

General Conference

GC(56)/OR.9

Issued: October 2012

General Distribution

Original: English

Fifty-sixth regular session

Plenary

Record of the Ninth Meeting

Held at Headquarters, Vienna, on Friday, 21 September 2012, at 9.45 p.m.

President: Mr BARROS OREIRO (Uruguay)

Contents

Item of the agenda ¹		Paragraphs
23	Examination of delegates' credentials (<i>resumed</i>)	1
18	Implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement between the Agency and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea	2–17
–	Oral report by the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole on the following items:	18–81
–	– Nuclear security	24
–	– Strengthening of the Agency's technical cooperation activities	25
–	– Promotion of efficiency and effectiveness of the IAEA decision making process	26–31
–	– Strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of the safeguards system and application of the Model Additional Protocol	32–81

¹ GC(56)/19.

Contents (continued)

Item of the agenda ¹	Paragraphs
24 Report on contributions pledged to the Technical Cooperation Fund for 2013	82–83
– Closing of the session	84–91

Abbreviations used in this record:

DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
UN	United Nations

23. Examination of delegates' credentials (resumed) (GC(56)/23)

1. The PRESIDENT announced a correction to the Report of the General Committee contained in document GC(56)/23, which the General Conference had approved the day before. Colombia should have been listed among the States that had submitted credentials satisfying the requirements of Rule 27 of the Rules of Procedure.

18. Implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement between the Agency and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (GC(56)/II; GC(56)/L.6)

2. Mr BAUDE (France), introducing the draft resolution contained in document GC(56)/L.6, said that it was an updated version of resolution GC(55)/RES/13 adopted by consensus in 2011, and had been developed in close consultation with China and the Russian Federation.

3. The draft resolution noted that the Agency had been unable to conduct monitoring and verification activities in the DPRK following the discontinuation of the DPRK's invitation to the Agency. It also highlighted the DPRK's statements regarding the construction of a light water reactor and its uranium enrichment programme. It acknowledged the importance of the six-party talks, particularly the commitments made in the 2005 Joint Statement and in February and October 2007, which included a commitment to denuclearization. It noted with concern the DPRK's recent statement that it intended to totally re-examine its nuclear policy, and called upon the DPRK to comply with its obligations under UN Security Council resolutions.

4. He noted that 51 Member States had sponsored the draft resolution thus far. France hoped it would be adopted by consensus.

5. Mr CHO Hyun (Republic of Korea) said that the draft resolution voiced the concern of the international community about the DPRK's nuclear programme, particularly its uranium enrichment activities and the construction of a light water reactor. Those activities showed the DPRK's ongoing defiance of its obligations under the relevant UN Security Council resolutions to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner and cease all related activities. As the Director General had stated in his report contained in document GC(56)/11, the DPRK's nuclear programme was a matter of serious concern. That country's uranium enrichment programme was particularly worrying, as it opened up another path for development of nuclear weapons capabilities.

6. It was highly regrettable that, following its launch of a long-range missile in April 2012, the DPRK had discontinued its invitation to the Agency to visit the country, leaving it unable to conduct its monitoring and verification activities there. The Republic of Korea called upon the DPRK to comply fully with the NPT and cooperate with the Agency in the full and effective implementation of comprehensive safeguards, including the establishment of a long-term Agency presence to monitor the cessation and abandonment of all nuclear activities. The draft resolution contained in document

GC(56)/L.6 noted with concern the DPRK's announcement declaring its intention to totally re-examine its nuclear policy. Whatever form that review took, the DPRK must renew its commitment to denuclearization and to the September 2005 Joint Statement.

7. The Republic of Korea hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus and that the unified message it sent out would be duly heard by the DPRK and lead to the realization of that country's long-standing commitment to denuclearization.

8. Mr MARSÁN AGUILERA (Cuba) said that his country supported the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. It firmly believed that diplomacy and dialogue were the only effective means to achieving a long-term solution to the DPRK nuclear issue, and therefore supported the six-party talks. Cuba also supported the peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula, without any external interference. Increased tension in the region could undermine the efforts of a large part of the international community to achieve lasting peace. It was essential to respect the sovereign equality of States and refrain from the use or threat of use of force.

