

# General Conference

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## Fifty-sixth regular session

# Plenary

## Record of the Fourth Meeting

*Held at Headquarters, Vienna, on Tuesday, 18 September 2012, at 3 p.m.*

**President:** Mr CHO Hyun (Republic of Korea)

**Later:** Ms DENGU (Costa Rica)

**Later:** Mr HAMID (Sudan)

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**Abbreviations used in this record:**

ABACC	Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials
AFRA	African Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARASIA	Co-operative Agreement for Arab States in Asia for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARCAL	Co-operation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
Basic Safety Standards	International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
G20	Group of Twenty
GRULAC	Latin American and Caribbean Group
HEU	high-enriched uranium
imPACT	integrated missions of PACT
INES	International Nuclear and Radiological Event Scale
INEX	International Nuclear Emergency Exercise
INIR	Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review
INLEX	International Expert Group on Nuclear Liability
INSSP	Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan
Interpol	International Criminal Police Organization

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

IPPAS	International Physical Protection Advisory Service
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
LEU	low-enriched uranium
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPCs	national participation costs
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
R&D	research and development
RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
SAGSI	Standing Advisory Group on Safeguards Implementation
SIT	sterile insect technique
TCDC	technical cooperation among developing countries
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
UNSCEAR	United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation
WENRA	Western European Nuclear Regulators' Association

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

1. Mr DE MISTURA (Italy) said his country had always been actively involved in Agency technical cooperation activities, in particular those focused on strengthening nuclear culture, including the School of Nuclear Energy Management and the Sandwich Training Educational Programme. Under the Peaceful Uses Initiative it had contributed, through the marine environment and sustainable development laboratory in La Spezia, to the establishment of the Ocean Acidification International Coordination Centre at the IAEA Environment Laboratories in Monaco. The Scientific Forum in 2012 would be dealing with nuclear applications in food and agriculture, and a food security event would be held in Milan in 2015 which should continue raising awareness of that important issue.
2. Although nuclear safety and nuclear security were distinct issues, an integrated and coherent approach to both was essential. President Monti had underscored the importance Italy attached to that issue in his statement at the 2012 Seoul Nuclear Security Summit.
3. In the light of the lessons learned from the Fukushima accident, Italy supported strengthening the relevant international legal framework, including through the introduction of regular international review mechanisms and strengthening of the emergency preparedness and response system, as outlined at the recent meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management.
4. Effective, timely and transparent implementation of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety would require the concrete commitment of all Member States. States should promptly perform national assessments of the safety of their nuclear power plants in the face of extreme natural hazards and submit the results to the Agency's peer review services, as had been done in the European Union through the so-called stress tests. Italy had hosted a seminar in Bologna in March 2012 to discuss ways forward one year after the Fukushima accident. It had been attended by the coordinator for the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. He congratulated the people and the Government of Japan for their handling of the accident. Italy welcomed the successful outcome of the second extraordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the proposed change to the guidance documents on enhancing the peer review process under that instrument. It looked forward to further progress in strengthening the Convention at the fifth review meeting in 2014, and to a positive outcome of the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety to be held in Fukushima in December 2012.
5. The success of the International School on Nuclear Security in Trieste the preceding year, organized in cooperation with the Agency and the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics, had shown that focusing on the human factor yielded a high return on investment even in times of decreasing financial resources. His country would like to see that initiative become a permanent part of the activities promoted by the Agency.
6. Although it had suspended its nuclear energy programmes, Italy was still committed to achieving the highest levels of nuclear safety and security. Significant funds continued to be allocated for safety and security in national programmes for the decommissioning of nuclear power plants and the management of radioactive waste. The Agency was rightfully playing a pivotal role in underscoring the social and environmental dimensions of that issue.

7. His country supported universal adherence to and implementation of the NPT, which remained the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime. Application of Agency safeguards remained the test of that regime's integrity and a logical consequence of the right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy enshrined in the NPT. Italy supported efforts to strengthen Agency safeguards, especially the State-level approach and integrated safeguards. It had signed the additional protocol and strongly supported the universalization of that instrument.

8. Italy remained concerned by the possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear programme and by that country's lack of cooperation and transparency in its dealings with the international community. The lack of progress the Director General had reported in the dialogue between the Agency and Iran on a structured approach was deeply regrettable. The Director General, whose integrity and neutrality were beyond question, had his country's full support. Italy had co-supported the resolution on Iran adopted by the Board of Governors the preceding week.

9. It was a matter of concern that, well over a year since the Board of Governors had urged Syria to remedy urgently its non-compliance with its safeguards agreement and cooperate transparently with the Agency to resolve all outstanding issues, it had still not done so.

10. Equally, the situation in the DPRK was also of great concern and Italy looked forward to progress in that regard.

11. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in the Middle East were a serious issue requiring attention. Italy welcomed the success of the forum on experience of possible relevance to the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region which had been held in November 2011. It fully supported the process — launched by the decision of the 2010 NPT Review Conference — aimed at convening a conference on the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East and it supported the work of that conference's facilitator.

12. Italy was the sixth largest contributor to the Agency's budget and the TCF. It had always paid its contributions on time and in full and would continue to do so. In the current difficult economic situation in Europe, the Italian Government had made unprecedented efforts as regards public expenditures. The Italian public naturally expected that the same rigour that was being applied at home would be applied by international organizations. His country therefore welcomed the accelerated efforts to rationalize the Agency's operations. It also welcomed the commitment to present a zero-real-growth budget for 2013 and expected that the zero-growth principle would be applied in the 2014 budget as well. It appreciated the Director General's efforts to improve management of the Agency's resources further, believed that even more efficiency could be achieved and was prepared to support any initiative in that direction.

13. Mr STACEY MORENO (Ecuador) reiterated his country's commitment to the Agency as the only intergovernmental organization with the experience and mandate to deal with technical aspects of nuclear safety and security. Given the Agency's democratic character, Ecuador believed that all countries, especially developing countries, should enjoy the inalienable right to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination. The decision to make use of that right was a sovereign choice of each State.

14. His delegation had been gratified that the Director General had begun his opening statement with the subject of technical cooperation and the goal of meeting people's real needs. Ecuador welcomed the special attention the Agency was giving to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in areas such as human health and the fight against cancer, environmental protection, water resources management and agriculture. It was highly encouraging that the topic chosen for the current year's Scientific Forum was food. His delegation was convinced that the event would yield important ideas

and conclusions on how to use the benefits of nuclear science and technology to utilize food better and ensure food security.

15. That initiative was all the more welcome in view of experts' predictions of food shortages as a result of recent droughts in many regions which, besides driving up the price of staple foods by 10% or more, could pose a threat to the health and well-being of millions of people, especially in developing countries. A severe El Niño phenomenon and poor harvests in the southern hemisphere might make things even worse.

16. A year and a half had passed since the nuclear emergency at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, and many lessons had been learned. Fears remained, which had brought about a more cautious attitude to nuclear development. There could be no doubt that the accident had marked a milestone in the history of nuclear energy and of the Agency. What had not changed was the principle that nuclear safety and security were, above all, the responsibility of each country.

17. Since consequences could cross national borders, work was needed on drawing up international agreements that were inclusive, rigorous and binding. Ecuador stressed the importance of nuclear safety and security and considered it an urgent task to strengthen international control standards to ensure the highest levels of on-site nuclear safety and security under IAEA controls and standards.

18. A year had passed since the General Conference had approved the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, and its benefits and the aspects in need of improvement could now be judged better. Progress had been made in assessing vulnerabilities of nuclear power plants, emergency preparedness and response capacities had been improved, and capacity building and communication and information exchange with Member States, international organizations and civil society had been strengthened.

19. His country welcomed the fact that the Agency had improved the review of its safety standards and that more attention was being paid to accident prevention. It must be ensured that disasters like Chernobyl and Fukushima never happened again. The Agency must work together with Member States to ensure that nuclear safety issues were handled with absolute transparency in order to regain the confidence of the world community in the use of nuclear technology. The preventive efforts contained in the action plan were a positive step in that direction and, with a view to furthering those efforts, Ecuador would be taking part in the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety to be held in Fukushima in December.

20. He highlighted the important support Ecuador received from the technical cooperation programme. Operational capacities for upgrading laboratory equipment and nuclear instrumentation were continually being enhanced, and new technical staff qualified to handle such technology were being trained.

21. Progress had also been made in projects on occupational radiation protection, which had helped prevent accidents. Recent accidents had shown how unprepared Ecuador had been for such risks, but thanks to close cooperation with the Agency and friendly countries the risks had been reduced considerably.

22. He welcomed the efforts under PACT to combat cancer, which should help control that disease which gravely affected so many people, especially those with scarce resources.

23. His country agreed that there was a need to enhance mutual confidence through specific actions that could be initiated by the Agency itself or by States possessing nuclear plants. In that context, it had been very interesting a few months previously to visit the nuclear facilities at Paks and the repository at Bataapáti in Hungary, where the high standards of safety and the broad possibilities for cooperation had been noted. That type of visit — especially if scientists were included — should be

organized more often so that experience and know-how could be shared, with a view to establishing greater collaboration, raising confidence levels and mutual understanding, and clarifying concerns.

24. Ecuador also took a great interest in the Agency's important work in the nuclear verification and safeguards field. That work must remain strictly technical, governed only by the Agency's mandate and obligations under the NPT.

25. In conclusion, he reaffirmed the need to respect the sovereignty of Member States, to trust in the transparency and good faith of Governments, and to promote respectful dialogue on an equal footing in order to deal with the matters entrusted to the Agency under the Statute. At the same time, it was important to strengthen technical cooperation for developing countries, providing greater resources so as to give effect to their inalienable right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy as a means of achieving human development and the Millennium Development Goals. The Agency should continue on a path aimed at promoting understanding with a view to making nuclear technology a development tool rather than a source of discord and confrontation among nations.

26. Mr KUBELKA (Croatia) said that the international community, Member States and relevant stakeholders should make every effort to prevent any future tragedies at a nuclear facility. Nuclear safety had to come before any cost-benefit analysis.

27. Following the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, the General Conference had endorsed the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, which constituted a significant step forward in strengthening nuclear safety. Since then, Member States had made a great effort to implement the action plan. The second extraordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, and other related meetings, had produced useful ideas and conclusions that should be incorporated in revisions of the action plan in order to strengthen the global nuclear safety framework. Decisive implementation of the action plan, and its constant improvement, were crucial to restoring public confidence and meeting public expectations, especially at a time when the adverse effects of a nuclear accident greatly overshadowed the benefits resulting from the expansion of nuclear energy over many years. In that connection, his country also welcomed Japan's initiative to convene a high-level meeting on nuclear safety later in 2012 in conjunction with the Agency.

28. Croatia had actively participated in the fourth review meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management held in Vienna earlier in 2012, at which it had presented its fourth national report. It welcomed in particular the plenary session's conclusions on the safety assessments carried out at spent fuel and waste management facilities.

29. Safeguards were a key element of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the Agency, along with Member States, should work to strengthen further the safeguards regime. Croatia commended all Member States which had concluded and brought into force a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol, especially its neighbour, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Those two instruments were integral parts of the safeguards system, and they were essential for the Agency to be able to provide credible assurances that all declared and undeclared nuclear material was not being diverted from peaceful uses. His country reiterated its call for universal accession to and implementation of both instruments.

30. Croatia attached great importance to nuclear safety. Although it did not have a nuclear installation on its own territory, owing to historical circumstances it had a long tradition of nuclear and nuclear-related engineering activities. It highly valued the Agency's work on nuclear security, which was indispensable for preventing and responding to nuclear terrorism.



31. The most important aspect of the successful cooperation between Croatia and the Agency fell within the framework of the technical cooperation programme, especially at regional level. In the 2012–2013 project cycle, four national projects were being implemented: on improvement of radioactive waste management infrastructure, feasibility of the introduction of nuclear energy in a small economy, quality assurance in radiotherapy and radiation applications in medicine. For the 2014–2015 project cycle, Croatia had submitted four project proposals in line with the priorities set in its CPF.

32. His country fully supported the work of the Agency, and despite the global financial crisis, it continued to meet its financial obligations to it.

33. Ms N'DRI-YOMAN (Côte d'Ivoire) welcomed the work done by the Agency during the preceding year to strengthen international cooperation in the areas of nuclear safety and security, radiation safety, transport safety and security, and radioactive waste management, to improve protection against nuclear terrorism, and to enhance the Agency's activities in the area of nuclear science, technology and applications, especially in the field of human health, food and agriculture, water resources and the environment.

34. Côte d'Ivoire had joined the Agency in 1963, three years after independence. Its cooperation with the Agency had focused on the benefits nuclear technology could bring in areas of fundamental importance for economic and social development, such as agriculture, animal production and health, and the food industry. Numerous projects had been implemented successfully on animal production and health and improvement of agricultural yields, bringing benefits to the population.

35. Her country welcomed the Agency's continued efforts to apply nuclear techniques in health and agriculture, which were priority areas for developing countries. Such efforts contributed to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

36. In particular, projects on use of the SIT had helped to reduce animal mortality and thus improve food and incomes, thereby reducing poverty in rural areas. African countries were among those most affected by malaria. In Côte d'Ivoire, malaria was the primary cause of morbidity and mortality in children under 5. Her country therefore welcomed the efforts of the Agency and FAO to cooperate in promoting the SIT as a means of eradicating mosquito-borne diseases such as malaria, dengue fever, yellow fever and chikungunya, which threatened the health of millions of people, particularly in Africa. In the case of trypanosomiasis, much work remained to be done. She appealed to the international community and Member States to support those activities and to contribute to the upgrading of the Seibersdorf laboratories and to the establishment of additional centres in Africa.

37. Noting the concerns raised by the Fukushima accident, she said that Côte d'Ivoire had developed an extensive programme for the exploitation of its hydropower and fossil fuel resources to meet energy demand, which was growing at a rate of 10% per year as a result of industrial development, increased consumption by households and exports. However, the hydropower water resources were unreliable owing to climate change, and natural gas availability was insufficient. The financial deficit of the electricity sector was becoming enormous, and the risk of load shedding was real.

38. Nevertheless, Côte d'Ivoire was a major player in the West African grid system. The search for sustainable solutions for social progress, and to meet the growing demand for energy from the West African countries supplied by Côte d'Ivoire, had led her Government to take decisions aimed at developing nuclear power to supply Côte d'Ivoire and its neighbours. That would require the mobilization of considerable financial resources for infrastructure development, but nuclear power seemed an inevitable solution for supplying clean and environmentally friendly electricity in large quantities.

39. Accordingly, her country welcomed the Agency's activities in support of Member States planning to introduce nuclear power, and it was making efforts to strengthen cooperation with the Agency as outlined in its CPF, which focused on sustainable development projects with a major socio-economic impact. The CPF was currently being revised to adapt it to new needs and problems and would be submitted to the Agency for approval in due course.

40. Her Government intended to underpin those achievements by implementing an adapted and strengthened legislative and regulatory framework that would lead to the establishment of institutions for managing nuclear activities, including the creation of a national atomic energy commission and a regulatory body with an effective radiation protection centre, as well as by providing a reference radiotherapy and nuclear medicine centre for the population.

41. The decision had been taken to emphasize treatment of cancer using nuclear applications and techniques because cancer had become a public health problem, especially breast cancer, cervical cancer, liver cancer and prostate cancer. In addition, priority technical cooperation projects would be launched in the health field for the construction of a reference nuclear medicine centre and a radiotherapy and oncology centre in order to combat cancer in all its forms. Moreover, under PACT, her country was receiving assistance with the training of doctors and cancer experts and the raising of funds from donors, for which it was grateful.

42. She sought Member States' indulgence in connection with the difficulties her country was encountering with the implementation of certain directives and projects. Côte d'Ivoire was currently a fragile country as a result of a decade of socio-political crisis and, especially, the dire socio-economic consequences of the post-election crisis precipitated in December 2010. Before that period of instability, her country had always considered public health and food self-sufficiency priority areas and had invested heavily in them. Following that period of uncertainty and stagnation, the country was returning to stability and good governance with a view to launching its socio-economic recovery.

43. Her Government was making great efforts to pay all its contributions to all the Agency, in particular to the TCF and the Regular Budget. Despite financial difficulties caused by the recent crisis, the President of Côte d'Ivoire had given instructions to release the necessary funds, and her country promised to pay its assessed contributions for 2013 in a timely manner.

44. Mr KOVÁCS (Hungary) said his country was convinced that a consensual approach was the only way to make progress towards implementing one outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, namely the convening of a conference in 2012 to consider the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery in the Middle East, which would provide a concrete opportunity to address issues of concern to the region.

45. The Director General had visited Hungary recently and had met members of the Government and parliament and had been shown the achievements of peaceful nuclear activities pursued in the country. He had visited the Paks nuclear power plant, and while visiting the Centre for Energy Research had been shown the experimental version of the reactor pressure vessel external cooling system that was being introduced at the Paks plant.

46. Hungary was proud of the performance of the people working in the nuclear field in the country. Based on the findings of the targeted safety reassessment (the so-called stress test initiated by the European Union), there was no urgent need to take measures as the Paks plant had been found to be able to withstand extreme environmental situations. Hungary's national report on the stress test had been submitted to the European Union by the end of 2011 and an international peer review had followed in March 2012. The review had concluded that the national report was correct in its form and adequate in its content, and that the Hungarian participants had been open and very cooperative during the whole process. The stress test had been executed with exceptional care and thus the reviewers had

found that no additional measures besides the actions proposed in the report were needed. Based on those findings in the targeted safety reassessment national report, the operator — the Paks nuclear power plant — had submitted a proposal for further enhancing the safety of the plant even under extreme conditions. The Hungarian Atomic Energy Authority, the regulatory body, was currently examining that proposal.

47. The regulatory body was currently heavily engaged in the process of extending the service life of the Paks nuclear power plant. In October there would be a public hearing on the matter. The operator had applied for an extension of the operating lifetime of unit 1 for an additional 20 years. The application was the culmination of a 12-year process in which the Paks plant had prepared for the extended operation of the units beyond their design lifetime. In parallel, the Hungarian Atomic Energy Authority had taken part in the process of adjusting the national legal system to the requirements of such a lifetime extension in accordance with international practice.

48. In order to speed up the strategic and administrative decisions necessary for the new units at the Paks site, the Hungarian Government had established, by Government resolution, a Governmental Commission on Nuclear Energy headed by the Prime Minister and consisting of the Minister for National Development, whose ministry was in charge of energy infrastructure, and the Minister for National Economy. Hungary was ready to share with all interested partners the strategy followed by its Government for the expansion of its nuclear programme.

49. During the fourth review meeting of the Contracting Parties to Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management in May 2012, his country had presented aspects of its management of radioactive waste. The meeting had found that Hungarian practice was in accordance with international standards and included a number of best practices, including the repatriation of the HEU fuel from the Budapest research reactor, accomplished with the efficient participation of the Agency.

50. His country was sure that the topics discussed and conclusions drawn two weeks previously at the extraordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety would soon be reflected in the safety features of nuclear infrastructure worldwide.

51. Action to upgrade regional emergency response centres had also been discussed at that meeting and the outcome should give a boost to experts currently working on a concept for establishing regional emergency support and training centres.

52. Turning to the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety approved by the General Conference in 2011, he said that Hungary fully supported its implementation and commended the Agency for making good progress in that regard. His country had already completed its safety reassessment and would be prepared to take any further steps required to improve the safe operation of the Paks nuclear power plant.

