

# General Conference

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## Fifty-sixth regular session

# Plenary

## Record of the Fifth Meeting

*Held at Headquarters, Vienna, on Wednesday, 19 September 2012, at 10.05 a.m.*

**President:** Mr BARROS OREIRO (Uruguay)

**Later:** Mr STUART (Australia)

**Later:** Mr BARRY (Australia)

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**Abbreviations used in this record:**

AAEA	Arab Atomic Energy Agency
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
CPF	Country Programme Framework
BARC	Bhabha Atomic Research Centre
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
CTBTO	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
ECAS	Enhancing Capabilities of the Safeguards Analytical Services
EPREV	Emergency Preparedness Review
EU	European Union
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GDP	gross domestic product
HEU	high-enriched uranium
imPACT	integrated missions of PACT
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
INSSP	Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan
IPPAS	International Physical Protection Advisory Service
IPSART	International Probabilistic Safety Assessment Review Team
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
LEU	low-enriched uranium
LWR	light-water reactor

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

MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NGO	non-governmental 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
NPT Review and Extension Conference	Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
OECD/NEA	Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
P-5+1	The five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PHWR	pressurized heavy water reactor
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)
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
WWER	water cooled water moderated reactor

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

1. Mr BAYER (Turkey) said that, owing to a rapid increase in national electricity demand and insufficient domestic energy resources, his country was highly dependent on imported fossil fuels — to the extent of around 75%. Pursuant to projections that the country would require an additional installed capacity of 100 000 MW(e) by 2030, and with a view to strengthening its energy security, Turkey had decided to embark on a nuclear power programme. It had concluded an agreement with the Russian Federation that would pave the way for the construction by 2020 of a nuclear power plant with a total capacity of 4800 MW(e) at the Akkuyu nuclear site. Turkey also planned to construct a nuclear power plant with a total capacity of 5000 MW(e) at the Sinop nuclear site.
2. In support of its nuclear power programme, Turkey was in the process of enhancing its human resources and knowledge management capacity and updating its legislation in the light of the latest Agency standards.
3. His country, which was committed to the safe, secure and peaceful utilization of nuclear energy, would continue its close cooperation with the Agency to that end.
4. Turkey, which attached great importance to high levels of nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety, encouraged the Secretariat to continue strengthening its efforts aimed at achieving and maintaining them.
5. The Fukushima Daiichi accident had brought the significance of nuclear safety to the world's attention. The lessons learned from it should be used to prevent further such accidents. Turkey greatly appreciated the activities organized by the Secretariat for the sharing of those lessons.
6. His country encouraged the Secretariat to continue providing guidance and assistance to Member States wishing to adopt safety regulations and establish or maintain safety infrastructure, with due regard for the needs of those Member States which were thinking of embarking on nuclear power programmes.
7. Regarding the safety of old nuclear power plants, the very old Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant, located in an earthquake zone in Armenia and lacking protective structures, remained a matter of concern for Turkey and other nearby countries. All necessary measures should be taken in order to eliminate the risks associated with that plant.
8. Turkey, which attached great importance to the promotional activities of the Agency and to the Agency's technical cooperation programmes, considered the funding of those programmes to be a joint responsibility of all Member States.
9. Turkey believed that the resources provided to the Agency through the Regular Budget should continue to be sufficient to enable it to perform its statutory functions properly. It would therefore continue to support all reasonable, balanced and affordable Regular Budget increases.
10. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction was one of the major challenges of the current century, and creating conditions for a world free of nuclear weapons was therefore essential.
11. The NPT was an irreplaceable framework for strengthening international peace, security and stability. It was the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and essential for the

pursuit of nuclear disarmament and for access to the benefits of the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy. The sustainability of the NPT regime depended on, inter alia, the universalization of the NPT and of additional protocols, strengthening of the Agency's safeguards system, the reinforcement of export controls, and the early entry into force of the CTBT.

12. An important priority was the establishment of effectively verifiable zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction wherever feasible. A reduction of the stockpiles of nuclear weapons in a transparent, irreversible and verifiable manner was also an important priority.

13. Nuclear terrorism was one of the most serious threats to global security, as everyone would be vulnerable if non-State actors acquired nuclear or other radioactive material. Collective international responses therefore needed to be developed. With that conviction, Turkey had been participating in the Nuclear Security Summit process from the outset — and in November it would host the first Sherpa meeting for the 2014 Nuclear Security Summit.

14. The Agency's safeguards system was an essential part of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, which Turkey would like to see strengthened through the universalization of additional protocols, as strengthening of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime would not only help to further enhance security worldwide but also help to enable international cooperation in the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy to reach its full potential.

15. However, there were still a considerable number of countries without additional protocols in force, and 15 of those countries had not yet even brought comprehensive safeguards agreements with the Agency into force pursuant to their NPT obligations. Turkey called upon all the countries in question to bring comprehensive safeguards agreements and/or additional protocols into force without further delay.

16. At the same time, it should be remembered that the NPT did not impose obligations only on non-nuclear-weapon States; under Article VI, the nuclear-weapon States also had important obligations. Without a genuine commitment to the final elimination of nuclear arsenals, including non-strategic nuclear weapons, the NPT regime was bound to fail. Turkey believed that the Agency should be given a mandate for the verification of nuclear disarmament activities. Serious nuclear disarmament efforts were very important for encouraging non-nuclear-weapon States to accept and to submit to a strengthened safeguards system. The existence of States not party to the NPT but with nuclear weapons programmes dangerously undermined the global safeguards system, and Turkey therefore called upon those States to accede to the NPT and eliminate their military nuclear capabilities and programmes as promptly as possible.

17. During the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference, the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), a ministerial-level group of 12 countries to which Turkey belonged, had made a number of meaningful proposals. Turkey, which had hosted the NPDI's 2012 meeting, hoped and believed that the 2015 NPT Review Conference would build on the achievements of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

18. The decision of the 2010 NPT Review Conference on the convening in 2012 of a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction was yet to be implemented. Turkey, which had greatly appreciated the Agency forum on that subject held in November, was encouraged by the tireless efforts of the conference facilitator, Mr Laajava, and would spare no efforts in helping to bring about the convening of that conference.

19. All States that complied with their obligations under the NPT had, pursuant to Article IV, the undisputed right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. At the same time, it was essential to ensure that there would be no increased risk of nuclear weapons proliferation associated with the

expansion of nuclear energy utilization. Turkey therefore advocated universalization of the NPT and its consistent implementation.

20. His country attached great importance to the effectiveness of the Agency's safeguards system and greatly appreciated the manner in which the Secretariat conducted its verification activities.

21. Following the recent meetings between representatives of Iran and of the Agency to discuss the implementation of Iran's safeguards agreement, Turkey encouraged further dialogue in that regard with a view to finalizing a structured approach to clarification of the outstanding questions. It remained fully committed to a resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue through diplomatic and other peaceful means. In its view, only through a step-by-step process with parallel actions would it be possible to arrive at a mutually satisfactory resolution.

22. Turkey, which had hosted several meetings between Iran and the P-5+1, would continue doing all it could to facilitate dialogue.

23. As regards the Syrian nuclear issue, Turkey called upon Syria to cooperate fully with the Agency.

24. Turkey, which was gravely concerned about the fact that the DPRK had not been cooperating with the Agency since April 2009, called upon the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapon-related activities in an irreversible manner under Agency verification, to act strictly in accordance with its international obligations and to return immediately to the Six-Party Talks process without preconditions.

