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President: Mr AZEEZ (Sri Lanka)

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¹ GC(58)/22.

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Abbreviations used in this record:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| AFRA | African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology |
| Assistance Convention | Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency |
| Brussels Supplementary Convention | Convention Supplementary to the Paris Convention of 29 July 1960 on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy |
| CPF | Country Programme Framework |
| CPPNM | Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material |
| CTBT | Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty |
| DPRK | Democratic People's Republic of Korea |
| Early Notification Convention | Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident |
| E3+3 | France, Germany and the United Kingdom plus China, the Russian Federation and the United States of America |
| EU | European Union |
| Euratom | European Atomic Energy Community |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations |
| INSSP | Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan |
| IPPAS | International Physical Protection Advisory Service |
| IRRS | Integrated Regulatory Review Service |
| Joint Convention | Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management |
| Joint Division | Joint FAO/IAEA Division of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture |
| JPA | Joint Plan of Action |
| Joint Protocol | Joint Protocol Relating to the Application of the Vienna Convention and the Paris Convention |
| NPT | Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons |
| NPT Review Conference | Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons |
| PACT | Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy |

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Paris Convention | Convention on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy |
| PUI | Peaceful Uses Initiative |
| QUATRO | Quality Assurance Team for Radiation Oncology |
| R&D | research and development |
| RCA | Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific) |
| ReNuAL | Renovation of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories |
| SIT | sterile insect technique |
| TCF | Technical Cooperation Fund |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNSCEAR | United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation |
| Vienna Convention | Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage (May 1963) |
| WHO | World Health Organization |

5. Arrangements for the Conference (GC(58)/INF/10 and 11)

(a) Adoption of the agenda and allocation of items for initial discussion

1. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee had recommended that the agenda for the current session consist of all the items on the provisional agenda set forth in documents GC(58)/1 and Add.1, Add.2 and Add.3. With regard to the allocation of items for initial discussion, it had recommended that all the items be taken up for discussion as indicated in those documents. It had also recommended that the order of items be as set out in those documents.

2. The General Committee's recommendations were accepted.

(b) Closing date of the session and opening date of the next session

3. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee had recommended that the Conference set Friday, 26 September 2014, as the closing date of the 58th regular session, and Monday, 14 September 2015, as the opening date of the 59th regular session.

4. The General Committee's recommendation was accepted.

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

5. Mr YAMAGUCHI (Japan) said that his country highly appreciated the Agency's work to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and ensure non-proliferation, and commended the tireless efforts of the Director General and the Secretariat in fulfilling their mandate.

6. The 4th Strategic Energy Plan, adopted by his Government in April to provide direction on Japan's mid- to long-term energy policy, had identified nuclear power as an important baseload power source. The Government of Japan would carefully consider the volume of electricity to be generated using nuclear power, taking into consideration energy supply stability, cost reduction, maintenance, global warming and human resources.

7. Japanese nuclear power plants, all of which were currently shut down, would be restarted once their compliance with new regulations had been confirmed by the Nuclear Regulation Authority. The safety conformity review for the Sendai nuclear power station had been completed that month and the Government was taking the next steps necessary for its restart, including obtaining the cooperation and understanding of the municipalities hosting the facility site.

8. Japan, which upheld the principle of not possessing reserves of plutonium without specified purposes, continued to manage and utilize plutonium appropriately, taking into account the balance of supply and demand.

9. The Japan Atomic Energy Commission had been playing an important role with regard to the nuclear activities in Japan. Its recent reform would enable it to focus more on fostering the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in Japan and on facilitating government coordination in that regard.

10. Japan would continue to enhance the safety of nuclear technology by taking into account the lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident, and strengthen support for human resources and institutional development for countries that intended to embark on nuclear programmes.

11. Managing the aftermath of the Fukushima Daiichi accident remained an important task. His Government had been taking measures in accordance with its basic policy for the fundamental resolution of the issue, adopted in September 2013. After reflecting on some 780 proposals received from within and outside Japan, the Government had formulated multilayered preventative plans to manage the contaminated water issue, and measures such as groundwater bypassing had been implemented as soon as they had become feasible. Concrete steps had been taken and his Government was determined to continue working in an integrated manner to resolve the contaminated water issue. It hoped to be able to report on further progress the following year.

12. Progress was also being made in decommissioning the reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power station, with over 80% of the fuel assemblies from the spent fuel pool of Unit 4 already having been removed. The work was expected to be completed by the end of 2014.

13. As a result of the progress made in the remediation work, evacuation orders had been lifted in some affected areas in April for the first time since the accident. Japan recognized the importance of enhancing communication with the public, and had been taking various initiatives to ensure that those returning had a sufficient understanding of the risks associated with radiation.

14. Japan, which recognized the importance of disseminating information to the international community, was striving to provide as much information as possible and maintain transparency. Marine monitoring results were being published on a daily basis and the results of monitoring of foods, including fishery products, were made available once a week. In addition to updates on the decommissioning process and on countermeasures concerning the contaminated water, comprehensive information was reported to the Agency on a regular basis and made public through its website.