53. Hungary was ready to provide assistance, and he understood there was interest from a number of States in the experience and know-how his country could offer in the area of nuclear power plant maintenance. The highly sophisticated maintenance training centre with real equipment, established with the Agency assistance, was now being used to train experts from abroad without radiation risks. On 12 September, a training course for over 100 experts from Vietnam had commenced at the Budapest University of Technology and Economics and at Paks. The programme included a complete nuclear training course about the safe operation of a new nuclear power plant. Hungary continued to stand ready to share its experience and expertise with Member States planning or embarking on new nuclear programmes.

54. He was delighted to announce that agreement had been reached between the Russian Federation, Ukraine and Hungary regarding the transport of nuclear material through Ukraine. Following the legal review of the document by the European Commission, his country was set to sign the agreement before the end of the year.

55. In full cooperation with the Agency, Hungary continued to fulfil its commitment, made at the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit in March 2012, regarding a nuclear security training course to be held in the country. Nuclear security played an important role among the activities of the Agency and for those working with equipment employing ionizing radiation.

56. An IPPAS mission to Hungary had been initiated which was expected to take place in mid-2013. His country hoped that the measures it had taken to implement the amended CPPNM met or exceeded international expectations.

57. His country was committed to improving safeguards culture in facilities using ionizing radiation. In 2011, the State system of accounting for and control of nuclear material had been enhanced by a comprehensive domestic safeguards verification system consisting of regular comprehensive verifications throughout the whole lifetime of the facilities.

58. Hungary continued to contribute to the Agency's safeguards support programme. Besides traditional training of safeguards inspectors and assistance with the development of measurement methods, it was participating in two new tasks related to acquisition path analysis methodology and the collection and analysis of nuclear trade-related information. The Hungarian support programme had provided the Agency with a prototype methodology for acquisition path analysis based on a directed graph approach. Two well known technical support organizations, the Institute of Isotopes and the Atomic Energy Research Institute, had joined forces and formed the Centre for Energy Research as of 1 January 2012. The merger was expected to enhance the effective use of the research infrastructure available at the institutions' common campus.

59. The Institute of Nuclear Techniques of the Budapest University of Technology and Economics had started a master's course for physicists specializing in medical physics. The first group of 11 medical physicists had graduated. Most of them would continue their academic work as PhD students at universities at home or abroad.

60. His country had paid its full share of the TCF in 2012. It had also made an extrabudgetary contribution of €60 000 to the Peaceful Uses Initiative to support water-related programmes in Indonesia, Pakistan and Uganda. Hungary had always been an active participant in the Agency's technical cooperation programme and was willing to continue that tradition. The current year had seen an increase in the number of experts taking part in Agency workshops and in the number of meetings held in Hungary. His country was experiencing the beneficial effects of the strategy for the technical cooperation programme in the Europe region, which had made cooperation with the Secretariat smoother.

61. In conclusion, he reiterated the Hungarian Government's position that nuclear energy would continue to contribute significantly to the global energy mix, and in that connection, reaffirmed the full support of the Hungarian authorities for the Agency.

62. Mr NAFO (Mali) said the General Conference was meeting at a time when the world was facing the threats of terrorism, weapons proliferation, climate change, pandemics and food insecurity, which even the most powerful States were unable to stop or control on their own. Thus, there was more need than ever for Member States to support the Agency in its efforts to meet those challenges. Only the establishment of a coordinated security system at global level would offer a viable chance of improving living conditions.

63. Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons was still a challenge for the world. There must be a constant commitment on the part of all States to respect strictly the provisions of the NPT and to adhere fully to the CTBT. In that regard, Africa was on the right path in that virtually all States on the continent had adhered to the Pelindaba Treaty.

64. His country's Government was highly appreciative of the technical and financial assistance it had received through the Agency's technical cooperation programme, which had enabled Mali to put in place a national authority to control and regulate the various uses of nuclear energy, an operational nuclear medicine department at the country's biggest hospital, and a number of laboratories equipped for measurement, research and diagnosis. Mali's first radiotherapy centre had also benefited from Agency assistance via training and expert missions. The country was proud to participate in the regional project on water resources management in Africa targeting Member States of the Sahel region, the project formulation meeting and high-level consultative meeting for which had been held in Bamako in March 2012.

65. Agency cooperation had enabled his country to develop strong, solid and internationally recognized expertise in infant nutrition and the impact thereof on malaria control. A major challenge was the establishment of a legal infrastructure for managing the range of nuclear technologies in use nationally, and the Agency was providing support for capacity building for the Malian Radiation Protection Agency.

66. Preparations were under way for the 2014–2015 technical cooperation programme. In that cycle, Mali's second CPF would enable it to focus on radiation safety and security by strengthening the capacity of the national regulatory authority, on improvement of public health through the introduction of radiotherapy and enhancement of nuclear medicine, strengthening of efforts to combat malaria and malnutrition, improvement of agricultural and animal production, assessment of erosion and sedimentation and acquisition of a better understanding of groundwater resources, energy planning, and the promotion of education and research in nuclear sciences and technologies.

67. Mali, which pledged to pay its share of the TCF for 2013, acknowledged the need for all Member States to meet their financial obligations vis-à-vis the Agency so it could fulfil its mandate.

68. Mr EL-KHOURY (Lebanon) commended the Agency on its achievements in the face of major challenges stemming from unforeseen events. He expressed concern, however, at the lack of progress in resolving persistent problems despite Member States' endeavours to find appropriate solutions based on scientific data and impartial political standards, in keeping with the Agency's role and objectives.

69. The factual evidence that was still coming to light concerning the technical, managerial, emergency oversight and other aspects of the Fukushima accident underscored the Agency's role in supporting States' efforts to ensure nuclear safety. Lebanon reiterated its plea to States which possessed nuclear reactors, and to those planning to introduce nuclear power programmes, to comply strictly with safety standards within their territory and to ensure the safety of neighbouring countries. His country welcomed the determination of the States concerned to draw lessons from the Fukushima accident and called for the full implementation of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. Review of models, designs and stored equipment, strict crisis management, action to promote the independence of regulatory bodies and to ensure that the public interest and safety took precedence over commercial considerations, and resolute action against corrupt practices were basic prerequisites for attainment of the Agency's goals.

70. The continuous renovation of nuclear power reactors was essential to ensure long-term stability. He therefore welcomed the Agency's involvement in processes aimed at converting scientific research reactors to use LEU rather than HEU. The reported plan to dismantle the Soreq HEU reactor in Israel

gave some grounds for optimism, provided that the dismantling process was a permanent and not a temporary measure.

71. His country welcomed the increase in requests from Member States for Agency assistance in building capacity for peaceful applications of nuclear energy, and the resulting achievements. The technical cooperation programme with Lebanon was proceeding as scheduled, following the completion by Lebanon of the requisite financial arrangements. The Agency had been provided with the draft law on nuclear energy and the regulatory body, which was currently being reviewed pending its adoption in accordance with the relevant constitutional procedures. The Agency had provided support for Lebanon's draft feasibility study on the establishment of a nuclear reactor for scientific research and training purposes. He thanked the Arab member States of ARASIA for their unanimous agreement to entrust responsibility for the secretariat of the Agreement to Lebanon for the coming four years. Resources for the technical cooperation programme should be sufficient, assured and predictable, so that beneficiary States could specify their needs, obtain the requisite resources and implement the relevant projects.

72. A large share of the Agency's work, and of the Regular Budget, was devoted to safeguards. Notwithstanding the many achievements in that area, and the effective control of peaceful nuclear activities in accordance with the provisions of the NPT and the Agency's Statute, many of the methods of work gave rise to concern and misgivings. Verification programmes under safeguards agreements were designed to guarantee that nuclear energy was being used for peaceful purposes and was not being diverted to weapons proliferation. Every State had the inalienable right under international law to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. However, transparency was required in all cases and no State should be exempted from such obligations on the pretext that it was not a party to the NPT. The Agency and the international community should therefore apply the same standards to all States without exception and should not be influenced by political considerations. No State should enjoy special protection or be exempted from the duty to disclose its nuclear activities.

73. In the Middle East, it was regrettably the case that references to non-peaceful activities were perceived as a declaration of war calling for a counter-attack. The international community had no right to disregard threats by a State to destroy installations in the territory of another State based on subjective assumptions and hypotheses. The State concerned, Israel, was not a party to the NPT and its facilities were not subject to comprehensive Agency safeguards. It would not allow anyone to enquire about its military nuclear capabilities, acting as though it enjoyed international impunity on the grounds that it was allegedly in constant peril of attack, whereas it was in fact a usurper of land and an oppressor of people and constantly threatened the safety and security of its neighbours. Israel also rejected all attempts by the Arab States to bring about a comprehensive, just and lasting peace. As a State's security basically depended on the maintenance of peace with its neighbours, the Arab States had been requesting the General Conference for decades to adopt a resolution calling on Israel to accede to the NPT and to apply the Agency's comprehensive safeguards regime. The resolution had remained hostage to a constantly changing international environment, while its sponsors had consistently sought to lay the basis for peace and security by ridding the Middle East region of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction which could trigger a nuclear arms race. The Arab States had never missed an opportunity to display their good intentions and had therefore called for the convening of a conference in 2012. They hoped that influential States would take serious steps to meet their hopes and to promote the participation by all States of the region in the conference.

74. Mr SHAMAA (Egypt) said that his country had been interested in nuclear energy and its peaceful applications for half a century because of their potential contribution to the socio-economic development of humankind. It had cooperated closely with the Agency throughout that period in developing scientific and operational capacities, and had actively participated in all the Agency's activities. Egypt was also committed to the application of nuclear safety standards in its nuclear

facilities. It had completed the procedures for the establishment of an independent nuclear and radiation safety authority, which was subject to the control of the Prime Minister, the aim being to ensure the independence of the regulatory authority from the parties involved in nuclear and radiation-related activities, in accordance with the 2010 law on the subject and its implementing regulations.

75. Egyptian projects under the Agency's technical cooperation programme included support for optimum use of research reactors and training of human resources in the design and operation of such reactors and associated facilities. Egypt noted with interest the new projects foreseen under the Agency's 2014–2015 technical cooperation programme, especially those relating to the development of nuclear power plants, nuclear regulation, nuclear equipment and material, nuclear medicine, and capacity building for radiation emergencies.

76. Egypt, which had entered a new democratic era after the January 2011 revolution and had recently elected a new President, would continue to implement the plan to establish its first nuclear power plant in order to produce the energy required to achieve sustainable development for the Egyptian people. After the Fukushima accident, the Egyptian nuclear authorities had reviewed the specifications for the plant, in coordination with the Agency, with a view to taking advantage of the lessons learned from the accident and applying the highest possible safety standards to the nuclear power plant that Egypt was about to construct.

77. His country believed that nuclear security was unattainable without arms control and support for international disarmament efforts. It had taken resolute steps to reinforce its national nuclear security regime and had participated actively in many international conferences on nuclear security. At the regional level, Egypt was participating in two AFRA projects on implementation of nuclear security requirements and support for human resources in AFRA countries. His country had also hosted a regional conference of Arab States in Cairo in June 2012, in cooperation with the Agency, on strengthening protection of nuclear material and sharing of information about nuclear security.

78. Calls had intensified in recent years for the elimination of nuclear weapons and the threat they posed to humankind, and the States party to the NPT had agreed during the 2010 NPT Review Conference on an action plan to achieve nuclear disarmament. However, that trend had not been accompanied by action to boost the Agency's activities in support of nuclear disarmament, even though one of the objectives of the Medium Term Strategy 2006–2011 had been to contribute, as appropriate, to effective verification of nuclear arms control and reduction agreements, including nuclear disarmament, in accordance with Article II of the Agency's Statute. Egypt trusted that the same objective would be pursued under the Medium Term Strategy 2012–2017, which stated that the Agency must remain ready to assist, in accordance with its Statute, with verification tasks under nuclear disarmament or arms control agreements. His country urged all Member States to take serious steps to achieve that objective.

79. The Middle East remained a special case in efforts to rid the world of nuclear weapons, as demonstrated by the consensus reached at the 2010 Review Conference on the convening of a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the region. Egypt commended the Director General's support for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, including by convening a forum in November 2011 on experience of possible relevance to the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region. It hoped that the Agency would assist in preparing the reference documents for the 2012 conference. In fact, the Agency's credibility depended to a large extent on the seriousness with which its Member States addressed the issue of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and the application of comprehensive safeguards to all nuclear facilities in the region. Their action should reflect a consensus on the importance of the goal to be attained.

80. Although 20 years had elapsed since the adoption by the General Conference of a resolution calling on all States in the Middle East to apply comprehensive safeguards, Israel had taken no steps to achieve that objective. The General Conference should therefore reaffirm the responsibility of the Agency, as the authority responsible for verification activities, to take serious action to address the nuclear threat in the Middle East by dealing with resolutions under relevant agenda items in a manner that guaranteed respect for the NPT regime and promoted regional and international peace and security. To that end, Egypt was again submitting to the current session a draft resolution on the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East, an issue of increasing importance in view of the international consensus at the NPT Review Conference in support of serious practical steps to achieve universality of the NPT in the Middle East through Israel's accession to the Treaty and the placement of all that country's nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards. That verification regime had been accepted by the countries of the region, as non-nuclear-weapon State Parties to the NPT, based on their belief that the Agency would oversee its application in a manner that was not politicized, selective or based on double standards.

81. Egypt was convinced that the Agency would continue to play an important global role in the areas of nuclear knowledge and technology transfer, support for peaceful applications of nuclear energy in the areas of health, agriculture and water management, the establishment of rules governing nuclear safety, and action to ensure the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. It worked closely with the Agency in scientific and research activities both at national level and within the framework of AFRA with a view to promoting development, safety and security on behalf of the peoples of the region and the world as a whole. The peoples of the Middle East had the right to freedom from the threat to their security posed by nuclear weapons. Serious action must therefore be taken by all concerned to achieve security on an equal footing for the States of the region.

82. Ms DENGO (Costa Rica) thanked the members of GRULAC for nominating her country to represent the Latin American and Caribbean region on the Board. In fulfilling that role, it would be guided by the need to achieve an appropriate balance between the statutory pillars of the Agency, independent and rational management, and greater transparency and objectivity in the working methods of the Board and the Agency.

83. Costa Rica welcomed the new applications for membership, in particular from the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, which would increase the number of members from Latin America and the Caribbean. The increase in the number of Agency members from the region in recent years should be reflected in the resources allocated in the future to activities and projects implemented with the participation of and for the benefit of GRULAC countries.

84. In the area of nuclear safety and security, she drew attention to the Agency's work to implement the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. Her country fully supported the action plan and called upon all Member States of the Agency to work towards its full implementation, including the voluntary measures. Safety of the public and the environment should be the primary consideration in the development of nuclear energy.

85. Her country had hosted a regional workshop in May to provide assistance to countries in the region in implementing the Basic Safety Standards, in particular the new or modified requirements in the revised version.

86. Costa Rica was confident that the Agency would continue to lead efforts to improve nuclear safety in the world given its unique resources, capabilities and mandate. It looked forward to the holding in December of the Fukushima Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety by the Government of Japan under the auspices of the Agency.



87. Her country was seeking to strengthen its capacities in the area of nuclear security and hoped to complete the ratification of the 2005 amendment to the CPPNM as soon as possible. In April, in cooperation with the Government of Canada, it had hosted a regional workshop on universal adherence to international legal instruments on nuclear security in which representatives from nine countries from Central America and the Caribbean, and Mexico had participated. It would shortly be joining the Agency's illicit trafficking database. In addition, it was studying the extent of possible assistance from the Agency with the development of an INSSP and with security management for an international sporting event that it would be hosting in 2014.

88. It was essential that the Agency be provided with the financial resources it needed to fulfil all of its statutory obligations, and a balance should be maintained in the allocation of those resources amongst the three pillars of the Agency's activities. Funding for the TCF must be sufficient, assured and predictable, and Costa Rica hoped that the recommendation, endorsed by the Board, to establish a working group in 2013 to move forward the negotiations on the level of the Regular Budget and the TCF targets for 2014 and 2015 would be implemented.

89. Costa Rica was satisfied with its national technical cooperation programme and with the regional programme for Latin America and the Caribbean. It welcomed the efforts to make the technical cooperation programme more efficient and ensure it had a greater impact on social, economic and technological development. Her country attached particular importance to transfer of knowledge and technology for development. Seven national projects were currently being implemented in Costa Rica and the country was participating in the majority of the regional projects under ARCAL. Significant improvements had been made in internal processes for the selection and design of projects prior to the preparations for the 2014–2015 cycle in order to ensure quality and impact.

90. Her country had welcomed the visit in July of the Deputy Director General for Technical Cooperation in connection with a high-level forum on the Agency's technical cooperation programme organized by the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Atomic Energy Commission. During the forum, Costa Rica's CPF for 2012–2016 had been signed.

91. She was proud to report that the Environmental Pollution Research Centre had been designated an Agency collaborating centre. The Director of the Centre would be participating as a panellist in the Scientific Forum. Costa Rica welcomed the Forum's focus on food for the future, and she congratulated the Joint FAO/IAEA Division of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture on its excellent work in that area.

92. She drew attention to the IAEA Water Availability Enhancement project that had been implemented in Costa Rica during the year with funds from the Peaceful Uses Initiative. The project should bring important benefits in the area of isotope hydrology, in particular in building a solid scientific basis for the utilization and distribution of water resources. It was to be hoped that the benefits could be extended in the future to all interested States.

93. Costa Rica saw ARCAL as an ideal vehicle for cooperation between the Agency and Latin America and the Caribbean. Her country was grateful to the Department of Technical Cooperation for its continuing support to improve management, and to partners contributing resources to facilitate project implementation.

94. The preceding year, Costa Rica had ratified an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement with the Agency in connection with the Tlatelolco Treaty, which was now in force. Her country attached great significance to the Agency's nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament activities and called on countries that did not yet have an additional protocol in force to take the necessary steps to that end. It was important for the Agency to have all the tools and authority it needed to implement its

mandate under its Statute and the NPT with objectivity, technical rigour, impartiality, independence, reliability and transparency. Her country advocated a peaceful, multilateral and negotiated settlement of any conflict and encouraged all Member States to meet their commitments to the Agency.

95. She welcomed the Director General's initiative to convene a forum on experience of possible relevance to the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free -zone in the Middle East in November 2011, which had provided an excellent opportunity for an open and constructive discussion. She hoped that a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction could be held in 2012, as agreed at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Participation of all States in the Middle East in that conference would be a step towards achieving a comprehensive and sustainable peace in the region.

96. Mr MARSÁN AGUILERA (Cuba) highlighted the importance of the Agency's technical cooperation activities for developing countries like his own. His country greatly valued the application of nuclear techniques in such vital areas as public health, agriculture, food, hydrology and environmental conservation and he reaffirmed his Government's commitment to meeting its obligations with respect to technical cooperation activities. Cuba had achieved an implementation rate of over 90% in its national projects and had sent more than 40 experts to meetings organized by the Agency.

97. His Government attached particular importance to cooperation among developing countries. It supported the ARCAL programme, which was an essential mechanism for promoting cooperation on nuclear matters among the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, and it welcomed measures to strengthen ARCAL, both by member countries and by the Agency. Cuba was actively involved in that process.

98. Every effort should be made to strengthen the work of the Department of Technical Cooperation and improve its efficiency, which was indispensable for the successful implementation of the Agency's technical cooperation strategy. He expressed appreciation to the Deputy Director General for Technical Cooperation who had visited Cuba in July 2012, allowing him to see the main facilities where nuclear techniques were used. His country was involved in 21 coordinated research programmes of unquestionable utility for its development of nuclear science and technology.