25. Mr FERNÁNDEZ DI MAGGIO (Uruguay) said that his country greatly appreciated the work being done within the framework of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety.

26. Uruguay attached great importance to Agency safeguards, to the role of the Agency in helping to establish regulatory infrastructures for radiation protection and safety and for the security of radioactive sources and nuclear facilities, and to multilateral dialogue as a means of resolving international tensions connected with the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy.

27. During the past eight years, Uruguay's economy had grown at an average rate of 6.5% annually, and his country now had the lowest poverty index in Latin America. In 2008, a 20-year energy policy had been agreed to by all the political parties represented in the national Parliament. As a result, annual investment in Uruguay's energy infrastructure during the period 2011–2015 would exceed 3% of GDP — five times the average for Latin America.

28. Uruguay, which had no proven reserves of oil, natural gas or coal, had already constructed as many hydroelectric plants as the country's main rivers could power. However, thanks to the energy transition now under way, renewable energy was being introduced and energy independence increased without any subsidies. His country aimed to ensure that, by 2015, 50% of its primary energy and 90% of its electricity would come from renewable sources such as hydropower, wind and solar power, biomass and biofuels, with a 30% reduction in generation costs. The Agency had assisted in that regard through a project on long-term energy planning.

29. Uruguay was considering its energy options beyond 2030, including the introduction of nuclear power, and it was drawing on the Agency's publication *Milestones in the Development of a National Infrastructure for Nuclear Power*. It was currently at Milestone 1 — preparing to make a knowledgeable commitment to nuclear power. The process was being led by a high-level commission that included representatives of the country's main political parties. The commission greatly appreciated the support it had received from the Secretariat.

30. Uruguay was pleased that in 2011 the Agency's technical cooperation programme had focused particularly on emerging economies. Given the needs of Latin American countries, however, Uruguay believed that the TCF should not have to rely on voluntary contributions. A mechanism should be created to ensure that the funding for Agency technical cooperation activities was sufficient, assured and predictable.

31. Uruguay, which attached great importance to PACT, had in August concluded a contract for the acquisition of a linear accelerator for the Faculty of Medicine of the University of the Republic, with co-financing through the Agency and the OPEC Fund for International Development.

32. His Government, which was keen to develop Uruguay's growing mining industry in an environmentally responsible manner, greatly appreciated the support being provided through the Agency for a high-resolution airborne geophysical survey project.

33. Uruguay, which was strengthening its National Regulatory Authority for Radiation Protection, had benefited from the provision through the Agency of regulatory authority staff training and donations of high-tech equipment for conducting regulatory inspections.

34. His country, where an INSSP was being implemented, was about to conclude an agreement with the Agency's Office of Nuclear Security for the provision of radiation portal monitors and of technical advice to port and customs authorities, the police and the army.

35. Within the ARCAL framework, Uruguay was currently implementing projects relating to nuclear medicine (particularly cancer treatment), to the determination of chemicals in food for domestic consumption and export, and to the improvement of reproductive efficiency in dairy cattle.

36. Mr WATHELET (Belgium) said that his country, which had welcomed the adoption by the General Conference in 2011 of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, considered that there were still many lessons to be learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident as regards improving nuclear safety worldwide. The necessary steps should be taken to ensure that the objectives of the Action Plan were achieved. Belgium would therefore like to see all Member States implementing all aspects of the Action Plan.

37. Belgium, which was committed to the achievement of high levels of safety at its nuclear facilities, believed that regular — and preferably obligatory — OSART, IRRS and other peer reviews were the best means of ensuring compliance with the strictest nuclear safety standards.

38. During recent safety inspections, possible flaws had been detected in the pressure vessel of Unit 3 of the Doel Nuclear Power Plant. The operator had immediately carried out an in-depth investigation, while the Belgian nuclear safety authority had assembled a group of foreign counterparts with a view to benefiting from their expertise in the analysis of the probable causes and effects. Unit 3 had been shut down pending the results of the investigation and the analysis. A week ago, possible flaws had also been detected in the pressure vessel of Unit 2 of the Tihange Nuclear Power Plant, and a similar process of investigation and analysis was being followed.

39. Belgium was preparing for an IRRS mission planned for the end of 2013. The mission would be in conformity with the country's obligations under the Euratom directive on nuclear safety adopted in July 2009.

40. Following the Fukushima Daiichi accident, Belgium had, in cooperation with the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group, developed an action plan for enhancing safety at its nuclear power plants; the action plan was being implemented. The methodology had been presented in August at the Second Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety.



41. A credible and effective safeguards system was essential for the development of the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy, and the safeguards commitments made must be abided by; cases of non-compliance with safeguards agreements could not be ignored.
42. Accordingly, Belgium, which was seriously concerned about the nuclear weapon and ballistic missile programmes of the DPRK and its decision to cease cooperation with the Agency, called upon the DPRK to comply fully, unconditionally and immediately with all its international obligations, including those under the relevant Security Council resolutions and the NPT, and to refrain from further provocations. In that connection, it would welcome a resumption of the Six-Party Talks.
43. Belgium was also seriously concerned about the continuing lack of progress towards resolving the Iranian nuclear issue; the numerous opportunities offered by the international community with a view to resolving it diplomatically had not been seized by Iran. Belgium condemned the continuation of uranium enrichment activities in Iran and the Iranian project for the construction of a heavy-water reactor, as they were in clear violation of resolutions of the Board of Governors and the Security Council. There needed to be complete transparency on the part of Iran in order to dispel all doubts regarding the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme. Belgium hoped that Iran would resume the dialogue with China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.
44. Belgium called upon Syria to cooperate fully and transparently with the Agency.
45. His country, which had welcomed the Director General's initiative in convening the Forum on Experience of Possible Relevance to the Creation of a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East, held in November 2011, hoped that a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction would be held before the end of 2012.
46. In his country's view, the current verification standard of Agency safeguards was a comprehensive safeguards agreement plus an additional protocol. Belgium would therefore like all countries to have a comprehensive agreement plus an additional protocol in force.
47. His country commended the tireless efforts of the Secretariat in increasing the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of the Agency's safeguards system, which played a key role in combating nuclear weapons proliferation and whose objectivity and independence must be preserved.
48. Belgium, which was following with interest the Secretariat's work on developing a State-level approach to safeguards implementation, welcomed any initiative that increased the effectiveness of safeguards and ensured their objectivity while permitting a reduction in the number of inspections in States with a good non-proliferation record.
49. The unique nature and the high quality of the Agency's safeguards system were due not only to the analysis and evaluation capabilities of the Secretariat but also to the diversity of resources at its disposal. Those resources, the use of which should be rationalized and optimized, were essential for the independent performance of the mission assigned to the Agency under its Statute and the NPT.
50. The Secretariat was to be commended for its activities in the area of nuclear security, which were particularly useful in helping Member States to establish physical protection regimes.
51. Belgium would like to see the Amendment to the CPPNM entering into force soon.
52. New regulations on the physical protection of nuclear material (including nuclear material during transport) and nuclear facilities had entered into force in Belgium in May. They had been explained in workshops and in bilateral meetings with all stakeholders and, as a result, they had been readily accepted. In line with the commitments made by it at the 2010 Nuclear Security Summit,

Belgium intended to continue strengthening the security of its nuclear material and nuclear facilities. It also intended to improve its ability to respond in the event of a nuclear security incident.