9. Cuba reaffirmed its position on nuclear disarmament, stressing its concern over the threat to humanity posed by the continuing existence of nuclear weapons and their potential use or threat of use. His country was deeply concerned by the slow pace of nuclear disarmament and the lack of progress by nuclear-weapon States in eliminating their nuclear arsenals. It supported the action plan put forward by NAM at the 2010 NPT Review Conference aimed at eliminating and banning nuclear weapons by 2025.

10. His country once again called on all the nuclear-weapon States to comply immediately and unconditionally with their obligations under Article VI of the NPT and to speed up implementation of the agreements reached at the 1995, 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences, regarding the total elimination of nuclear weapons through systematic and progressive efforts. Cuba remained convinced that international peace and security could only be guaranteed through the total elimination of nuclear weapons and the cessation of nuclear testing.

11. The PRESIDENT took it that the Conference wished to adopt the draft resolution contained in document GC(56)/L.6 without a vote.

12. It was so decided.

13. Mr OZAWA (Japan) said that his country welcomed the adoption of the resolution by consensus and thanked France for submitting it.

14. The DPRK nuclear issue was a threat to peace and security in the region and worldwide. That country's uranium enrichment programme and construction of a light water reactor constituted a clear violation of UN Security Council resolutions and the 2005 Joint Statement from the six-party talks. Japan hoped that the Agency would continue to play a critical role in resolving the issue.

15. As stated in the relevant Security Council resolutions, the DPRK could never have the status of a nuclear-weapon State. The only way for that country to gain international confidence was to implement the 2005 Joint Statement and abandon all its nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes. Japan called upon the DPRK to take immediate and concrete action towards denuclearization and allow the Agency to establish a long-term presence to monitor and verify the abandonment of all its nuclear activities.

16. Mr WOOD (United States of America) thanked France for its work on the resolution. Its unanimous adoption sent the clear message that the international community continued to hold the DPRK to its denuclearization obligations and remained vigilant with regard to that country's nuclear

activities, which compromised the integrity of the global non-proliferation regime and seriously undermined the core objectives of the General Conference.

17. The resolution reaffirmed the Agency's central role in the resolution of the DPRK nuclear issue. It also reiterated that, contrary to its recent statements, the DPRK could not have the status of a nuclear-weapon State and that it must abandon all its nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes. In order to address the international community's collective concerns and restore international confidence, the DPRK must immediately cease all nuclear activities, including its uranium enrichment programme and the construction of the light water reactor, which were in clear violation of UN Security Council resolutions 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009) and of the 2005 Joint Statement from the six-party talks. The DPRK also had to allow the Agency to establish a long-term presence to monitor and verify the cessation and abandonment of those activities. Finally, in re-examining its nuclear policy, the DPRK should re-evaluate the cost of continued and deliberate defiance of its obligations and commitments. In any nuclear policy review, the DPRK should reaffirm its commitment to denuclearization and to the 2005 Joint Statement, which was a critical element of peace and security on the Korean Peninsula and of concern to the entire international community.

– **Oral report by the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole**

18. Mr SHUKRI (Saudi Arabia), Chairman of the Committee of the Whole, presented the outcome of the Committee's deliberations on agenda items 14, 15, 17 and 21.

19. Under item 14, "Nuclear security", the Committee recommended that the Conference adopt the draft resolution set out in document GC(56)/L.7.

20. Under item 15, "Strengthening of the Agency's technical cooperation activities", the Committee recommended that the Conference adopt the draft resolution set out in document GC(56)/L.8.

21. Under item 17, "Strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of the safeguards system and application of the Model Additional Protocol", although there was broad agreement on most of the draft resolution contained in document GC(56)/COM.5/L.3/Rev.2, there were a few paragraphs on which some delegations had expressed concerns, which had prevented consensus being achieved.

22. Under item 21, "Promotion of efficiency and effectiveness of the IAEA decision making process", the importance of maintaining and promoting the efficiency and effectiveness of the Agency's decision-making processes had been highlighted. The relevance and importance of the process currently under way for the early ratification of the amendment of Article VI of the Agency's Statute had been referred to in that context. The importance of respect for the decisions of the Agency's policy-making organs and the need to avoid politicization of the Agency had been emphasized. Several members had expressed their desire that consultations on the issue continue with a view to its consideration at the 2013 session of the General Conference.

