima accident. Like many others, his country had worked extensively to assess the safety of its operating reactors, benefiting greatly from the insights of others and welcoming opportunities to share lessons learned. To complement those efforts, the Agency had provided forums for regulators, operators and other stakeholders to come together to discuss lessons learned.

90. The recent extraordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety had considered some of the most significant technical topics arising from the Fukushima accident with a view to enhancing effective implementation of the Convention and promoting safety. His country was particularly pleased that the meeting had identified a number of action-oriented

objectives for strengthening nuclear safety for immediate implementation. All Contracting Parties should join forces in taking the identified actions. Individually, countries were already on the right path, incorporating passive safety systems into the design of new reactors. The United States was looking forward to the Fukushima Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety to be held in December 2012.

91. His country was also working with the Agency and other Member States to strengthen the international nuclear and radiological emergency management system, including by registering its response capabilities with the IAEA Response and Assistance Network.

92. The promise and potential of nuclear energy brought with it great responsibility. The threat of nuclear terrorism was too great to ignore, and the challenge too complex for any nation to address alone. The 2010 Washington Nuclear Security Summit had brought together leaders who recognized the need to address those threats collectively. Building on the momentum of President Obama's Prague speech and the 2010 Summit, world leaders from 53 States and four international organizations had attended the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, making over 100 new pledges for concrete action.

93. Much had been achieved in efforts to make the world a safer place, including: the conversion of 62 reactors from HEU to LEU; the securing of 1338 buildings in the United States and abroad containing nuclear and radioactive material; and the removal of all HEU from 21 countries. The United States had partnered with Russia to monitor the elimination of more than 450 metric tons of Russian HEU under the 1993 US-Russia HEU Purchase Agreement, which work was 90% complete. At home, the United States had downblended more than 130 metric tons of surplus HEU to LEU, i.e. enough material to make 3000 nuclear weapons. Since the 2010 Nuclear Security Summit, it had worked with more than a dozen countries to remove approximately 650 kilograms of HEU and plutonium, sufficient to make dozens of nuclear weapons. It was also working with international partners to enhance security at facilities with sensitive nuclear material around the world.

94. It was important to remain vigilant. In August 2012, protestors had breached the security perimeter of one of the United States' most important nuclear security sites and security had been redoubled at all nuclear facilities in the country in response. That incident had been an important wake-up call.

95. Member States must provide the Agency with appropriate resources to carry out its vital safeguards mission. To achieve the shared goal of a world without nuclear weapons, and the expansion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy globally, all States must provide financial, political and technical support for a robust international safeguards regime. A safeguards regime capable of detecting diversion at known facilities, and of providing assurances regarding the absence of undeclared activities, was a condition for achieving disarmament and making the world safe for nuclear energy. His country provided such support through its Member State safeguards support programme and the Department of Energy's Next Generation Safeguards Initiative, providing over $25 million per year in extrabudgetary and in-kind support to the Department of Safeguards.

96. The United States continued to support the additional protocol as an essential standard for international safeguards verification. Additional protocols were in force in more that 100 States, with seven new States having ratified over the preceding year. States that had not done so should ratify additional protocols in order to strengthen the Agency's important verification mission. Countries that had not concluded an NPT comprehensive safeguards agreement should do so promptly, and any outdated SQPs should be updated.

97. Those steps, while vital to reducing nuclear dangers, were not sufficient. His country took seriously its responsibilities under the NPT and had not conducted any nuclear weapon test explosions

in nearly 20 years. During that time, it had taken significant steps to reduce the size of its nuclear arsenal and dispose of excess fissile material from its defence programmes. The United States and Russia were successfully implementing the New START treaty. Once that treaty was fully implemented, the United States would have reduced its strategic nuclear warheads by 85% since the Cold War. Together with Russia and the Agency, his country was working on an agreement that would enable the Agency to verify independently that the United States and Russia were meeting their mutual commitments to eliminate at least 34 metric tons each of former military plutonium.