53. At the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit, Belgium — together with the United States of America, France and the Netherlands — had made a declaration on minimizing the use of HEU fuel in research reactors and ensuring supplies of radioisotopes for medical uses; it had also made — together with the Republic of Korea, the United States of America and France — a declaration regarding cooperation in the production of high-density LEU fuel. His country was currently cooperating with the United States in the repatriation of HEU fuel.

54. With regard to radioactive waste management, Belgium was currently working on a project for the final disposal of low- and intermediate-level waste. Its Agency for Radioactive Waste and Enriched Fissile Materials had drawn up a plan for the long-term management of intermediate- and high-level long-lived waste that would shortly be submitted to the Government for approval.

55. Belgium was continuing with its MYRRHA (multi-purpose hybrid research reactor for high-tech applications) project. Upon completion, the MYRRHA facility would be used for — inter alia — studies on the transmutation of radioisotopes, the development of construction materials for fourth-generation reactors and fusion reactors, and the production of medical radioisotopes. The Belgian Government had allocated €60 million for the period 2010–2014 for an R&D programme. Also, it had agreed to meet 40% of the €960 million total cost of the MYRRHA project, provided that there was sufficient external funding.

56. Belgium welcomed the establishment of the IAEA LEU Bank, which had been established with considerable financial support from the European Union. In its view, however, the Bank should serve only as a mechanism of last resort and should not be allowed to distort the commercial market in LEU.

57. His country, which was concerned about the many problems encountered in supplying isotopes for use in nuclear medicine, had increased the radioisotope production capacity of the BR2 reactor at Mol and of the National Institute for Radioelements (IRE) at Fleurus.

58. His country, which was in favour of the conversion of research reactors from HEU fuel to LEU fuel provided that it was technically and economically feasible, had taken steps towards converting the BR2 reactor at Mol and the targets at Fleurus.

59. The Belgian Government had decided to extend the operational life of the Tihange-1 reactor by ten years while maintaining its phase-out policy for the commercial generation of electricity using nuclear power. The extension, which was required in order to ensure an adequate electricity supply, meant that Tihange-1 would operate for 50 years altogether, whereas Belgium's other power reactors would be in operation for only 40 years. So far, the Government's decision had not been affected by the problems with Doel-3 and Tihange-2.

60. Mr TURDIU (Albania) said that his country, which was committed to helping to bring about nuclear disarmament, believed that Agency safeguards could play an important role in nuclear disarmament efforts.

61. Albania commended the Secretariat's continuing professional and unbiased approach to the verification issues relating to Iran, Syria and the DPRK, and it urged those countries to comply with the relevant resolutions of the Board of Governors and the Security Council.

62. The establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East would be a major step towards the achievement of global nuclear disarmament, and it could become a reality if the countries concerned cooperated with each other and a peaceful environment was maintained in that region. In that connection, Albania commended the Director General on his initiative in convening the Forum on

Experience of Possible Relevance to the Creation of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone in the Middle East that had been held in November 2011.

63. The Fukushima Daiichi accident had shaken confidence in the safety of nuclear power generation. Nuclear safety would be a matter of paramount importance for all in the future, and Albania concurred with the Director General's view that there was no room for complacency.

64. Albania welcomed the progress made in the implementation of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety and would like to see the Action Plan implemented in full.

65. His country, which attached great importance to international cooperation in the field of nuclear security, was participating in the Agency's Illicit Trafficking Database programme. Albania's international airport, some of its many land border crossing points and several of its seaports had been provided with equipment for the detection and inspection of radioactive materials, but further training was needed in the use of that equipment and in response procedures.

66. His country, which attached great importance to the CPPNM, was about to ratify the Amendment thereto, and it would like to see many more countries ratifying.

67. Under the IAEA Peaceful Uses Initiative (PUI), Albania had hosted a cancer assessment mission whose goal had been to make recommendations for improving the application of nuclear techniques in cancer diagnosis and treatment. It hoped to benefit further from the PUI in the coming years, and it would therefore like to see many more Member States making contributions in support of the PUI.

68. In March, Albania had signed a CPF for the period 2012–2017 covering its most important development priorities — health, energy, the environment, education, and nuclear safety and security.

69. Albania, whose cancer control strategy had been elaborated with Agency assistance, was a PACT Model Demonstration Site. It hoped that its oncology centre would soon achieve the status of a centre of competence in radiotherapy.

70. With Agency assistance, a radiotherapy service and a nuclear medicine service had been established at the University Hospital Centre "Mother Teresa". The nuclear medicine service, inaugurated in April 2011, had already carried out thousands of diagnoses and there were plans to expand its activities to include the training of medical students and of qualified physicians.

71. Albania, which considered nuclear power to be a viable option for helping to meet its energy needs, would take it into serious consideration when the national energy strategy was being formulated. His country hoped for Agency support in that connection.

72. Mr SINHA (India) said that the Agency had led the global response to the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station with the adoption of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. In line with his country's commitment to the implementation of the Action Plan, Indian experts would continue to assist the Secretariat in its endeavours to enhance nuclear safety worldwide.

73. The first OSART mission to India, to Units 3 and 4 of the Rajasthan Atomic Power Station, was planned for October, and planning was under way for an IRRS mission. Also in October, India would host an Agency-organized International Workshop on the Safety of Multi-Unit Nuclear Power Plant Sites against External Natural Hazards.

74. By and large, the global response to the Fukushima Daiichi accident had been mature, with nuclear power growth prospects continuing to be driven by long-term energy security concerns. In the post-Fukushima period, seven newly constructed reactors in five countries had been connected to the grid, and many countries had decided to continue planning for the launching of a nuclear power

programme. Furthermore, many countries, including India, had continued with their programmes for the expansion of nuclear power, while at the same time placing additional emphasis on nuclear safety. Thus, the latest Agency projections pointed to continued nuclear power growth in the coming decades.

75. India was pursuing the three-stage nuclear power programme that had been formulated under the visionary leadership of Dr Homi Bhabha. Its strategy was to adopt a closed nuclear fuel cycle in order to extract the maximum energy from its very limited uranium resources, to ensure sustainable nuclear waste management and, above all, to achieve long-term energy security through the use of thorium.

76. Nuclear power generation in India was continuing to grow as a result of improvements in the supply of uranium from domestic and foreign sources. So far in 2012 there had been an increase of approximately 23% compared with the same period in 2011. The average annual availability of India's power reactors had also increased, from 83% to 91%.

77. In March, the 540 MW(e) indigenously designed Unit 3 of the Tarapur Atomic Power Station had achieved a period of uninterrupted operation lasting 522 days. To date, ten Indian power reactors had had continuous operational runs of over a year; three had registered over 500 days of continuous operation, the longest period being 590 days.

78. The construction of the first of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant's two 1000 MW(e) LWRs had reached completion. Unit 1 was expected to start operation shortly, and the commissioning of Unit 2 was expected for early 2013.

79. The construction of the four indigenously designed 700 MW(e) PHWRs was on schedule, with progressive completion expected by 2017. The construction of a 500 MW(e) prototype fast breeder reactor was proceeding well at Kalpakkam; construction and installation activities in the reactor vault were nearly complete and all the major reactor equipment was in place.

