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Atoms for Peace

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Fifty-eighth regular session

Plenary

Record of the First Meeting

Held at Headquarters, Vienna, on Monday, 22 September 2014, at 10.05 a.m.

Temporary President: Mr SEOKOLO (South Africa)
President: Mr AZEEZ (Sri Lanka)

Contents

[1] GC(58)/22.

Contents (continued)

The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(58)/INF/12.

Abbreviations used in this record:

AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
E3+3	China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States of America
E3/EU+3	China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States of America plus the European Union
EPREV	Emergency Preparedness Review
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
G8	Group of Eight
HEU	high-enriched uranium
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
INSARR	Integrated Safety Assessment of Research Reactors
INSSP	Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan
IPPAS	International Physical Protection Advisory Service
ITER	International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor
JPA	Joint Plan of Action
LEU	low-enriched uranium
MOX	mixed oxide
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
NSF	Nuclear Security Fund
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
OECD/NEA	Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team

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

P5+1	The five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
PMO	Policy-making Organs
PUI	Peaceful Uses Initiative
R&D	research and development
RBMK	high-power channel-type reactor (Soviet Union)
ReNuAL	Renovation of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories
SIT	sterile insect technique
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
UN	United Nations
WANO	World Association of Nuclear Operators

– Opening of the session

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT declared the 58th regular session of the General Conference open.

2. In accordance with Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, he invited the delegates to observe one minute of silence dedicated to prayer or meditation.

All present rose and stood in silence for one minute.

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

4. The General Conference was taking place at a poignant time in the international development discourse, on the eve of the intergovernmental process to agree on the post-2015 UN development agenda. The challenges of extreme poverty, inequality and unemployment remained acute, especially in developing countries. The Agency was uniquely placed to play a significant role in supporting Member States' efforts to use nuclear technology for socioeconomic development: although it had already contributed positively in that regard, a lot more could still be done.

5. Through its nuclear applications laboratories in Seibersdorf, the Agency continued to provide much needed support to Member States in such areas as food and agriculture, water management, human health and environmental protection. The laboratories could not continue to discharge those vital services to Member States in their current condition, however, which was why the Agency's strategy to renovate the laboratories was particularly welcome. In that regard, he thanked all Member States who had pledged resources for the ReNuAL project and appealed to others to do likewise.

6. The question of resources for technical cooperation had been one of the challenges faced by the Agency for many years. In 2013, the General Conference had called for the establishment of a Working Group on Financing the Agency's Activities, including to examine the ways and means to render resources for the TCF sufficient, assured and predictable. The Working Group had produced a consensual document containing a set of recommendations that would assist in responding to that challenge. It was not an issue that should divide Member States, for they all shared a common vision of creating a world that was just and equitable.

7. Energy security remained a key objective for governments across the globe. Nuclear energy was an integral part of the energy mix in most countries, especially developing ones. Notwithstanding the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, global trends indicated that nuclear technology remained safe, clean and economically viable. With 72 nuclear power reactors under construction worldwide, including 38 in developing countries, and 33 countries that had expressed an interest in introducing nuclear power, demand for the Agency's services looked likely to increase.

8. As the use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes was promoted, people needed ongoing assurance that due attention was being given to safety and security. In that regard, the report on the Fukushima Daiichi accident was eagerly anticipated so that appropriate lessons could be learned and necessary adjustments made. The Nuclear Security Summit in 2016 would reaffirm the essential responsibility and central role of the Agency in the international nuclear security architecture.

9. With regard to safeguards implementation in the Islamic Republic of Iran, significant developments had been noted between Iran and the international community since the previous session of the General Conference. Negotiations to resolve the current and past issues related to the Iranian nuclear programme were unfolding on two tracks: between Iran and the P5+1 in the context of the Joint Plan of Action, and between Iran and the Agency in the context of the Framework for Cooperation. During the course of the year, there had been encouraging updates on the implementation of the Framework for Cooperation, including a high-level meeting between the Director General and the President of Iran. All parties needed to remain resolute and deploy their best efforts in resolving the issue in a peaceful manner.

10. Strengthening the implementation of Agency safeguards in an efficient and effective manner was an objective shared by all. In the previous seven months, there had been seven technical briefings by the Secretariat on the State-level concept, and the Supplementary Document to the Report on the Conceptualization and Development of Safeguards Implementation at the State Level[2] had been published pursuant to General Conference resolution GC(57)/RES/13. The Director General had provided assurance that the State-level concept would be implemented within the existing legal frameworks between the Agency and the respective Member States and that safeguards would be implemented based on objective criteria. He had also undertaken to continue to submit periodic reports to Member States on the implementation of safeguards measures.

11. At its previous session, the General Conference had made clear pronouncements on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. The application of full-scope Agency safeguards in relation to all nuclear activities in that region would constitute an important confidence building measure among all the States therein and enhance peace and security in the Middle East.

12. It had been a great honour for his country, South Africa, to provide on behalf of the African Group the President of the General Conference at its 57th session. He thanked Mr Mabhongo, the former Ambassador of South Africa, who had so skilfully steered the proceedings of that session of the General Conference to a successful outcome.

1. Election of officers and appointment of the General Committee

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

14. Mr MISRA (India), speaking on behalf of the Middle East and South Asia Group, proposed Mr Azeez (Sri Lanka).

15. Mr Azeez (Sri Lanka) was elected President by acclamation.

16. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT congratulated Mr Azeez on his election and wished him every success in his task.

Mr Azeez (Sri Lanka) took the Chair.

[2] GOV/2014/41

17. The PRESIDENT said that it was a great honour for his country, Sri Lanka, to provide the President of the General Conference at its current session. He accepted the task in humility and sincerity, and thanked Member States, in particular those of the Middle East and South Asia Group, for placing their confidence in him.

18. When standing on solid ground, one tended to celebrate the fact that one was standing and forget about the ground beneath one's feet. He therefore expressed appreciation for the efforts of all those at the Agency who had helped make the ground solid. In that regard, he extended his thanks to Mr Mabhongo of South Africa for his energetic and skilful leadership during the previous session of the General Conference, to the Director General and staff of the Agency, in particular the PMO Secretariat, and to the Chair of the Board of Governors.

19. Throughout his years working in various multilateral settings, he had come to appreciate that, throughout the work of delegates, diplomats and negotiators ran a commitment to embrace all other strands in the same fabric. Together, those strands had a unified strength that made it possible to withstand or effectively address pressing challenges, even those that initially appeared intractable. Such unity could, in his view, be achieved through dialogue, consensus-building, working in the larger interest of the organization, being outcome-oriented, and working within set time frames.

20. Dialogue was the best way to understand one another, demonstrating above all a willingness to address areas where differences arose. Constructive dialogue allowed progress to the next phase of the resolution process. Consensus was the best form of agreement to reach the desired outcome: a treasured goal to which all should aspire. However, practical realities often predominated, demonstrating that not everything could be achieved in the desired way. That should not cause despair, but rather instil courage to seek consensus, thus giving the process and final outcome greater legitimacy. That search for consensus and common ground was at the heart of his own approach, and he was certain that the Chair of the Committee of the Whole would also make every effort to achieve consensus. It was imperative that the Committee move through its agenda in a timely, efficient and cooperative manner. He therefore urged Member States to deal with issues that might arise with flexibility, allowing bridges to be built across all apparent divides. He believed in the ability and willingness of the Committee to achieve such an outcome. Orientating its work towards outcomes was in the larger interest of the Agency and its Member States.

21. He drew attention to the Working Group on Financing the Agency's Activities, the dialogue of which was a model for best practice.

22. The world was faced with a myriad of challenges whose implications would be far reaching unless solutions were found to them in a timely manner. The role of consensus building, which was at the heart of peaceful resolutions, could not be overstated. Today must not threaten tomorrow: an agenda for development — not for destruction — needed to be sought. In that regard, he noted that the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons would be marked on 24 September 2014 on the margins of the General Conference.

23. The Agency had an important role to play in the future. On the one hand, it needed to ensure the non-diversion of nuclear material and technology to non-peaceful purposes, which required the efficiency and effectiveness of institutions and processes, in addition to mutual trust. On the other hand, it had the vital obligation of continuing to ensure that nuclear energy and nuclear technology contributed to improving the lives of people. Technical assistance, including for the promotion of non-power applications, played a crucial role in advancing that objective. Through its commendable work in many areas, including nuclear safety, security and safeguards, and nuclear applications in health, agriculture and the environment, the Agency ensured the peaceful use of nuclear energy while facilitating implementation of nuclear safeguards: such work should continue in the interests of all

States and the Agency. During the period until September 2015, it was critical to consolidate the gains made and to create synergies for effectively pursuing a new development agenda.