98. While the United States and its partners had demonstrated their dedication to fulfilling their commitments under the NPT, regrettably not all countries were holding up their end of the bargain. States that cheated brought instability to the international system and undermined the value of shared commitments under the NPT. Iran was defying multiple IAEA Board of Governors and United Nations Security Council resolutions and had violated its NPT obligations and its bilateral safeguards agreement with the Agency. In the preceding week, the Board had passed another resolution holding Iran to account for its continued violations of its international obligations, noting that it was essential and urgent for Iran to cooperate with the Agency to address all outstanding concerns. Iran continued a decade-long pattern of evasion regarding questions over the nature of its nuclear programme, including possible military dimensions of its nuclear activities. In November 2011, the Secretariat had reported that it had credible information that Iran had conducted activities that were specific to nuclear weapons development prior to the end of 2003. It had further noted that activities relevant to nuclear explosive device design might still be ongoing. The Director General's latest report on the issue stated that additional information further corroborated the analysis given in the November 2011 report. Iran had failed to provide the necessary cooperation to enable the Agency to resolve outstanding questions about those activities. Along with the country's unwillingness to implement the additional protocol, that situation left the Agency unable to provide credible assurances regarding the absence of undeclared activities and the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme.

99. Iran was not the only State violating its international obligations. Syria must cooperate fully with the Agency to return to compliance with its safeguards agreement, and the DPRK must abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes and return at an early date to the NPT and Agency safeguards. The Agency had an essential role to play in the complete and verifiable denuclearization of the DPRK, and his country had consistently called on the DPRK to cease all nuclear activities and allow the Agency to resume its monitoring and verification activities. The United States firmly supported the Agency's efforts to maintain readiness to resume those activities.

100. Meaningful progress could be made with the Agency's broad and challenging agenda through partnership and cooperation. The international conference on nuclear security to be hosted by the Agency in 2013 would reconfirm its leading role in nuclear security. Another Nuclear Security Summit would be held in 2014, hosted by the Netherlands. He encouraged States to increase voluntary contributions to the Nuclear Security Fund and to announce voluntary specific actions intended to minimize the civil use of HEU by the end of 2013, including through the conversion of reactors to LEU.

101. An international commitment was needed to unlock the fuel cycle of the future. The United States was investing in R&D on new fuel cycle technologies, including designing reprocessing facilities where diversion of nuclear material or misuse of those facilities would be much more difficult and more easily detected.

102. The United States would continue to work towards a world without nuclear weapons, including by pursuing a future agreement with the Russian Federation for broad reductions in all nuclear weapons, and continued engagement among all five NPT nuclear-weapon States to improve nuclear transparency and to discuss nuclear weapons and proliferation issues. His country supported the

immediate start of the long-delayed negotiations on an FMCT. It also remained committed to ratifying the CTBT and to strengthening and ultimately completing the monitoring and verification regime of that Treaty. To support future arms reduction initiatives, the United States would continue researching advanced monitoring and verification capabilities that could provide confidence in a range of verification initiatives.

103. Significant progress had been made, but all members must work together to keep up the momentum for the sake of the planet and future generations.

104. Mr PAPAGEORGIOU (Cyprus) speaking on behalf of the European Union, the acceding country Croatia, the candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland and Serbia, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, said that the European Union remained committed to effective multilateral action against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and emphasized the importance of universalizing the NPT. It called on States that had not done so to join the Treaty as non-nuclear weapon States. Furthermore, the European Union was actively contributing to global efforts to make the world safer for all and create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons in accordance with the goals of the NPT, in a way that promoted international stability and was based on the principle of undiminished security for all.

105. The European Union had welcomed the consensus reached on the action plan at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. That action plan, as well as the agreement on an implementation process for the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference resolution on the Middle East, had demonstrated a common resolve not only to uphold but also to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The European Union also welcomed the professional work and consultations carried out by the facilitator, Mr Laajava, for the 2012 conference on a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, as well as the report thereon which had been presented during the NPT Preparatory Committee meeting held earlier in 2012 in Vienna.