80. The fast breeder test reactor at the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research had continued to operate smoothly, providing valuable operating experience and also technical input for India's fast reactor programme.

81. India, as a founder member of INPRO, was pleased with the progress INPRO had made over the years. The INPRO methodology for the assessment of innovative nuclear reactors and fuel cycles provided a broad framework for formulating goals and acceptance criteria for new designs. India would continue to support INPRO, making a contribution of US \$50 000 in addition to an in-kind contribution through participation in several INPRO initiatives.

82. India had intensified its uranium exploration activities. As a result, new uranium resources had been identified and there had been an increase of about 70% in its reserves over the past five years.

83. The production of PHWR fuel in India had reached 751 metric tons in 2011–2012, representing an increase of about 15% over the previous year's production. India had already successfully closed the nuclear fuel cycle for its PHWR programme.

84. India's new reprocessing plant had completed its first year of operation, performing excellently. Its second system for the vitrification of high-level nuclear waste, at Tarapur, had also performed excellently.

85. Ensuring food security was a major objective of his Government, and nuclear techniques were playing an important role in the efforts to achieve that objective through higher crop yields, greater crop disease resistance and better food preservation. Thus far, 40 radiation-induced mutant crop varieties had been released for commercial cultivation in India.

86. India attached great importance also to other non-power applications of nuclear techniques, particularly in health care, water resources management, industry and environmental protection. It was a strong supporter of RCA initiatives, and it had been the lead country in the area of industrial applications of ionizing radiation during the past few years.

87. India, which was developing state-of-the-art systems for cancer diagnosis and treatment in a cost-effective manner, stood ready, within the PACT framework, to ship two Bhabhatron II teletherapy units to Sri Lanka and Namibia as soon as the recipient hospitals could install them.

88. India's first medical cyclotron facility, which had been set up at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre for the production of tracers and for positron emission tomography, would complete ten years of successful operation in October. There were now 16 medical cyclotron facilities and 70 positron emission tomography/computed tomography units in India.

89. Isotopic techniques were being increasingly used in the management of water resources, and an isotope hydrology laboratory with advanced equipment had been set up at India's Himalayan Environmental Studies and Conservation Organization to provide training in the conduct of spring recharge-related studies.

90. Good progress had been made in refurbishing and upgrading India's Apsara reactor, the oldest reactor in Asia. The original core, with imported HEU fuel, was being replaced by a core with LEU fuel that would provide a neutron flux comparable to that which used to be provided by the CIRUS reactor, which had been shut down in December 2010. The fabrication of LEU fuel for the new Apsara core, using indigenously enriched uranium, had started earlier in 2012.

91. India was exploring the possibility of using nanofluids as an alternative coolant for water-cooled reactors. Experiments on the natural circulation and heat transfer behaviour of nanofluids had shown that they possess clear advantages, even with just trace concentrations of nanoparticles.

92. As part of India's programme in support of the management of ageing reactors, a weld inspection manipulator had been developed for the in-service inspection of welds in the pressure vessels of Tarapur Atomic Power Station Units 1 and 2. It had been successfully deployed during a recent outage of Unit 1, enabling the pressure vessel welds to be cleaned and ultrasonically examined.

93. The BARC Channel Inspection System, which had been used extensively for the in-service inspection of the coolant channels of 220 MW(e) PHWRs, had recently been adapted for use in the in-service inspection of the larger-diameter coolant channels of 540 MW(e) PHWRs.

94. With the use of accelerator-driven systems, the self-sustainable thorium fuel cycle seemed distinctly feasible. Accordingly, India had initiated a programme of physics studies and stage-wise technology development in that regard.

95. Continuing its support for the exchange of information on recent advances in nuclear science and technology, India had in 2011 hosted the well-attended 21st International Conference on Structural Mechanics in Reactor Technology (SMiRT).

96. At the Nuclear Security Summit held in Seoul, his country had announced a contribution of US \$1 million to the Agency's Nuclear Security Fund. It was looking forward to working with the Secretariat in the field of nuclear security.

97. The project for the establishment, near New Delhi, of a Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership with state-of-the-art training and research facilities was progressing. Off-campus activities had already begun: in 2011 there had been a regional training course on nuclear security, organized with Agency support; later in 2012 there was to be a regional training course on radiological safety.

India looked forward to intensive collaboration with the Agency in various programmes connected with the Global Centre.

98. Recent studies on newborns in the areas of Kerala with high-level natural radiation backgrounds had revealed no significant difference between them and newborns in areas with normal natural radiation backgrounds as regards the frequency of congenital malformations, Down syndrome and micronuclei abnormalities. Earlier studies carried out in the same region with a cohort of nearly 400 000 people had revealed no significantly higher incidence of any type of cancer in the areas with high-level natural radiation backgrounds.

99. In that connection, India was of the view that, as part of the efforts to address the public concerns about nuclear power that prevailed in some parts of the world, it was essential to present credible and authentic scientific information on the effects of ionizing radiation on human health and to dispel the misconceptions about nuclear power. The Agency should take the lead in that regard.

100. Mr STEINMANN (Switzerland), speaking also on behalf of Liechtenstein, welcomed the fact that the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference had taken place earlier in the year in a constructive climate. Resumption of the review process was important because the challenges relating to non-proliferation were growing stronger.

101. Regarding the conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction due to be held in December in Helsinki, the facilitator, Finnish Under-Secretary of State Laajava, was to be commended on the intensive consultations being conducted by him.

102. Switzerland and Liechtenstein, which welcomed the initial results achieved through implementation of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, believed, in the light of the Fukushima Daiichi accident, that the safety arrangements at nuclear power plants should be subjected to periodical peer reviews and that nuclear safety issues should be dealt with in a fully transparent manner.

103. In August, at the Second Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, Switzerland had proposed various amendments to the Convention. Its proposals would be taken into account by a working group tasked with considering ways to strengthen the Convention.

104. The responsibility for nuclear security lay exclusively with individual States. However, international exchanges of confidential information within the framework of the European Nuclear Security Regulators Association were proving to be useful. The Association planned to become involved in the training of nuclear security experts, which meant that more such experts would be available for IPPAS missions in due course.

105. Switzerland would like to see the CPPNM and the Amendment thereto signed and ratified by all States. It would also like to see the States with stockpiles of military nuclear material reducing their stockpiles in a transparent manner.

106. At the 2010 NPT Review Conference, Switzerland had put forward a suggestion regarding the examination of ways of optimizing the Agency's safeguards system. After a presentation on that suggestion made in the margins of the 2011 session of the General Conference, it hoped that the Secretariat would keep the Board informed of developments in connection with its suggestion.

107. Switzerland, which attached great importance to financial and budgetary matters, particularly in view of the present severe global financial crisis, considered that the Agency's current Regular Budget was sufficient for the performance by the Agency of all its statutory functions. At the same time, it would like to see all Member States paying their full TCF target shares.

108. In the wake of the Fukushima Daiichi accident, the Swiss nuclear safety authority had subjected Switzerland's five nuclear power plants to its own stress tests — over and above the stress tests carried out by the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group. Those plants would have to demonstrate by the end of 2013 that they were adequately protected against incidents due to extreme meteorological conditions.