24. The General Conference should aim to be outcome orientated in its work, while bearing in mind the time frame available.

25. Finally, if the peaceful use of nuclear energy was important for advancing development, was the use of peace itself not equally, if not more, important? With peace taking root in Sri Lanka, his country had undertaken a number of activities jointly with the Agency to benefit its people. In fact, more regional and subregional activities had been carried out there in the past three years than in the preceding decade.

26. Pursuant to Rules 34 and 40 of the Rules of Procedure, the Conference had to elect eight Vice-Presidents, a Chair of the Committee of the Whole and five additional members of the General Committee, resulting in a General Committee of 15 with himself as its Chair. However, since the Chair of the Committee of the Whole at the Conference's current session was to be from the South East Asia and Pacific Group, which that year had only one representative on the General Committee, he proposed that, following past practice, the Conference suspend Rules 34 and 40 in order to elect only seven Vice-Presidents — and six additional members so as to ensure that the General Committee had 15 members.

27. The President's proposal was accepted.

28. The PRESIDENT proposed that the delegates of Canada, Chile, Germany, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Korea, Latvia and Zimbabwe be elected as Vice-Presidents, that Mr Stuart of Australia be elected as Chair of the Committee of the Whole, and that the delegates of Costa Rica, Estonia, the Russian Federation, South Africa, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America be elected as additional members of the General Committee.

29. The President's proposals were accepted.

30. The PRESIDENT proposed that the General Conference take up items 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7 of its provisional agenda, in that order, pending receipt of the General Committee's recommendation on the agenda.

31. The President's proposal was accepted.

2. Applications for membership of the Agency
(GC(58)/10, 11, 12 and 13)

32. The PRESIDENT drew attention to documents GC(58)/10, 11, 12 and 13 containing applications for membership by the Union of the Comoros, the Republic of Djibouti, the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and the Republic of Vanuatu respectively. The applications had been endorsed by the Board of Governors, which had also submitted, in those documents, four draft resolutions for adoption by the General Conference.

33. He took it that the Conference wished to adopt the four draft resolutions by acclamation.

34. It was so decided.

35. The PRESIDENT congratulated the Union of the Comoros, the Republic of Djibouti, the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and the Republic of Vanuatu on having been approved for membership of the Agency.

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

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

> "I am pleased to send my greetings to the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency.
>
> "The IAEA continues to serve as an indispensable forum for international nuclear cooperation and as a sentinel against nuclear proliferation. To carry out these obligations effectively is no easy task, but time and again, the IAEA has risen to the challenge.
>
> "The past year has indeed spawned many such challenges.
>
> "The aftermath of the Fukushima Daiichi accident has justifiably continued to dominate the international conversation on nuclear safety. There is a growing recognition that the use of nuclear power requires a strong nuclear safety culture, including the adoption and implementation of effective international safety standards.
>
> "In the same way, nuclear security has also remained at the forefront of international concerns, and every care must be taken to minimize the threat of nuclear terrorism.
>
> "In March, I attended the third Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague, during which the leaders of over 50 countries pledged their determination to strengthen international cooperation in this area. They also reaffirmed the IAEA's central role, and I have full confidence in the IAEA's ability to continue to perform this role admirably.
>
> "The IAEA has also continued its work to ensure that the use of nuclear power will not contribute to nuclear weapons proliferation. In this regard, I am pleased to note that there are now 124 States with additional protocols in force.
>
> "With respect to efforts to ensure the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme, I welcome the progress made by Iran and the IAEA under the Framework for Cooperation, and I encourage the parties to expedite their efforts aimed at resolving all outstanding issues. The extraordinary support by the IAEA for the Joint Plan of Action has also been essential in providing the political space for diplomacy to work.
>
> "Regrettably, due to the continued lack of access, the IAEA has remained unable to verify the status of the nuclear programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. I once again encourage the DPRK to work towards building confidence and mutual trust with its neighbours to enhance peace and stability in the region. This would facilitate the resumption of diplomatic dialogue on the peaceful resolution of the nuclear issue, leading to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.
>
> "I commend the Director General and the IAEA staff for their continuing efforts to help Member States realize the benefits of nuclear energy while protecting against its misuse. And I look forward to the continued partnership of the IAEA and the United Nations in our shared efforts towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

"Please accept my best efforts for a productive conference."

4. Statement by the Director General

37. The DIRECTOR GENERAL welcomed the three new Member States which had joined the Agency since the last General Conference: the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, Brunei Darussalam and the Republic of San Marino.

38. As he visited Member States all over the world, he became increasingly convinced of the vital importance of science and technology for sustainable development. Nuclear science and technology had much to contribute to the achievement of development goals in areas such as human health, agriculture, water management, and industrial applications, as well as in energy. He saw the impact of nuclear technology on the lives of cancer patients, who gained access to better health care because the Agency helped their countries build capacity in nuclear medicine for diagnosis and radiotherapy. He also saw the impact on the lives of farmers, who could grow larger crops of basic foods such as rice and barley, even in difficult conditions, thanks to the availability of robust new varieties of plants developed through radiation techniques.

39. Through its technical cooperation programme, the Agency played a key role in ensuring that developing countries gained access to nuclear science and technology, which impacted extraordinarily on the daily lives of millions of people around the world. Unfortunately, those activities were not well known, so he tried to raise awareness of them wherever he went.

40. The nations of the world were presently considering the post-2015 sustainable development goals. He asked all Member States to help ensure that the importance of science and technology was explicitly recognized as a central part of the post-2015 agenda. That should include recognition of the immense benefits of peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology.

41. A unique feature of the Agency, and a key element of its special contribution to development, was its cluster of nuclear applications laboratories in Seibersdorf, near Vienna. They offered training in nuclear applications to scientists in Member States, supported research in human health, food and other areas, and provided analytical services to national laboratories. He had had the pleasure of meeting many graduates of the laboratories who were working in their home countries, applying the knowledge and training they had gained at Seibersdorf to national programmes. The laboratories were more than 50 years old, however, and a major overhaul was long overdue. He had presented a detailed modernization strategy, known as the ReNuAL project, to the Board of Governors in May 2014. Work under that project was about to begin. When the project was completed in 2017, the Agency would have fit-for-purpose laboratories that would meet Member States' needs for the following 15 to 20 years. The ReNuAL project was extremely important for the Agency and would benefit all Member States. He therefore appealed to all countries to contribute generously.

42. A key challenge facing the world in the coming decades would be to provide reliable supplies of energy as the population grew, while limiting greenhouse gas emissions. Many countries believed that nuclear power could help them to address that challenge. Nuclear power — alongside hydro- and wind-based electricity — was one of the lowest emitters of carbon dioxide when the entire life cycle was taken into account.

43. There were 437 nuclear power reactors currently in operation in 30 countries, producing about 11% of global electricity. Seventy reactors were under construction, mostly in Asia. The Agency was working closely with 33 countries that were considering, planning or starting nuclear power programmes. Latest projections showed continued growth in the use of nuclear power by 2030, although growth was likely to be slower than previously expected before the Fukushima Daiichi

accident. Based on experience and feedback from Member States, the Secretariat was currently revising an important publication entitled *Milestones in the Development of a National Infrastructure for Nuclear Power*, which had proved to be of great value to many countries.

44. The Agency was also working with Member States on increasing the use of nuclear power reactors in areas such as seawater desalination, district heating and petrochemical applications, with a view to significantly boosting plant efficiency and generating more revenue.

45. Radioactive waste was an issue for all countries, not just those with nuclear power programmes. Although there was widespread misunderstanding about the feasibility of disposing of radioactive waste, technologies did exist to that end. Waste management needed to be given proper consideration by all States embarking on any use of nuclear technology. In that connection, all Member States were invited to participate in the upcoming Scientific Forum entitled "Radioactive Waste: Meeting the Challenge".

46. Progress continued to be made in improving nuclear safety throughout the world. He had seen specific improvements in safety features at every nuclear power plant he had visited since the Fukushima Daiichi accident. The Agency and its Member States continued to implement the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, which had been endorsed by the General Conference in 2011. In the immediate aftermath of the Fukushima Daiichi accident, the focus had been on helping Japan respond to the crisis and ensuring that the necessary lessons were learned, and acted upon, everywhere. An important report on the accident would be published for the next session of the General Conference in 2015.