23. He thanked the General Conference for the confidence it had placed in him by electing him to undertake the important task of Chairing the Committee of the Whole. He thanked Ms Martinho of Portugal and Mr Kuzinski of Poland who had served as Vice-Chairpersons; the members of the Committee for their cooperative spirit; and the staff of the Secretariat, along with all others who had assisted in the Committee's work.

Nuclear security (agenda item 14)

24. As recommended by the Committee of the Whole, the draft resolution contained in document GC(56)/L.7 was adopted.

Strengthening of the Agency's technical cooperation activities (agenda item 15)

25. As recommended by the Committee of the Whole, the draft resolution contained in document GC(56)/L.8 was adopted.

Promotion of efficiency and effectiveness of the IAEA decision making process (agenda item 21)

26. Mr CHOREV (Israel) said that it took a good measure of cynicism for a Member State that had invested so much in undermining the well-being of the international system in general and the Agency in particular to introduce an agenda item on promotion of efficiency and effectiveness of the Agency's decision making process. The repeated calls by the Islamic Republic of Iran for the destruction of the State of Israel negated every norm, value and principle of the family of nations. The UN Secretary-General had stated on a recent visit to Tehran that such behaviour was not only wrong, but also undermined the very principles that States had pledged to uphold. In its explanatory note for requesting the inclusion of the item on the agenda (GC(56)/1/Add.2), Iran had listed the very principles of the Agency and other international organizations that it systematically violated.

27. The explanatory note also referred to Article IV.C of the Agency's Statute, which related to ensuring that all members had the rights and benefits resulting from membership. However, Iran was striving to deny Israel its membership rights of every possible international forum, including the Agency's Middle East and South Asia Group.

28. Iran's call to restructure the mandate and composition of the Board of Governors reflected that country's desire to ruin the body that oversaw the investigation into violations of its nuclear commitments and obligations.

29. Israel looked negatively upon a proposal made by a Member State which had a proven record of violating the international norms and values it purported to advocate.

30. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to take note of the report of the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole with regard to agenda item 21.

31. It was so decided.

The meeting was suspended at 10.20 p.m. and resumed at 11.30 p.m.

Strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of the safeguards system and application of the Model Additional Protocol (agenda item 17)

32. Ms STIX-HACKL (Austria), speaking on behalf of the European Union, proposed that the General Conference consider the draft resolution contained in document GC(56)/COM.5/L.3/Rev.2. Although it had not been the subject of consensus in the Committee of the Whole and some delegations had reservations about certain parts of the text, broad agreement had been reached, and she believed that the current text represented the best basis for achieving consensus. The draft resolution would provide input to the work of the Agency in an important area, and she urged all Member States to support it.

33. Mr SOLTANIEH (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that strengthening safeguards was an important issue upon which his delegation had, in the past, always worked with others to try and achieve consensus. During the current session of the General Conference, however, his delegation had not been included in informal deliberations on the draft resolution contained in document

GC(56)/COM.5/L.3/Rev.2, nor had it been permitted to propose amendments thereto within the Committee of the Whole.

34. Iran proposed that, in paragraph (b) of the preamble, the words “and nuclear disarmament” be inserted after “nuclear non-proliferation” since the Agency had the mandate and obligation to deal with both matters under its Statute. He requested a roll-call vote on the proposed amendment.

35. Mr CURIA (Argentina) opposed the request made by the representative of Iran to vote by roll call, and instead requested that the vote on the proposed amendment to paragraph (b) be taken by show of hands.

36. The PRESIDENT, supported by Mr SHAMAA (Egypt) and Mr CHENG Jingye (China), said that, under Rule 72 of the Rules of Procedure, once a roll-call vote had been requested, the General Conference must proceed accordingly.

37. Mr CURIA (Argentina) expressed the view that Rule 72 did not oblige the Conference to accede to a Member State’s request for a roll-call vote. Under Rule 64 of the Rules of Procedure, he asked for a separate vote to be taken regarding the form of voting to be undertaken on the proposed amendment.

38. Mr SOLTANIEH (Islamic Republic of Iran) expressed regret that his country’s request for a roll-call vote had been opposed, thus eroding the constructive environment of the Conference. Rule 72 contained no provisions for such a situation.