109. Switzerland's Federal Council had decided that the existing nuclear power plants would not be replaced after their final shutdown. Parliament had endorsed that decision and had called for a reorientation of the country's energy strategy. Consultations regarding a new strategy, covering the period up to 2050, were about to start. Among the core elements of the new strategy would be greater energy use efficiency and the promotion of renewable energy sources. In the initial implementation phase, it would be necessary to resort to fossil fuel-based electricity generation, with 100% compensation for the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. A new Energy Act, based on the new energy strategy, could be in force as of 2015.

110. Switzerland, convinced that electricity supply security was increasingly an international issue, was planning a major investment in its electrical grid that would strengthen its role as a central hub for electricity distribution in Europe.

111. The Federal Council was soon to place before Parliament a proposal for promoting energy research. About 200 million Swiss francs would be allocated to the creation of centres of competence in the spheres of energy use efficiency and renewable energy sources.

112. Work was continuing on the selection of a site for a deep geological repository for nuclear waste. Twenty sites in six regions had been declared technically suitable. There had been considerable reaction in the regions concerned and in the national media, and the consultation process would no doubt take a long time, perhaps continuing until the end of 2013.

113. Switzerland and Liechtenstein were grateful to the Secretariat and the Director General for the high quality of the work done by them during the past year, especially in responding to the expectations of the international community in the aftermath of the Fukushima Daiichi accident.

114. Mr UZCÁTEGUI DUQUE (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that his country was still committed to the NPT, the Agency's Statute and the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

115. The principles of the sovereign equality of States, of non-intervention and of the self-determination of peoples were enshrined in the preamble to the Venezuelan Constitution, Article 129 of which prohibited the manufacture and use of nuclear weapons on Venezuelan territory. Venezuela was among those countries which had undertaken to keep their territories forever free of nuclear weapons pursuant to the Tlatelolco Treaty.

116. After the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, President Chávez had announced a temporary suspension of the preliminary studies relating to the possible launching of a nuclear power programme so that Venezuela's energy policy could be assessed in the light of the accident.

117. In the Annual Report for 2011, it was stated that the Fukushima Daiichi accident "resulted in a slowing of the expansion of nuclear power but did not reverse it." Many countries still considered that nuclear power had a significant contribution to make in helping them to meet their energy needs. Thus, the Agency should intensify its efforts to learn safety lessons from the accident that might be applied at nuclear power plants in operation and to be constructed.

118. In that context, his country commended the Japanese Government for convening the Fukushima Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety due to take place in December. Also, it hoped that the Agency would continue to support the Japanese Government in nuclear safety-related matters.

119. With the growing interest in nuclear technology, the Agency should maintain its leading role in establishing standards for the safe operation and decommissioning of nuclear facilities.

120. Venezuela was pleased that the Agency's Design and Safety Assessment Review Service had been enhanced in the light of lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident.

121. As regards nuclear security, which was a State responsibility, Venezuela considered that the Agency should focus on assisting countries that requested assistance. It also considered that a clear distinction needed to be made between nuclear security and nuclear safety.

122. His country, while greatly appreciating the Agency's nuclear security guidance, considered it important to bear in mind that nuclear security-related activities were not mandated by the Statute and should therefore be financed through extrabudgetary contributions, which should be made without any conditions attached.

123. Venezuela, which had benefited considerably from Agency technical cooperation projects, some of them implemented within the framework of ARCAL, considered that technical cooperation was the Agency's most important statutory activity and that the funding for it should be sufficient, assured and predictable. It therefore believed that the Agency's technical cooperation programmes should be funded from the Regular Budget.

124. Venezuela also believed that, given the highly specialized nature of the Agency's technical cooperation programmes, the Secretariat should exercise caution when seeking partnerships between the Agency and other organizations within the United Nations system.

125. Closer cooperation among the States of Latin America and the Caribbean and strengthened South-South relations were high priorities for Venezuela, which therefore attached great importance to ARCAL.

126. Venezuela, which had experienced great social progress in the past decade, hoped to further improve the living conditions of its population through technical cooperation projects in areas such as human and animal health, food and agriculture, environmental protection and water resources management.

127. His Government, which considered that the Agency's verification activities should be based exclusively on objective and technical criteria, believed in the sovereign right of States to develop and use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes as provided for in the NPT and the Agency's Statute.

128. A fundamental aspect of the NPT was the commitment of the nuclear-weapon States to general and complete nuclear disarmament under strict and effective international control. Venezuela, which would like to see more progress being made towards a world free of nuclear weapons, considered that the nuclear-weapon States should embark on serious nuclear disarmament negotiations in good faith without further delay.

129. Venezuela believed that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East would be an effective way of bringing peace and stability to that region.

130. With regard to the nuclear programme of Iran, the Director General's reports on that subject had confirmed that the nuclear material and activities declared by Iran were for peaceful purposes. However, several countries were continuing to allege that Iran had not been complying fully with its safeguards obligations and were urging it to bring into force and implement an additional protocol to



its safeguards agreement with the Agency. Iran had repeatedly pointed out, however, that the implementation of an additional protocol was a voluntary act, not an obligation, and Venezuela believed that a clear distinction should be made between the obligations of States and the confidence-building measures taken by States voluntarily.

131. Venezuela also believed that adopting a discriminatory approach in nuclear verification matters and using the Agency, in conjunction with the Security Council, as a tool in efforts to justify military intervention policies was counterproductive.

132. In a number of international forums, including the recent 16th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, Iran's authorities had affirmed that the Iranian nuclear programme was exclusively for peaceful purposes. The international community should give credence to those affirmations and recognize the efforts of Iran's authorities to provide assurances regarding the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme.

133. The Agency had found no evidence that Iran's nuclear programme was anything but peaceful, and Venezuela therefore called for an end to the persecution of Iran by a group of countries that seemed not to be committed to resolving the Iranian nuclear issue and, in order to justify their imperialist geopolitical and commercial ambitions in the region, had launched a media slur campaign against Iran.

134. The negotiations aimed at agreement on a structured approach should be intensified and take into account the reasonable view of Iran that such an approach should address its national security concerns as well as meeting the Agency's requirements.

135. Regarding the possible military dimensions to the Iranian nuclear programme and the questionable allegation that Iran had conducted activities related to the development of a nuclear explosive device, Iran should be given access to any documents that substantiated that allegation.

136. A discriminatory campaign was also being waged against Syria, and certain Member States had been unduly influencing the Director General's reports on the Syrian nuclear issue. Venezuela, which roundly condemned the September 2007 attack by Israel on Syria, could not understand why a country that had been the victim of a brutal attack was unjustifiably having an accusing finger pointed at it.

137. Given the geopolitical situation in the region to which Iran and Syria belonged, Venezuela urged the Agency to redouble its efforts to bring about a peaceful resolution of the two issues through diplomacy and dialogue.

**Mr Stuart (Australia), Vice-President, took the Chair.**

138. Mr MÜNT (Estonia) said that his country, which commended the efforts being made by the Agency following the Fukushima Daiichi accident to enhance the safety of nuclear facilities worldwide, attached great importance to the Agency's safety standards and to the peer reviews of nuclear safety organized within the Agency framework.

139. Estonia welcomed the decision taken at the Second Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety to establish open-ended working group on effectiveness and transparency for the purpose of strengthening the Convention.

140. Estonia, which had welcomed the European Council's decision that all nuclear power plants in European Union member countries should be subjected to stress tests carried out by the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group, was pleased that seven of the countries in question had voluntarily undertaken to carry out additional stress tests of their own.