47. However, nuclear safety was not simply about guarding against severe natural hazards. In the coming years, the safety aspects of other important activities would also need to be examined, including the decommissioning of old facilities, lifetime extension of existing nuclear power plants, disposal of high-level radioactive waste, and development of innovative technologies such as fast reactors and new small and medium sized reactors. Taking into account the lessons learned from Fukushima Daiichi, it was time to start considering a broader approach to strengthening nuclear safety.

48. The central role of the Agency in helping to strengthen the global nuclear security framework was widely recognized. The international nuclear security environment was constantly changing. With its broad mandate and technical capabilities, and the support of 162 Member States, the Agency was well placed to continue playing the central role in helping the world to act in unison against the threat of nuclear terrorism.

49. Demand for the Agency's services was growing steadily: nuclear security training was being provided to an increasing number of people, and a total of 62 IPPAS missions had been held in 40 countries.

50. The most important area of unfinished business in nuclear security remained the entry into force of the 2005 amendment to the CPPNM. There had been real momentum in recent years towards its entry into force, which was one of the most significant measures the world could adopt to strengthen nuclear security. He appealed to all countries which had not yet done so to adhere to the amendment.

51. The next high-level IAEA International Conference on Nuclear Security, to take place in December 2016, would provide an important opportunity to review progress achieved and to map out the Agency's work for the future.

52. Turning to the topic of nuclear verification, he said that the number of States with additional protocols to their comprehensive safeguards agreements in force continued to rise, now standing at 124. He urged the remaining States to conclude additional protocols as soon as possible. He also asked

the 12 States without NPT safeguards agreements in force to bring such agreements into force without delay.

53. The nuclear programme of the DPRK remained a matter of serious concern. He called upon the DPRK to comply fully with its obligations, to cooperate promptly with the Agency, and to resolve all outstanding issues, including those that had arisen during the five-year absence of Agency inspectors from the country. The Agency would maintain its readiness to play an essential role in verifying the DPRK's nuclear programme.

54. Since the 2013 General Conference, there had been important developments concerning safeguards implementation in the Islamic Republic of Iran. In November 2013, the Agency and Iran had agreed to cooperate further to resolve all present and past issues under a Framework for Cooperation. In August 2014, he had held meetings in Tehran with the President of Iran and other senior officials as part of efforts to advance high-level dialogue between the Agency and Iran. Under the Framework for Cooperation, Iran had implemented a number of practical measures, but two measures remained. In order to resolve all outstanding issues, it was very important that Iran continued to implement, in a timely manner, all practical measures agreed under the Framework for Cooperation, and that it proposed new measures that could be agreed upon for the next step. The Agency continued to verify the non-diversion of nuclear material declared by Iran under its safeguards agreement. However, the Agency was not in a position to provide credible assurance about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in that country and, therefore, was unable to conclude that all nuclear material there was in peaceful activities. The Agency also continued to undertake monitoring and verification in relation to the nuclear-related measures set out in the Joint Plan of Action agreed between the E3+3 and Iran. In that regard, Iran had been implementing the relevant measures as envisaged and on time.

55. With regard to the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East, there remained fundamental differences in the views of the countries of the region. He had therefore not been able to make further progress in fulfilling his mandate from the General Conference in that area, but consultations would continue.

56. The Agency was likely to face tough budget constraints for some years to come as a result of financial difficulties in many countries. In response, the Secretariat was doing everything possible to make prudent use of its limited resources while ensuring maximum benefit to Member States. However, growing demand for the Agency's services could not be met within the existing financial means. It was therefore necessary to strike a delicate balance between Member States' financial capacities and their needs, while seeking additional sources of funding.

57. He continued his efforts to encourage qualified women to apply for senior positions in the Agency. The number of women in such positions had risen steadily since he took office nearly five years earlier. All of them were making significant contributions to the Agency's work. Recruiting more women was not just a matter of fairness: if the Agency failed to do so, it would miss out on the skills and experience of some exceptionally bright and capable people.

58. He thanked the Member States for their support of the Agency's work and the confidence that they had placed in him as Director General. He extended special thanks to Austria for being a model host country. He also expressed his deep appreciation to all Agency staff for their hard work and dedication.

6. Contributions to the Technical Cooperation Fund for 2015 (GC(58)/20)

59. The PRESIDENT said that, on 3 June 2014, the Board of Governors had recommended a figure of €69 797 000 (equivalent to US $91 million) as the target for voluntary contributions to the TCF for the year 2015. The table in document GC(58)/20 showed the contributions that each Member State would need to make in order to meet its share of that target.

60. The early pledging and payment of contributions to the TCF greatly helped the Secretariat in planning the Agency's technical cooperation programmes, and all delegations that were in a position to do so, but had not done so yet, were therefore urged to notify the Secretariat during the current session of the contributions that their governments would be making to the TCF for 2015.

61. He would report at the end of the session, under a later agenda item, on the contributions that had been pledged up to that time. He hoped to be able to report favourably on the percentage of the 2015 target figure already pledged.

7. General debate and Annual Report for 2013 (GC(58)/3 and Additional Information)

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

> "I send greetings as you convene for the 58th International Atomic Energy Agency General Conference. The IAEA's work is more important than ever, and its steadfast efforts to promote the safe, secure and peaceful uses of nuclear energy continue to reinforce the NPT. As we look forward to next year's NPT Review Conference, we must ensure that the Agency has the necessary resources to fulfil its enduring mandate and continue effectively exercising its authority to address issues of non-compliance.
>
> "The United States remains committed to achieving peace and security in a world without nuclear weapons, and is taking substantial steps to that end. We have reduced the number and role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy. We continue to work successfully with Russia to implement the New START Treaty, decreasing our deployed strategic warheads to the lowest levels in nearly 60 years. We have also reduced the United States nuclear stockpile by 85% since its Cold War peak. However, there is still more work to do. As I reiterated in Berlin last year, the United States is committed to moving beyond Cold War nuclear postures and to continuing a step-by-step process to reduce nuclear weapons stockpiles.
>
> "We welcome the Agency's work in assisting Member States to enhance the regulatory infrastructure for nuclear safety, and to secure materials, preventing them from falling into the hands of terrorists. I will host the fourth Nuclear Security Summit in 2016, and I look forward to the Agency's participation. The Agency has a critical role to play in the global nuclear security architecture, which will endure beyond the summits.
>
> "The United States is the leading contributor to Agency nuclear assistance programmes and has exceeded its pledge of $50 million for the Peaceful Uses Initiative. The PUI programmes have addressed the sustainable development needs of over 120 Member States in areas including human health, water resource management, food security, environmental protection, and nuclear power infrastructure development. I encourage more Member States to join in contributing to the PUI, which is a vital initiative.

> "We can meet the challenges ahead if we focus our efforts on our shared interest in building the safer, more secure world we all seek. Let us work together at this Conference to make real progress on promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy, strengthening safeguards, and preventing proliferation. I wish everyone all the best for a successful conference".

63. In May, President Obama had called for evolving international institutions to meet the demands of the present day, and stressed that dynamic international institutions could serve as force multipliers. The Agency and other international institutions were required to help in countering the most pressing challenge of the present generation, namely climate change, since strong global action was needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and develop smart climate policies driving cleaner growth.

64. Responding to the conclusive findings of the international community, President Obama had announced his Climate Action Plan to cut carbon pollution, prepare the United States for the impact of a changing climate, and for leading the international efforts to combat climate change. While nuclear energy was an important part of the country's energy strategy and five new reactors were currently under construction in the United States, there were challenges, including the number of plants to be decommissioned in the coming decades. It was important to know, within a decade, how new nuclear energy sources could play a major part in the clean energy solution.

65. In seeking to reduce carbon pollution, the Agency and its Member States must work tirelessly to limit the risks of nuclear accidents, protect against terrorism, prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and move towards disarmament.

66. Turning to peaceful cooperation, he said that efforts to promote peaceful nuclear energy were fundamental to both the NPT and the Statute. The United States strongly supported the Agency's efforts in assisting interested Member States in developing the necessary infrastructure for the safe and secure deployment of nuclear power.

67. The United States was pleased to be supporting the PUI. Together with at least 18 other Member States and the EU, it had raised some $73 million for the Initiative. The five-year goal of raising $100 million for the PUI before the 2015 NPT Review Conference could be achieved with the help of all Member States.