106. With regard to a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, the European Union had welcomed the outcome of the forum convened in November 2011 at the initiative of the Agency's Director General on that issue, in which participants from the Middle East and other interested parties had been able to learn from the experiences of other regions, including in the area of confidence building relevant to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

107. As announced during the 2012 NPT Preparatory Committee meeting, the European Union would be holding a follow-up event to its seminar organized in July 2011 on the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. That event, in the form of a seminar along the same lines as the previous initiative, would be held on 5–6 November 2012 in Brussels and would allow for an open exchange of views among the participants on all aspects related to the creation of such a zone in the Middle East.

108. The European Union wished to reaffirm its full support for the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, as demonstrated by the adoption on 23 July 2012 of a new European Union Council Decision (2012/422/CFSP) in support of a process leading to the establishment of such a zone. Full implementation of the 1995 resolution and 2010 commitments remained a key objective for the European Union. In that respect, it welcomed the constructive spirit which had once again been shown by all interested parties on the issue of non-proliferation in the Middle East at the current General Conference.

109. The 2010 NPT Review Conference had reaffirmed the role of the Agency in verifying and providing assurances of compliance by States with their safeguards obligations, with a view to preventing the diversion of nuclear material and activities from peaceful uses. Equally, it had stressed

the importance of resolving all cases of non-compliance with safeguards obligations, and of State Parties responding resolutely and effectively in such cases.

110. The European Union was deeply concerned by the protracted and serious challenges to the non-proliferation regime posed by the Islamic Republic of Iran, the DPRK and the Syrian Arab Republic. It wished to stress again that the United Nations Security Council, as the final arbiter of international peace and security, had the mandate to take appropriate action in the event of non-compliance with NPT obligations, including safeguards agreements.

111. The European Union noted with great concern that the Director General's latest reports had confirmed that the Islamic Republic of Iran, in violation of its international obligations, continued to expand its enrichment activities, including by increasing its capacity to enrich to 20%. In addition, the European Union was deeply worried that, contrary to the relevant resolutions of the Board of Governors and the Security Council, Iran had not suspended work on all heavy water related-projects and was not cooperating with the Agency to resolve questions and concerns relating to possible military dimensions to its nuclear programme.

112. The European Union deeply regretted the fact that, despite the continuing efforts of the Agency to engage Iran in an intensified dialogue to resolve all outstanding substantive issues in accordance with the requirements laid down in the resolution adopted by the Board in November 2011 and contained in document GOV/2011/69, no concrete results had been achieved. The Director General's latest report showed clearly that Iran had not engaged seriously and without preconditions in talks aimed at restoring international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme, as required by that resolution. Iran's procrastination was unacceptable. The European Union again urged Iran to cooperate fully with the Agency. It wished to reiterate that the test of any agreement in that connection (e.g. on a structured approach to resolve outstanding issues) would be its implementation.

113. The European Union urged Iran to implement the mandatory resolutions of the Security Council and the binding resolutions of the Board of Governors. Iran should suspend its enrichment activities and heavy water-related projects, including R&D, and implement the modified Code 3.1 of the Subsidiary Arrangements General Part to its safeguards agreement. The latter issue was not a matter which the United Nations or Agency Member States could decide unilaterally. Therefore the European Union could not accept that compliance with international obligations freely accepted by Iran could be later unilaterally revoked. Security Council resolutions also called upon Iran to bring into force its additional protocol. Iran must cooperate fully with the Agency in order to clarify all outstanding issues, in particular those which gave rise to deep concerns about possible military dimensions to its nuclear programme.

114. The European Union's objective remained the achievement of a comprehensive negotiated long-term settlement which would build international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme, while respecting Iran's legitimate rights to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in conformity with the NPT. The European Union High Representative together with China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States remained firm, clear and united in seeking a swift diplomatic resolution of the international community's concerns regarding the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme, based on the NPT and full implementation of Security Council and the Board of Governors resolutions. Based on the principles of a step-by-step approach and reciprocity, clear and credible proposals had been put forward in recent months for an initial confidence-building step which would address the immediate key concerns, including the 20% enrichment activities, in a comprehensive manner. The European Union urged Iran once again to engage seriously and take such a step.

115. The European Union fully supported the resolution tabled by China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States at a recent Board of Governors meeting urging Iran, once again, to comply with all its international obligations.