99. It attached particular importance to PACT and reaffirmed its willingness to continue supporting that programme with medical personnel and specialists. At the same time, he drew attention to the need to provide PACT with the financial resources needed to broaden its scope and results.

100. He roundly condemned the unjust and criminal economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on his country by the Government of the United States of America, which continued to affect the implementation of Agency technical cooperation activities in Cuba. The blockade made it more difficult to obtain the scientific equipment approved for projects in Cuba, thereby delaying implementation and undermining the achievement of objectives, as well as contravening international law and the Agency's Statute. His country acknowledged the tireless efforts of the Secretariat to find alternatives and solutions. Thanks to its efforts and the determination of his country's institutions, it had been possible to attain high rates of implementation in spite of the difficulties faced.

101. The Fukushima accident and the subsequent actions by the international community had once again made it clear that nuclear safety was everyone's responsibility. The open and inclusive nature of the issue must be reflected in all nuclear safety activities. The primary responsibility lay with States, but the Agency had an important role to play in promoting and coordinating global efforts to strengthen the nuclear safety regime. Cuba continued to devote particular attention to activities in the field of nuclear and radiation safety, including physical protection, and had been improving its material and organizational infrastructure, training its human resources and organizing a range of

events under national and regional programmes in order to exchange relevant experience. Having assumed the chairmanship of the Ibero-American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies, his country had hosted the Forum's seventeenth plenary meeting in July 2012, which had been attended by the Deputy Director General for Nuclear Safety and Security. During his stay in Cuba, he had visited centres applying nuclear techniques to great effect, and had held meetings with nuclear institutions and authorities.

102. While expressing appreciation for the Agency's work on nuclear security, he emphasized that the main responsibility in that regard lay with States. Cuba had signed an INSSP with the Agency in March 2012 and implementation thereof was progressing satisfactorily. He acknowledged the excellent cooperation with the Office of Nuclear Security in carrying out projects to improve nuclear security at borders and at facilities using radiation sources. Cuba had also hosted regional training events, which were an important part of the assistance the Agency provided. It was also already at an advanced stage in the constitutional process of ratifying the amendment to the CPPNM. In addition, it welcomed the Agency's preparations for hosting the important International Conference on Nuclear Security in Vienna in 2013.

103. Nuclear security was closely related to nuclear disarmament. The only effective way to avoid nuclear terrorism was to eliminate and ban nuclear weapons. His country sincerely hoped that any initiatives on nuclear security would result in the adoption of decisions aimed at universal and complete nuclear disarmament.

104. The Agency's verification role in the nuclear disarmament field should be reinforced. Fulfilment by the nuclear powers of their commitments and obligations under the NPT would contribute decisively to that end. Cuba advocated the strict and non-discriminatory application of the three pillars of the NPT and an end to manipulation and double standards in non-proliferation. It was unacceptable that a privileged club should exist whose members perfected their nuclear arsenals while the inalienable right to use nuclear energy was being denied to countries of the South.

105. Nuclear disarmament was a matter of the utmost priority and urgency. He called on the international community, particular those countries that possessed nuclear weapons, to agree a plan of action containing specific steps to eliminate all nuclear weapons by 2025.

106. His country had demonstrated by its actions its political will and firm commitment to meet its obligations under the NPT, and it was proud to stand among the 53 States in which the Secretariat had found no diversion of declared nuclear material nor any evidence of undeclared nuclear material or activities. Cuba attached great importance to the sensitive issue of safeguards, and to the impartial and professional actions of the Secretariat in that regard. It had repeatedly criticized the manipulation and politicization of the Secretariat for geopolitical ends, and the double standards that unfortunately prevailed in its analyses. The Agency had exclusive competence in safeguards activities and Cuba rejected decisions that involved the United Nations Security Council in those activities. The principle of confidentiality in the Agency's safeguards activities should be strictly observed, and exclusively voluntary decisions should not be turned into obligations. Solving safeguards problems required political will, diplomacy and a genuine readiness to negotiate. Negotiation and cooperation, rather than confrontation, should be encouraged.

107. Given the importance of the issues that fell within the Agency's remit, effective and efficient decision-making was essential. The General Conference should be strengthened, both as a supreme legislative body and as an essentially democratic institution in which all Member States participated. Similarly, the composition and functions of the Board of Governors needed to be examined in depth.

108. Cuba was committed to continuing its efforts to build an organization that had respect for the opinions of all. It would always be at the forefront in supporting the peaceful and safe uses of nuclear energy and international peace and disarmament.

109. Mr DAAG (Sweden) said that, since the Fukushima accident, a substantial part of the Agency's work had focused on strengthening nuclear safety. His country welcomed the progress made through the adoption of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety and looked forward to its full implementation. It would be participating in the Fukushima Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety in December, which was being organized by Japan in cooperation with the Agency.

110. At the extraordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety held in August 2012, the Parties had emphasized that new reactors must be designed not only to prevent accidents as far as possible, but also to prevent serious off-site contamination in the event of an accident. Existing reactors should be upgraded to achieve similar safety objectives. Such recognition constituted a milestone towards improving nuclear safety; the next challenge was implementation. Sweden encouraged the Agency to address those issues in its future development of international safety standards. The outcome of the meeting would be implemented in Sweden via a review of safety requirements both for reactors currently in operation and for any new reactors. An application had been filed in July 2012 to construct one or two new nuclear power reactors intended to replace the oldest units.

111. Sweden welcomed the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference. It was crucial to build on the successful outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and progress needed to be made in implementing and monitoring implementation of the agreed action plan on all three pillars of the NPT.

112. The Agency's safeguards system was a fundamental part of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, not least in verifying that States met their obligations under the NPT. Sweden encouraged all States which had not yet done so to conclude and bring into force an additional protocol without delay.

113. He expressed regret that no concrete results had been achieved in resolving outstanding issues concerning the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran, including issues related to possible military dimensions, despite an intensified dialogue between the Agency and Iran. It was essential that Iran cooperate fully with the Agency and fulfil its international obligations, including the requirements imposed by the United Nations Security Council and the Board.

114. In June 2011, the Board had reported to the Security Council Syria's non-compliance with its safeguards agreement. It was a matter for regret that no progress had been made since on resolving the outstanding issues and his country urged the Syrian Arab Republic to remedy its non-compliance.

115. It was highly regrettable that the Agency had not been able to implement any safeguard measures in the DPRK since April 2009 owing to that country's unwillingness to cooperate with it. As a result, the Agency had been unable to draw any safeguards conclusions for the DPRK. Sweden called on the DPRK to comply fully, unconditionally and without delay with its international obligations.

116. His country reaffirmed its support for the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery in the Middle East. A constructive and consensual approach, including confidence-building measures, was needed to realize that goal. He commended the Director General's initiative to convene a forum the preceding year on experience relevant to the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Sweden fully supported the efforts of the facilitator who had been tasked with preparing the 2012 conference on a Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zone together with the conveners of the conference. It encouraged all Member

States to support those efforts. It also encouraged all States in the region to involve themselves in the preparations for the conference and to attend it.

117. Sweden had worked actively for a number of years to advance cooperation on multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle. His country had welcomed the important breakthroughs that had been achieved over the preceding two years, not least the decisions to establish a reserve of low-enriched uranium at Angarsk in the Russian Federation and a nuclear fuel bank under Agency control. Sweden looked forward to the full implementation of those important decisions.

118. His country strongly supported the Agency's technical cooperation programme and its important contributions in such areas as human health, food security and water management, through which the Agency was addressing fundamental global problems identified in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and at the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. Sweden contributed to the technical cooperation programme both on a bilateral basis and through the financial instruments of the European Union. The Swedish Government was also supporting the Agency's Peaceful Uses Initiative, and more specifically the Agency's project on integrated and sustainable management of the shared aquifer systems and basins in the Sahel region.

119. The Director General had reported the preceding day that great progress had been made in the process to select a method and a site for a final repository for spent nuclear fuel in Sweden. A licence application had been submitted the preceding year and reviewing the application was an important task for the regulatory authority. After finalizing the licensing procedure, it was expected that the repository would start operating around 2025.

120. A full-scale IRRS mission had been carried out in his country in February 2012. Sweden believed that such missions benefited the Member States reviewed and provided valuable input for continuous improvement of the nuclear and radiation safety framework.

121. Sweden was taking an active part in international efforts to secure vulnerable nuclear material and prevent terrorists from obtaining such material and using it to cause destruction and spread fear. At the Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul in March 2012, his country had announced the removal of separated plutonium from Sweden to the United States. That shipment had been the first of its kind under the Global Threat Reduction Initiative. Sweden was proud to have contributed in a practical way to the common goal of securing all vulnerable nuclear material. His country was ready to share experience and to support others in eliminating their excess separated plutonium.

122. Sweden would remain active in the field of international nuclear safety and security cooperation, including through the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. Through the Swedish Radiation Safety Authority, his country had supported some 50 bilateral projects in the preceding year.

123. The Agency played an essential role in advancing nuclear security worldwide. In 2011, it had carried out an IPPAS mission in Sweden. His country wished to highlight the value of the IPPAS missions as an instrument to strengthen nuclear security and it encouraged States to use that service.

124. In 2010, the Swedish Government had commissioned a national review of protection of nuclear facilities and shipments from threats. A national action plan was being developed to implement the recommendations from that review.

125. In March 2012, Sweden had ratified the 2005 amendment to the CPPNM. His country encouraged all States to adhere to the amendment and promote its early entry into force.

126. Mr STUART (Australia) said that the General Conference provided an opportunity to take stock of the progress made by the international community in enhancing nuclear safety since the Fukushima

accident. The Director General's report on progress in implementing the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety showed that substantial efforts were being made nationally and internationally in that regard, but what mattered was what was done not what was said. Australia would participate constructively and energetically in the follow-up to the recent extraordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety. It encouraged the Agency to strengthen its peer review services. As the incoming chair of UNSCEAR, his country and its experts would cooperate closely with the Agency to help assess the radiological consequences of the Fukushima accident.

127. All Agency Member States must work to ensure that an effective safeguards system was in place in order to have assurances of the correctness and completeness of a State's declarations. This was of fundamental importance for nuclear trade and cooperation, international security and continuing progress on nuclear disarmament. To be effective, a safeguards system must have universal coverage and good-faith implementation. Australia again called on all NPT States which had yet to fulfil their obligations under the Treaty to conclude comprehensive safeguards agreements without delay. It would continue to use regional and bilateral opportunities to encourage all countries to implement effective safeguards, including as chair of the Asia-Pacific Safeguards Network which would hold its next plenary meeting later in the year. It would also contribute to the preparatory process for the 2015 NPT Review Conference.

128. The Australian safeguards support programme, which had been in place since 1980, was one way his country supported the Agency in developing safeguards techniques and approaches. The programme had made valuable contributions in such areas as analytical services for environmental sampling, remote monitoring, training, and analytical and concepts work. The University of Western Australia had now qualified its large-geometry secondary ion mass spectrometer to become a member of the Agency's network of analytical laboratories.

129. The major technical challenge faced by the safeguards system was the need to ensure credible verification, thus providing confidence that safeguards were effective in detecting both the misuse of declared facilities and the existence of undeclared facilities. The additional protocol was an essential component to guarantee maximum effectiveness of the system and Australia encouraged those States that had yet to sign, ratify and implement an additional protocol to do so as soon as possible.

130. It was a matter of continuing regret that a very small minority of States continued to be in breach of their safeguards obligations. His Government again urged the Islamic Republic of Iran to comply with the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and to engage with the Agency in order to demonstrate conclusively the peaceful intent of its nuclear programme. The Director General's latest report on Iran detailed further enrichment and heavy water-related work, and Iran's refusal to provide access to the Parchin site. His country shared the concerns about the mounting evidence of possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear programme. It was thus appropriate that the Board of Governors had adopted a further resolution on Iran by an overwhelming majority at its meeting the preceding week. Australia welcomed the Director General's proactive efforts to engage with Iran but, despite the Agency's efforts and the assurances by the Government of Iran that there were no obstacles that would prevent an agreement, Iran had so far failed to conclude any agreement.

131. His Government was deeply concerned by the DPRK's uranium enrichment activities and its construction of a light water reactor, and it urged that country to abandon its nuclear weapons and its nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, and to comply with its NPT and Agency safeguards obligations. The Agency should remain ready to play an essential role in verifying the DPRK's nuclear programme.

132. Australia had long supported the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. It welcomed the Director General's initiative to convene a Middle East forum on the issue the preceding November. Participants in the forum had benefited from the experience of experts from the five nuclear-weapon-free zones. The forum had been a positive step towards achieving a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons. Australia encouraged all States to avoid any actions that might disrupt progress towards that goal.

133. His country continued to work closely with the Agency and its regional neighbours on nuclear safety and security. It looked forward to hosting an IPPAS mission in 2013 and a regional IPPAS workshop in November 2012.

134. As a major uranium producer and exporter, Australia was committed to the safe and environmentally sound mining, processing and transport of uranium and had a good record in those areas. It had sought to promote an informed discussion between the Vienna missions of existing and prospective uranium mining countries.

135. His country would continue to work actively with the Agency and regional partners on strengthening the security of radioactive sources.

136. Australia supported international efforts to develop nuclear forensic libraries, a common lexicon and training, including through the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and the international technical working group. It had developed new technologies that would enable customs authorities to identify radioactive material in transit swiftly and accurately, thereby enhancing their ability to detect the presence of illicitly trafficked nuclear material. It also continued to support international endeavours to provide safe, timely and reliable transport of radioactive material essential to industry and to medical, scientific and industrial applications.

137. His country upheld the right of Member States to enjoy the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in accordance with their international obligations. It shared its skilled scientific research base with other Member States and facilitated the use and exchange of equipment and personnel. It had made its facilities available to Japanese neutron beam researchers following the March 2011 earthquake.

138. Australia was significantly expanding production of molybdenum-99 through its fully LEU-based production facilities and process, and it had recently earmarked funding for the construction and commissioning of a large-scale molybdenum-99 processing plant which would supply a significant part of global demand following the closure of current production reactors in the coming years. In so doing, it was advancing global nuclear non-proliferation efforts by minimizing the civilian use of HEU. It was also proceeding with a pilot plant for specialized waste-form technology, Synroc.

139. His country would remain one of the leading contributors to the TCF, providing substantial contributions to the Agency's efforts to share the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Regionally, it was strongly committed to the success of the RCA, to which it made significant extrabudgetary contributions for projects on radiation protection and health care.

140. The Agency faced many challenges, but his country remained confident that it had the leadership, capacity and resilience to meet its statutory objectives and to contribute to a better world.

141. Ms TROJANOWSKA (Poland) said that her Government had decided to launch a nuclear power programme primarily for reasons of energy security: to ensure long-term supply of electricity at reasonable prices while respecting environmental protection requirements. That decision would have a major economic and social impact not only on the domestic power industry but on the entire economy. Poland planned to build two nuclear power plants with a total installed capacity of roughly

6000 MW(e), and to start operation of the first nuclear power reactor around 2023. By 2030, nuclear energy would account for 17% of the country's energy mix. The decision was a response to the challenging situation in the domestic power sector: a high dependence on coal, ageing power-generation assets, and the obligation to meet international targets set by the European Union climate and energy package.

142. Energy production needs could not take precedence over the safe and secure operation of nuclear facilities. Preparatory work on the introduction of nuclear power in Poland was in full compliance with the provisions of international law and European Union regulations, and with the guidelines and recommendation of the Agency and other international organizations. Her country was in the final stage of preparations for an INIR mission which was planned for the first quarter of 2013. The final self-evaluation report would be based on recently amended legislation and the Polish nuclear power programme. An IRRS mission was also scheduled for 2013.

143. National R&D institutes, universities and other R&D entities played an important role at all stages of nuclear power implementation, from legislation, through staff training and collaboration with investors in the preparation phase, to safe operation. Nuclear research in Poland had begun more than half a century ago. In the absence of a domestic nuclear power industry, cooperation with the Agency, and in particular technical cooperation on national and regional projects, had played an important role in improving nuclear knowledge and developing skills. Her country's progress in that regard had been recognized by the Agency which had used its researchers as experts. In addition, many foreign students had been trained at Polish research institutes, one of which had been made an Agency collaborating centre for radiation processing and industrial dosimetry for the years 2010–2014. Modernization of the country's R&D infrastructure for its nuclear power programme was a Government priority, and with the help of the European Union's Structural Fund a project had been implemented on a centre for radiochemistry and nuclear chemistry to meet the needs of nuclear power and nuclear medicine. The National Centre for Research and Development had launched a project on technologies in support of safe nuclear power worth some €13 million. The Centre was coordinating three research areas under the project: spent fuel and radioactive waste reprocessing; coolant chemistry; and radiolysis/catalytic phenomena in the core and temporary spent fuel wet storage ponds.

144. The decision to embark on a nuclear power programme had made it necessary to review the suitability of national regulations. Binding acts of international law, European Union directives and the safety standards adopted by the Agency required countries developing nuclear power programmes to implement regulations on safety of nuclear installations. Experts from the Polish nuclear regulator, drawing on Agency and WENRA recommendations, had elaborated detailed safety requirements for nuclear installations, including their siting, design, construction, commissioning and decommissioning, as well as a model for financing radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel management. Those requirements had been given effect in Polish law through amendments to legislation and regulations. The Polish nuclear regulator had undergone a far-reaching reorganization of personnel, finances and competencies in order to ensure better supervision of nuclear power facilities.

145. Poland participated actively in international cooperation directed at improving nuclear safety worldwide. The review process under the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management was a vital instrument in that regard. The fourth review meeting held in May 2012 had given fresh impetus to the implementation of long-term national policies and strategies on radioactive waste and spent fuel management. In addition, suggestions had been made at the recent extraordinary review meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety on further action to strengthen the safety of nuclear power plants, whether currently operating or under construction, and to enhance the effectiveness of the review process under that Convention. Poland supported those important activities, and it intended to pursue its efforts to



improve the application of Agency safety standards, enhance the transparency and the effectiveness of the nuclear regulator, and make use of international peer review missions.

146. Her country ensured the effective independence of its nuclear regulatory body and provided for effective sanctions. The functional separation of the nuclear regulatory body from other organizations dealing with the promotion or use of nuclear power was guaranteed. The decisions of the regulatory body had legal force, including measures to require an adequate level of knowledge and financial and staff resources from a licensee to ensure that personnel were in a position to ensure safe operation and appropriate response to any accident.

147. The technical cooperation programme was a unique platform for the exchange of information, experience and technical and scientific know-how. In Europe, regular consultative meetings aimed at devising new managerial tools had helped to make the programme more effective and efficient. Her country particularly appreciated the cooperation with the Secretariat on the preparation of the up-to-date version of the strategy for the technical cooperation programme in the European region and of the European Regional Profile for 2014–2017.

148. Initially a recipient of Agency technical cooperation, Poland had become an important donor. Together with other new European Union countries, it played a dual role in the technical cooperation programme, contributing significantly to TCDC. In addition to national projects with very high government cost sharing, Polish institutions actively participated in regional projects, offering their knowledge and competence to other Member States.

149. Financing of technical cooperation activities should be assured, sufficient and predictable. All Member States, donors and recipients, must demonstrate their commitment to the programme by pledging and paying their TCF target shares on time and in full as well as their NPCs. For that reason, Poland strongly supported the application of the due account principle. As in the past, it had pledged and paid its TCF target share.