39. Mr VARELA (Uruguay) said that the representative of Argentina had risen to a point of order, pursuant to Rule 56 of the Rules of Procedure. The Conference should therefore proceed to a roll-call vote on the form of voting.

The meeting was suspended at 12.10 a.m. and resumed at 12.15 a.m.

40. The PRESIDENT announced that it had been decided, in order to save time, to vote by roll call on the amendment proposed by Iran. He therefore invited the General Conference to proceed to a roll-call vote on the proposal to insert the words “and nuclear disarmament” after “nuclear non-proliferation” in paragraph (b) of the preamble.

41. Italy, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

42. The result of the vote was as follows:

In favour: Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Islamic Republic of Iran, Nicaragua, Peru, Syrian Arab Republic, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Zimbabwe.

Against: Albania, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America.

Abstaining: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan,

Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vietnam.

43. There were 9 votes in favour and 55 against, with 40 abstentions. The amendment was rejected.
44. Mr VINHAS (Brazil), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his country's abstention should not in any way be interpreted as a deviation from its firm stance on nuclear disarmament. It had abstained merely in order to emphasize its support for the compromise reached during the extensive negotiations on the draft resolution. Brazil believed that more time was needed to reach a full consensus on the text.
45. Mr GUIZA VARGAS (Mexico), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his country was a staunch supporter of nuclear disarmament and his delegation's vote should not be interpreted otherwise. Mexico had rejected the amendment to avoid jeopardizing the adoption of a resolution it regarded to be of utmost importance.
46. Mr SWAMINATHAN (India) said that his country was committed to universal, non-discriminatory and verifiable nuclear disarmament. However, his delegation had been constrained to vote against the amendment in the belief that the Conference on Disarmament was the most appropriate forum for such discussions.
47. Mr ESPINOZA SOLANO (Costa Rica) said that, as a country that had not had an army for more than 60 years, disarmament — including nuclear disarmament — was central to Costa Rica's foreign policy. His country supported the adoption of the draft resolution as a whole. It had abstained in the vote as it could not support amendments that might jeopardize the compromise reached following negotiations on the text.
48. Mr BERGUÑO HURTADO (Chile), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his country worked tirelessly for a world free of nuclear weapons and was a member of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative. Chile had rejected the amendment to maintain the integrity of the resolution and thus ensure its adoption.
49. Mr CHOREV (Israel) said that his country had voted against the amendment because it was another example of Iran's repeated efforts to ruin the Agency's democratic decision-making process. Israel regretted that the Rules of Procedure allowed Iran, a major destructive force at the Agency and in the international arena, to carry forward its sinister plans.
50. Mr ALKAABI (United Arab Emirates) said that nuclear-weapon States could contribute to international peace and security by taking significant and transparent steps towards nuclear disarmament in accordance with their NPT obligations. His country had abstained in the vote with a view to achieving a consensus on the draft resolution as a whole, taking into consideration the compromise text agreed upon during negotiations.
51. Mr PAVLYSHYN (Ukraine), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his country had rejected the amendment but wished to stress its long-standing commitment to nuclear disarmament and full support for international efforts to bring it about. Efficient safeguards were an essential component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.
52. Mr PASCHALIS (South Africa), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his country remained firmly committed to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Safeguards were an integral part of the Agency's work and a subject upon which the General Conference could not remain silent; South Africa had abstained in the vote in that context.

53. Mr CURIA (Argentina) said that his country had abstained in the vote because the proposed amendment went against the spirit of consensus and efforts made to strike a compromise on the important draft resolution. Argentina endorsed the statements made by other delegations in support of nuclear disarmament.

54. Mr QUEISI (Jordan), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his country attached the greatest importance to the safeguards regime, which was a very important element of international efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament and devote nuclear energy to peaceful purposes. Nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction posed real dangers to regional and international peace and security. Jordan's abstention in the vote did not alter its support for strengthening the non-proliferation regime.

55. Mr RASHID (Pakistan) requested that operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution contained in document GC(56)/COM.5/L.3/Rev.2 be put to the vote by show of hands.

56. Mr SHAMAA (Egypt) requested that the vote be taken by roll call as it had on previous occasions.

57. The PRESIDENT invited the Conference to vote by roll call on whether to retain operative paragraph 6 in the draft resolution contained in document GC(56)/COM.5/L.3/Rev.2.