116. The nuclear weapons and missile programmes of the DPRK, and its decision to cease all cooperation with the Agency, remained an ongoing cause of grave concern to the European Union. The European Union recalled the condemnation by the Security Council of the 13 April 2012 satellite launch by the DPRK, using ballistic missile technology in violation of Security Council resolutions 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009), and the subsequent strengthening of the United Nations sanctions. The European Union regretted that the DPRK's invitation to the Agency to carry out a visit in accordance with the US-DPRK agreement of February 2012 had been withdrawn and that the Agency's inspectors had not been granted access to the relevant nuclear facilities in Yongbyon.

117. The European Union again urged the DPRK to abandon all its existing nuclear and ballistic missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. It called on the DPRK to refrain from any further provocation, including any further nuclear tests, to return to full compliance with all its NPT and Agency safeguards obligations, to allow an early return of Agency inspectors and to provide the Agency with the requested access to individuals, documentation, equipment and facilities.

118. The European Union had fully supported the adoption by the Board of Governors on 9 June 2011 of the resolution contained in document GOV/2011/41, which had reported Syria to the Security Council and to the United Nations General Assembly owing to that country's non-compliance with its obligations under its safeguards agreement. That resolution had been based on the Agency's conclusion regarding the Dair Alzour site, contained in the Director General's report to the Board of Governors in June 2011 (GOV/2011/30), that the destroyed building at the site had very likely been a nuclear reactor and should have been declared by Syria pursuant to Articles 41 and 42 of its safeguards agreement and Code 3.1 of the General Part of the Subsidiary Arrangements thereto.

119. The European Union deeply regretted that, despite that resolution, and the Syrian pledge of 26 May 2011 to the Director General to respond positively and without delay to the Agency's request to resolve all outstanding questions, Syria still had to provide the necessary cooperation. It shared the concerns of the Agency and its disappointment that, despite proposals by the Agency to hold further discussions, Syria, in a letter dated 12 February 2012, had only been able to indicate that it would provide a detailed response at a later time.

120. The European Union once again strongly urged Syria, as required by the Board's resolution, to remedy urgently its non-compliance with its safeguards agreement and to cooperate urgently and transparently with the Agency to clarify matters with regard to Dair Alzour and the other sites, and to bring into force an additional protocol as soon as possible.

121. The Agency's safeguards system was a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and played an indispensable role in implementation of the NPT. The European Union reiterated its view that the measures contained in the Model Additional Protocol formed an integral part of the Agency's safeguards system and that comprehensive safeguards agreements together with additional protocols constituted the current Agency verification standard. The European Union called for universalization of those two essential instruments of the Agency safeguards system without delay. It was of the view that measures to strengthen the effectiveness and improve the efficiency of the Agency's safeguards system were required. Those measures should include improved cooperation with State and regional systems of accounting for and control of nuclear material, as well as the adoption of the 2005 revised SQP where relevant. The European Union firmly supported the continued evolution of safeguards towards a State-level concept applicable to all States that was more objectives-based and that considered all safeguards-relevant information about a State. It encouraged

the Secretariat to continue to inform Member States about the further evolution of the State-level concept and its implications for the planning, conduct and evaluation of safeguards. That approach would enable the Agency to focus its efforts where the proliferation risks were greatest.

122. The European Union welcomed the fact that the Agency and Euratom continued to develop their cooperation arrangements. That should enable the Agency to make fuller use of Euratom's verification activities thereby optimizing the use of its resources. The close cooperation between Euratom and the Agency, exemplified by the joint inspection of installations underpinned by joint management and use of common instruments and tools, made for effective and efficient safeguards and allowed the European Union's member States to demonstrate continuing respect for their international non-proliferation obligations.

123. The European Union actively supported the Agency's safeguards system, inter alia through its safeguards support programme, which was one of the biggest. The European Union recognized the need to strengthen the Agency's capability to provide credible and timely analysis of safeguards samples and it therefore firmly supported the modernization of the SAL. It was contributing €5 million to modernizing the SAL and a second European Union contribution of approximately the same amount was now in the final stages of the decision-making process.