68. He noted with satisfaction that the Board of Governors had approved a 40-year extension of the Agreement for Cooperation between the Agency and the United States, under which his country had been providing nuclear material and technology to 28 Member States.

69. Noting the importance of the security of fuel supply for collective non-proliferation efforts, he said that his country strongly supported the establishment of the IAEA LEU bank, and thanked Kazakhstan and the Agency for their efforts in that regard.

70. With regard to nuclear safety, he said that his Government was supporting the deployment of passively safe reactors in the United States and around the world. The Department of Energy had issued $6.5 billion in loan guarantees to support the construction of two such reactors in Georgia, and it was expected that two small modular reactor designs going through the licensing process of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission would be deployed early in the next decade.

71. The United States was also working towards a next-generation nuclear fuel that would combine higher performance with greater tolerance for extreme events. It had entered into strong partnerships with national laboratories, universities and industry and commended the leadership role of the OECD/NEA and the Agency in expanding international involvement in that area.

72. Noting the importance of addressing accidents quickly and effectively, and of handling liability issues through mechanisms based on treaty mechanisms, he said that the United States remained a

strong supporter of a global nuclear liability regime based on the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage. It welcomed the significant progress made towards that goal the previous year with the ratification of that Convention by the United Arab Emirates. The anticipated ratifications by Canada and Japan would bring the Convention into force, creating a regime with members on five continents and almost doubling the number of civil nuclear power plants covered by nuclear liability treaties.

73. Turning to nuclear security, he said that all stakeholders must continue working together to reduce the risk of nuclear terrorism. The United States was committed to working with other countries and the Agency to secure and protect nuclear and other radioactive materials. Since 2009, it had partnered with 26 countries and Taiwan to eliminate more than 3000 kg of HEU and plutonium — enough material for more than 100 nuclear weapons — and had eliminated HEU from 12 countries. Since the previous session of the General Conference, it had reached an agreement with Japan to remove all HEU and plutonium from Japan's Fast Critical Assembly, and had recently completed another shipment of HEU from Poland in cooperation with its Russian counterparts.

74. Since the last session of the General Conference, the United States had also hosted an IPPAS mission at the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

75. In the area of radiological security, the United States had undertaken to work with France, Germany and the Netherlands to establish a roadmap of actions over the forthcoming two years to strengthen the international framework and enhance the efforts of source supplier countries. During the Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague in March, it had joined 34 other countries in committing to actions, including subscribing to the Agency's Nuclear Security Fundamentals and meeting the intent of the recommendations contained in documents at the level of the Agency's Nuclear Security Series. All Member States should strive to do likewise to improve nuclear security practices globally.

76. The United States continued to support the need for a strengthened global nuclear security architecture consisting of legally binding instruments, multilateral institutions, voluntary collectives and national actions. His country looked forward to hosting the next Nuclear Security Summit in 2016.

77. Turning to non-proliferation, he said that preventing the spread of nuclear weapons was one of his country's highest priorities and that failure to comply with legally binding obligations could not be tolerated.

78. The United States commended the Agency's ongoing efforts to resolve all past and present issues of concern regarding Iran's nuclear programme, and welcomed the Agency's essential role in verifying Iran's nuclear-related commitments under the Joint Plan of Action. His country called on Iran to cooperate fully with the Agency to resolve all outstanding issues, particularly those giving rise to concerns regarding possible military dimensions.

79. It remained essential for the Assad regime to cooperate fully with the Agency in remedying its non-compliance. The United States urged Syria to provide such cooperation without delay, including access to all relevant locations, materials and persons.

80. The United States called on the DPRK to take tangible steps to demonstrate its commitment to denuclearization, engage in a credible diplomatic process to implement the 2005 Statement of the Six-Party Talks and come into compliance with its UN obligations. It commended the Agency's efforts to play an essential role in the DPRK's complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization.

81. Those cases demonstrated that the Agency must have the access and resources necessary for detecting and investigating indications of undeclared nuclear programmes. The United States believed that a combination of a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol was the international standard for safeguards verification, and it called upon all States that had not yet done so

to bring a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol into force as soon as possible.

82. His country also called on all Member States to strengthen their financial and technical support to Agency safeguards and welcomed the Secretariat's continued efforts to make the implementation of safeguards more effective and efficient.

83. The United States continued to fulfil its obligations under Article VI of the NPT by taking steps towards nuclear disarmament. It had reduced its stockpile of nuclear weapons by over 26 000 warheads and, under the New START Treaty, the deployed strategic warheads of his country and the Russian Federation would reach their lowest levels since the 1950s. It had disposed of excess weapons-origin fissile material by downblending over 143 metric tons of HEU, and remained firmly committed to eliminating, under Agency verification, 34 metric tons of weapons-origin plutonium pursuant to the Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement.

84. In May 2014, the United States had signed the Protocol to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, which provided legally binding assurances not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against parties to that Treaty.

85. A nuclear council of senior programme leaders and advisors was being created in the Department of Energy to address increasingly interdependent, cross-cutting issues in the nuclear field with a view to building a safer, more secure world.

86. The challenges of the current era, such as climate change and preventing proliferation and nuclear terrorism, were as serious as any the international community had faced over the previous 60 years. Member States must rededicate themselves to reinforcing international organizations and cooperation, bolstering the non-proliferation regime, and strengthening the Agency by ensuring that it had sufficient financial resources, expertise, legal authority and political support.

87. Mr DELLA VEDOVA (Italy), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia associated themselves with the statement that he was about to make.

88. The EU was grateful to the Director General and the Secretariat for their professional and impartial work. They could continue to count on the EU's support.

89. The EU, which was committed to effective multilateral action against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, attached the utmost importance to universalizing the NPT. It called on those States that had not yet done so to accede to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States.

90. Nuclear non-proliferation was of vital importance, and the EU was actively contributing to the global efforts being made to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, in accordance with the goals of the NPT and in a manner that promoted international stability and was based on the principle of undiminished security for all.

91. The EU remained committed to the establishment of a Middle East Zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, as agreed by NPT States parties in a resolution on the Middle East during the 1995 Review Conference. It therefore regretted that the envisaged 2012 conference on the establishment of such a zone had been postponed. It fully supported the continuing preparations for a conference, in particular the tireless efforts of the conference facilitator, Mr Jakko Laajava. The progress achieved during the informal gatherings in Switzerland had given some grounds for hope and the EU called upon all States of the Middle East to engage proactively

with the facilitator and the conference co-conveners with a view to holding the conference as soon as possible and on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by States of the region.

92. The 2010 NPT Review Conference had reaffirmed the role of the Agency in verifying the compliance by States with their safeguards obligations and also the importance of responding resolutely and effectively in all cases of non-compliance.

93. The EU, which was deeply concerned about the protracted and serious current challenges to the non-proliferation regime, emphasized once again that the Security Council had a mandate to take appropriate action in the event of non-compliance with safeguards obligations.

94. The EU fully supported the ongoing diplomatic efforts — led by its High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, together with China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States of America — to seek a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. The EU welcomed the Joint Plan of Action between Iran and the E3/EU+3, and the Framework for Cooperation between Iran and the Agency, and was pleased that Iran continued to implement the measures under the JPA.

95. The European Union's objective remained the achievement of a negotiated comprehensive long-term settlement of the issue. It was deeply concerned that the Agency was unable to provide credible assurances about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran and that the Agency was not able to conclude that all nuclear material in Iran was in peaceful activities. Iran must engage fully with the Agency to resolve all outstanding issues, including those relating to possible military dimensions, in order to build international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme.

96. The EU had condemned, in the strongest possible terms, the DPRK's nuclear test in February 2013, and its threat of another nuclear test, and had urged the DPRK to refrain from further provocative actions. It would continue to work with key partners and the wider international community in an effort to demonstrate to the DPRK, including through the full implementation of United Nations sanctions, the consequences associated with its continued violations of Security Council resolutions.

97. It once again urged the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons programme, including its uranium enrichment programme, in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, and continued to attach great importance to the Agency's verification role in the DPRK.

98. The EU, which had fully supported the adoption by the Board, on 9 June 2011, of the resolution contained in document GOV/2011/41, in which the Board had decided to report the non-compliance of Syria with its safeguards agreement to the Security Council and the General Assembly, deeply regretted that Syria had still not remedied its non-compliance. Syria should start cooperating transparently with the Agency as a matter of priority, and sign and bring into force an additional protocol as soon as possible.