15. Noting that food safety was assured by strengthened administrative systems, he said that import restrictions on food, notably fishery products, had been eased in some countries and regions, including Australia and the EU. A report covering all developments concerning the safety of fishery products after the accident had been made available to the international community in May.

16. The work to deal with the aftermath of the accident was unprecedented in difficulty and enormous efforts were required in mobilizing technologies, expertise and experience from both within Japan and abroad. The decommissioning and remediation missions Japan had received from the Agency the previous year had provided useful advice, and his country was grateful to the international community for its assistance and support. It was planning to receive another Agency decommissioning mission and would continue to work with the Agency and the international community.

17. In April 2015, it was planned to establish an international collaborative research centre on decommissioning and related facilities, such as a mock-up test facility and a radioactive analysis facility at the Japan Atomic Energy Agency, with a view to promoting R&D activities on advanced decommissioning technologies and developing human resources. The centre would provide a platform for the sharing and dissemination of information.

18. His country attached great importance to the implementation of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. It was sharing its expertise by sending experts to international experts' meetings and had decided to receive an IRRS mission towards the end of 2015. In order to improve the effectiveness of the international legal framework — one of the 12 main actions in the Action Plan — his Government had expressed its intention to conclude the Convention on Supplementary Compensation

for Nuclear Damage and would continue to cooperate actively with the Agency in the preparation of the IAEA Report on the Fukushima Daiichi Accident.

19. Turning to nuclear security, he said that Japan had deposited its instrument of acceptance of the Amendment to the CPPNM on 27 June and would be receiving an IPPAS mission in February 2015. The Integrated Support Center for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Nuclear Security had provided seminars on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and training courses for nuclear security to approximately 350 experts the previous year, bringing the total number of such trainees to 1200. It had also concluded a practical arrangement with the Agency in September 2013 and continued to be engaged in R&D activities in such fields as nuclear forensics.

20. Japan continued to support efforts to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the safeguards system and noted with satisfaction that two comprehensive safeguards agreements and four additional protocols had entered into force in 2013.

21. Japan strongly condemned the DPRK's continued development of nuclear and missile programmes, which posed a serious threat to peace and security not only for East Asia, but also worldwide. The DPRK's provocations, including nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches, were totally unacceptable. Japan urged the DPRK to refrain from any further provocative action, to take concrete steps towards complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization and immediately cease all related activities, to comply fully with the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks and relevant Security Council resolutions, and to return to compliance with the NPT and Agency safeguards. Japan fully supported the Agency's continued involvement in the issue.

22. Japan welcomed the efforts by the E3+3 to reach a final and comprehensive settlement of the Iranian nuclear dossier. His country, which fully supported the Agency's verification and monitoring activities and its efforts to resolve all outstanding issues, including possible military dimensions, had made an extrabudgetary contribution of €420 000 in support of the Agency's work in that regard.

23. Japan, which believed that the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology should be enjoyed by all Member States, particularly developing countries, continued to support the Agency's activities aimed at promoting non-power applications of nuclear energy.

24. His country had made a contribution of €500 000 in support of the renovation of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories and was considering a further contribution. It called on all Member States to cooperate in supporting the ReNuAL project.

25. In addition to paying its financial contributions to the TCF, Japan was a strong supporter of the PUI and had just made a contribution of over US \$2 million to the Initiative, its fourth consecutive contribution since 2011. Japan had also been making extrabudgetary contributions towards Agency work to promote public understanding of nuclear energy for the past 25 years, and would continue to host the IAEA Nuclear Energy Management School.

26. Mr BIGOT (France) said that his country, which considered the proliferation of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery to be a major threat to international peace and security, had engaged in the negotiations to reach a long-term agreement on the Iranian nuclear issue with hope and determination following the conclusion of the interim agreement in Geneva on 24 November 2013. It was therefore concerned to note from the Director General's report dated 5 September 2014 (GOV/2014/43) that Iran had failed to provide sufficient cooperation, notably in resolving issues concerning possible military dimensions. Iran must step up its cooperation with the Agency under the Framework for Cooperation and take concrete, verifiable and verified steps on the ground since the resolution of all outstanding issues was essential to the credibility of any long-term agreement.

27. Following a space launch in December 2012 and a third nuclear test in February 2013, the DPRK had conducted several ballistic missile launches, notably two intermediate range missiles, since spring 2014. In accelerating the development of its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes and threatening to conduct a further nuclear test, the DPRK had again flagrantly violated its international obligations, in particular those arising from Security Council resolutions calling on it to cease all nuclear and ballistic activities in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. It was essential that the DPRK comply strictly with its obligations under the NPT and its safeguards agreement. It should permit the return of Agency inspectors without delay and give them access to all its nuclear facilities, halt all proliferation-related activities and put an end to its uranium enrichment activities.

28. The Agency's latest report on Syria noted the failure of the Syrian authorities to cooperate with the Agency since the June 2011 resolution of the Board of Governors. That was deeply regrettable. France urged Syria to comply with its obligations and to provide the additional information on its nuclear programme requested by the Agency. It was to be hoped that that commitment would ultimately lead to full cooperation with the Agency in order to shed light on Syria's past and present nuclear activities.