124. The European Union attached the utmost importance to implementation of the highest standards of nuclear safety worldwide. International cooperation was crucial for promoting the global nuclear safety framework. In that context, the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Early Notification and Assistance Conventions, and the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management were instruments of major importance. The European Union called on all Member States which had not yet done so to join the relevant safety conventions without delay. The IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety was also an important instrument to be implemented by Member States and the Secretariat.

125. Proliferation of uncontrolled nuclear material was a major security risk and should be prevented. If nuclear weapons, nuclear material or highly radioactive sources were to fall into terrorist hands, they would pose one of the potentially most destructive threats to global security. The international nuclear security architecture therefore needed to be strengthened.

126. In the light of the ongoing threats, the European Union was actively supporting Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1887 (2009) as well as a number of other international initiatives, the G8 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, the Proliferation Security Initiative, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, and the Global Threat Reduction Initiative. It welcomed the international conference on nuclear security to be hosted by the Agency in July 2013, and the role that international processes and initiatives — including the Nuclear Security Summits organized in Washington and Seoul and the one to be held in The Hague in 2014 — could play in facilitating synergy and cooperation in the area of nuclear security. It also welcomed recent steps to strengthen the Agency's nuclear security programme.

127. The European Union supported Agency activities in the area of nuclear security within the framework of the European Union strategy against proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Together with individual European Union member States, it was among the main contributors to the Nuclear Security Fund, having provided around €30 million to date. So far, more than 50 countries had benefited from assistance funded through European Union Joint Actions and Council decisions, and the number continued to grow.

128. Under the European Union Instrument for Stability, over the period 2007–2013 nearly €260 million had been dedicated to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) risk mitigation worldwide. Out of that amount, more than €100 million had been allocated to the European Union's

regional CBRN Centres of Excellence initiative. The objective of that initiative was to invest in strengthening the institutional capacity of stakeholders in partner countries to mitigate chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear risks, irrespective of their origin. At the same time the European Union had stepped up its outreach and coordination efforts for key partners and international organizations. On 19 April 2012, the Security Council had welcomed the establishment of the CBRN Centres of Excellence, a major conference on them had been held at the United Nations in New York on 22 June, and European Union services were about to finalize a broad understanding on coordination with the Agency's Office of Nuclear Security that would include regular work at a strategic and technical level on the radiological and nuclear aspects of the CBRN Centres of Excellence initiative.

129. Effective physical protection was of the utmost importance to prevent nuclear material falling into the hands of terrorists, or accidental misuse thereof, and to protect nuclear facilities against unauthorized use and malicious acts. The European Union therefore urged all States that had not yet done so to join the CPPNM and ratify the 2005 amendment thereto.

130. The European Union remained firmly convinced of the benefits of multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle. In line with the conclusions of the 2010 NPT Review Conference on that matter, it welcomed the steps taken to establish an LEU bank under Agency auspices. It was committed to supporting that future LEU bank with up to €25 million.

131. The Agency's technical cooperation programme, and the role of the Agency in the responsible development of peaceful applications of nuclear technology in the areas of human health, food and agriculture, water resources, environment, nuclear energy, and nuclear and radiation safety, were valued and widely supported. The successful undertakings of the Agency in that area were commendable and the contribution of technical cooperation projects to the Millennium Development Goals was greatly valued.

132. The European Union used several of its financial instruments to support both the Agency and cooperation with third countries, contributing some €150 million per year for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology. Part of that funding was implemented in third countries through the Agency's TCF, and the European Union and its member States were among the largest contributors to that Fund. The European Union also made substantial contributions to the Agency's Peaceful Uses Initiative. On 4 May 2012, during the NPT Preparatory Committee meeting, the European Union had organized a side-event on the topic of peaceful uses, with the participation of the Agency.

133. Finally, through the European Union Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation up to €524 million had been allocated over the period 2007–2013 for the promotion of nuclear safety, radiation protection and the application of efficient and effective safeguards on nuclear material in third countries. That instrument financed projects in the CIS, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa. The European Union Instrument for Pre-Accession had also financed similar activities in candidate countries; more than €35 million had been allocated over the same period to such countries, mainly for radiation protection. The European Union aimed to pursue its support for nuclear safety worldwide through the Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation over the period 2014–2020.