99. The Agency's safeguards system was a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and played an indispensable role in the implementation of the NPT, and the measures provided for in the Model Additional Protocol were an integral part of that system. Comprehensive safeguards agreements together with additional protocols constituted the current Agency verification standard, and the EU called for the universalization of those instruments without delay. In that regard, it noted with satisfaction that Bosnia and Herzegovina had brought an additional protocol into force and that Kuwait had amended its small quantities protocol.

100. The EU had firmly supported the continued evolution of safeguards implementation at the State-level and welcomed the clarifications and additional information provided in the Supplementary

Document to the Report on the Conceptualization and Development of Safeguards Implementation at the State Level[3]. It was convinced that consistent and universal implementation of the State-level concept would strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of the safeguards system and contribute to global non-proliferation efforts.

101. The EU, which was supporting the Agency's safeguards system through the European Commission's safeguards support programme, considered that the close cooperation between Euratom and the Agency made for effective and efficient safeguards. It recognized the need to strengthen the Agency's ability to provide credible and timely analysis of safeguards samples and had contributed more than €18.5 million to the modernization of the Safeguards Analytical Laboratory.

102. The EU was pleased with its cooperation with the Agency. The most recent meeting of senior officials from the Agency Secretariat and the EU, which had taken place in February, had followed meetings of the Director General with the President of the European Commission in Brussels and the EU High Representative in Munich.

103. Pursuant to the memorandum of understanding on nuclear safety signed by the Director General and the European Union's Commissioner for Energy in 2013, a Senior Officials Liaison Committee had been established and had met earlier in the year to identify areas of potential future cooperation.

104. Recalling the high importance attached by the EU to the promotion of the highest standards of nuclear safety, he said that the Council of the European Union had adopted a renewed directive in July 2014 to strengthen the safety framework for nuclear installations. It would apply to all nuclear installations and would also be used as a reference for the implementation of safety improvements to existing nuclear installations.

105. The EU looked forward to the holding in 2015 of a diplomatic conference to consider an amendment to the Convention on Nuclear Safety.

106. Within the framework of its strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the EU was actively supporting the implementation of Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1887 (2009) and international initiatives such as the G8's Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction, the Proliferation Security Initiative, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, the Global Threat Reduction Initiative and the Nuclear Security Summit process. More than €100 million of the €260 million allocated to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) risk mitigation worldwide had been allocated to the EU's regional CBRN Centres of Excellence initiative.

107. The EU strongly supported the Agency's activities in the area of nuclear security and was, together with individual member States, among the main contributors to the NSF, having contributed around €40 million to date. It looked forward to the next high-level Agency international conference on nuclear security to be held in 2016.

108. The effective physical protection of nuclear material and nuclear facilities was of the utmost importance, and the EU therefore urged all States that had not yet done so to become parties to the CPPNM and ratify the 2005 Amendment thereto. It welcomed the Director General's concerted efforts to promote the Amendment's early entry into force.

109. The EU, which was convinced of the benefits of multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle, had hoped that the IAEA LEU bank, to which it had contributed €20 million and pledged a further €5 million, would already have been completed. Nevertheless, it welcomed the Secretariat's

[3] GOV/2014/41.

efforts to intensify the process and looked forward to the early conclusion of the Host State Agreement with Kazakhstan.

110. The EU noted that projections still indicated an increase in global installed nuclear power capacity by 2030, with different regional developments. Although the projections had been lowered every year since 2010, he noted that nuclear power remained an important option for several countries. The EU welcomed the Director General's decision to make the theme of the Scientific Forum for 2014 the challenges of radioactive waste management.

111. The EU, which attached the utmost importance to the Agency's technical cooperation activities, had made available some €150 million in support of those activities and of its own technical cooperation with third countries in the peaceful application of nuclear energy.

112. In further support of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the EU had allocated €225 million during the period 2014–2020 for the promotion of nuclear safety, radiation protection and efficient and effective safeguards implementation in third countries.

113. The EU looked forward to continuing its strong support for the essential activities of the Agency.

114. Mr XU Dazhe (China) read out the following message from Mr LI Keqiang, Premier of the Chinese State Council:

> "On the occasion of the convening of the 58th session of the IAEA General Conference, I would like to extend on behalf of the Chinese Government the warmest congratulations. Over the past 30 years since China became a member of the IAEA, both sides have carried out close cooperation consistently. The fruitful results achieved in such fields as nuclear energy development, R&D in nuclear science and technology, nuclear safety and security have greatly contributed to promoting the widespread use of nuclear energy and non-proliferation. Now the Chinese Government is endeavouring to achieve green, low-carbon development so as to build a beautiful China. We have always adhered to a policy of conserving energy, controlling the aggregate energy consumption, optimizing the energy mix, enhancing the proportion of clean energy and developing nuclear power efficiently while ensuring safety. China is willing to work together with the Agency and other Member States to broaden the scope of cooperation and improve its level of cooperation, to address current challenges, and make joint efforts to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for mankind. I wish the Conference every success."

115. The Chinese Government had always attached great importance to the Agency's position and role in the world's nuclear community, and consistently supported its work. China strictly fulfilled its international non-proliferation obligations, provided assistance to newcomer countries and assisted the Agency in implementing its statutory functions. In celebration of the 30th anniversary of China's accession to the Agency, and in recognition of his country's support of the Agency's work, China would be donating a US $2.5 million irradiation device for the Agency's ReNuAL project.

116. Since China had begun its cooperation with the Agency, notable results had been achieved in the development of its nuclear power industry. His country was committed to a closed nuclear fuel cycle and, thanks to almost six decades of unremitting exploration, a complete and independent nuclear fuel cycle system had taken shape, with enhanced industrial level and capability; a complete safety regulatory system was also in place.

117. The overall technical scheme of Hualong Unit 1, which met Generation III technology requirements, had recently passed its appraisal, and a demonstration project concerning a Generation IV high-temperature gas-cooled reactor was currently under development. The preliminary safety analysis report on the self-developed CAP1400 reactor design that was ready for construction

had been reviewed. China was willing to share its experience and provide those countries planning to develop nuclear power with support and assistance.

118. In March, the Chinese President had set out China's views on nuclear security at the Nuclear Security Summit held in The Hague, placing equal importance on development and security, rights and obligations, independence and cooperation, and temporary and permanent solutions. He had also made a commitment to enhancing China's safety and security capability. Although China's current nuclear safety regulatory and emergency management systems were fairly comprehensive and compatible with international practice, all new plants to be built in the future would be required to meet the world's strictest third-generation safety requirements.

119. China had been actively involved in international cooperation in the area of nuclear security. The China–US Center of Excellence on Nuclear Security, which would provide an important platform for personnel training, technical exchange and international cooperation in the nuclear security field for China and the Asia–Pacific region, was expected to be operational by the end of 2015. Furthermore, during the current session of the General Conference, China would be concluding an agreement with the Agency and Ghana concerning assistance in securing LEU for a research reactor, with a view to contributing to the enhancement of nuclear security worldwide.

120. Three years had passed since the Fukushima Daiichi accident, and the perception of nuclear power development in various countries was becoming more rational. It was recognized that nuclear energy played an important role in promoting the reform of energy production and in ensuring sustainable socioeconomic development. With almost 40 countries having expressed their intention to build new nuclear power plants, it was obvious that the global nuclear power industry was revitalizing.

121. China's confidence in nuclear power development had never wavered. Over the previous year, four units had gone into operation bringing the total number of units in operation in mainland China to 21, with a total installed capacity of 19.02 GW(e). Another 27 units were under construction, accounting for almost half of those under construction worldwide; they would have a total installed capacity of 29.53 GW(e).

122. According to China's revised medium- and long-term nuclear power development programme, the total installed capacity of operating nuclear power plants would reach 58 GW(e) in 2020 with another 30 GW(e) under construction. In August 2014, the State Council had put forward a plan calling for major efforts in clean energy development and the construction of a series of coastal nuclear power projects, which would give a strong impetus to nuclear energy development worldwide.

123. China was firmly opposed to the proliferation of nuclear weapons and advocated their complete prohibition and destruction. It had acceded to major international non-proliferation systems including the NPT, the NSG and the Zangger Committee. China, which was supporting the efforts of the Agency to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the safeguards system, had taken the lead among the nuclear-weapon States in bringing an additional protocol into force. It had also established comprehensive nuclear material control, and import and export control systems.

124. China had steadfastly advocated the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, and believed that a peaceful resolution of the DPRK nuclear issue through dialogue and negotiation and the maintenance of peace and security on the Peninsula served not only the interests of all concerned parties, but also the shared interests of the Asian region and the world community as a whole. His Government would continue to play an active role in promoting the Six-Party Talks.