150. In February 2012, Poland had hosted a conference on combating nuclear smuggling jointly with Interpol, with a view to exchanging good practices on enhancing international cooperation among States, with a focus on preventing and responding to nuclear and radiological threats. The conference had been attended by participants from 27 countries which had also subsequently taken part in the Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, as well as Agency representatives.

151. Under the Global Threat Reduction Initiative's Russian research reactor fuel return programme, her country was removing spent HEU nuclear fuel from its Ewa and Maria research reactors. Between September 2009 and September 2010, five shipments of spent nuclear fuel had been organized. The uranium-235 recovered from the spent nuclear fuel would be used as new fuel for nuclear power plants. The Maria reactor core conversion was ongoing and should be complete by the first quarter of 2014.

152. Poland was committed to ensuring that the highest nuclear security standards were observed during the development of its peaceful nuclear power programme. To that end, it had been cooperating with the Agency since 2011 on preparing a national nuclear security training programme. The Agency's Office of Nuclear Security had sent an expert mission to Poland in December 2011. The recommendations that had emerged from the mission had been analysed and follow-up action taken. Poland had also amended its domestic legislation to empower the relevant Government agencies to take action in the nuclear security field.

153. Mr VAN WULFFTEN PALTHE (Netherlands) said that the significant progress had been made in recent years on non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament. At the 2010 NPT Review Conference, consensus had been reached for the first time in many years among the parties. He

expressed appreciation to the organizers of the planned 2012 conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, and to the facilitator of that event, Mr Laajava. His country had welcomed the outcome of the forum convened in November 2011 at the initiative of the Director General on experience of possible relevance to the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

154. It continued to be a challenging time for the non-proliferation regime. The ongoing defiance of the DPRK regarding its nuclear weapons programme, Iran's failure to cooperate in allowing the Agency to verify the nature of its nuclear programme, Syria's unresolved non-compliance and the danger of nuclear material falling into the hands of terrorists and other non-State actors were all matters of grave concern.

155. Non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control had always been and would remain cornerstones of his country's foreign policy, with the NPT as a basis and the 2010 NPT Review Conference action plan as a road map. All three were facets of the same diamond. The Netherlands would continue to make innovative, practical and realistic proposals for implementing key recommendations of the 2010 action plan.

156. The Netherlands was an active member of the group of ten countries that had launched the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative. At the ministerial meeting held in Istanbul in June 2012, the members of that Initiative had decided to press for greater transparency in the way nuclear-weapon States reported their disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation efforts, and they had also stepped up their efforts to achieve universal accession to the additional protocol and entry into force of the CTBT. Like all members of the Initiative, the Netherlands was deeply concerned and frustrated about the continuing stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament.

157. Agency safeguards were a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and played an indispensable role in the implementation of the NPT. The measures contained in the Model Additional Protocol formed an integral part of the safeguards regime. His country firmly supported the continued evolution of safeguards towards a State-level concept which would enable the Agency to focus its efforts where proliferation concerns were greatest. The Netherlands appreciated the way in which the Secretariat was discharging its mandate. It supported safeguards on a bilateral basis through its safeguards support programme. In addition, it was supporting the Secretariat's action plan on universalization of the additional protocol through a voluntary contribution of €100 000.

158. His country had noted with deep concern the latest report of the Director General on safeguards implementation in Iran which had confirmed once again that Iran continued to expand its enrichment activities — including by increasing its capacity to enrich uranium to 20% — in violation of its obligations. The Netherlands remained deeply concerned about possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear programme. That country's cooperation was still insufficient for the Agency to provide credible assurances regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in the country and therefore to conclude that all nuclear material there was in peaceful activities. His country firmly supported the resolution the Board of Governors had adopted the preceding week, and it urged Iran to comply in full with all its international obligations and to cooperate with the Agency to resolve all outstanding issues and restore international confidence in the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme.

159. He commended the Secretariat for its energetic approach to nuclear security, a very important field which his country was helping to promote through various forums such as the Nuclear Security Summits and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. The Netherlands sought to strengthen the Agency's pivotal role in that regard by ensuring that it had sufficient capacity and means to carry out its task. Over the years, it had contributed generously to the Nuclear Security Fund and would be

making a further contribution of up to €250 000 to strengthen nuclear security measures in Colombia. The Agency's work on nuclear security should not be dependent on extrabudgetary contributions: it should be fully funded through the Regular Budget.

160. In addition to such financial contributions, the Netherlands cooperated with the Agency by hosting events, such as training courses on physical protection. The Netherlands Forensics Institute had recently signed a partnership agreement with the Agency. Starting February 2013, the Reactor Institute in Delft, an IAEA collaborating centre, would offer a master's programme in nuclear security.

161. The Netherlands had completed a full cycle of IPPAS missions to all its nuclear installations and had received the follow-up mission to discuss implementation of the recommendations made. Those missions had been of great value to the country in improving work at national level. He strongly encouraged other Member States to request IPPAS missions in order to strengthen the physical protection of their nuclear installations.

162. The Netherlands would be hosting the next Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague on 24 and 25 March 2014. The objective of the Summit was to raise awareness of the risks of nuclear terrorism, to work towards a greater commitment to specific measures, and to give impetus to the implementation of nuclear security, thereby fully supporting the Agency's work in that area. The Agency should consolidate and expand on the excellent work that it had done in the preceding decade in that field and the planned 2013 international conference on nuclear security should provide an excellent opportunity to take a further step in that respect.

163. His Government believed that nuclear energy had an important role to play in the country's energy mix in terms of security of supply and CO<sub>2</sub> reduction. Nuclear energy could serve as a major bridging technology pending a future with more renewable energy. The Fukushima accident had strengthened his Government's resolve that safety must come first. Lessons learned from the accident had been incorporated into the country's nuclear policy.

164. The Netherlands continued to be a strong supporter of the Agency's technical cooperation programme. It had therefore again pledged its full target share to the TCF for 2013. Through the technical cooperation programme, the Agency could make a unique contribution to sustainable national and international development, including in the context of the Millennium Development Goals. However, rigorous implementation of safety, security and safeguards measures in the technical cooperation programme was essential to prevent unnecessary health risks and to ensure that nuclear material did not end up in the hands of terrorists or other malicious individuals or organizations. He welcomed the Agency's clear commitment in that regard.

165. The Agency had an invaluable role to play in strengthening nuclear non-proliferation, guaranteeing the safety and security of nuclear energy and advancing nuclear technology for the benefit of all. It was therefore crucial to ensure that it had the authority, expertise and resources it needed to fulfil its mandate. In that connection, his country welcomed the agreement on the budget update for 2013.

166. Mr BALSLEV (Denmark) said that the Agency's key role in the global effort to prevent nuclear proliferation remained at the centre of his country's attention. The Agency's recognized mandate in the field of nuclear safety and security was also of increasingly pivotal importance.

167. The Agency verified the peaceful use of nuclear technologies and offered essential assurances in that regard. Its work offered Member States the opportunity to clear themselves of any suspicion of wrongdoing through full and unrestricted cooperation with the organization. As experience had shown, the Agency could only play that role to the full when it had the necessary tools, and his country was convinced that a comprehensive safeguards agreement in combination with an additional protocol

constituted the contemporary verification standard under the NPT. It therefore called for universal accession to and implementation of both instruments, and fully supported the Agency's efforts to develop the State-level safeguards concept to make safeguards as effective as possible.

168. The United Nations Security Council also had a key responsibility for non-proliferation and his country continued to support fully its resolutions 1887 (2009) and 1540 (2004). The Council had also adopted a number of country-specific resolutions with the object of upholding the integrity and efficiency of the non-proliferation regime. It was essential that all countries fully implement the resolutions on the DPRK and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

169. With regard to Iran, the Director General's report of November 2011 had set out what the Agency termed overall credible information indicating that Iran had carried out activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device. That was a matter of grave concern. Iran's ongoing and expanding enrichment activities, including enrichment to 20%, had exacerbated that concern. Denmark urged Iran to comply fully with all resolutions of the Security Council and the Board of Governors, and with its safeguards agreement, so that confidence in the peaceful nature of its nuclear activities could be restored. The most recent Board resolution had further underscored the need for Iran urgently to step up its cooperation with the Agency.

170. As regards the Syrian Arab Republic, his country had noted with serious concern the Agency's conclusion, recently confirmed, that the destroyed building at Dair Alzour had very likely been a nuclear reactor and should have been declared by Syria. It joined the Director General in urging Syria to implement fully its safeguards agreement and to bring into force an additional protocol. That issue was of central importance for the credibility of the international non-proliferation verification regime.

171. With regard to the DPRK, Denmark was very concerned that the Agency was not being permitted to fulfil its mandate and it strongly supported calls on the DPRK to comply with all its international obligations and commitments and to allow an early return of Agency inspectors.

172. Turning to the issue of nuclear safety, he said that the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in 2011 had demonstrated the need for the international community to come together to strengthen nuclear safety substantially around the world. The adoption of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety a year ago had been a step forward, as it set out commitments on the part of Member States and the Secretariat. Denmark welcomed the efforts made since then by the Secretariat to implement the plan, including allocating financial and human resources for that purpose, but it continued to see a need to strengthen further some aspects of nuclear safety efforts, in particular peer review mechanisms, Agency safety inspections and binding safety standards. While many of the points in the plan primarily affected countries with nuclear power programmes, his country had also taken steps to implement relevant parts of it. It was currently in the process of reviewing its emergency response arrangements as far as preparedness, capacities and agreements regarding international assistance were concerned. The lessons learned from Fukushima were part and parcel of that review. The aim was to achieve a more robust preparedness regime. There was also an ongoing process to review the arrangements pertaining to the national regulatory body. Furthermore, in 2011 and 2012 Denmark had strengthened its national nuclear system, with strong quality controls, to monitor permanently radiation levels in Denmark and Greenland as a central part of its nuclear preparedness system. Denmark exchanged the radiological monitoring data collected with a number of other countries, including through the European Union Radiological Data Exchange Platform.

173. His country highly valued the Agency's work on nuclear security. The need to protect against nuclear terrorism and other malicious acts involving nuclear material was rising higher and higher on the world's agenda, and rightly so. Denmark was pleased to have been able to make a substantial contribution during the year to the Agency's Nuclear Security Fund, and it was committed to working

to ensure that the Fund had sufficient resources, including from the Regular Budget, to step up its work to help all Member States protect themselves and each other against nuclear terrorism. Following the fruitful Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, there was a need to focus on collectively defining priorities for the work on nuclear security in time for the Nuclear Security Summit in the Netherlands in 2014. Denmark was proud of its number 1 ranking among countries without nuclear material in the Nuclear Threat Initiative's nuclear material security index, it stood ready to share relevant experience with interested partners and was looking forward to hosting an Agency workshop on stakeholder involvement and communication in remediation projects later in the year.

174. Following the successful 2010 NPT Review Conference, it was important that implementation of the action plan adopted there be prioritized and steps avoided that might jeopardize that work. His country supported the Agency in its role under the action plan and welcomed the success of the Agency forum on experience relevant to the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East in November 2011. That forum could provide valuable input, including for the planned 2012 conference mandated by the 2010 NPT Review Conference on the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in that region. Denmark appreciated the helpful spirit of the countries directly involved, and regional organizations, in refraining from introducing elements that could be detrimental to the process.

175. Turning to the peaceful uses of nuclear technology, he said that Denmark had made the decision that nuclear power should not be included in its own energy mix, as it did not consider it a sustainable form of energy. It was therefore not in favour of a promotional role for the Agency in the field of nuclear power, but it respected the choice of other Member States and the Agency's statutory obligations. It recognized the interest of a number of States in introducing nuclear power and highly valued the Agency's contribution to ensuring that that was done under the best safety, security and non-proliferation conditions.

176. Denmark was appreciative of the Agency's highly professional work in the field of technical cooperation on peaceful applications and had again pledged its full share of the TCF in order to support the Agency's work to combat hunger, disease and poverty. It was highly relevant that the Director General had chosen to focus, in the current year, on the use of nuclear techniques to achieve food security. The world would continue to rely on the Agency for expertise and support in all its fields of activity.

**Ms Dengo (Costa Rica), Vice-President, took the Chair**

177. Mr SUÁREZ PÉREZ-LUCAS (Spain) said that the full and effective application of the NPT and the non-proliferation regime played an essential role in the promotion of international peace and security. His country supported the universalization of the NPT and the implementation of all points of the action plan adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, including the holding of a diplomatic conference in December 2012 to initiate negotiations on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. He expressed appreciation to Finland for its willingness to host that conference, and to the facilitator, Mr Laajava, for his efforts. Spain also much appreciated the Director General's organization, in November 2011, of a forum on nuclear-weapon-free zones, which should help generate the necessary climate of confidence for the forthcoming diplomatic conference.

178. Universalization of the NPT, safeguards agreements and the additional protocol was essential to maintain confidence in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. His country welcomed the fact that 117 countries had now ratified an additional protocol and it joined the Director General in calling on those that had not yet done so to take that step without delay. It also called on the 13 States that had not yet concluded safeguards agreement to do so swiftly.

179. He commended the Director General and the Secretariat on their impartiality, objectivity and authority in carrying out their verification mandate, of which mission his Government continued to be a committed supporter. Spain had a national safeguards support programme and it had provided financial support for the Clean Laboratory Extension in Seibersdorf and the new Nuclear Material Laboratory which was planned to be complete by 2015.

180. His country was greatly concerned by the Director General's report on the Iranian nuclear programme and his assessment that the intensified dialogue between the Agency and Iran since January 2012 had not produced tangible results. The lack of full and unconditional cooperation by Iran, the ongoing enrichment of uranium up to 20% and the installation of new centrifuges at Fordow were cause for particular concern. As a result of Iran's continued failure to comply with its obligations under resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and the Board of Governors, the international community's doubts regarding the exclusively peaceful nature of that country's nuclear programme could not be dispelled and the Agency was unable to provide credible assurances of the absence of undeclared nuclear material or activities.

181. Spain urged Iran to conclude an agreement with the Agency on a structured approach and effective implementation thereof as soon as possible, granting the Agency access to the Parchin facilities; and to ratify and apply the additional protocol, and apply the modified Code 3.1 of its Subsidiary Arrangements. It trusted that the resolution adopted by the Board on 13 September would contribute to that end.

182. As a European Union member State, Spain shared the objective of achieving a comprehensive, negotiated diplomatic solution that would fully restore the confidence of the international community in the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme. It respected the right of all countries to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, in conformity with the obligations countries assumed under the NPT. It trusted that the ongoing diplomatic efforts undertaken by the European Union High Representative together with China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States would contribute to the Agency's efforts to fulfil its verification mandate in Iran.

183. His country shared the concerns expressed in the latest report on the DPRK. That country should cease all military nuclear activities completely and verifiably, comply with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and meet its commitments under the NPT. Spain called on the DPRK to initiate cooperation with the Director General of the Agency, allowing Agency inspectors to return to the country to carry out their inspection work. It also supported the continuation of the six-party talks with the aim of finding a diplomatic solution to the crisis caused by the DPRK's nuclear programme.

184. With regard to Syria, his Government noted with concern the Director General's report which indicated that there had been no progress in resolving the outstanding issues. He requested the Director General to continue to report on that issue. The disturbing developments and instability in the country must be taken into consideration but could not exonerate the Syrian authorities from complying with their obligations.

185. The terrorist attacks of 2001 had radically altered the way threats to international peace and security were perceived and countered. The risk of nuclear terrorism had prompted new actions, initiatives and mechanisms at both national and international level. At the second Nuclear Security Summit held in Seoul in March 2012, the Spanish Prime Minister had stressed the need for collective efforts, the nature of the challenges being such that every State, whatever its size and the scale of its nuclear programme, must develop the necessary capabilities to prevent, detect and respond to a nuclear or radiological attack. His country was fully aware of the dangers and thus participated actively in all international initiatives and mechanisms in that area.

186. International cooperation in that area was of fundamental importance and the Agency's work was key. Thus, it was important that the organization be given all the resources it needed. Spain contributed to the Nuclear Security Fund and encouraged other States to do likewise. Thanks to that contribution, a bilateral cooperation programme with Morocco had been launched with Agency involvement.

187. Since 2010, Spain had been acting as coordinator of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, over which period it had done important work on compiling and defining best practices and recommendations in three areas: forensic techniques, detection mechanisms and protection methods, and response to intentional radiological incidents. The Agency, in its capacity as an observer, had made a vital contribution. He commended in particular its establishment of the Nuclear Security Guidance Committee to enhance collaboration with national experts on Agency standards, and the improvements made in such tools as the illicit trafficking database. Spain also welcomed the international conference on nuclear security the Agency was planning to hold in July 2013, and was playing an active part in the preparations for it.

188. The nuclear accident at the Fukushima nuclear power plant that had occurred in March 2011 had prompted much debate and reflection with the aim of re-establishing confidence in, and improving safety standards. No effort had been spared in upholding the central principle of the primacy of safety. Thus, the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety had been approved at the preceding session of the General Conference, an extraordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety had been held in August 2012, and the Fukushima Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety was planned for December, offering another opportunity to learn lessons from the accident.

189. Turning to Spain's own activities in the field of nuclear safety and radiation protection, he congratulated the Ibero-American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies, to which his country belonged, on its 15th anniversary. He drew particular attention to the Forum's contribution to the development of a methodology for the control of metallic materials in the region, based on experience with the Spanish protocol for radiological surveillance of metallic materials; as well as its contribution to patient protection through its work on the safety of radiotherapy facilities and on radiation protection recommendations for medical exposures, and to nuclear safety in the area of life extension and stress tests for nuclear power plants.

190. The Agency's work on the development of international standards was important and of great assistance to many countries developing their own legal frameworks. Spain, through its Nuclear Safety Council, was closely involved in the planning, drafting and review of those standards, which reflected its own best practices. In recent years, it had also made an extrabudgetary contribution for the translation of Agency standards into Spanish in order to promote the establishment and improvement of regulatory capacities in other Spanish-speaking countries.

191. His country was in favour of strengthening the Agency's role in encouraging Member States to apply safety standards and carry out peer reviews, and in monitoring application of standards, in line with the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety.

192. One important activity where Spain collaborated closely with the Agency was the IRRS. IRRS missions allowed the quality of regulatory bodies to be compared at international level and they were a splendid tool for achieving the levels of excellence those bodies should aspire to. The outcome of the IRRS mission to Spain in 2008 had been pleasing, as was also the case for the follow-up mission in 2011. In addition, when the Agency requested his country to supply staff for missions to other countries, it was committed to providing high-level representatives from its own regulatory body.

Spanish experts participated in various types of Agency mission, including the mission organized following the Fukushima accident which had been led by an expert from the Nuclear Safety Council.

193. Spain would continue to dedicate significant resources to public information mechanisms to ensure that information on incidents was reliable and technically well founded. It continued to be involved in work on the development and application of the INES scale and welcomed the initiatives to review and strengthen the early notification and assistance mechanisms.

194. His country continued to participate in the Agency's technical cooperation programmes, which it viewed as a priority activity, especially the programmes for improving regulatory infrastructure in Latin America and North Africa, which it supported both financially and through the supply of experts. It also greatly valued ARCAL, for which it was a strategic partner.

195. The value of the Agency's activities was indisputable. Spain and its Nuclear Safety Council, which had over 40 years' accumulated experience in the civil use of nuclear energy and its regulation, looked forward to a continuing excellent climate of cooperation in the coming decades.