141. His country was looking forward to the March 2013 Nordic-Baltic crisis exercise in Finland, where the exercise scenario would be a nuclear accident at the Loviisa Nuclear Power Plant and the cooperation between organizations responsible for nuclear and radiation safety would be tested.

142. Estonia believed that Member States should take full advantage of the Agency's nuclear safety and security peer review services, both during the operation and before the commissioning of their nuclear power plants and that the peer review team reports should be made available to the general public.

143. Although Estonia had no nuclear power plants of its own, as nuclear accidents did not respect national borders it was focusing on ensuring that its radiological emergency preparedness and response capabilities were adequate.

144. Accordingly, within the framework of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, it had hosted an EPREV mission in September 2011. The resulting recommendations had been studied carefully and were in the process of being implemented.

145. Estonia's position vis-à-vis nuclear power remained pragmatic: nuclear power could serve as an additional carbon emission-free option in the diversification of its energy mix.

146. An Estonian energy company had expressed an interest in participating as an investor in the Visaginas nuclear power plant project in Lithuania. Only after the technical negotiations had been concluded would a final decision be made, with full account taken of Estonian public opinion about the project and about nuclear power in general.

147. Estonia, which had benefited greatly from its technical cooperation with the Agency, was now in a position to share with other Member States the knowledge gained by it, especially in the public health area.

148. Mr BEN SALEM (Tunisia) said that, as part of the comprehensive reforms being undertaken by the Government elected by the Tunisian people after the revolution, a review was being made of the system for research and development and technological innovation with a view to attainment of the country's development goals. The focus was on finding solutions to the challenges facing Tunisia in priority areas such as energy, food, health and water security.

149. Nuclear techniques were important in the health area, especially for cancer diagnosis and therapy, and his Government, which was planning to set up cancer control centres in marginalized parts of the country, would be counting on the support of the Secretariat and, in addition, hoping for support from donor States. It attached great importance to PACT in that connection.

150. In view of its very limited fossil fuel resources and increasing energy consumption, Tunisia was studying the possibility of increasing electricity generation through the use of nuclear energy and of renewable forms of energy. It hoped to take a decision once the post-revolution transitional phase came to an end.

151. The use of nuclear energy for seawater desalination was also of interest to Tunisia on account of its very limited freshwater resources, especially in the southern and central parts of the country, and increasing freshwater consumption. Tunisia therefore welcomed the work under way within the Agency framework on the development of small and medium-sized reactors for desalination combined with electricity generation.

152. Tunisia also welcomed the Agency's tsetse fly and trypanosomosis eradication programme, which it would like to see intensified.

153. Climate change was likely to have very adverse consequences for the food security of developing countries. Tunisia was therefore eager to learn what practical measures were to be taken by the Agency, in partnership with FAO, in response to the requests and needs of developing Member States threatened with such consequences.

154. Since becoming a Member State, in 1957, Tunisia had consistently fulfilled its commitments vis-à-vis the Agency. Also, it had benefited from the Agency's technical cooperation programmes. Currently, there were 13 national technical cooperation projects under way in Tunisia, which, together with other African countries, was participating in 43 regional technical cooperation projects.

155. In benefiting from the Agency's technical cooperation programmes, Tunisia was conscious of the need to bear its share of the costs by contributing to the TCF and paying the NPCs due from it. Accordingly, it would of course pay its full TCF target share for the coming year.

156. His country, which attached special importance to equitable representation of Member States in the Secretariat, would like to see greater efforts made to appoint qualified persons from developing Member States. The representation of Tunisia, which had declined to a level not commensurate with his country's strong ties with the Agency since 1957, should be improved.

157. His country attached great importance to the Agency's cooperation with the AAEA, whose headquarters were in Tunisia, and it welcomed the perceptible strengthening of that cooperation under Director General Amano.

158. During the current year, cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy between his country and the United States of America had been stepped up under an agreement concluded between the Tunisian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research and the United States Department of Energy, with the launching of a number of joint projects.

159. Tunisia fully understood that benefiting from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy should entail complying with all nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear safety and nuclear security obligations. It would therefore ratify the additional protocol that it had signed in 2005 as soon as the relevant legal and regulatory framework had been established — hopefully in 2013. It was grateful to the Agency's Office of Legal Affairs for assisting with the drafting of the necessary legislation.

160. Tunisia, which had participated in the Second Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, attached great importance to learning lessons from the Fukushima Daiichi accident and to the implementation of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety.

161. Tunisia had, in cooperation with the United States of America, taken steps to upgrade the security at the most important of its facilities where radioactive materials were used, and it planned to implement an INSSP agreed upon with the Agency.

162. Tunisia also planned to strengthen its land, sea and air border controls in order to ensure the detection of radioactive materials entering and leaving the country.

163. The objectives of the NPT would remain elusive without the accession of all States to that treaty. Tunisia, which would like to see the creation of a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, therefore hoped that the General Conference would, in an appropriate resolution, call upon Israel to accede to the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities, which posed a threat to the security of the region, under Agency safeguards so that the peoples of the region could live in peace.

164. Mr TSEKOA (Lesotho) commended the Director General on his efforts in addressing the issue of cancer in developing countries and for putting cancer treatment high on the Agency's agenda.

165. The recommendations resulting from an impACT mission to Lesotho in 2011 were being drawn on by its Ministry of Health in the planning for the establishment of the first cancer treatment centre in the country. Also, they had been indispensable for raising awareness of the issue of cancer in Lesotho with a view to the mobilization of funds for equipping the centre and training radiation therapy specialists.

166. Lesotho, which attached great importance to its technical cooperation with the Agency and was about to conclude its first CPF agreement, greatly appreciated the assistance that it had received through the Agency in the areas of agriculture, food security and cancer management and with the establishment of an institutional infrastructure for the control of radioactive sources.

167. The subject of the 2012 Scientific Forum, “Food for the Future: Meeting the Challenges with Nuclear Applications”, was highly relevant for his country given the food insecurity there. The first Millennium Development Goal, to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, would remain meaningless unless the issue of food insecurity among the poor was addressed.

168. Lesotho greatly appreciated the IAEA Peaceful Uses Initiative (PUI), from which it had benefited in the area of capacity-building, and it would like to see all Member States in a position to support the PUI doing so.

169. At the end of October, Lesotho would be hosting a seminar on nuclear law which it hoped would give impetus to the work on drafting legislation for the establishment of a national regulatory authority for the peaceful applications of nuclear energy.

170. During the current session of the General Conference, Lesotho had deposited instruments of acceptance of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, of the supplementary Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources, and of the Amendment to the CPPNM.

171. Mr ZHANTIKIN (Kazakhstan), recalling that, at his country’s initiative, the United Nations General Assembly had declared 29 August the International Day against Nuclear Tests, said that from 27 to 29 August 2012 Kazakhstan had hosted an international conference entitled “From the Nuclear Test Ban to a Nuclear Weapons-Free World” that had been attended by representatives of the United Nations, the Agency, the CTBTO and other international organizations, of academic institutions and of numerous NGOs. At the conference, President Nazarbayev had announced the launch of the ATOM (Abolish Testing. Our Mission) Project, whose purpose was to enable people everywhere to sign an online petition to the world’s governments calling for the permanent abandonment of nuclear weapons testing and for the early entry into force of the CTBT — an instrument that Kazakhstan would like to see ratified by all States.