125. China believed that the Iranian nuclear issue should be resolved through dialogue and negotiation. It had consistently followed an objective, impartial and responsible approach in an active

effort to promote peace and encourage dialogue. His country continued to play a constructive role in promoting the negotiation process with a view to achieving a lasting and proper resolution of the issue.

126. Over the previous 30 years, China and the Agency had moved forward hand in hand. China was willing to continue working with the Agency and other Member States to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, non-proliferation, and the attainment of peace, safety and prosperity.

127. Mr SHAABAN (Egypt) expressed appreciation of the Agency's role in promoting the scientific and economic development of Member States through the peaceful applications of nuclear energy.

128. Egypt, which recognized the essential role of nuclear energy for socioeconomic development, was preparing to construct nuclear power plants with a view to overcoming the two greatest obstacles to its growth — namely the supply of electricity and water — and contributing to the development of research programmes and Egyptian industry.

129. In 2007, Egypt had announced the launch of a project to build four nuclear power generation units. Numerous steps had been taken since then to improve the legislative, institutional and regulatory infrastructure for nuclear energy-related activities, including the restructuring of the Supreme Council for the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy, the enactment of nuclear law No. 7 in 2010 and its implementing regulations, the establishment of a nuclear and radiation oversight commission as an independent monitoring body, and the signing of a contract for the provision of advisory services in relation to the project. The necessary technical and strategic studies had also been undertaken. The invitation for tenders had been finalized in February 2011, but in view of the internal political situation following the revolutions of 2011 and 2013, and in light of the Fukushima accident, the issuing of the invitation for tenders had been postponed.

130. In June 2014, the Egyptian President had stressed that Egypt remained committed to building Egypt's first nuclear power plant. The technical specifications had been reviewed and updated in cooperation with Agency experts, in order to incorporate experiences and lessons learned from the Fukushima accident and ensure maximum compliance with nuclear facility safety requirements.

131. His country was increasing its research and development efforts related to the peaceful applications of nuclear energy, including in the areas of health, food, agriculture, industry, minerals and water resources. It therefore welcomed the Agency's increased efforts to help Member States overcome numerous obstacles to development, in particular in the areas of food security and human health, and the implementation of the project concerning the joint management of the Nubian aquifer. It considered that the Agency's role in maximizing the benefits of the peaceful applications of nuclear energy should be commensurate with its role in strengthening nuclear safety.

132. Egypt appreciated the Agency's assistance in strengthening national emergency preparedness and response capacities, and was pleased to have benefited from Agency advisory services concerning implementation of the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety.

133. Egypt remained convinced that the elimination of nuclear weapons was the only means of ensuring that such weapons were not used by either State or non-State actors.

134. His country, which recognized that the primary responsibility for nuclear safety lay with Member States, was striving to cooperate closely with the Agency in that area, through implementing IPPAS mission recommendations, developing physical protection systems for Egyptian nuclear facilities, and establishing supervisory and advisory structures for the safe handling of radioactive waste. It would shortly complete an INSSP and the construction of a centre to promote nuclear safety and provide relevant training.

135. Egypt was making every effort to make available its experts and research facilities for the benefit of African and Arab States through its participation in AFRA and through Arab Atomic Energy Agency training programmes carried out in cooperation with the Agency. It also provided national experts for Agency advisory missions to a number of Member States.

136. Egypt's research activities relating to the peaceful application of nuclear energy were carried out in a completely transparent manner, in cooperation with the Agency and in full compliance with the NPT. Egypt, which was in full legislative compliance with the provisions of its safeguards agreement, believed that the development of safeguards in States should not involve the imposition of supplementary obligations exceeding those to which States had agreed. Furthermore, the concerns of all States should be taken into account and the process should not be politicized.

137. Egypt welcomed the importance the Agency attached to cancer treatment, particularly in relation to the production of medical isotopes. It was looking forward in the near future to completing construction of a facility to produce medical isotopes, including molybdenum-99, thereby helping to address the global shortage arising from the closure of a number of production facilities around the world.

138. Precise information was required in order to overcome the global challenges related to water supply, including the shortage of clean water, the effects of climate change on water resources, and sustainable management of water resources. The Agency had helped countries of the Nile basin, including Egypt, to analyse the extent of groundwater renewal from rain and surface water and pollution sources, and Egypt was cooperating actively in Agency projects related to water resources and isotope techniques, particularly in regard to the Nubian aquifer.

139. Egypt was continuing to assist the Agency in promoting food security through the use of gamma irradiation to produce highly productive crop varieties adapted to particular conditions.

140. Egypt's technical cooperation projects also covered the management of radioactive sources and the creation of a database of spent radioactive sources on Egyptian soil, the introduction of quality assurance systems for radioactive waste management, and training of human resources to deal with any accident that might occur during the use, transport or storage of nuclear material.

141. The peaceful application of nuclear energy could help to promote stable growth in the Middle East, including by upholding the right of the peoples of the region to live without the threat of nuclear weapons on the basis of equal security for all. Nuclear energy should exist solely for the service of mankind.

142. The Agency's achievement of its goals depended on the extent to which Member States cooperated in establishing an NWFZ in the Middle East and in the application of comprehensive safeguards to all facilities in the region. Thus, Egypt was again submitting to the General Conference a draft resolution on the application of safeguards in the Middle East, the aim being to bring about the application of comprehensive Agency safeguards to all nuclear facilities in the region and universalization of the NPT. It hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

143. In closing, he reiterated his country's support of the Agency's important role in promoting growth, safety and security for the benefit of all peoples of the world.

144. Mr KIRIENKO (Russian Federation) said that his country supported the central role of the Agency as a coordinator of international cooperation on a number of fronts — from nuclear security and nuclear non-proliferation to the development of nuclear infrastructure. It had particularly high regard for the Agency's impartiality and its commercial and political neutrality and had sought to step up its cooperation with the Agency over the previous year.

145. Given the scale and diversity of the tasks assigned to the Agency, his country was steadily increasing its voluntary additional support. Taken as a whole, Russia's contribution over the past year in the form of extrabudgetary payments, in-kind inputs to the implementation of Agency projects, and the provision of highly qualified cost-free experts to the Secretariat had even exceeded its assessed contribution to the Regular Budget.

146. Russia was committed to the conclusions in the outcome document of the Agency's International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century, namely that nuclear energy remained a vital means of enhancing energy security and combating climate change.

147. Nuclear energy was a strategic area with very long life cycles that could not and must not be made dependent on upheavals in the political landscape. The average life cycle of a nuclear power plant was approximately 100 years — longer than the average human life expectancy and much longer than the lifetimes of any political developments.

148. The Russian Federation recognized the importance of the provision of information and open access, and welcomed the useful practice, developed with the support of the Secretariat, of organizing visits to nuclear facilities for ambassadors accredited to the Agency. He drew attention to the second such trip organized by the Russian Federation during the year to the technological facilities of the Rosatom State Corporation at the Sayda Guba site, and noted that visits had also been organized to nuclear power plants in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia.

149. In 2014, it had been 60 years since the world's first nuclear power plant had commenced operation in the city of Obninsk, in the Russian Federation. His country traditionally paid close attention to basic and applied research, and within the next twelve months it would be commissioning one unit abroad with its Indian partners and three units in Russia, namely Rostov unit 3, Novovoronezh unit 1, and Beloyarsk unit 4.

150. One of the most important events of the year had been completing the development of a new type of super-pure radiation-resistant steels for the new WWER reactor vessels. Use of those vessels would make it possible to guarantee the operation of Russian-designed units for more than 100 years.

151. The Russian Federation was assiduously implementing a comprehensive programme for the transition to a closed fuel cycle. Two fast reactor technologies were being worked on simultaneously — one operating on a sodium coolant and one on a heavy metal coolant. The work, which was aimed at attaining a new quality of nuclear power, was known as the Breakthrough Project. Its goal was to set up a pilot nuclear power facility on the same site as an enhanced-safety nuclear power plant with a fast neutron reactor, a reprocessing and reloading facility that produced nuclear fuel without actinide separation, and installations preparing all types of radioactive waste for final removal from the production cycle and subsequent disposal without disturbing the radioecological equilibrium of the natural environment.

152. The Russian Federation was also working under the ITER project on a fundamentally new energy source, namely controlled thermonuclear fusion.