196. In 2011, nuclear technology had been Spain's primary source of electricity, 20% of total demand having been met by its 8 nuclear reactors. As the country was heavily dependent on energy imports, it was determined not to underuse its available energy sources, including operating nuclear power plants, in the interests of the security and diversification of its energy supply, optimization of energy costs and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, but in strict compliance with the safety requirements established by the Nuclear Safety Council. That being so, as a centralized interim storage facility for spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste was the safest and most sensible way of managing such material from a technical and economic point of view, the Spanish Government had designated the location where such a facility and its associated technological centre would be built, with public involvement and based on the report of the inter-ministerial commission established to address that issue. As a result, his country would have the capacity and infrastructure needed to manage radioactive material generated in the country in the coming decades.

197. Mr SURIYAWONGSE (Thailand) said his country had cooperated fully with the international community in its efforts to strengthen nuclear safety, security and safeguards. At the Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, it had made a commitment to global nuclear security and offered to host a sherpa meeting for the next Summit to be held in The Hague. Thailand looked forward to participating in the high-level meeting on countering nuclear terrorism to be held in New York during the 67th session of the United Nations General Assembly, and in the international conference on nuclear security to be held by the Agency in July 2013.

198. His country appreciated the Agency's efforts to implement the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety and it would be participating in the ministerial conference on the issue to be held in the Fukushima Prefecture.

199. He thanked the Agency for the active role it had played in the preparations for the conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East which was to be held in Helsinki pursuant to the outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

200. At regional level, Thailand had initiated the establishment of an ASEAN network of nuclear regulatory bodies or relevant authorities with the objective of enhancing regulatory activities and strengthening nuclear safety, security and safeguards. The meeting to finalize the network's terms of reference had been held in Bangkok in August 2012 and it was expected that it would be established by the end of the year. It would support and contribute to preserving South-East Asia as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. In October 2012, in cooperation with Australia, Thailand would be hosting



in Bangkok the third plenary meeting of the Asia-Pacific Safeguards Network with the aim of promoting nuclear safeguards in the region.

201. Thailand had also been working to strengthen nuclear safety and security at national level. A centre of excellence for nuclear forensic science would be established in Bangkok in 2013 with the objective of enhancing capacity building for relevant national authorities in nuclear detection and forensics. In the preceding twelve months, his country had established six additional radiation monitoring stations, including two underwater stations, bringing the total number of such stations in the country to fourteen; it had also maximized their use as local operations centres for initial response to nuclear security emergencies. In May 2012, the Office of Atoms for Peace had established regional offices in the north, east and south of Thailand to enhance its capacity as the nuclear regulatory body; a regional office in the north-east was to be established in 2013.

202. In addition to its programmes for capacity building and improving facilities, Thailand was finalizing its atomic energy policy, which should be implemented as of 2013, with the objective of strengthening the policy and legal framework and reaffirming the country's commitment to nuclear safety, security and safeguards, and the ratification of relevant international legal instruments.

203. Following its decision to postpone the commencement of its nuclear energy programme after the Fukushima accident, his country had established a Nuclear Energy Study and Coordination Office under the Ministry of Energy with the objective of strengthening its nuclear safety capabilities. Peaceful nuclear energy remained an important part of Thailand's energy mix in its power development plan for 2012–2030.

204. Thailand had been working with the Agency on technical cooperation projects in various areas, especially food and agriculture. At the end of 2011, it had experienced one of the worst flood crises in its history, to which the Agency had promptly responded by providing emergency funding to assist in the use of nuclear techniques to improve agricultural and livestock conditions, and water and soil management. The project had been developed and expanded into a national project for longer-term research and development in the 2014–2015 cycle. As in previous years, Thailand had pledged to contribute 100% of its target share of the TCF for 2012.

205. Ms TAN (Singapore) said that, 40 years on, the NPT remained the cornerstone of global efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and make progress towards the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament. Her country was encouraged by the positive atmosphere of the discussions at the NPT Review Conference Preparatory Committee on how to move the process forward. It was regrettable that some States remained outside the NPT, and that the DPRK had yet to return to the NPT and to resume its cooperation with the Agency. Singapore was also concerned about the continuing allegations of possible military dimensions to the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran. While her country fully supported Iran's right to peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology in accordance with its obligations under the NPT, Iran needed to address the serious confidence deficit with respect to its nuclear programme. Singapore continued to urge Iran to comply fully with the relevant United Nations Security Council and Board of Governors resolutions, and to extend its fullest cooperation to the Agency to clarify all outstanding issues.

206. The second Nuclear Security Summit held in Seoul in March 2012 had reaffirmed the Agency's central role in providing advice and assistance to States in connection with nuclear security matters, and in coordinating various multilateral initiatives. Singapore welcomed the convening of an international conference on nuclear security by the Agency in 2013 to examine how to improve coordination of multilateral initiatives. In March 2012, it had joined the Agency's illicit trafficking database.

207. The Fukushima accident had been a wake-up call with regard to the safe operation of nuclear power plants. Since the adoption of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, the Secretariat had made commendable efforts to oversee its implementation, but much more still needed to be done. Her country appreciated the Agency's assistance to newcomers in building up their indigenous expertise and in establishing a sound and robust regulatory and legislative infrastructure. It urged all Member States to work with the Secretariat and other stakeholders to ensure the full and effective implementation of the action plan. In that connection, it looked forward to a meaningful and constructive outcome to the ministerial conference to be held in Fukushima in December 2012.

208. At the extraordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, proposals had been put forward to amend the Convention in order to strengthen nuclear safety and enhance transparency and regulatory effectiveness. Singapore welcomed the establishment of an effectiveness and transparency working group and hoped that the goal of enhancing and strengthening the Convention would receive broad support.

209. Singapore encouraged the Agency to step up its capacity-building cooperation with regional organizations in order to promote and uphold Agency safety and security standards in the development of nuclear energy for peaceful uses. That would help strengthen nuclear safety throughout the world. In that connection, her country was pleased to announce that good progress had been made in the initiative launched by Thailand to establish a network of nuclear regulatory bodies among South-East Asian countries to enhance regional cooperation on nuclear safety, security and safeguards matters, including emergency preparedness and response and environmental radiation monitoring. It looked forward to close collaboration between the ASEAN nuclear regulatory network, the Agency and international partners.

210. Member States must continue to support the Agency's role in promoting other peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology in such areas as cancer treatment, water management and agriculture. Her country welcomed the Director General's proposal to focus on the theme of food security at the current year's Scientific Forum.

211. As a member of the Board of Governors over the preceding two years, Singapore had worked closely with other Board members to advance the interests of all Member States. From time to time, that had not been possible owing to the unnecessary politicization of the Agency's work and polarization of views. As it left the Board, Singapore hoped that discussions could be conducted in a spirit of consensus and that all parties would work for the best interests of the Agency as a whole. It looked forward to returning to the Board of Governors in four years' time.

212. In the meantime, her country would continue to support the Agency's work. In June 2012, it had hosted the Asia-Europe Meeting seminar on nuclear safety, which had focused on emergency preparedness and response, one of the key areas of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. It had also agreed to the Agency's proposal jointly to host a regional workshop on communicating with the IAEA during a radiological or nuclear emergency in December 2012. It would continue to work with the Agency in promoting capacity building, in particular among developing countries, through various technical assistance and cooperation projects.

213. Ms MARTINHO (Portugal) offered her condolences to the victims and families of the attacks recently perpetrated against the diplomatic premises of Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States.

214. She called on all States that had not yet done so to join the NPT as non-nuclear weapon States and to conclude safeguards agreements with the Agency. The standard model for safeguards constituted a safeguards agreement and an additional protocol. Both instruments were essential for ensuring peace and the non-diversion of nuclear material and activities. Her country supported the

evolution of safeguards towards a State-level concept which would apply to all States. That concept had already been applied in many States with concrete and advantageous results. That State-level approach would enable the Agency to focus its efforts on areas where the risks of proliferation were greatest.

215. The Agency's efforts since the tragic events at Fukushima were commendable. Portugal had contributed to the discussions on safety by making public its national report to the second extraordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety. Given its geographic location, her country paid particular attention to transport safety and security.

216. As a global and far-reaching organization, the Agency played a vital role in nuclear safety and security. Those issues were of universal importance and ought to be addressed in a comprehensive and global manner. She stressed that the Agency brought together countries that used nuclear energy for very different purposes, be it for electricity production or mainly for research.

217. The Agency had a major role in the modern world, firstly in the safeguards field and secondly via its technical cooperation activities in such areas as human health, food and agriculture, water resources, environment, nuclear energy, and nuclear and radiation safety. Radiation safety was also of particular relevance to non-nuclear States like her own. The European Union's chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risk mitigation centres of excellence had a role to play in that area.

218. Portugal was finishing its second CPF in 2012 and was already planning to start a third in 2013. It continued to count on the support of all members of the Agency. Agency technical cooperation had been a major element in her country's scientific culture, and of clear benefit to research and scientific programmes, particularly since the Agency's technical cooperation programme was needs-based and intended for all members of the Agency.

219. Capacity-building initiatives for scientific research, and specific results obtained to the benefit of populations, were equally as important as safeguards in ensuring worldwide peace.

220. Ms VILLANUEVA BRACHO (Mexico) said that her country had cooperated extensively with the Agency over the preceding year, particularly in the area of nuclear security. The Agency's work to promote nuclear security and prevent illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive material was of ever increasing importance for international security. Mexico was continuing its efforts to establish an effective and sustainable national security system.

221. On 1 August 2012 her country had deposited its instrument of ratification of the amendment to the CPPNM with no declarations or reservations attached, thus reaffirming its commitment to international nuclear security efforts. It urged Member States which had not already done so to ratify the amendment so as to allow its early entry into force.

222. As part of its commitment to reduce any potential threat to nuclear security, Mexico, in close collaboration with the Agency and the Government of the United States, had successfully converted the TRIGA Mark III research reactor at its National Nuclear Research Institute from HEU to LEU fuel.

223. Her country encouraged all Member States to participate actively in the Agency's illicit trafficking database with a view to achieving optimal results in the location and recovery of nuclear and radioactive material.

224. Mexico had informed the Director General of its intention to apply the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and had designated a point of contact. The National Commission for Nuclear Safety and Safeguards had signed an administrative agreement with its Canadian counterpart on the import and export of radioactive sources and was negotiating a

memorandum of understanding with the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission concerning the import and export of certain types of radioactive sources.

225. Work had been done, in cooperation with the Agency and the United States, on a project under the Megaports Initiative to prevent illegal imports of nuclear and radioactive material, and measures were already in place at the ports of Veracruz, Manzanillo and Altamira. With the inclusion of Altamira in 2012, 80% of Mexico's commercial shipping was subject to verification.

226. Her country welcomed the Agency's accelerated development of INSSPs and had notified the Agency of its acceptance of its own such plan in June 2012.

227. Mexico was grateful for the assistance provided by the Agency in connection with security arrangements at two major public events, namely the XVI Pan American Games in Guadalajara in October 2011 and the 7th G20 Leaders' Summit in Los Cabos in June 2012.

228. She congratulated the Ibero-American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies on its 15th anniversary and commended its efforts to maintain high levels of nuclear and radiation safety and security in the Ibero-American region, and its contribution to human and environmental health and safety.

229. Mexico was in the process of formalizing its membership in the Nuclear Suppliers Group. As a member of that Group, it looked forward to helping strengthen significantly international export control regimes, which it viewed as effective tools for ensuring States' compliance with their obligations under the NPT and other non-proliferation and disarmament instruments, thus facilitating the controlled development of advanced technology in sectors using nuclear technology for power generation and other applications.

230. The Agency was the main intergovernmental forum for technical and scientific cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear technology and as such it should continue to be strengthened. Her country attached great importance to the technical cooperation programme and to all mechanisms designed to optimize use of the resources allocated to that programme, especially with regard to increasing the relevance of projects in the areas of human health and nutrition, agriculture and power generation.

231. Mexico was an active promoter of technical cooperation among developing countries in Latin America and the Caribbean and it thus continued to support the activities promoted by the Agency in regional cooperation forums, including ARCAL. Under ARCAL, her country worked hard to ensure that countries that were more advanced in the nuclear science and technology field supported the efforts that were being made in that area by those which were relatively less advanced.

232. In that connection, Mexico was grateful to the Director and staff of the Division for Latin America in the Department of Technical Cooperation for their work in coordinating effectively the work carried out in the first quarter of the year at the biennial meeting in Vienna, and for the assistance provided with the organization of the 13th meeting of the ARCAL Technical Co-ordination Board in Viña del Mar, Chile, and the extraordinary meeting of the Board of ARCAL Representatives in May.

233. The Agency's work was receiving more and more public attention and advantage should be taken of that fact to advertise the benefits humanity was deriving from the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

234. The technical cooperation programme was one of the main vehicles for expanding the scope of those benefits, particularly in developing countries. Mexico therefore believed that the Agency's activities should reflect a balanced, equitable approach to technical cooperation, safety and verification, the three main areas of its work. Only in that way would it be possible truly to ensure optimal use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. To achieve that objective, all Member States

should make their voluntary contributions to the TCF in full and on time. Mexico, for its part, had paid its full share of the TCF in 2012.

235. Her country noted that the draft budget for 2013 represented an increase of 3.7% over 2012. Mexico had traditionally had a policy of zero real growth but, faced with shortfalls in various areas of the economy and in education, human health and well-being, it had moved to a policy of zero nominal growth. It therefore supported measures to make the Agency's budget more transparent and efficient. That would necessitate a clear correspondence between programme priorities and budget allocations.

236. The Agency's Financial Statements for 2011 (GC(56)/10) indicated that the rate of collection of assessed contributions for 2011 had been 93.2%, leaving a total of €21.2 million receivable. Even though the receivables balance had decreased by €16.1 million by comparison with the preceding year, it was important to note that the rate of collection remained low. Though, of course, many Member States were currently going through a financial crisis, it should be noted that the Agency's rate of collection was the lowest of all the international organizations headquartered in Vienna. Mexico encouraged the Director General to redouble his efforts to improve the rate of collection and urged Member States which had not yet done so to meet their statutory financial obligations on time and in full.

237. Mexico was one of three Member States to have ratified in the preceding year the amendment to Article XIV.A of the Agency's Statute introducing biennial budgeting. Given that the approval process for annual budgets consumed significant resources which could be used by the Secretariat and by Member States for other purposes, her country urged Member States which had not yet done so to ratify the amendment.

238. Her country acknowledged the important safeguards work that was being done by the Agency as part of its mandate under the NPT. It welcomed the many activities and efforts deployed by the Director General and his staff over the preceding year to meet all the challenges involved in that work, including hosting in November 2011 the forum on experience of possible relevance to the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and providing assistance in April and May 2012 with the organization of the meetings of the NPT Review Conference Preparatory Committee.

239. The application of safeguards required the cooperation of all States party to the NPT, which should all conclude and bring into force as early as possible a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol.

240. Mexico called on the DPRK, Iran and Syria to fulfil their obligations under the NPT and relevant resolutions of the Board of Governors and United Nations Security Council concerning their nuclear programmes. That cooperation was essential to facilitate the effective re-establishment of safeguards for international peace and security. As a State Party of the NPT, Mexico supported the right of all States to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, in full compliance with Agency safeguards agreements. At the same time, it was essential that all States have the necessary safeguards in place to preclude diversion from civilian to military programmes. Her country was confident that the negotiations between Iran and China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States would result in concrete actions with the aim of reaching a negotiated solution that would restore international confidence in the peaceful nature of that country's nuclear programme. Mexico called on Iran to demonstrate transparency, good faith and a spirit of constructiveness in those negotiations.

241. The promotion of peaceful nuclear programmes and the building of confidence and transparency must be based on the political will of States to accept and honour the obligations set forth in legally binding agreements such as the NPT and the various agreements and conventions relating to nuclear safety and security. That was the only way to ensure that more people could enjoy the benefits of the

safe and peaceful use of atomic energy. Mexico had always strongly advocated nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, as evidenced by its promotion of the Tlatelolco Treaty, the first treaty of its kind to ban nuclear weapons in a populated region and a model for others parts of the world.

242. Mr TOUQAN (Jordan) underscored the importance of the Agency's role in transferring knowledge and technology to developing countries with the aim of building up their scientific and technological capacities. He also commended its work on the application and assessment of safeguards, and its promotion of nuclear safety, especially in the wake of the Fukushima accident. The Agency had sought to involve the international community in meeting the challenge posed by the accident and Jordan planned to attend the forthcoming Fukushima Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety which should enhance transparency and promote the implementation of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety.

243. His country had been cooperating closely with the Agency for many years in expanding peaceful uses of nuclear energy by developing the country's infrastructure and training scientific and educational personnel. The Government and the institutions involved in implementing the country's nuclear programme endeavoured to ensure strict compliance with nuclear safety standards by opting for safe modern technology.

244. The Jordan Atomic Energy Commission had completed its assessment of tenders for the construction of the first nuclear power plant as well as its assessment of technological options. It had decided to continue its negotiations with two companies that had submitted tenders and were best qualified to implement the project, namely the ATMEA company, which was a joint venture of AREVA and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, and the Russian company Atomstroyexport. The Commission was also completing a comprehensive survey aimed at selecting an appropriate site for the construction of the nuclear power plant.

245. The Atomic Energy Commission was currently completing uranium exploration activities and embarking on economic feasibility studies in the central region of the country. Preliminary findings indicated the existence of quantities of uranium exceeding 20 000 tonnes. The establishment of a strategic reserve of uranium ore would certainly provide the nuclear fuel supply required to operate planned nuclear power plants in Jordan and would enhance national independence and self-reliance in that regard. In the longer term, supply of nuclear fuel should be assured through the establishment of a regional Arab nuclear fuel bank under the Agency's auspices.

246. Jordan was aware that public acceptance was an important prerequisite for the success of its nuclear power programme. The Atomic Energy Commission was therefore devising a strategy for disseminating a sound nuclear culture. A key achievement had been the publication of a white paper on nuclear energy to inform the public in a transparent and scientific manner about all aspects and aims of the nuclear programme. Preparations were also under way for a comprehensive awareness-raising programme targeting various sectors of society, and providing for seminars and visits by the people's representatives to nuclear power plants in a number of industrialized countries. Jordan appreciated the Agency's continuous support for its plan to boost public acceptance of its nuclear power programme.

247. The use of nuclear energy called for a highly qualified work force and Jordan had taken resolute action to achieve that end from the outset. The Atomic Energy Commission had been implementing a human resources development strategy which had led, inter alia, to the introduction of a bachelor's degree course in nuclear engineering and master's degree courses in nuclear physics and nuclear medicine at Jordanian universities. The Commission also supported grants and fellowships in nuclear energy at the bachelor's and master's degree level, and specialized international training opportunities. To date, Jordan had taken advantage of 56 opportunities for further education in nuclear science and

engineering under nuclear cooperation agreements with the governments of France, China, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Korea and Japan.

248. His country was currently developing a comprehensive human resources plan for all institutions involved in the national nuclear programme. That plan, which addressed the requirements of all current and future infrastructure projects, would be reviewed by Agency experts to ensure that it met the standards applied in assessing the country's nuclear energy infrastructure.

249. Jordan was also building a subcritical nuclear facility in cooperation with the China Atomic Energy Authority which would be used to train university students specializing in nuclear engineering. The Jordanian nuclear training and research reactor, which was expected to begin operating in 2015, would play a vital role in training future generations of nuclear researchers, scientists and engineers and would also be used to produce the radioisotopes required for medical, agricultural and industrial purposes.