172. In support of the Agency’s nuclear fuel supply assurance initiative, Kazakhstan had offered to host an international LEU bank (the IAEA LEU Bank), and its offer had been accepted. Negotiations were under way with the Secretariat on a Host State Agreement and related instruments.

173. His country was convinced that such nuclear fuel supply assurance mechanisms would not jeopardize the right of Member States to establish their own nuclear fuel fabrication facilities. However, they must not be discriminatory; they should be accessible to all States that complied fully with their safeguards agreements, and the transfers of LEU should be based on non-political and consistent criteria.

174. Kazakhstan, which would like to see the universalization of comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols, believed that those States which had not yet accepted those instruments should do so without further delay.

175. His country, which had played an important role in the establishment of the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, was convinced that the experience gained by it could be useful in other regions, including the Middle East.

176. Kazakhstan, which was implementing the provisions of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, would like to see all countries acceding to that convention. It had acceded to the CPPNM and ratified the Amendment thereto, and it hoped that the Amendment would enter into force soon.

177. His country had taken part in the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit and would make every effort to help in implementing its outcomes.

178. With the support of the United States Department of Energy, the WWR-K research reactor at Kazakhstan's Institute of Nuclear Physics was being converted from the use of HEU fuel to the use of LEU fuel and studies were under way on the feasibility of doing the same for other research reactors in Kazakhstan.

179. Given the lower efficiency of radioisotope production technologies not involving the use of HEU, at the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit his country had proposed that economic incentives be offered for the conversion of research reactors from HEU to LEU.

180. Kazakhstan, which was implementing the provisions of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), was taking measures to further improve the system for combating illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive material. As a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Zangger Committee, Kazakhstan was also taking measures to ensure the scrupulous control of nuclear exports, including the export of equipment that could be used to enrich uranium and reprocess spent nuclear fuel.

181. As any large-scale nuclear accident could have serious transboundary consequences, Kazakhstan was supporting the Agency's efforts to develop a tougher approach to nuclear safety in the nuclear power sector and attached great importance to the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety.

182. Kazakhstan, which also attached great importance to the Agency's activities in promoting the development and transfer of technology related to peaceful applications of nuclear energy, including nuclear power generation, was particularly interested in the activities in the area of human capacity-building.

183. Together with the Secretariat, Kazakhstan had been assessing the radioactive contamination levels on part of the Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site with a view to returning it to economic use.

184. Kazakhstan, which was a leading producer of uranium and had the potential to fabricate nuclear fuel, intended to expand its involvement in the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy under the NPT. Its State-owned holding company Kazatomprom was establishing a vertically integrated company covering the complete nuclear fuel cycle. Kazatomprom had joined forces with a Russian isotope separation company with a view to joint nuclear fuel fabrication activities.

185. Though his country was a very active and responsible member of the Agency, it was unfortunately deprived of the opportunity of participating directly in the work of the Board of Governors. It would therefore like to see the amendment to Article VI of the Statute entering into force soon.

186. Mr SABBAGH (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his country would like to see the Secretariat doing more to assist developing Member States in the areas of water and food security and human health.

187. A large share of the Agency's activities and budget was devoted to verification of the compliance of Member States with their safeguards agreements. However, some aspects of the Agency's verification activities raised concerns regarding information sources, the use of outside experts and the handling of confidential information.

188. Syria, one of the first States to accede to the NPT, had a solid record of compliance with its safeguards agreement with the Agency, concluded in 1992. Yet on 6 September 2007 Israel had breached Syria's sovereignty and destroyed a military building that had in no way been connected with nuclear activities, flagrantly violating the Charter of the United Nations and exploiting the decades-long tendency of the international community to turn a blind eye to its violations of international law, which were severely undermining peace and security in the Middle East. About eight months after the attack, in April 2008, the United States of America had made baseless allegations and produced fabricated information relating to the destroyed building. In a spirit of transparency and with a view to preserving its credibility, Syria had in June 2008 permitted Agency inspectors to visit the destroyed building, at Dair Alzour, and take environmental samples. Moreover, notwithstanding the adoption by the Board in June 2011 of a resolution based on inaccurate information and inconclusive findings, Syria had in October 2011 invited a high-level Agency team to Damascus at which agreement had been reached on an action plan to resolve the outstanding issues pertaining to the Dair Alzour site. Syria had on many occasions proclaimed its willingness to cooperate with the Agency in implementing the action plan.

189. Many years after the adoption by the General Conference, in 2000, of decision GC(44)/DEC/12, on the convening of a forum on the experience of other regions relevant to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, the Agency had in November 2011 finally managed to hold such a forum. His country had greatly appreciated the efforts of the Director General in that connection.

190. Syria, which had in 2011 participated in the adoption of General Assembly resolution 66/25, "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East", had already in 2003 submitted a draft resolution on that subject to the Security Council, but international circumstances — which remained unchanged — had precluded consideration of the Syrian initiative. Syria now looked forward to the convening before the end of the current year, in Helsinki, of a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction — a conference to be attended by all States of the Middle East in accordance with the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, which had drawn on the resolution on the Middle East adopted in 1995 at the NPT Review and Extension Conference. It greatly appreciated the efforts of the conference facilitator, the Finnish Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in connection with the convening of the conference. In its view, the success of the conference would depend on the seriousness of the nuclear-weapon States and on Israel's readiness to participate constructively.

191. In 2009, the General Conference had, in resolution GC(57)/RES/17, "Israeli nuclear capabilities", expressed concern about the Israeli nuclear capabilities and called upon Israel "to accede to the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards". Israel had still not responded positively to that call.

192. The fact that some influential Member States were continuing to ignore Israel's possession of unsafeguarded nuclear capabilities demonstrated the blatant application of double standards by those States, whose conduct was not only precluding the achievement of universality of the NPT in the Middle East but also threatening security and stability in the region — and could even trigger a nuclear arms race. To make matters worse, Israel was, on the basis of purely subjective assessments, threatening to destroy installations in the territory of another State.

193. The course leading to a Master's Degree in Radiation Protection and the Safety of Radioactive Sources that had been introduced in Syria some ten years previously and had been run with assistance provided through the Agency was now being run independently by the Atomic Energy Commission of Syria (AECS) in cooperation with University of Damascus. It had been described as a success story in the dissemination of nuclear science in the Arabic language.

194. The AECS had served as the executive secretariat for ARASIA for the past ten years; the Lebanese Atomic Energy Commission had now assumed that role. During the AECS's mandate, the number of approved projects had doubled and the number of areas covered had increased to include energy planning, nuclear medicine, management of the marine environment, and nuclear analysis techniques.

195. Many delegates had referred in their statements to additional protocols. In that connection, it should be recalled that the 2010 NPT Review Conference had confirmed that the conclusion of an additional protocol was a voluntary act. In Syria's view, it was important not to confuse the legal obligations arising out of the NPT with voluntary acts like the conclusion of an additional protocol.

**Mr Barry (Australia), Vice-President, took the Chair.**

196. Ms JUUL (Norway) said that nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation remained cornerstones of the foreign policy of her country, which would like to see the NPT regime being applied universally and attached great importance to the effectiveness of the Agency's safeguards system.

197. Norway was deeply concerned about the non-compliance of Iran with its obligations under Board and Security Council resolutions and its failure to implement the additional protocol to its safeguards agreement with the Agency.