134. Mr KIRIENKO (Russian Federation) said that the key mission of the current session of the General Conference was to discuss the results achieved in the world nuclear sector in the year since the Fukushima accident, to analyse emerging challenges and to identify the future trends of nuclear energy development. Nuclear power continued to develop, and a more balanced approach was evident in particular with regard to safety enhancement in both the construction and the operation of nuclear power plants. Despite pessimistic predictions that the number of new power units would be reduced by half as a result of the accident, the Agency was predicting the commissioning of 300–340 GW of new capacity by 2035, which was only 10–12% lower than pre-Fukushima expectations. Since March 2011

seven new power units had been connected to the grid, of which three employed Russian technology: the Kalinin-4 plant in his own country, the Bushehr plant in the Islamic Republic of Iran and an experimental fast reactor in China.

135. In the preceding year, a great deal of work had been undertaken to improve nuclear safety pursuant to the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. He welcomed the outcome of the second extraordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety held in August 2012, where the participants had called for improvement of that fundamental international instrument. His country welcomed the establishment of a working group to strengthen that Convention and hoped that similar measures would be taken to strengthen the Early Notification Convention.

136. The forthcoming high-level conference on nuclear safety to be held in December 2012 in the Fukushima Prefecture should confirm two important lessons from the Fukushima accident: the common understanding that large-scale development of nuclear power in the 21st century would require stringent respect for the highest standards of nuclear safety; and that nuclear safety was entirely achievable from a technical point of view.

137. The Russian Federation was currently building nine nuclear power units. Construction of the Baltic nuclear power plant had begun, which marked the first time in history that foreign partners had been invited to participate in the construction and ownership of a Russian plant. The country was expanding its international cooperation with both traditional partners such as China and India, and newcomers. A government-to-government agreement had been signed with Vietnam for the construction of a nuclear power plant and nuclear science and research centre, an agreement with Bangladesh for the construction of a nuclear power plant, and a government-to-government agreement with Nigeria for the construction of a nuclear power plant. Construction work had commenced on projects in Belarus and Turkey.

138. In the post-Fukushima era, the requirements for nuclear power plant technology had become very specific, and supplier-associated responsibilities had increased. In the current market for nuclear power plant construction, clients expected to receive a comprehensive offer with the supplier providing a modern design with enhanced safety and reliability parameters and a range of additional services, fuel-supply and life-cycle services, more potential for local equipment manufacture, certification of suppliers and the opportunity for them to participate in third-country projects, assistance with establishment of the required infrastructure, and financial services.

139. An international crisis centre had been set up under the auspices of the Moscow WANO Centre for all countries using WWER reactors.

140. The Russian Federation's international cooperation was not limited to power generation: it was also establishing an international platform to ensure the sustainability and growth of uranium mining.

141. His country was convinced of the strategic need to focus on development of innovative nuclear technology, primarily fast reactors with a closed nuclear fuel cycle, which would allow enhanced use of natural uranium and spent nuclear fuel. The Russian Federation had significant potential in that area. However, it also believed that such projects should be open international projects and it was encouraging its partners to conduct joint operations.

142. The Russian Federation was conducting research into new ways of using the power of the atom in nuclear medicine and many other fields. Extensive international collaboration was needed in that area to solve pressing problems and his country was accordingly expanding its collaboration with its strategic partners. It had signed a memorandum on cooperation in science and technology with India, was finalizing a comprehensive R&D agreement with the United States of America and was preparing a similar agreement with France.

143. Nuclear non-proliferation was another priority area in which the Agency must play a major role and the Russian Federation continued to cooperate with the Agency in that area. It intended to continue assisting the Agency with strengthening of the safeguards system through its national safeguards support programme which had marked its 30th anniversary in 2012. Training courses for Agency inspectors were once again taking place at the gas centrifuge plant in Angarsk, providing both theoretical expertise and familiarity with the operation of gas centrifuge cascades.