250. His country had benefited from numerous national, regional and international projects under the Agency's technical cooperation programme, including projects to strengthen the country's infrastructure in preparation for the building and operation of the Jordanian nuclear power plant, to create a uranium extraction laboratory, to develop the country's safety assessment capacity, to ensure optimum use of nuclear research reactors and to strengthen the radioactive waste management infrastructure.

251. Jordan had received excellent advice from the Agency during the current year on its nuclear energy infrastructure through an INIR follow-up mission. The recommendations from the mission had been used to draw up a comprehensive two-year action plan aimed at coordinating the work of all national institutions operating under the Jordanian nuclear programme. They had stressed the importance of preparing for a third review in order to ensure compliance with Agency guidelines. Agency experts had also offered technical advice on the research reactor, focusing on the development of technical capacity and of human resources specializing in nuclear safety, a review of the design of the reactor and reactor management procedures.

252. During his visit to Jordan in October 2011, the Director General of the Agency had reaffirmed the transparency of the Jordanian nuclear programme. That visit had constituted an important step towards consolidating cooperation between Jordan and the Agency and had highlighted Jordan's commitment to international standards.

253. In the summer of 2012, Jordan had hosted the Second Arab Forum on the Prospects of Nuclear Power for Electricity Generation and Seawater Desalination, which had been organized by the Arab Atomic Energy Agency and in which the Agency had participated. The Forum had adopted several important recommendations, including on the possibility of building joint nuclear power plants, of integrating Arab nuclear power plants and of establishing an Arab regional nuclear fuel bank under Agency auspices in one of the Arab States. Jordan hoped that the Agency would provide the requisite support for the proposed fuel bank and looked forward to strengthening of the Agency's cooperation with the Arab Atomic Energy Agency.

254. The Jordanian Nuclear Regulatory Commission continued to develop the legislative framework by drafting laws and regulations designed to strengthen its regulatory role and to ensure nuclear safety and security at national level. The Agency had supported action to strengthen the regulatory regime with an eye to future stages of the Jordanian nuclear programme, in particular the need to conduct a comprehensive review of Radiation Safety Law No. 43, the amendments thereto and related regulations, to emphasize the importance of civil nuclear liability and its incorporation in national legislation, and to accede to the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage. Through the national technical cooperation project relating to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, it had also

contributed to building capacity for the authorization and regulation of operation of nuclear installations in a manner that complied with international standards and practices.

255. Nuclear safety and security would remain unattainable as long as the risk and fear of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, persisted. Jordan consistently supported calls for the elimination and non-proliferation of such weapons and looked forward to the day when the world would be rid of them. It also called for universal accession to instruments concerning weapons of mass destruction, strengthening of the NPT, effective international cooperation in promoting nuclear security by preventing the smuggling of nuclear material, and the establishment of an institutional framework that guaranteed effective international cooperation, sharing of information and coordination of efforts to achieve nuclear security.

256. It was high time for the international community to take effective action to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East in order to promote security and stability in the region and the world as a whole. Such a step would contribute to the universality of the NPT and would prevent an arms race in the region. It would also give an incentive to any State that possessed nuclear weapons to get rid of them, and any State that planned to acquire nuclear weapons to desist. Moreover, it would provide an opportunity for the only country in the region that had not acceded to the NPT, namely Israel, to do so.

257. Jordan attached great importance to the Conference on Disarmament, since it was the only forum for multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament. Resolute action should be taken to ensure that all countries of the Middle East region attended the 2012 conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the region. His country hoped that the conference would agree on an action plan that would restore international confidence and strengthen the security and stability that was a basic prerequisite for economic, social and cultural progress.

258. Mr SCICLUNA (Malta) said that his country was a strong proponent of disarmament and non-proliferation. As a State Party of the NPT it took very seriously the principle of full compliance with the Treaty and was a vocal supporter of its universalization. Under the NPT, the Agency had been tasked with the challenging responsibility of ensuring that nuclear energy was used for peaceful purposes in compliance with the safeguards imposed by the Treaty. Malta called on all States which had not yet done so to accede to the NPT. The objective of universal adherence to the NPT was neither naïve nor unrealistic. In the interest of achieving a complete and effective regime, and strengthening Agency verification, Malta called on States to bring into force without delay a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol.

259. Nuclear energy offered an alternative to increasing demand for fossil fuels. Although Malta did not have nuclear energy, it acknowledged the right of every State to develop, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in accordance with Article IV of the NPT. That right, however, entailed obligations vis-à-vis the international community, the most important of which was to maintain the most rigorous standards of safety and security. The risk of natural disasters, including earthquakes, aftershocks and the impact of tsunamis on near-shore structures, was ever present. Malta looked forward to a successful outcome of the upcoming Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety in Fukushima, which represented an important step in strengthening nuclear safety and sharing lessons learned from the Fukushima accident that might be incorporated in national and international safety plans. It supported strengthening the global nuclear safety framework, including emergency preparedness and response capabilities, and called for stronger commitment from nuclear States to the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. As an island State and leading maritime flag State, Malta favoured strengthened safety measures for marine transport of radioactive material, and improved communication between States shipping and receiving radioactive material. It



also commended the initiative of the European Union in conducting stress tests and recommended that they be applied globally as a standard procedure under the auspices of the Agency.

260. The historic events which had taken place in the southern Mediterranean and which were still unfolding in the Arab world had presented new challenges and opportunities and his country believed that the time was ripe to establish a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction. Such a zone would benefit not only the region, but the whole world. It would ensure transparency, accountability, and regional and global security, while upholding the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Malta therefore looked forward to the planned conference on that topic to be held in Finland, and extended its full support to the facilitator, Ambassador Jaakko Laajava.

261. His country remained extremely concerned about the nature of Iran's nuclear programme and Iran's continuing enrichment activities, which posed serious challenges to the non-proliferation regime. It urged Iran to implement fully its legally binding international commitments, including the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and the Board of Governors, Agency safeguards and the additional protocol, as an important way to build confidence with a view to a lasting, peaceful settlement of the issue of its nuclear programme. Iran should cease its enrichment activities, suspend all heavy water-related projects and allow immediate access to the Parchin site. It should also cooperate with the Agency fully and in a constructive manner in order to solve all outstanding issues, build international confidence, demonstrate transparency regarding its nuclear programme and assure the world of its peaceful intentions.

262. The decision of the DPRK to cease all cooperation with the Agency was a matter of grave concern. The DPRK must comply with its international commitments, including relevant legally binding Security Council resolutions. Malta called on the DPRK to cooperate fully in resolving outstanding issues and to return to the NPT, suspend its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, refrain from further nuclear tests and allow the return of Agency inspectors, with a view to regaining the trust of the international community. His country supported the six-party talks as an essential tool for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, which was vital for ensuring lasting peace and stability in the entire region and beyond.

263. The lack of tangible progress on the issue of Syria's nuclear programme and that country's non-compliance with its safeguards agreement was regrettable. His country urged Syria to cooperate fully with the Agency with a view to resolving all outstanding issues. If Agency inspectors were allowed full access to Syria's nuclear facilities, the Agency would be in a position to assess Syria's claims that its nuclear programme was exclusively peaceful. His country strongly urged Syria to uphold the safeguards system based on the NPT and to bring into force an additional protocol as soon as possible.

264. Alongside the Agency's work in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, Malta attached equal importance to the technical cooperation programme and applications of nuclear science and technology in public health, industry, agriculture, culture, the environment, and water resources management. Those activities were of great importance, both in their own right and because they contributed to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.

265. Malta benefited from technical cooperation in a number of fields and through several regional programmes, including on the strengthening of legal and safety regimes, human health, and the preservation of cultural heritage artefacts. It had one of the highest densities of World Heritage sites in the world and, with its 7000 years of history and numerous walled cities and towns, one could say it was an open museum. The country's heritage was an important part of its identity, and proper preservation, conservation, restoration and protection of that heritage were of critical importance for its future. Thus, Malta welcomed the launching of a joint project the preceding January between the

Agency and Heritage Malta to support the establishment and operation of specialized equipment to maximize the expertise, efficiency and quality of research and education in the field of conservation science and its application to cultural heritage. The project included the setting up of laboratories furnished with state-of-the-art equipment, including equipment employing nuclear techniques.

266. His country welcomed the priority given by the Director General to PACT, as it considered prevention and treatment of cancer a top priority in its public health strategy and had received Agency support in connection with the setting up of a new specialized oncology centre. The technical meeting on national cancer plans organized by the Agency in July had been of great value to Malta in furthering the aims of its cancer programme.

267. Mr EGLAJS (Latvia) said his country saw the Agency's technical cooperation programme as an essential element of the organization's work. As its recently signed CPF indicated, Latvia was committed to continuing technical cooperation in areas important for its national development, to extending the use of nuclear technology in several important areas such as medicine, and to ensuring radiation protection and safety. It appreciated the dedication and professionalism of the Department of Technical Cooperation. However, in recent years it had become clear that there was a lack of financial resources for the programme which was limiting assistance. In the context of the budgetary limitations the Agency was facing, he stressed the importance of the European technical cooperation strategy document adopted several years previously and recently reviewed. Horizontal cooperation tools and regional cooperation projects were still an important element in ensuring safety and security. Certain issues covered in the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety could not be addressed without proper knowledge management, and technical cooperation should be seen as one of the key tools for achieving the goals set in the plan. Latvia encouraged the Agency to promote further development of the technical cooperation programme despite the decrease in resources. In recent years, there had been an improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of programme planning and implementation, which should continue.

268. The Seoul Nuclear Security Summit had been a significant milestone in efforts relating to nuclear terrorism, protection of nuclear material and prevention of illicit trafficking. The importance his country attached to nuclear security was dictated by its external borders as a European Union and NATO country. It had already implemented some projects in cooperation with the United States Department of Energy under the Global Threat Reduction Initiative. However, Agency expertise was vital and the Seoul communiqué encouraged States to make use of Agency resources to enhance nuclear security infrastructure. Latvia was a member of the CPPNM and had approved the 2005 amendment to that Convention. In view of the country's geographical location, exchange of information was an important factor. The greatest challenges in the nuclear security field were the location and recovery of stolen or smuggled nuclear material, and illegal transport of sources. Latvia welcomed all steps taken by the Agency to provide assistance to Member States with the establishment of effective and sustainable national nuclear security systems. It also encouraged all Member States to participate in the forthcoming international conference on nuclear security.

269. His country supported the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety and, in that connection, he underscored the role of nuclear safety culture in achieving the goals defined in the plan. The development of nuclear safety culture was a challenging task in the face of the decrease in human and financial resources available to state institutions. In his own country, the number of licensees was increasing every year and a lot of effort was needed to ensure that operators developed a nuclear safety culture and improved their awareness of their responsibilities. In its CPF, Latvia had underlined the need to ensure that requirements defined in legislation were not treated as mere formalities, and all operators must comply with them. The principal tools in that regard were education of operators and confidence building. For a nuclear security culture to be genuine and sustainable, operators had to

understand that safety requirements must be defined and supervised by a credible regulatory authority which was not biased and took its decisions with a view to protecting public health and safety.

270. Latvia agreed fully with the recent findings of the Centre for International Governance Innovation to the effect that the Agency was a standing, multilateral organization with near universal membership and a science and technology orientation whose legitimacy and credibility allowed it to oversee the formulation and dissemination of global nuclear non-proliferation, safety and security norms. The organization played a unique role in fostering a truly international nuclear community and his country believed its role would become ever more important in the future. Hence, while strengthening of particular aspects of the Agency was welcome, Latvia's response to those who were arguing that there was a need to reform the Agency was that no changes were acceptable which might damage the organization's credibility or reduce its ability to perform in accordance with its Statute. Past experience in implementing safeguards agreements and promoting non-proliferation had proven that dialogue was the best approach to solving complex issues.

271. Ms MYKOLAICHUK (Ukraine) said that the Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident in 1986 had triggered both a revision of international nuclear safety standards and the creation of numerous international instruments to ensure the highest standards of nuclear, waste and radiation safety worldwide and the availability of an adequate emergency preparedness and response system. In 2011, those instruments had been put to the test in the Fukushima nuclear power plant accident. Given its unique expertise, the Agency had a leading role to play in any nuclear-related accident or emergency and its on-site involvement was vital in addressing such situations.

272. Her country strongly supported the Agency's activities aimed at improving nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety worldwide. At its preceding session, the General Conference had approved the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, which provided a road map for both the Agency and Member States. Like many other countries, Ukraine had carried out safety vulnerability assessments at all nuclear power plants. It had also joined the European Union stress test exercise and follow-up peer review process. All necessary measures and improvements identified were either in the implementation phase or had already been implemented. The national regulator had launched a comprehensive review and revision of nuclear safety regulations, giving proper consideration to Agency safety standards and lessons learned from the Fukushima accident. The Government of Ukraine had recently approved an action plan on strengthening safety culture and public communication on nuclear safety issues and, only two weeks previously, the parliament of Ukraine had approved the next step in the country's nuclear power development: the construction of two new units at the Khmelnytsky nuclear power plant. Agency peer review instruments would be used to achieve the highest possible safety levels in implementing the latter project.

273. Activities under both the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management enhanced the safety of peaceful nuclear energy use worldwide. She called on all countries that had not yet done so to join those important instruments. The second extraordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety had taken another important step in achieving nuclear safety goals. Contracting Parties must meet their obligations under the Convention in full if its review process was to have real outcomes. The existing international treaty basis for response to nuclear disasters clearly required further improvement. Work in that connection had already commenced and tangible results should be achievable in the near future.

274. Developments in Japan had caused widespread concern about the safety of nuclear power plants and had prompted deliberations about the feasibility of nuclear power as an energy source. There were many lessons still to be learned from the Fukushima accident and her country looked forward to the Fukushima Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety to be held later in the year.

275. Her country was grateful to those countries and international organizations that had provided support and assistance as it sought to overcome the aftermath of the Chernobyl accident. April 2012 had marked an important milestone in that regard: assembly of the New Safe Confinement had commenced. That work, which was due to be complete in 2015, would pave the way for further transformation of the Shelter facility into an ecologically safe system.

276. She commended the Agency for its activities aimed at assisting States to prevent and combat nuclear terrorism, and emphasized the important role the organization played in fostering international cooperation on nuclear security, establishing comprehensive nuclear security guidelines and assisting States, on request, with enhancing nuclear security. The responsibility for nuclear security rested with individual States, which must all establish appropriate systems and take the necessary measures to prevent, detect and respond to malicious acts involving nuclear material.

277. Ukraine had implemented in full its decision to get rid of all national stocks of HEU, thus demonstrating it was a reliable member of the international community that actively contributed to combating nuclear terrorism and strengthening physical protection of nuclear material. At the 65th session of the United Nations General Assembly, Ukraine, Mexico and Chile had announced their joint intent to minimize use of HEU. She urged other States to follow that example.

278. Adherence to international instruments relating to nuclear security continued to increase, though slowly. Seven years after the adoption by consensus of the amendment to the CPPNM, only 57 of the 145 parties to the Convention had adhered to it. Her country called on all States that had not yet done so to adhere to the amendment as soon as possible and, pending its entry into force, to act in accordance with its object.

279. The Agency had an invaluable role in nuclear security competence development, and thanks to the support her country had received it had achieved an important milestone in developing training and education facilities for nuclear security at the Sevastopol National University of Nuclear Energy and Industry, which had become an Agency partner in that field.

280. Ukraine also appreciated the assistance the Agency had provided with nuclear security measures at major public events, including the 2012 UEFA European football championship in Ukraine and Poland.

281. The Agency's safeguards system was a fundamental component of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. The measures contained in the additional protocol formed an integral part of that system and a comprehensive safeguards agreement plus an additional protocol constituted the current best verification standard. Ukraine noted the increase in the number of countries that had brought an additional protocol into force and called on those States that had not yet done so to follow suit. It strongly supported the Agency's efforts to strengthen the effectiveness and improve the efficiency of the safeguards system, and strictly fulfilled its obligations under its own safeguards agreement and additional protocol which had been in force since 2006. In 2010, for the first time the Agency had drawn 'broader conclusions' regarding her country's nuclear activities and had confirmed that all nuclear material in the country remained in peaceful activities. Ukraine was profoundly grateful to the Agency and its inspectors for their efforts and it continued to work with the Agency to establish the necessary conditions for the effective application of safeguards in the country.

282. Her country had always been committed to effective multilateral action against proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and in the nuclear disarmament field. The consensus reached at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, and the action plan agreed upon there, demonstrated the resolve of all States not only to uphold but also to strengthen the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. In 2010, agreement had been reached on further steps to implement the 1995 NPT Review Conference resolution on the Middle East, including the convening of a conference in 2012. It was essential that

the Agency's General Conference build upon those results and avoid any action that might undermine them.

283. Over the preceding year, the Agency had continued to make a significant contribution to global development objectives. The 2012 Scientific Forum was focusing on nuclear applications related to food and it should constitute another step forward in demonstrating how radiation technologies could serve human health goals without causing unnecessary risks. Ukraine commended the Agency and its Director General for their tireless efforts in that connection and called upon the Agency to increase further the contribution of nuclear technology to health and economic development, and to promote the dissemination of knowledge on the peaceful applications of such technology.

**Mr Hamid (Sudan), Vice-President, took the Chair.**

284. Mr PADILLA DE LEÓN (Colombia) confirmed his country's commitment to disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in its foreign policy. It participated actively in all international forums addressing those issues, promoted attempts to reach agreements in that regard and supported multilateral initiatives aimed at dispelling the threat of proliferation and the potential use of nuclear energy for terrorist purposes, in full accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. It also advocated the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones as a contribution to international peace and security and was party to the Tlatelolco Treaty. Disarmament, non-proliferation and the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy were all essential features of the international non-proliferation regime and their joint aim was to protect humanity from a potential nuclear war and to safeguard international peace and security. The Agency had a fundamental role to play in that regard.

285. As part of his Government's commitment to the Agency, it had been working to gain legislative approval for the amendments to Articles VI and XIV of the organization's Statute.

286. Through its technical cooperation programme, the Agency helped make the public aware of the benefits the peaceful uses of nuclear energy could bring, even in the face of the scepticism generated by the nuclear accident at the Fukushima nuclear power plant. Transfer of nuclear knowledge and technology in areas of fundamental importance for development such as health, the environment and agriculture was essential. His Government therefore thanked the Agency for the work it had been doing together with national institutions under technical cooperation projects, including those related to strengthening radiation protection and security. Under ARCAL, Colombia had worked with other countries in the region, with the support of the Agency and the Government of Spain — a strategic partner with which his country had enjoyed a valuable relationship for many years.

287. PACT was also particularly important owing to the contribution it made to health at global level. Colombia had supported that initiative from the outset and it appreciated the efforts of the Agency and its partners in that regard. The prevention and timely treatment of cancer could prevent loss of life and improve conditions for patients. His country therefore urged the Agency, Member States and partner organizations to continue to support PACT.

288. Colombia acknowledged the important work carried out by the Director General in the aftermath of the Fukushima accident and shared his view that the safety of nuclear facilities needed to be strengthened.

289. His country had made much progress under its INSSP and it was particularly grateful to the Government of Canada for its support in that area and with other activities, including its assistance with the holding of a workshop on universal adherence to international legal instruments in that field.

290. Colombia had been working with the Office of Nuclear Security for some years. It had been making good progress with the internal procedures required to ratify the amendment to the CPPNM,

the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

291. He reiterated the importance of continuing dialogue between shipping and coastal States on the safe maritime transport of radioactive waste, with the participation and support of the Agency.

292. His country condemned terrorism in all its forms and was firmly committed to combating that scourge through the application of international standards and through international cooperation. It was particularly concerned about the possible use of dirty bombs by terrorist groups and emphasized the need for joint international efforts to prevent such incidents.