58. Malawi, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

59. The result of the vote was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Vietnam, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: Pakistan.

Abstaining: India, Israel, Mozambique, Myanmar, South Africa, Sri Lanka.

60. There were 98 votes in favour and 1 against, with 6 abstentions. The paragraph was adopted.

61. Mr RASHID (Pakistan), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his country's support for Agency safeguards was evident from the fact that it met all its safeguards obligations and cooperated with the Agency in that regard. It was Pakistan's belief that the role of safeguards was to facilitate and provide a framework for cooperation in the peaceful applications of nuclear energy, unaffected by and without discrimination based on political or strategic considerations.

62. His delegation had been constrained to vote against retaining operative paragraph 6 in the draft resolution owing to the failure of the sponsors to make the text consistent with the Agency's Statute,

which took into account the differentiated nature of Member States' safeguards obligations. The draft resolution instead called for the universalization of a particular safeguards model, adherence to which was not a legal obligation for all Member States. His delegation's vote reflected a commitment to upholding the Statute in letter and spirit. Pakistan would continue to support the Agency's verification activities in a manner consistent with the framework laid down in the Statute.

63. Mr SWAMINATHAN (India) said that, as a founder member of the Agency, his country had consistently supported all the Agency's activities within the framework of its Statute. India attached great importance to the Agency's safeguards work in particular, and had contributed to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of its safeguards system, inter alia, through active participation in the work of the Advisory Committee on Safeguards and Verification within the Framework of the IAEA Statute.

64. India had hoped that the draft resolution on the important subject of strengthening safeguards could be adopted by consensus. His delegation had striven hard to that end during the meetings of the Committee of the Whole and had made suggestions on operative paragraph 6. It was regrettable that its proposals had not been accepted. His country had, therefore, been left with no option but to abstain in the vote on that paragraph.

65. Mr SOLTANIEH (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that he had intended to request roll-call votes on preambular paragraphs (k) and (m) and operative paragraph 20 of the draft resolution contained in document GC(56)/COM.5/L.3/Rev.2, but would refrain from doing so, owing to time constraints. Iran hoped that those who had submitted the resolution would hold intensive consultations with all Member States in 2013 with a view to incorporating their concerns.

66. He requested a roll-call vote on the adoption of the draft resolution as a whole since there were still paragraphs upon which agreement had not been reached.

67. The PRESIDENT invited the Conference to proceed to a roll-call vote on the draft resolution as a whole, as requested by Iran.

68. Bulgaria, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

69. The result of the vote was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Mozambique, Myanmar, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Vietnam, Zimbabwe.

Abstaining: Algeria, Bahrain, Cuba, Egypt, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Nicaragua, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

70. There were 89 votes in favour and none against, with 16 abstentions. The draft resolution was adopted.

71. Mr BENÍTEZ TOLEDO (Cuba), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his country complied strictly with all its obligations under its safeguards agreement and additional protocol. The Agency had concluded that there had been no diversion of declared nuclear material and no indication of any undeclared nuclear material in Cuba.

72. The safeguards issue was highly sensitive and relevant to all States, and any decisions adopted by the General Conference in that regard had a significant impact in the field.

73. It was regrettable that not enough time had been dedicated to reviewing the issue during the Conference, and that consultations on the text of the resolution had not involved all States to allow them to express their legitimate concerns and make proposals.

74. The way in which the sponsors of the resolution had handled the process had prevented consensus being reached; it was regrettable that they had decided to force a decision on the subject despite the lack of agreement in the Committee of the Whole. Cuba hoped that the sponsors would learn from that year's experience and aim to hold open, transparent and constructive consultations at the subsequent General Conference with a view to reaching consensus on the very important subject of safeguards.

75. He also expressed Cuba's deep dissatisfaction with the sponsors' decision to omit any reference to nuclear disarmament from the resolution. Such a reference was relevant, timely and necessary. Cuba believed that all Member States needed to work together to ensure that the Agency fulfilled its considerable safeguards responsibilities.

76. Mr CASTILLO PARRA (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), speaking in explanation of vote, said that although his country supported the strengthening of Agency safeguards, it should be done within a framework that did not compromise States' confidence in the Agency. Venezuela had abstained in the vote on the adoption of the resolution because the text as it stood lacked the elements which would enable dialogue and diplomacy to prevail in the Agency's safeguards activities.