144. Other areas of cooperation with the Agency included the International Uranium Enrichment Centre with the world's first assured LEU fuel bank under Agency safeguards. On Agency authorization, fuel from the bank could be shipped to any country requiring fuel for its nuclear power plants. The Russian Federation encouraged further development of multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle and was willing to offer wide-ranging assistance to the LEU fuel bank which the Agency was setting up in Kazakhstan.

145. To ensure stability, and in compliance with a decision taken by the Government of the Russian Federation, funding for all programmes in which his country cooperated with the Agency, including INPRO, had been changed from a one-year to a three-year funding cycle. His country actively participated in the implementation of the INPRO action plan, including collaboration on the multifunctional fast research reactor. He encouraged all partners to take part in that international project and welcomed the creation of an INPRO Group under the Agency's Department of Nuclear Energy.

146. His country contributed both financially and otherwise, to the implementation of the Agency's action plan to combat nuclear terrorism.

147. It supported the Agency's technical cooperation activities and the technical cooperation programme both financially and conceptually. It had recently added new areas of activity, such as training to enhance the qualifications of medical physicists in radiation oncology, for which funds had been allocated from the State budget. With the Department of Technical Cooperation, his country was developing a regional project for training of staff in clean-up of uranium tailings dumps. New technological development goals increased the need for management. That very day, the State Atomic Energy Corporation, "Rosatom", was about to sign a practical arrangement with the Agency in the area of nuclear knowledge management and the National Research Nuclear University of Russia was due to sign a framework cooperation agreement with the Agency.

148. The third high-level Agency international conference on nuclear power in the 21st century was scheduled to take place on 27–29 June 2013 in St Petersburg. It would be an appropriate forum for the formulation of approaches to the global development of nuclear power in the new world situation in the coming decades. It would discuss such issues as energy and environmental protection, nuclear safety and security and associated responsibilities, international cooperation, advances in infrastructure, and incentives for using innovative technology. It would be one of the key international events of 2013 and would provide an impetus for the global development of safe and secure nuclear energy. It was expected to be seen very positively by the public. The Russian Federation invited all Member States of the Agency to take an active part in the event.

149. His country's President had spoken of the country's great plans for developing modern nuclear energy while ensuring its safety. Those plans could not be realized without wide-ranging international cooperation and the benefit of the Agency' s expertise and potential.

150. Mr ABBASI DAVANI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that, in keeping with Islamic principles, his country had always opposed and would continue to denounce the manufacture and use of weapons of mass destruction. Iran's Supreme Leader had stressed that the production and use of nuclear weapons were forbidden. Iran did not believe that nuclear weapons could serve as a basis for might

and power. The victory of the Islamic revolution in Iran and the toppling of the US-backed monarchy had shown that a nation could overcome the power of nuclear weapons through reliance on its own natural and human resources and capabilities.

151. Following the assassination of Daryoosh Rezaeenejad, Dr Majid Shahriyari and Dr Masoud Alimohammadi, Zionist agents had murdered Mostafa Ahmadi Roshan and his colleague Reza Qashqaee with a car bomb. Other specialists and persons negotiating with the Agency had also been targeted by terrorists who had been identified and arrested by the Ministry of Intelligence and the Revolutionary Guards. The advent of nuclear terrorism and the indifferent response to it by the Agency's Secretariat might well mean that specialists from other countries were also at risk. Mostafa Ahmadi Roshan had played a key role in Iran's nuclear and enrichment technology activities.

152. In 2011, the Director General had been invited to visit Iran's nuclear activities and facilities and requested to propose a reasonable verification timeframe. A year had passed but no response had been forthcoming and, regrettably, the Agency continued to take the approach that such negotiations failed to produce results. The Agency should be more patient about what it called verification and act more cautiously in order to respect the rights and security of Member States.

153. Given the proximity of Iran to certain countries, the risk of the Taliban, Al-Qaida and Saddam Hussein's regime to his country's national security had been much greater than for other countries, especially those on the other side of the Atlantic. It was imperative for Agency inspections to be carried out with due consideration for the specific conditions of the region and the need to build confidence.