293. For Colombia, the application of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and subsequent Security Council resolutions was very important, as they served as a tool to prevent possible access to and use of weapons of mass destruction by terrorist groups, in accordance with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. In March 2012, Colombia had held a seminar for States in the Andean region on resolution 1540 which had been attended by representatives from the countries of the region, regional and international organizations, including the Agency, civil society and the private sector. As an outcome of that seminar and prior meetings with the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism, Colombia had designed an action plan for the application of resolution 1540.

294. Colombia supported the important verification and safeguards work conducted by the Agency. Its additional protocol had been in force since March 2009. Colombia's voluntary adherence to that legal instrument was another sign of its commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation and its support for the Agency's work.

295. Humanity was facing enormous challenges, including food security, energy security, climate change and the preservation of international peace and security. Those challenges needed to be tackled in a constructive manner, while ensuring the well-being of all people.

296. Mr ISHIMOV (Kyrgyzstan) said that his country supported the Agency in its efforts to develop the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime, of which the NPT was the cornerstone. However, as a result of new challenges in that area there was a need to adapt the NPT to changing circumstances, including the increased risk of nuclear terrorism.

297. International safeguards and physical protection of nuclear material and facilities were the first line of defence against nuclear terrorism. Thus, his country firmly supported efforts to strengthen the safeguards system and the CPPNM, and to implement United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), and it welcomed the practical measures agreed upon at the 2010 and 2012 Nuclear Security Summits. Kyrgyzstan would soon be adopting a national action plan on implementation of Security Council resolution 1540, which it saw as a vital instrument in the fight against proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, whose aim was to prevent nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and materials, and their means of delivery, from falling into the hands of terrorists.

298. One effective way of achieving disarmament and non-proliferation goals was the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. The second conference of State Parties to and signatories of treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones had been held in 2010 and had noted that such zones encompassed the entire southern hemisphere of the planet and extended into the northern hemisphere, including territory where nuclear weapons had previously been stationed. The Kyrgyz Republic was particularly pleased by the entry into force in 2009 of the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia. A distinctive feature of that Treaty was the requirement that parties conclude a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the Agency and an additional protocol. State Parties also undertook to comply with the CTBT and the CPPNM.

299. On 2 November 2011, the additional protocol to his country's safeguards agreement had entered into force, demonstrating its commitment to strengthening peace and security. In 2012, representatives of the Department of Safeguards had made two successful visits to Kyrgyzstan to discuss implementation of key provisions of the additional protocol. The Kyrgyz authorities were currently working on that issue based on the Agency's recommendations. The Government intended to pursue its cooperation with the Agency in that regard.

300. He thanked the Agency for a number of important projects that had been implemented under the technical cooperation programme. The relevant authorities of the Kyrgyz Republic were taking the necessary measures to pay off the country's arrears to the TCF. The Kyrgyz Ministry of Foreign Affairs stood ready to assist in any way possible in that connection.

301. His country attached great importance to mitigation of environmental damage caused by uranium mining and the nuclear fuel cycle. There was a problem with uranium tailings dumps in Kyrgyzstan, many of which were located close to rivers and water sources which formed part of the drainage basin of the whole Central Asian region. Transboundary contamination of rivers with highly toxic waste in the event of accidents at tailings dumps could cause major ecological and humanitarian crises. The risks of long-term negative impact on the lives and health of millions of people, and on the socio-economic development of several countries in the region, were increasing. The problem was regional in scale and required a comprehensive solution and coordinated action by all States in the region in partnership with international organizations and financial institutions.

302. Mr MACHILI (Mozambique) endorsed the two priorities the Director General had focused on in his opening statement, namely technical cooperation and nuclear safety.

303. Technical cooperation, including capacity building, was an important tool to enable all countries to benefit from the application of nuclear technology in various fields. His Government appreciated the existing cooperation with the Agency in radiotherapy and nuclear medicine, agriculture, mineral resources, and animal production and health. Capacity building was one of the most important components of technical cooperation and contributed significantly to human resources development in the nuclear technology field. The country's National Atomic Energy Agency had been established in 2009 and efforts to empower it and ensure its full functioning were under way. Mozambique was in the process of finalizing the necessary legal framework for technical cooperation, including its CPF and a national nuclear law, both of which had been submitted to the Council of Ministers for approval. It appreciated the contribution the Agency had made to the elaboration of those documents.

304. His country was aware of the importance of fulfilling its obligations under Agency treaties and it was making every effort to submit its first report under its safeguards agreement. It remained fully committed to the Agency's objectives.

305. Mr NKANZA (Zambia) said his country continued to advocate general and complete disarmament and called upon the nuclear-weapon States to support that goal. It joined with other NAM members in emphasizing the need for all Agency Member States to cooperate in achieving universality of comprehensive Agency safeguards in all regions of the world.

306. Zambia appreciated the technical support it had received from the Agency under the technical cooperation programme. In the preceding year it had implemented projects on peaceful nuclear applications with a view to enhancing its socio-economic development. It welcomed the continued strengthening of Agency technical assistance, which had resulted in improvements in food production, better access to health care and improved protection against radiation exposure, and it intended to continue to build on its achievements to date.

307. Since the preceding General Conference, his country had made a number of advances. Nuclear medicine facilities had been strengthened through the provision of specialized equipment and training of staff at the nuclear medicine department of the University Teaching Hospital. National capacity in radiation protection had been strengthened through the regulatory framework. The Government had issued the statutory instrument under the Ionizing Radiation Protection Act and had approved and funded the establishment of the Radiation Protection Authority. In parallel, radiation safety officers, mine safety officers and customs officers were being trained in radiation protection. Agency expert missions and the procurement of detection equipment had greatly helped strengthen national capacity in radiation detection and location of orphan sources. The country continued to receive expert missions, inter alia on radiation protection and controlled use of isotopic and nuclear techniques, from the Agency and AFRA member States. A radiation therapy technology school had been established at the Cancer Diseases Hospital and the curriculum finalized, allowing the country to start training radiation oncologists and oncology nurses. Zambia was a pilot country in the Virtual University for Cancer Control and Regional Training Network, whose aim was to increase the number of trained health care personnel working in the oncology field in Africa. It had successfully hosted a coordination meeting and a regional training course for that initiative, with Agency assistance. Construction of cancer wards, a nuclear medicine treatment facility and a training centre had commenced and should be complete by November 2013. It was planned to establish another five smaller radiotherapy units at strategic locations in the country and train staff locally for them. In addition, national capacity to improve the productivity of dairy animals on smallholder farms had been strengthened through Agency expert missions, scientific visits and the provision of equipment and training.

308. Measures had been put in place to coordinate and provide local funding for Agency-supported projects in order to improve implementation and monitoring of technical cooperation programmes. His country was eager to be part of global efforts to foster the peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology, but it would need the support of the Agency and Member States. It commended the Director General and the Agency Secretariat, and AFRA, for their commendable efforts, and confirmed its commitment to meeting its financial obligations vis-à-vis the TCF and the AFRA Fund for the years 2012 and 2013.

309. Mr DINYANDO (Namibia) said that his country's Constitution enshrined the principles of promotion of international cooperation, peace and security, the creation and maintenance of just and mutually beneficial relations among nations, and fostering of respect for international law and treaty obligations for the good and welfare of the Namibian people and people the world over. Thus, his country respected and was committed to the fundamental principles that guided the work of the Agency. As a demonstration thereof, it had ratified the Pelindaba Treaty and the additional protocol to its safeguards agreement. It stood ready to cooperate with all partners to ensure that its obligations under those instruments were met and was concerned that not all demonstrated the same level of commitment.

310. Safeguarding of nuclear material was a core activity of the Agency and he commended the Secretariat on its efforts to promote adherence to the nuclear non-proliferation regime. However, nuclear disarmament should be accorded the same priority and he called for universal application of safeguards and meaningful action to ensure nuclear disarmament.

311. An equally important part of the Agency's mandate was the provision of assistance to Member States with the establishment of infrastructure for the safe and secure use of nuclear technology and radiation sources. In the preceding year, Namibia had achieved a significant milestone in that regard with the full operationalization of the Atomic Energy and Radiation Protection Act, which established the regulatory infrastructure for safety and security of radiation sources and protection against the harmful effects of radiation. With that development, the basic elements were in place to ensure that



nuclear technology was developed and promoted responsibly, while also providing assurances regarding adequate protection of the public and the environment. The country remained committed to consulting with other Member States with the aim of improving its national infrastructure and capacity, and to striving to achieve conformity with international standards and practices. Having established its regulatory systems, it wished to exploit nuclear science vigorously to attain some of its development goals.

312. Namibia's vision as a nation was to become a prosperous industrial country with the help of its indigenous human resources, and to enjoy peace, harmony and political stability. Nuclear science and technology unquestionably had the potential to contribute to that vision. His country's Government felt an obligation to attend to the welfare of the Namibian people, who were facing unemployment, poverty and health problems. In an effort to address those challenges, it had recently formulated the country's fourth national development plan which articulated priorities for the coming five years. It intended to use every means possible, including nuclear technology, to effect the desired growth and development. Thus, the country's nuclear science programme needed to be redefined and strengthened.

313. One initiative in that regard had been the development of a nuclear fuel cycle policy with a view to harnessing the country's uranium resources to ensure they contributed meaningfully to national development. Various strategic options were being considered for expanding and enhancing the nuclear science and technology programme to guide the country in those efforts. Namibia's policies advocated equitable and sustainable development of uranium resources. The country urged multinational companies extracting those resources to form strategic partnerships with local industries.

314. The Agency's technical cooperation programme had been the driving force behind the country's nuclear science programme, contributing to the transfer of technology in such areas as crop production, animal health, public health, water resources management and energy studies. However, the programme had its limitations and, with its current implementation framework, was insufficient to develop the required national nuclear science development infrastructure. Significant domestic investment was needed to ensure that nuclear technology made a visible contribution to the attainment of the country's aspirations.

315. His country was also ready to explore mutually beneficial cooperative arrangements with other nations, its aim in that regard being to ensure that available resources were optimally utilized, and to leverage the experience of others. In that connection, it had identified key areas it wished to develop in the context of its national development plan. Those areas included the deployment of a nuclear power programme, food safety, public health, agriculture development, analytical services, and the development of a highly skilled workforce in the nuclear science field.

316. Ms MACMILLAN (New Zealand) said that her country was a strong supporter of the NPT, was dedicated to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons and continued to encourage national, regional and global efforts to that end. That included a commitment to helping prevent the spread of nuclear weapons through implementation of safeguards under the NPT. The Agency played a crucial role in the non-proliferation agenda.

317. Like other NPT States, New Zealand benefited from the right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in conformity with Articles I, II, III and IV of the Treaty. In such fields as human health, food quality and safety, crop improvement, sustainable land and water management, pest control, water resources and environmental management, the people of her country contributed to and benefited from advances in nuclear science both within the country's national institutions and in cooperation with others. New Zealand had become an early supporter of the Peaceful Uses Initiative and had announced a second contribution to it earlier in 2012.

318. The generation of electricity using nuclear energy was an option her country did not intend to make use of, but nuclear power did form part of the existing or planned energy mix of a number of countries. The development and use of nuclear energy must be accompanied through all stages of the nuclear fuel cycle by the highest standards of safety and security, waste management and disposal, and non-proliferation safeguards.

319. The tragic Fukushima nuclear accident had been a sobering reminder of the inherent danger of the atom and had reinforced the interest of all countries in ensuring that international nuclear safety and security standards were adhered to, and constantly reviewed and updated as technologies improved. A year after the accident, the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety remained a credible response to the accident and to the collective desire to strengthen the global safety regime. It was essential to maintain a sense of urgency until the plan had been implemented in full. New Zealand welcomed the opportunity for the international community to review further that critical work at the Fukushima Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety which was being organized by Japan and the Agency in December 2012.

320. The risks from lapses in that area were not confined within national boundaries. Shipments of radioactive material by air, land or sea were an inevitable by-product of the growth in the use of nuclear energy. As an island nation, her country was concerned to ensure that such shipments were carried out under the highest possible safety and security conditions, and that communication between shipping and other interested States was timely and transparent and took place within a well defined framework which included proper emergency preparedness and response systems.

321. In that connection, New Zealand welcomed the outcome of the 2011 International Conference on the Safe and Secure Transport of Radioactive Material, and the follow-up meeting in 2012. It particularly appreciated the recommendation that best practice guidelines should be developed for systematic and timely communication between governments and looked forward to working towards the development of such guidelines within the informal dialogue between coastal and shipping States. The Conference had also acknowledged the importance of improving the international nuclear liability regime, particularly in connection with issues of concern regarding transport, which her country saw as a priority. INLEX should continue to give attention to those issues.

322. Like a nuclear accident, the consequences of a deliberate act of nuclear terrorism were not confined to a single State. Her country had been an active participant in the Nuclear Security Summit process which provided an essential impetus at the highest political level to global efforts to ensure the ongoing security of nuclear and radioactive material. The communiqué issued by the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit in 2012 had referred to initiatives to improve global nuclear security through international cooperation, such as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, to which her country contributed actively.

323. New Zealand welcomed the initiative of the Agency to convene a conference in 2013 with the aim of ensuring greater coordination of international nuclear security initiatives. The organization's own nuclear security work was indispensable and her country was pleased to assist with it by contributing regularly to the Nuclear Security Fund. It also supported the work of the World Institute for Nuclear Security.

324. The Agency had a key role to play in providing robust verification and assurances that States' nuclear activities were solely for peaceful purposes. The integrity of the Agency's verification practices was of fundamental importance for the assurances States sought through the international nuclear non-proliferation framework.

325. Her country held the view that the additional protocol constituted the contemporary NPT verification standard and should always feature as a condition for new supply arrangements. It encouraged all countries that had not yet done so, and particularly those with significant nuclear activities, to conclude and bring into force an additional protocol as a matter of urgency. States which were still outside the NPT safeguards system should remedy that situation as a matter of priority.

326. A number of complex compliance challenges threatened to undermine the effectiveness of the international non-proliferation regime. In particular, Iran's continued non-compliance with United Nations Security Council and Agency resolutions continued to cause profound concern. Along with many other countries, New Zealand had consistently urged Iran to engage in confidence-building activities, including transparency measures and implementation of its additional protocol, but those calls had not been heeded. In 2011, the Agency had reported extensive information on possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear programme. In 2012, it had reported that Iran had significantly expanded its enrichment activities, fuel fabrication and conversion, and that it appeared to be hampering the Agency's legitimate verification efforts. Iran needed to address the substance of the Agency's remaining questions and implement all elements of relevant Security Council and Board resolutions. She noted the resolution recently adopted by the Board in that regard, which her country believed was an appropriate response to Iran's lack of serious engagement, and encouraged Iran to take the path of constructive engagement to address the deficit in international confidence in its nuclear intentions.

327. The failure of the DPRK to re-engage substantively with the Agency, despite its earlier promises, was deeply regrettable. Instead, that country had claimed that it was further developing its nuclear capabilities and appeared to be acting consistently with those claims. New Zealand called on the DPRK to honour the commitments it had made in February 2012, including agreeing to the return of Agency inspectors, to comply with its international legal obligations and to re-engage sincerely with the Agency.

328. Syria's nuclear programme was a continuing cause for concern. It had been well over a year since that country had provided the Agency with any new information of substance. Serious questions remained over the nature of the destroyed buildings at Dair Alzour and the three other locations that had provoked suspicion, and over the purpose of the Syrian nuclear programme. There could be no reasonable excuse for such reticence. Syria was in non-compliance and must urgently prioritize cooperation with the Agency, and provide the required access and information.

329. As a firm advocate of nuclear-weapon-free zones, New Zealand welcomed the reaffirmation at the 2010 NPT Review Conference of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, and the agreement to convene a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in that region. It called on all parties, including all States in the region, to work diligently and constructively towards the convening of that conference, which it was to be hoped would lay the groundwork for a robust agreement that would live up to the expectations of 1995.

330. International developments over the preceding two years had shown that the use of nuclear energy entailed not only national rights but also global responsibilities. The renewed international focus on safety and security was critical, but there were also further challenges to the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The Agency had a vital role to play in leading and coordinating efforts to ensure that nuclear material was used for exclusively peaceful purposes for the benefit of all humankind.

331. Mr STRITAR (Slovenia) commended the Japanese authorities for sharing with the rest of the world the information and experience gained in mitigating the consequences of the Fukushima accident. The international community had demonstrated its commitment to learning from that

experience. Since accidents did not respect boundaries, international exchange and cooperation were indispensable to enhancing nuclear safety.

332. In response to the Fukushima accident, European Union countries had undertaken an extensive review of the ability of all nuclear power plants to withstand major external events — the so-called stress tests. All nuclear countries in the European Union, plus Ukraine and Switzerland, had submitted reports by the end of 2011 based on the stress test methodology prepared earlier in the year by the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group and the European Commission. At the beginning of 2012, experts had gathered in Luxembourg to conduct a horizontal peer review of individual chapters of national reports. The vertical peer review had been performed in each collaborating country.

333. In March, Slovenia had been visited by a team of 8 experts who had performed a detailed review of open issues and had visited the Krško nuclear power plant. The team had prepared a country report which had concluded that the plant was well designed to withstand all credible, and even some unlikely external events. In addition, the Slovenian Nuclear Safety Administration had issued a decision in September 2011 requiring the plant to reassess its severe accident management strategy, existing design measures and procedures, and to implement necessary safety improvements to prevent severe accidents and mitigate the consequences thereof. That assessment had been completed in January 2012 and the action plan had been reviewed and approved by the regulator. Numerous improvements had been proposed to increase the reliability of power supply systems, core cooling, spent fuel cooling and containment integrity, and to reduce the release of possible fission products and provide emergency control provisions in the event of a beyond design basis accident. Those improvements were scheduled to be implemented between 2012 and 2016. The plant had already implemented the majority of the requirements related to aircraft crashes. In January 2012, the regulatory body had also required the plant to review the bases and assumptions for the national radiological emergency response plan. Work in that regard was still ongoing and was expected to be finished by the end of 2012.

334. His country was following closely implementation of the Agency's post-Fukushima action plan. In addition to the measures already taken in the country, a comprehensive national post-Fukushima action plan was being prepared based on the Agency's action plan and input the country was seeking from other quarters.

335. Improving and strengthening emergency preparedness and response worldwide was of the utmost importance and Slovenian experts were actively supporting the Agency's projects in that field. Coordination of environmental radiation monitoring and provision and receipt of assistance from other countries were two obvious challenges and both had been the subject of exercises since the preceding General Conference. An INEX exercise had been carried out in Slovenia in November 2011 on a malicious act involving the release of radioactive material in an urban setting, i.e. a dirty bomb. It had been conducted as a single-day table-top exercise, though mobile monitoring teams had also been deployed in the field, and it had revealed many areas for improvement. In addition, a ConvEx-2b exercise had been carried out by the Agency with Slovenia acting as the country receiving assistance.

336. Slovenia's Nuclear Safety Administration had been subjected to an IRRS mission, which had also met the requirements of European Union regulations for a peer review of national nuclear safety infrastructure once every 10 years. The mission had been preceded by national self-assessments. The IRRS team had reviewed the regulatory framework and all regulated facilities and activities, as well as the regulatory implications of the Fukushima accident. The team had recognized that Slovenia was broadly in line with the best international standards and practices but had proposed several improvements. The Nuclear Safety Administration had already implemented many of the recommendations related to its own work and the Government was addressing those that lay within its competence. Thus, it was expected that a draft of a new national nuclear safety policy would be

available by the end of the year, and efforts were being made to speed up the construction of the future radioactive waste repository.