77. His country had voted in favour of the proposed amendment to preambular paragraph (b) because it believed that efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament should be increased in all international forums. As the only international body with technical capacity in the nuclear field, the Agency should play an active role in achieving that aim.

78. Finally, he stressed that negotiations on the safeguards resolution should be open to all Member States, and that sufficient time should be devoted to the issue.

79. Mr PASCHALIS (South Africa) said that his country had voted in favour of the resolution because it believed safeguards to be an integral aspect of the Agency's work.

80. However, his delegation regretted that it had not been given the opportunity to participate in negotiations on the resolution either in the Committee of the Whole or during informal consultations. That was why it had abstained in the votes on preambular paragraph (b) and operative paragraph 6. South Africa hoped that those paragraphs might be reviewed at the subsequent session of the General Conference with a view to improving them and achieving a consensus text.

81. Mr RASHID (Pakistan), speaking in explanation of vote, said that notwithstanding his country's serious reservations regarding operative paragraph 6, Pakistan had voted in favour of the resolution as a whole in 2007. In 2008, 2009 and 2010 his country had abstained in the vote to register its concern about the sponsors' continued lack of understanding regarding the differentiated nature of the

safeguards obligations of Member States. Pakistan had sincerely hoped that in the current year, the sponsors would bring the resolution in line with the Agency's Statute and the respective legal obligations of Member States, but they had not; nor had they exhibited the necessary flexibility to arrive at a consensus. As a result, his delegation had once again abstained in the vote on the resolution as a whole. Pakistan strongly urged all Member States, in particular the sponsors, to rectify the issue in the future.

24. Report on contributions pledged to the Technical Cooperation Fund for 2013

82. The PRESIDENT said that document GC(56)/16/Rev.1 contained details of the pledges of contributions to the Technical Cooperation Fund for 2013 which governments had made to the Director General by 6.30 p.m. on 20 September 2012. By that time, Member States had pledged a total of €12 142 648 or 17.00 % of the target for 2013, which was 4.02 % higher than the percentage of pledges received by the corresponding time in the preceding year. Since that document had been sent for printing, further Member States had communicated pledges to the Director General, as follows: China — €2 196 181; Ghana — €4 287. That brought the total amount pledged to €14 343 116 or 20.08% of the 2013 Technical Cooperation Fund target. He was pleased to note that it was the highest percentage of pledges received during the General Conference since the inception of the Technical Cooperation Fund.

83. He urged all delegations which had not yet done so to make their 2013 pledges and to pay their contributions in full at the earliest opportunity so that the Secretariat could submit to the Technical Assistance and Cooperation Committee in November a proposed technical cooperation programme for 2013 based on the level of pledges received, and thereafter implement the approved programme without hindrance or uncertainty.

— Closing of the session

84. The PRESIDENT said that the current session of the General Conference had been well attended by high-level representatives of Member States, including one Vice-President, one Vice-Chancellor and 19 Ministers. During the general debate, 122 speakers had taken the floor.

85. Ms MIHALESCU (Romania) thanked the President for his commendable and continuous efforts, impartial guidance and diplomatic skills which had led to the successful outcome of the Conference's current session.

86. Mr SOLTANIEH (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of NAM, expressed appreciation for the President's sincere, impartial and skilful leadership of the Conference's current session. He also thanked the General Committee members, the Secretariat staff, and the interpreters.

87. The PRESIDENT, expressing his gratitude for the kind words addressed to him, said that it had been an honour and privilege to serve as President of the General Conference during its fifty-sixth session.

88. He thanked all delegates for their cooperation and expressed his sincere appreciation to the Chairman and Vice-Chairpersons of the Committee of the Whole.

89. On behalf of the Conference, he thanked the Director General and the Secretariat staff for the valuable support they had provided during the session, the Austrian authorities which had provided the facilities in the Austria Center Vienna, and the city of Vienna for its hospitality during the preceding week.

90. Finally, in accordance with Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, he invited the Conference to observe one minute of silence dedicated to prayer or meditation.

All present rose and stood in silence for one minute.

91. The PRESIDENT declared the fifty-sixth regular session of the General Conference closed.

The meeting rose at 1.55 a.m.