154. Perhaps the Agency Secretariat had departed from its principle of impartiality and justice as a result of mismanagement and the influence of certain States. If Iran were to take the same cynical and unjustified approach as certain Agency authorities, it would discontinue dialogue and turn to other options. Terrorists and saboteurs might have slipped into the Agency and might be covertly influencing the decision-making process.

155. It was worth citing a few examples to illustrate Iran's concerns. On 17 August 2012, the electric power lines between the city of Qom and the Fordow complex had been cut using explosives. A power cut could damage centrifuge machines. In the early hours of the next morning, an Agency inspector had requested permission to conduct an unannounced inspection. One had to wonder whether there was any connection between that visit and the explosion. Who, other than Agency inspectors, could gain access to the complex in such a short time to record and report failures? A similar attack had been carried out against the power lines to the Natanz facilities.

156. Iran had sought to procure the items it needed for its activities in a legitimate manner on the global market, though the sanctions imposed on it did not help. It truthfully reported to the Agency all statistics about the number of centrifuge machines, the exact amount of enriched uranium, and the enrichment of the uranium in UF_6 flowing out of the machines. That information had been made readily accessible to saboteurs and terrorists in Agency reports. On 20 May 2012, that matter had been brought to the attention of the Director General, who had been shown a device with explosives inside and had been requested not to pass on such information. Unfortunately, the Director General's latest report had contained even more precise details. Thankfully, Iranian experts were now able to anticipate unwanted events and ward off cyber attacks, industrial sabotage and bombings. They had also devised ways of ensuring that nuclear facilities remained intact in the face of missile attacks and air raids.

157. The 50% increase in the number of centrifuge machines enriching up to 5%, the start-up of four cascades of centrifuge machines to increase production of 20% enriched uranium in Fordow, and the

start-up a cascade of new-generation centrifuge machines had all been necessary to meet needs and to deal with possible damage.

158. The greatest outcome of all the advances Iran had made in the field of nuclear science and technology had been the generation of self-esteem and national confidence, making the country a model for others in the region and the whole world and showing that a country could resist pressure, preserve its independence and break the scientific monopoly of certain arrogant powers. Fuel production for the Tehran research reactor was an example of that. Iran's capability in the areas of uranium exploration, extraction, processing and enrichment up to 20%, conversion to U_3O_8 with an enrichment of 20% and use thereof in the production and assembly of fuel plates demonstrated the determination and capability of Iran's experts and their dedication to peaceful cooperation aimed at promoting human health and welfare.

159. As in the past, Iran remained committed to meeting its obligations vis-à-vis the Agency and under the NPT and it would continue to assert its rights. The Agency should change its approach with regard to Iran. It should seek Iran's assistance to dismiss the accusations levelled against the country by certain hostile States; it should not act in a manner that suggested that its mission was to prove allegations.

160. Iran, as a Member State of the Agency and a country that would always use its nuclear capability for peaceful purposes and for the good of humanity, sought the Agency's assistance in strengthening the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and achieving universal nuclear disarmament, which must start with the State that had pioneered the use and proliferation of nuclear weapons and always needed an imaginary enemy for its own survival.

161. The Agency should help Member States improve the application of nuclear technology, and Member States should enjoy their rights while respecting their obligations. All Member States had the right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Selective and conflicting approaches violated that right. As the Chair of the NAM, the Islamic Republic of Iran would defend the rights of all NAM members, and it sought to improve the unfair structure of the Agency's Board of Governors. A more democratic Board of Governors would strengthen the Agency. A State which had used nuclear weapons should not be allowed to be on the Board of Governors.

162. The Zionist regime had nuclear weapons and was a serious threat to international peace and security. Liberating Palestine from the Zionist occupiers did not require the production and use of illegal nuclear weapons. The solution was democracy and recourse to the opinion of the native residents of Palestine.

163. The aim of those who opposed Iran's nuclear progress was to maintain a monopoly of power and wealth and strengthen colonization and modern slavery. The sanctions against his country needed to be seen in that context.

164. With its technology, Iran was ready to assist all nations in their quest for freedom and independence.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.