198. Norway called upon Iran to engage fully with the Agency in order to resolve all outstanding issues connected with the Iranian nuclear programme and restore confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of that nuclear programme, including by granting prompt access to the relevant equipment, documentation, persons and sites, starting with the Parchin site.

199. Her country, which believed that the outstanding issues should be resolved through a political process, wholeheartedly welcomed the ongoing dialogue between Iran and China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

200. Norway was also deeply concerned about the defiance of the DPRK regarding its nuclear weapons programme. The DPRK's declaration that it was now a nuclear-weapon State was unacceptable, and its recent statements about expanding and modernizing its nuclear capabilities were most worrying.

201. Norway regretted the fact that no progress had been made in relation to the nuclear programme of Syria since the preceding session of the General Conference, and it urged Syria to immediately engage with the Agency in order to resolve the outstanding issues.

202. Norway believed that sustained international cooperation, stronger commitment on the part of Member States and a highly competent, professional and effective Secretariat remained necessary in order to prevent nuclear material from falling into the hands of terrorists and other non-State actors.

203. The Fukushima Daiichi accident had highlighted the urgent need to improve nuclear safety and enhance nuclear emergency preparedness and response capabilities worldwide. Further efforts should be made to promote universal adherence to the nuclear safety-related conventions, to update or revise them as necessary and to improve their implementation.

204. Norway, which welcomed the progress made in the implementation of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, looked forward to the continued implementation of the International Action Plan for Strengthening the International Preparedness and Response System for Nuclear and Radiological Emergencies.

205. Norway would continue to support the efforts being made to enhance the interaction between States relating to the maritime transport of radioactive materials with a view to addressing safety and security issues more effectively.

206. Norway, which had taken part in the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit, believed that promoting nuclear security was a core Agency task and should be funded from the Regular Budget.

207. Her country was also supporting the promotion of nuclear security through international forums such as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, and it was contributing financially to the efforts being made to ensure full implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

208. Her Government had in January co-hosted the 2nd International Symposium on the Minimization of Highly Enriched Uranium, at which the participants had assessed the progress made in the five and a half years since the holding, in Oslo, of the first international symposium on that issue. The progress had been impressive, but much remained to be done, and there was a need to address the issue in a more transparent manner than in the past.

209. Norway, which was a strong supporter of multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle, greatly appreciated the efforts of the Secretariat relating to the establishment of an international LEU bank and looked forward to the results of the dialogue between the Secretariat and the Government of Kazakhstan on a Host State Agreement.

210. The peaceful utilization of nuclear energy went far beyond the generation of electricity, and the Agency could — through the provision of assistance in areas such as water resources management, crop improvement, nuclear medicine and pest control — make a significant contribution, in close partnership with other United Nations organizations, to the achievement of Millennium Development Goals.

211. Her country's position regarding nuclear power was well known: while Norway attached great importance to Article IV of the NPT and respected every country's sovereign right to choose its own energy mix, provided that the highest levels of safety and security were maintained, it had chosen not to include nuclear power in its own energy mix.

212. The peaceful utilization of nuclear energy was likely to increase worldwide, and the Agency must have the authority, expertise and resources necessary in order to meet the resulting safety, security and non-proliferation challenges. However, the funding for the Agency's statutory activities remained inadequate. Norway had consistently argued that the Agency's Regular Budget must increase in step with the tasks assigned to the Agency.

213. As regards the future non-proliferation challenges, Norway, which considered it important that the Agency have strong and independent safeguards analytical capabilities, had pledged 5 million Norwegian krone in support of the ECAS project for the next three years.

214. Regarding the Medium Term Strategy 2012–2017, Norway agreed that the Agency “must remain ready to assist, in accordance with its Statute, with verification tasks under nuclear disarmament or arms control agreements...”.

215. Work in the areas of nuclear safety and nuclear security could not proceed in isolation from work in the areas of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, and a world without nuclear



weapons could be achieved only through a universal NPT and a strong Agency safeguards system. Norway therefore believed that all States should be parties to the NPT and have additional protocols in force.

216. Mr TZOTCHEV (Bulgaria) said that his country, which was a party to the main international legal instruments relating to nuclear non-proliferation and to nuclear disarmament and arms control, attached great importance to Agency safeguards and was in favour of universalization of the NPT and of additional protocols. In its view, the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy should be based on full compliance with the NPT and on transparency in nuclear programmes.

217. His country, which had welcomed the initiative of the Director General in convening the Forum on Experience of Possible Relevance to the Creation of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (NWFZ) in the Middle East held in November 2011, looked forward to the second EU Non-Proliferation Consortium Seminar on the Middle East due to take place on 5–6 November 2012. It commended the work of the facilitator of the envisaged 2012 conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

218. Bulgaria was deeply concerned about the fact that Iran was not cooperating with the Agency in order to resolve all outstanding issues connected with the Iranian nuclear programme and was continuing to expand its enrichment activities in clear violation of Board and Security Council resolutions. The recent developments at the Parchin site and Iran's continuing refusal to grant access to that site to Agency inspectors were most worrying. Bulgaria urged Iran to cooperate fully with the Agency in concluding a structured approach agreement and to grant full access to the Parchin site without delay.

219. His country remained seriously concerned about the nuclear weapon and ballistic missile programmes of the DPRK and its decision to cease all cooperation with the Agency. It called upon the DPRK to return to full compliance with its NPT and Agency safeguards obligations and to provide the Agency with the requested access to individuals, documents, equipment and facilities.

220. His country urged Syria to comply with the resolution adopted by the Board on 9 June 2011 and cooperate transparently with the Agency in clarifying questions relating to the Dair Alzour site and other sites and to bring into force an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement.

221. Given the importance of nuclear power in the energy mix of many Member States, Bulgaria considered the assistance provided through the Agency with the improvement of national nuclear safety infrastructures to be essential and believed that, as envisaged in the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, relevant safety standards should be reviewed and — where necessary — revised in a prioritized sequence, using the existing process in a more efficient manner.

222. Following the Fukushima Daiichi accident, Bulgaria had, using the methodology of the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group, reassessed the safety of all nuclear facilities at the Kozloduy Nuclear Power Plant, and the results had been made public. In July, the National Regulatory Agency and the Kozloduy Nuclear Power Plant operator had organized a public discussion on the results in which representatives of regional and municipal administrations, journalists and private citizens had taken part.

223. Pursuant to the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety and European Council Directive 2009/71/Euratom, Bulgaria would be hosting an OSART mission at the Kozloduy Nuclear Power Plant in November 2012 and an IRRS mission in April 2013. In addition, an IPSART level 1 mission to the Kozloduy Nuclear Power Plant would take place in March 2013.

224. His country, which agreed with the view expressed at the Second Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety regarding the benefit of sharing the lessons

learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident, was, through the WWER Regulators Forum, sharing them in particular with other countries where there were WWERs in operation.

225. In the Europe region, Agency technical cooperation projects in support of nuclear power development, of the use of ionizing radiation in health care and of the maintenance of high levels of safety and security in the peaceful utilization of nuclear technology were important for many Member States.

226. His country, which had updated its CPF at the end of 2011, had participated in a number of regional projects. In the current year, it had hosted a regional workshop on advances and issues in integrated, risk-informed decision-making and one on regional project monitoring and evaluation.

227. Given that adequate funding was crucial for the effective implementation of Agency technical cooperation programmes, Bulgaria paid its full TCF target shares in a timely manner.

**The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.**