153. In October 2014, the 25th IAEA Fusion Energy Conference would be held in St Petersburg under the auspices of the Agency; it was expected that more than 750 participants from nearly 50 countries would attend the event.

154. The principles of radioactive waste management adopted by the international community had been enshrined in law in the Russian Federation. Over the next 20–25 years, it was planned to complete the bulk of the work to eliminate the legacy of that waste, including the reprocessing of all spent nuclear fuel, together with the disposal of the resulting waste, and the decommissioning of facilities posing nuclear and radioactive hazards, along with the rehabilitation of contaminated areas.

The safe and cost-effective disposal of waste would protect the health of future generations and free them from the burden of accumulated waste.

155. At the Mining and Chemical Complex, the wet storage facility for spent RBMK fuel had been upgraded and a new dry storage facility built, and two more dry storage facilities had been constructed for spent WWER-1000 and RBMK-1000 fuel. Work was also under way on the construction of a pilot and demonstration centre for the development of innovative spent fuel reprocessing technologies with a capacity of up to 250 tonnes per year and a plant for the production of fast reactor MOX fuel.

156. The problem of spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste could only be tackled through broad intergovernmental, regional and global cooperation. The Russian Federation therefore supported the decision to carry out a study under the INPRO framework on multilateral approaches to the final stage of the nuclear fuel cycle.

157. He drew attention to a technical cooperation project on remediation which aimed to improve the skills of the staff involved in an intergovernmental programme on the remediation of territory in member States of the Eurasian Economic Community affected by uranium mining activities. The first training course under that project prepared in conjunction with the Agency had opened that day in Obninsk.

158. In the field of international cooperation, much had been achieved over the previous year: the foundations had been laid on the construction site of the second stage of the Tianwan nuclear power plant in China; good progress was being made in the construction of a two-unit nuclear power plant in Belarus, and the Russian Federation had been awarded the tender for the construction of Jordan's first nuclear power plant; unit No. 1 at the Kudankulam nuclear power plant in India had been brought to 100% power and preparations were being made for the physical start-up of unit No. 2. In addition, intergovernmental agreements had been signed with Hungary concerning the construction of a two-unit nuclear power plant at the Paks site, and contract documents had been compiled for the construction of the Hanhikivi nuclear power plant in Finland. Those Generation III+ projects were fully in line with international standards and the very strict regulatory requirements of these countries. Work had also started on the site of the Rooppur nuclear power plant in Bangladesh, where the country's first ever two-unit nuclear power plant was being built with Russian technology.

159. The Russian Federation attached great importance to working with its partners, not only to ensure construction of the most up-to-date nuclear power plants, but also in establishing and developing the comprehensive nuclear infrastructure necessary for the sustainable and safe implementation of national nuclear power programmes.

160. The previous year had seen the successful conclusion of the Russian–US HEU-LEU programme, under which 500 tonnes of weapons-grade HEU — equivalent to the destruction of some 20 000 nuclear warheads — had been converted for use as nuclear power plant fuel. In August, a technically sophisticated programme for the extraction and removal of spent fuel from the Paks nuclear power plant had been completed with the last batch of fuel having been transported by rail across the territory of Ukraine and delivered to the Mayak federal State unitary enterprise for processing.

161. He wished to emphasize that, as before, deliveries of Russian nuclear fuel were being made in good time to Ukrainian nuclear power plants. The Russian Federation considered that safety and reliability of operation was an absolute priority at nuclear facilities, including those constructed in its projects abroad, and was complying rigorously and completely with all its commitments.

162. The mobilization of public support was a key factor in the development of nuclear power. In the Russian Federation, an open-access Internet portal provided constant information on the background

radiation and safety of all of the country's facilities. Legislation had been passed establishing a system of public hearings; no work could be carried out on nuclear facilities in Russia unless it had been approved at such hearings.

163. Seventeen information centres providing visitors with publicly available information about modern nuclear power plants and their safety arrangements had been opened in the Russian Federation; two had been established in Turkey, and others in Bangladesh and Viet Nam. A centre would be opened in Belarus by the end of the year. His country was also planning to sign a memorandum with its Kazakh partners on the joint establishment of such a centre in Kazakhstan.

164. Public support was a significant factor in the development of nuclear power in the 21st century, and as a result of the efforts made, the proportion of Russians who supported the development of peaceful nuclear energy in Russia had grown to more than 72% by the end of 2013 based on actual figures.

165. Russia had played and would continue to play an active role in supporting and strengthening the international nuclear safety, nuclear security and nuclear non-proliferation regimes. It recognized the importance of the independence of the regulatory authorities in ensuring security. The Russian regulator, Rostechnadzor, not only ensured the adoption of and compliance with the strictest national safety standards, but also played an active role in international cooperation. An Agency mission in November 2013 had deemed Rostechnadzor to be an effective and independent regulatory authority in the field of nuclear energy.

166. The Russian Federation supported the Agency's work in the domain of nuclear security both through annual voluntary contributions to the Nuclear Security Fund and through the regular organization in Russia of up-to-date thematic courses for Agency Member States. It shared the view that the Agency should play a central role in international cooperation on nuclear security.

167. He drew attention to the work being carried out by the Secretariat on improving the safeguards system and looked forward to continued constructive discussions in that regard at the Agency's headquarters.

168. The finishing touches were being made to the agreement between the Russian Federation and the Agency on the transit through Russian territory of uranium from the Agency's LEU bank, representing a further contribution from his country in developing a system of assured supplies. The Russian Federation was also keeping the guaranteed reserve of LEU in Angarsk in permanent readiness to meet any request from the Agency.

169. In closing, he said that the development of nuclear power was a very serious matter which required a fully qualified approach and government support and which could not tolerate political games. Nuclear energy could not be locked away within national borders. The best — and the only — way in which it could flourish was through broad international cooperation under the leadership of the Agency, which his country had always supported and would continue to support.

170. Mr LINHART (Austria) said that the Agency was uniquely placed to assist in ensuring the peaceful application of nuclear energy under the best safety, security and non-proliferation conditions. Its unique verification expertise not only provided the international community with the necessary assurances regarding the peaceful uses of nuclear material, it was also required for nuclear disarmament and the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones.

171. Austria supported the Agency's important work in two ways: as a Member State, by paying its assessed contributions to the regular budget and the TCF and, as the host State, by providing infrastructure virtually cost-free and by facilitating the programmatic work in Vienna and at Seibersdorf. During periods of renewal and expansion and at times of political necessity, such as

during the talks between the E3/EU+3 and Iran in Vienna during the year, Austria's support had remained substantial.

172. The right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes came with the obligation not to use such energy to cause harm to others and to ensure the highest standards of safety, security and safeguards. Austria strongly supported the implementation of safeguards in a manner that considered a State's nuclear and nuclear-related activities and capabilities as a whole.

173. Although nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament went hand in hand, nuclear disarmament had fallen short of expectations and must be pursued with new vigour. Austria recognized the importance of achieving a world without nuclear weapons and would be hosting the Third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in Vienna in December 2014. It was convinced that a humanitarian focus would have a positive effect on the international nuclear weapons discourse and considered that a facts-based discussion would facilitate a greater understanding of the immense risks of nuclear weapons and of the consequences of nuclear weapons explosions, and would inform and reinvigorate all the relevant international nuclear disarmament forums.

174. Austria, which was one of those countries that did not consider nuclear energy as a viable option for meeting its energy needs, considered that the Agency needed to keep up with technological developments and adapt its working methods in order to ensure a robust, up-to-date global verification regime, which would facilitate the transparency necessary for the peaceful application of nuclear energy and provide the necessary assurances regarding the application of the highest standards of safety, security and non-proliferation.

175. His country was confident that the Agency was well equipped to assist Member States in implementing the highest standards of nuclear safety. It recognized the importance of transparency and public involvement for the continuous improvement of nuclear safety and drew attention to the revised European Union Council directive establishing a Community framework for the nuclear safety of nuclear installations, which provided for increased transparency by ensuring that information was made available to the public under normal operating conditions and in the case of incidents or accidents.

176. Austria supported the proposal by Switzerland to amend Article 18 of the Convention on Nuclear Safety and looked forward to discussing that proposal with other Contracting Parties before, and during, the diplomatic conference to be held in February 2015.

177. Mr SHKOLNIK (Kazakhstan) said that the Agency was implementing a measured and effective policy in ensuring safety and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Kazakhstan would welcome the further strengthening of the non-proliferation regime and considered Agency safeguards to be the most effective instrument of the NPT. It called on all NPT States parties that had not already done so to conclude a safeguards agreement and an additional protocol with the Agency without further delay.