337. His country welcomed the outcome of the second extraordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety. The review process under the Convention had reached maturity and the Fukushima-related issues to be considered at the next review meeting were an appropriate path for introducing change into the process.

338. In the interests of ensuring continued safe operation of existing nuclear plants, in April and May 2012 the Krško nuclear power plant had conducted a more extensive refuelling outage involving replacement of the reactor vessel head and generator rotor, drawing up the irradiated capsules from the reactor vessel and inspecting the reactor coolant pump. The installation of the third emergency diesel generator and its supporting components in a new seismic category I building had significantly reduced the probability of a core meltdown due to loss of AC power. Another important project to reduce vulnerability to floods was the raising of the embankments along the river Sava. By 2016, when all the equipment would have been supplied and installed under the extensive programme to strengthen nuclear safety at the plant, its capacity to withstand and contain severe accidents would be further enhanced.

339. Slovenia supported Agency efforts to strengthen the safeguards system, which was of fundamental importance for the nuclear non-proliferation regime. His country provided a member for SAGSI and was actively contributing to global efforts to seek a safer world for all, and create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons in line with the goals of the NPT.

340. The Agency's nuclear security activities were crucial in helping Member States deal with the threats posed by those who sought to acquire and use nuclear and radioactive material for terrorist and other illegal purposes. The Agency's Nuclear Security Plan 2010–2013 was under way and his country looked forward to its continuation as part of the organization's commitment to nuclear security.

341. Agency technical cooperation activities in the field of food security and water management acquired added value as those commodities became ever more precious for countries. Climatic effects such as droughts, floods, higher temperatures and winds, combined with the recession in the global economy, made Agency technical cooperation to combat hunger and poverty even more crucial. The technical cooperation programme also did important work in the health field, in particular in cancer control, and in improving nuclear safety. His country applauded the Agency's efforts to make the programme efficient and to ensure it met Member States' needs. In the preceding year, Slovenia had hosted six Agency regional workshops, training courses, meetings and seminars, and Slovenian organizations and institutions had trained Agency fellows from various developing countries.

342. Mr MPAY (Cameroon) commended the Director General and the Secretariat on the action they had undertaken pursuant to the Fukushima accident to strengthen the safety of nuclear power plants and, in particular, on the organization of the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety in June 2011 in Vienna and the forthcoming Ministerial Conference to be held in Fukushima in December 2012. His country would like to see the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety implemented swiftly. The main results expected in that regard were a review of safety standards and a new approach to the management of nuclear accidents. The Fukushima Ministerial Conference should address the implementation status of the action plan.

343. Cameroon appreciated the continued support of the Agency's technical cooperation programme for regional and national projects on peaceful applications of nuclear energy in such priority development sectors as agricultural production, food security, climate change, management of soils and water resources, human health, industrial applications of radiation and sustainable energy development.

344. It welcomed the implementation of the regional project on integrated and sustainable management of water resources in Africa which focused on Member States in the Sahel region. His country had contributed to the design of that project which addressed the crucial problem of water supply in one of the most deprived regions in the world. Cameroon had joined the project and urged other countries to do their utmost to ensure its objectives were achieved.

345. Combating cancer was a field in which nuclear technology offered unique advantages, and one to which his country gave high priority. In most countries in Africa, thousands of new cancer cases were being registered every year. Cameroon thus recommended intensifying imPACT missions in the region. The Agency should also continue to search for new partners, like the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and the Islamic Development Bank, with a view to creating new synergies to control cancer in Africa. His country had participated in the recent high-level seminar organized by the two aforementioned organizations and the Agency in Saudi Arabia to work on devising a common strategy for combating the disease. Efforts in that regard should continue and, it was to be hoped, would soon give rise to new regional and national projects.

346. The AFRA programme was increasingly becoming the main mechanism for promoting and introducing nuclear science and technology in Africa. Its resources included the AFRA Fund to which Member States contributed annually, regional centres which supported sharing of experience and expertise, and a dynamic management structure led by regional experts.

347. His country hoped that the international community and donors would continue to support regional mechanisms for promoting or regulating nuclear activities. The Forum of Nuclear Regulatory Bodies in Africa helped strengthen the effectiveness of regional and national radiation protection authorities. The fourth plenary meeting of the Forum had been held in Cameroon in March 2012, with Agency support. At that meeting, his country's National Radiation Protection Agency had been elected chair.

348. Cameroon appreciated the technical assistance the Agency had been providing with the operational development of its National Radiation Protection Agency, in particular through training of staff and provision of scientific equipment. Thanks to that assistance, missions on quality control of X-ray equipment and location of orphan sources, and training activities for professionals in radiation protection had been extended to cover the whole country.

349. Harmonization of practices and strengthening of the capabilities of nuclear regulatory bodies in Africa were regional priorities. His country was convinced that substantial progress could be made in that regard with a more energetic approach from the Forum of Nuclear Regulatory Bodies in Africa, which needed partners and donors to support its activities. He thanked the Korea Institute of Nuclear Safety for its support for the Forum's objectives, which had led to the signing of a memorandum of understanding in 2010. Other partnerships were also being developed, notably with the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the implementation of nuclear power programmes.

350. The revised Basic Safety Standards which had been approved by the Board of Governors in September 2011 constituted a significant step forward as regards measures to protect the public and the environment against exposure to ionizing radiation. Other safety standards should be developed to minimize the probability of nuclear accidents like the one at the Fukushima nuclear power plant. The Agency had a unique role in strengthening the international nuclear safety regime.

351. Mr FAROSS (Euratom) commended the role the Agency played in the field of nuclear safety and emergency preparedness and response, and in particular its commitment to implementing the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. Every effort should be made to review the international nuclear safety framework and increase its effectiveness. Euratom welcomed the outcomes of the second

extraordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, and the fact that the Agency's role had been highlighted by the most recent Nuclear Security Summit.

352. Long before the Fukushima accident, ensuring and continuously improving nuclear safety had been an overriding priority for the European Commission. Immediately after the accident, the European Union had decided to reassess the level of nuclear safety, and regulation thereof, and had invited neighbouring countries to participate in that exercise. Stress tests had been carried out to assess the capacity of nuclear installations to withstand various beyond design basis events, and to analyse security threats and response to incidents caused by malevolent or terrorist acts. It had been the first time that all nuclear power plants in the European Union had been assessed simultaneously using a common methodology developed and agreed upon by all European Union regulators and the European Commission.

353. In 2011, operators of all nuclear power plants in the European Union, and in Switzerland and Ukraine, had thoroughly assessed their installations. National regulators had then verified those self-assessments and compiled national reports, which had been subjected to international peer reviews in the first half of 2012. Those reviews had added substantially to the value of the whole process. Significant safety improvements had been identified in all participating countries.

354. Implementation of those improvements was now the top priority. In July 2012, the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group had established an action plan providing a framework for implementation.

355. The Commission was scheduled to report the main findings of the stress tests, and the Commission's views on the overall process together with recommendations and follow-up actions, to the Council of the European Union in October 2012. The stress tests had demonstrated that nuclear safety was an area where cross-border cooperation and action at European Union level brought tangible benefits.

356. After the Fukushima accident, the European Council had also called on the Commission to review the European Union nuclear safety framework and propose any necessary improvements. The Commission had presented its initial findings to the European Council in December 2011 and had initiated a public consultation at the beginning of 2012. The review process would take full account of the stress tests and the public consultation. Legal provisions should further enhance the role and independence of national regulators, and improve transparency of regulatory decisions and operating practices, and new legislation could also define common criteria for siting, design, construction and operation of nuclear power plants.

357. With regard to emergency preparedness and response, European Union member States should consider expanding cross-border nuclear risk management plans to prepare better for emergencies and coordinate response actions. The Commission was initiating a review of off-site nuclear emergency preparedness and response arrangements in member States and neighbouring countries with a view to identifying inconsistencies and gaps, and developing proposals for improvements.

358. The European Union was convinced that nuclear safety was of paramount importance at international and global level and it strove to promote it beyond its borders. The Commission had involved all neighbouring countries which operated or owned nuclear installations, or which had nuclear power development plans, in its stress tests. Switzerland and Ukraine had participated fully, and Armenia, Belarus, Croatia, Russia and Turkey had been associated with the process but were following their own timetables.

359. Beyond its immediate neighbourhood, the European Union cooperated on nuclear safety at global level. Under the Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation, over €500 million had been

allocated over the period 2007–2013 to promote nuclear safety, radiation protection and the application of efficient and effective safeguards on nuclear material in third countries.

360. Following the adoption of a directive in the preceding year on management of radioactive waste and spent fuel, the Commission was focusing on assisting member States with the drafting of national waste and spent fuel management programmes. It was also monitoring funding regimes in member States with a view to applying properly the ‘polluter pays’ principle.

361. In August, the European Commission had endorsed the revised Basic Safety Standards. It supported their publication as a co-sponsored document and would promote their implementation. Since the adoption of the first basic safety standards directive in the European Union over 50 years previously, a significant body of Union legislation had been established and regularly updated. The Commission had undertaken to consolidate part of that legislation into a single act and its proposal in that regard was currently under negotiation in the Council of the European Union.

362. Maintaining knowledge and building capacity in nuclear safety, nuclear security and radiation protection were a major challenge for existing nuclear power programmes, and even more so for expanding or new ones. The European Nuclear Safety Training and Tutoring Institute was an initiative of the European Technical Safety Organisations Network and had been welcomed by the European Union. In the preceding year, for the first time the Commission had reported on Union initiatives to improve staff education and training in the nuclear field. In December 2011, the European Human Resources Observatory for the Nuclear Energy Sector had been officially launched. Its database was an important tool for monitoring human resources supply and demand.

363. The Commission was looking forward to the conclusion of a memorandum of understanding with the Agency on cooperation in the nuclear safety field. It cooperated closely with the Agency on the implementation of nuclear safety projects in third countries and provided considerable support for technical cooperation programmes and implementation of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. It had also developed joint projects with the Agency. The results of the European Union stress test peer reviews were available and he encouraged the Agency to use them in the review of its safety standards planned under the action plan.

364. The Commission welcomed the Agency’s organization of IRRS missions to European Union member States, as foreseen in the Union directive on nuclear safety. It would continue to follow that process, share the results and encourage member States with nuclear installations to consider requesting such missions on a regular basis. The recently adopted nuclear waste directive required comparable peer reviews of national waste management programmes and the Commission would welcome a similar Agency service.

365. The recent extraordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety had confirmed the need to make that Convention more effective and the Commission fully supported the establishment of an effectiveness and transparency working group.

366. Cooperation between the Agency and the Commission in the safeguards area continued to be smooth, productive and mutually beneficial, allowing both organizations to draw their own independent conclusions. Integrated safeguards had been fully implemented in the European Union since January 2010. The Commission welcomed the continued evolution of safeguards towards a State-level concept. Over the preceding year, the Agency and the Commission had been reflecting on how the two inspectorates could further enhance their cooperation, enabling the former to make even better use of the latter’s verification activities.

367. The European Union had continued to provide important technical support for Agency safeguards through the European Commission Cooperative Support Programme, which had celebrated



its 30th anniversary in October 2011. Under that programme, the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission actively collaborated with the Agency in its scientific and technical work programme on safeguards.

368. The European Union had enhanced the support it gave the Agency, including for the promotion of nuclear security worldwide. It remained a key donor to the Nuclear Security Fund, having committed more than €30 million since 2004. The Union and the Agency had coordinated their support to third countries in that field, mainly through the border monitoring working group, inter alia providing detection equipment and training.

369. Mr OLIVEIRA (ABACC) said that Argentina and Brazil had managed to establish a safeguards system which was unique in the world, had matured over a period of more than 20 years and had won the respect of the international nuclear community. The system had features which were not found in other comprehensive safeguards agreements. The Quadripartite Agreement went beyond normal safeguards agreements, which established a commitment between one State Party and the Agency. Instead it had four parties: two neighbouring States, an agency created by those States — ABACC, and the IAEA. It thus embodied a much more comprehensive safeguards regime which put into practice the concept of neighbours monitoring neighbours, internationally recognized as being both efficient and effective. Currently, ABACC was applying the Common System of Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials to all nuclear material in the approximately 70 nuclear facilities in Argentina and Brazil, and conducting some 110 inspections at those facilities annually. ABACC's efforts over the more than two decades it had been in existence allowed the clear conclusion to be drawn that both Argentina and Brazil had been conducting their activities in the nuclear field in full compliance with the nuclear safeguards and non-proliferation commitments they had entered into at both binational and international level.

370. The mature relationship which had grown up between ABACC and the Agency over the years allowed both organizations to work in harmony and with objectivity. Cooperation arrangements between the two agencies for the application of safeguards had been developed and implemented in line with the basic principles of the Quadripartite Agreement: joint inspections, coordination of activities to prevent duplication of human and material resources, and independence of conclusions. Based on those principles, many mechanisms had been put in place for joint use of equipment and staff and analysis of safeguards implementation, facilitating significant optimization of the use of resources.

371. ABACC's close integration with other international entities in the safeguards fields promoted exchange of experience and knowledge to the benefit of all. ABACC had benefited from its cooperation with the Agency, Euratom, the United States Department of Energy, nuclear institutes in the European Union and the national authorities of Argentina and Brazil. Its relations with other international partners had also been fruitful, in particular with Canada in connection with the development of training courses, and with France, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the United Kingdom with respect to conceptual development of safeguards implementation. Its participation in international forums such as the European Safeguards Research and Development Association and the Institute of Nuclear Materials Management had facilitated exchange of ideas and experience which had been very helpful in enhancing the agency's skills. Since 2011, ABACC had been attending the Board of Governors as an observer.

372. Since its establishment, ABACC's institutional policies had enshrined a commitment to ongoing technical training of its human resources which, together with use of the latest equipment, had played a major role in its success and the independence of its conclusions. One crucial factor had been the recognition and support it had received from the governments of Argentina and Brazil in the form of a commitment to ensuring that it could function smoothly, that it had the financial resources it needed,

and that it preserved its institutional independence. ABACC's staff was a clear demonstration of that support: they had come from institutions active in the nuclear field in both countries. Both governments had also given full support to technical cooperation between ABACC and the laboratories of various national bodies and institutions.

373. The many challenges ABACC faced in safeguarding the nuclear facilities of both countries included: the completion and testing of the installation of the unattended system for dry transfer of spent fuel to the silos at the Embalse nuclear power plant; the installation and operation of the safeguards systems at the Atucha II nuclear power plant, which should be operational by 2013; application of the safeguards approach for uranium enrichment plants in both countries, which would require investment in equipment and greater inspection effort as new cascades came on line; and application of safeguards in conversion plants in Argentina and Brazil, for which the safeguards approaches and equipment procurement were not yet complete.

374. The ABACC Secretariat kept abreast of new technical developments in the safeguards field in a constant attempt to keep its work up to date. Updating of surveillance systems with special authentication requirements employing new technologies was an area where ABACC needed to put in more effort. With respect to the testing of remote transmission of information on the operating status of safeguards equipment, ABACC and the Agency were elaborating a proposal which met the requirements laid down by the national authorities. Remote transmission would be used in some surveillance systems in Argentina and Brazil. The ABACC-Cristallini UF<sub>6</sub> sampling method was in the process of being standardized and certified, in cooperation with the American Society for Testing and Materials, and should reduce costs and generate less liquid waste. Another challenge ahead was the application of the State-level safeguards concept. Pursuant to the declarations made by both governments in recent years, ABACC and the IAEA, together with the interested parties, should soon be able to apply the special procedures foreseen in Article 13 of the Quadripartite Agreement to nuclear material subject to safeguards that was used for the propulsion and operation of a vehicle, including submarines and prototypes.

375. Finally, in the coming week, the 12th meeting of the Liaison Committee under the Quadripartite Agreement would be held in Vienna.

376. Mr MAHJOUR (Arab Atomic Energy Agency) said that his organization had succeeded in achieving many of the objectives for which it had been created two decades previously, one of which was to build human resources capacity by organizing training courses, workshops, seminars, conferences and other activities.

377. The Arab League Summit had adopted an Arab strategy for peaceful uses of nuclear energy up to the year 2020 and had tasked the Arab Atomic Energy Agency with elaborating a joint Arab programme on peaceful uses of nuclear energy in various fields. The programme had been developed by a group of Arab experts and his organization was determined to proceed with its implementation, with the support of the Agency and its Member States.

378. His organization had concluded a cooperation agreement with the Agency under which a number of joint programmes had been implemented. During a visit to its headquarters in Tunisia, the Director General of the Agency had expressed the wish to strengthen cooperation with it and to increase the number of joint activities. Several such activities were currently being planned for 2013.

379. The Arab Atomic Energy Agency hoped that advanced countries would assist the Arab States in building their human resources capacity by providing education and training courses. He thanked the Republic of Korea for its assistance in that regard. In 2011, the organization had held a workshop, in cooperation with the Korea Institute of Nuclear Safety, on safety and regulation of nuclear power plants, research reactors and radioisotope sources, and a training course on basic regulatory procedures

in nuclear power plants. Those events had been attended by specialists from various Arab countries. A workshop on the physical protection and security of radioactive sources had been held earlier in 2012 and a workshop was currently being held on radiation and nuclear emergencies and environmental radiation monitoring networks. His organization was also grateful to the United States State Department and Department of Energy and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory for their support in building a nuclear safety and security culture. It looked forward to joint activities with the European Union in the context of the human resources programme relating to nuclear safety and security.

380. Several Arab States were planning to build nuclear power reactors because of their production potential, and the unprecedented rise in oil and gas prices and the need to exploit such resources in a rational manner, preserving the rights of future Arab generations. Moreover, such reactors afforded major benefits in many other fields such as medicine, industry, agriculture, the environment, water and livestock. He therefore called on all Arab States to proceed with the implementation of their nuclear programmes in view of the immense contribution they could make to socio-economic development.

381. The Arab States relied on two energy sources — crude oil and natural gas — to generate the heat and electricity required for seawater desalination. It was expected that oil and gas supplies would be depleted during the coming century unless new sources were discovered. Nuclear energy played an important role in meeting the growing demand for heat and electricity in the Arab region. The idea of coupling nuclear electricity production with seawater desalination had therefore been raised with Arab decision-makers many years previously. The IAEA had offered considerable support in that connection to Arab countries in North Africa, undertaking numerous feasibility studies which had demonstrated the growing need of the countries concerned for electricity and water and the fact that the best solution was the nuclear option. The General Conference, Executive Council and general management of the Arab Atomic Energy Agency had therefore sought to help Arab States focus on nuclear programmes based on IAEA standards.

382. The increasing attention that was being given to nuclear safety and security, and the major steps that were being taken to prevent nuclear accidents, especially through improvements in reactor design, supported the hope that a new generation of reactors capable of eliminating unjustified public fears would be invented in the years ahead.

383. Israeli nuclear capabilities posed a threat to the States of the Middle East and his organization called for pressure to be brought to bear on Israel to place its installations under Agency safeguards and to accede to all relevant non-proliferation instruments. That would contribute not only to peace and security, but also to aspirations to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, along the lines of those created in Africa, Asia and South America. The Arab Atomic Energy Agency supported the efforts of the organizers of the conference to be held on that subject in late 2012. It also called on all States in the Middle East region to take the necessary steps to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone, thereby building confidence and promoting the safety of the peoples of the region.

**The meeting rose at 10.05 p.m.**