178. Given the importance of enhancing the Agency's safeguards system and the sensitivity of safeguards implementation procedures, the Secretariat should comply strictly with the provisions of the documents adopted in that area by Agency Member States.

179. His country was seriously concerned about the DPRK's nuclear programme and called on the DPRK to comply fully with its obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions and return to the Six-Party Talks.

180. It was important to achieve progress in the negotiations on the Iranian nuclear programme and Kazakhstan hoped that a comprehensive agreement could be achieved at an early date.

181. Kazakhstan had already acceded to the CPPNM and ratified the Amendment thereto, and urged other States to do likewise since the early entry into force of the Amendment would strengthen nuclear security globally.

182. The Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague had reaffirmed the aspiration of the majority of States to strengthen global nuclear security. Kazakhstan was taking steps to implement the decisions of the summit, including by reducing the use of sensitive material and technology in the civilian sector. Kazakhstan had put forward an initiative concerning the development and adoption of economic mechanisms to encourage conversion to technologies that did not use HEU, which had been supported by participants and had been included in the final document of the Summit. It called on the Agency to consider the proposal and make recommendations in that connection.

183. Kazakhstan fully supported the Agency's tougher approach to nuclear safety in the nuclear power sector and attached great importance to the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety.

184. His country called on States to support the Agency's activities in promoting the development and transfer of technology and knowledge related to peaceful nuclear applications, including nuclear power and the nuclear fuel cycle.

185. He drew particular attention to the remediation activities undertaken by Kazakhstan, together with the Agency, the Russian Federation and the United States to return the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site to a safe condition.

186. Kazakhstan was actively working on the establishment on its territory of an international LEU bank. It hoped that the text of the Host Country Agreement would be completed shortly and that the project would be implemented once all the ratification procedures had been completed.

187. His country regularly paid its contributions to the Agency's Regular Budget, voluntary contributions to the NSF and the PUI, as well as extrabudgetary contributions for the Agency's verification activities under the JPA. It intended to continue to meet in full its financial commitments to the Agency, without condition.

188. Kazakhstan, which was a leading producer of uranium ore and had the potential to produce nuclear fuel, intended to develop nuclear power. The State-owned company Kazatomprom had created a company specializing in the front end of the fuel cycle. It had joined forces with a Russian isotope separation company and joint nuclear fuel and conversion activities were being carried out.

189. Although his country was an active and responsible member of the Agency, it had unfortunately been deprived of the opportunity of participating in the elected bodies of the Agency since it had joined in 1994. Kazakhstan was not the only country in that position and called upon the Director General and the Secretariat to work with Member States to resolve the situation.

190. In closing, he reaffirmed Kazakhstan's full support of the Agency's activities aimed at extending the peaceful uses of nuclear power for the benefit of humanity, at strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and at raising the level of international security.

191. Ms JOEMAT-PETTERSSON (South Africa) said that her country advocated the achievement of a world without nuclear weapons and therefore remained committed to the NPT, which formed the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The 2015 NPT Review Conference would provide an opportunity to review the implementation of all the undertakings made in the context of the Treaty, and to build on them in a concrete manner.

192. South Africa looked forward to the Third Conference on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons to be held in Vienna later in the year.

193. Her country had repeatedly cautioned against any decision that would restrict the inalienable right of States to the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy; each country's choices and decisions in the field of peaceful uses in conformity with the provisions of the NPT should be respected.

194. Access to electricity generated by clean energy sources remained one of the most pressing issues for future sustainable development. South Africa, which remained committed to nuclear energy as an integral part of a sustainable energy mix mitigating the risk of climate change, would be embarking on a significant expansion of its nuclear power generating capacity, with provision having been made in the Integrated Resource Plan 2010–2030 for the procurement of an additional 9 600 MW. An energy security cabinet subcommittee was providing oversight, coordination and high-level decisions on the entire energy mix, including on the nuclear build programme. South Africa looked forward to training and developing the human resources required, including through cooperation with international partners, notably the Agency.

195. South Africa attached great importance to the technical cooperation programme, which contributed to sustainable socioeconomic growth throughout the African continent. It was participating in a project to recover orphan sources through mobile hot cell missions. Good progress had also been made on a project concerning the SIT, and the first coordination meeting for the new Tsetse project would be held at the Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute in November 2014. The establishment of the neutron beamline facilities at the SAFARI-1 research reactor would contribute to a significant increase in the research outputs of the Nuclear Energy Corporation of South Africa and she thanked the Agency for its continued support in that regard.

196. South Africa welcomed the Agency's continued efforts to strengthen the global nuclear safety framework and its support for nuclear safety infrastructure development in Member States that were introducing nuclear power or expanding their existing programmes.

197. Although no major shortcomings in the safety of the Koeberg nuclear power plant and the SAFARI-1 research reactor had been identified following the Fukushima Daiichi accident, a number of modifications and operating procedures had been identified to further improve safety, including additional studies beyond the current design basis. South Africa continued to engage internationally on lessons learned from Fukushima Daiichi and looked forward to the Agency's final report on the accident.

198. Her country welcomed the OSART missions conducted in 2011 and 2013 at the Koeberg nuclear power plant and the INSARR mission at the SAFARI-1 research reactor in 2013. The EPREV mission conducted in February 2014 had identified good practices and provided recommendations for areas requiring further attention. The national nuclear disaster management plan would be amended accordingly in 2015.

199. Noting that a peer review at the Koeberg nuclear power plant conducted in 2014 by WANO had shown significant improvements since the previous review in 2011, she recalled that, during the 2013–2014 financial year, the plant had broken a number of performance records. An initiative to replace the steam generators of the two units at the plant was under way.

200. South Africa attached importance to international and regional cooperation to enhance information sharing with respect to nuclear applications, safeguards, safety and security. Her country continued to participate in various Agency safety committees, technical meetings and regional workshops, and its nuclear regulator and operators continued to contribute to the work of international organizations.

201. Since the previous session of the General Conference, South Africa had established the National Radioactive Waste Disposal Institute, which would be responsible for designing and constructing new

interim storage and disposal facilities for radioactive waste, as part of which it would be leading a site selection planning process.

202. Given the continued existence of nuclear weapons, the threat of nuclear terrorism and of the use of nuclear or other radioactive material for malicious acts, and the illicit nuclear network, South Africa remained committed to a multilateral, cooperative approach to nuclear security with the Agency playing a central role. South Africa welcomed the International Conference on Nuclear Security to be held by the Agency in 2016 and looked forward to building on the firm foundation of the 2013 conference.

203. She was pleased to report that South Africa's nuclear forensics capability had been established and that her country had upgraded some of its facilities in line with Agency security guidelines.

204. South Africa would be hosting an international training course on nuclear material accounting and control for nuclear security at facilities in cooperation with the Agency in November 2014.

205. The safeguards system, which helped to build confidence in the peaceful nature of a State's nuclear activities, greatly facilitated the transfer of nuclear technology and its use by developing countries. South Africa continued to encourage those States that had not yet done so to conclude a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol with the Agency.

206. Her country had consistently called for measures to strengthen the safeguards system. It welcomed the discussions on the State-level concept, which had culminated in the Supplementary Document to the Report on the Conceptualization and Development of Safeguards Implementation at the State Level[4], and underscored the importance of maintaining an impartial and objective approach with respect to the application of safeguards.

207. South Africa attached importance to the work of the Agency's Nuclear Applications Laboratories at Seibersdorf and agreed that new facilities and equipment were urgently required if the Agency was to continue contributing nuclear technologies for peaceful purposes.

208. South Africa continued to be a leading supplier of critical medical isotopes and played a leading role in ensuring the continuous supply of molybdenum-99 during the recent outages in other countries. It remained committed to the global initiative to reduce the use of HEU where economically and technically feasible.

209. South Africa had always prioritized open communication to build confidence in the safe and secure operation of nuclear facilities and convey the benefits to be derived from the use of nuclear energy. Regular meetings with communities adjacent to nuclear facilities were held and a range of social responsibility programmes, including support for education initiatives, were implemented.

5. Arrangements for the Conference

210. The PRESIDENT, drawing the attention of delegates to the Statement of Financial Contributions to the Agency set out in document GC(58)/INF/10, said that the document included a table indicating those Member States that had lost their voting rights by virtue of the application of Article XIX.A of the Statute.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

[4] GOV/2014/41.