29. His country supported the Agency's efforts to ensure that its safeguards system remained effective and credible. It welcomed the Supplementary Document to the Report on the Conceptualization and Development of Safeguards Implementation at the State Level² presented to the Board of Governors the previous week and supported the further development of safeguards application based on a State-level approach, which would help to make the conclusions drawn by the Secretariat more robust and focus verification activities on areas of greater importance for safeguards in a State, which would lead to better use of Agency resources.

30. It would take several years to learn all the lessons from the Fukushima Daiichi accident and all stakeholders must continue their efforts in that regard. Member states should follow up on the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety in order to maintain the momentum beyond 2015.

31. The international community should strive to achieve the highest levels of safety at nuclear facilities and to develop a true international safety culture at the decision-making and operational levels. To that end, efforts must be made to strengthen and universalize existing legal instruments. France welcomed the steps taken by the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety at the Sixth Review Meeting, in particular the decision to organize a diplomatic conference at the beginning of 2015 to consider a Swiss proposal to amend Article 18 of the Convention.

32. He stressed the importance of a global nuclear civil liability regime. In August 2013, the United States and France had signed a joint statement affirming their commitment to work towards the development of a global nuclear liability regime that was based on treaty relations between States and allowed for adequate compensation for victims of nuclear accidents.

33. France encouraged all concerned States to join a civil liability regime, either the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage, or the revised Paris Convention (associated with the Brussels Supplementary Convention), which was linked to the revised Vienna Convention by the Joint Protocol. Although the second option was preferable to his country, an increase in the number of ratifications of either system would promote the development of relations between States in the area of civil nuclear liability and lead to the development of links between the two liability regimes.

² GOV/2014/41.

34. It was essential that the Agency, as the depository of the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear damage, the Vienna Convention and the Joint Protocol, did not promote one regime without promoting the other.

35. Nuclear security was essential to facilitate the development of nuclear energy while minimizing the risks of nuclear and radiological terrorism, and the Nuclear Security Summit held in The Hague in March had rightly shown the importance senior politicians attached to nuclear security. France was pleased that participants had emphasized the Agency's growing role in the field of nuclear security. It welcomed the Agency's efforts to provide, with the assistance of international experts, assessments or advice in the area of nuclear security at the request of States. After hosting an IPPAS mission in November 2011, France had organized, jointly with the Agency, the first international seminar on lessons learned from that type of mission in Paris in December 2013. That successful event had raised awareness of IPPAS missions among Member States and identified areas for improvement.

36. At the Nuclear Security Summit, the French President had emphasized France's strong desire to further improve the safety of high-activity sealed radioactive sources. His country, together with Germany, the Netherlands and the United States, was committed to working closely with the Agency to develop a roadmap setting out areas of action and cooperation over the next two years with a view to: strengthening the international framework and the Agency's guidelines applicable to such sources; supporting the development and growing use of alternative technologies that did not use high-activity sealed sources; and encouraging the ad hoc group of States that were major suppliers of radioactive sources to harmonize their actions in order to enhance the safety and security of radioactive sources presenting the greatest risks. The States concerned would report on the progress achieved at the next Nuclear Security Summit and at the International Conference on Nuclear Security in 2016.

37. France called on all States to ratify the Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the Joint Convention, and to implement the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and its supplementary Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources.

38. In the light of the recommendations of the International Conference on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources held in October 2013 in Abu Dhabi, France called upon the Agency to establish an ad hoc working group to consider the possibility and content of an international convention on the safety and security of radioactive sources, and to make recommendations in that regard.

39. France, which considered that efforts should be made to minimize the use of high-activity sealed sources, called on Member States that exported radioactive sources or had done so to strengthen cooperation among themselves and with importing States, in coordination with the Agency, in order to further improve the management of sources removed from service. Such cooperation should also facilitate the development of guidance concerning the return of spent sources to the supplier or their repatriation to the country of origin, the compilation of national lists of exported sources and the exchange of information.

40. The development of nuclear power remained an important option for many countries. The role of the Agency, which encouraged cooperation between States with experience in the area of nuclear energy and those wishing to develop its peaceful use, was internationally recognized. France would continue to support the Agency's activities aimed at the promotion of nuclear power.

41. France was convinced that the peaceful applications of the atom had a decisive role to play in meeting essential human needs and attaining the Millennium Development Goals. It welcomed the Agency's leading role in that area and would continue to support the Agency's development-oriented activities.

42. The international community was facing an unprecedented situation as a number of newcomer countries sought to access nuclear power at the same time. Those countries had very limited experience and, in order to monitor their nuclear power programmes, would have to acquire the necessary skills rapidly and enlist the help of multilateral cooperation mechanisms and those of experienced countries. That rendered the need for more extensive international cooperation all the more urgent than in the past.

43. Capacity building programmes in the nuclear field were of major importance for the responsible development of nuclear energy. Interested countries and the Agency should reflect further on the issue to identify what could be done to ensure that needs were met.

44. France had confidence in nuclear technologies and its nuclear industry would remain at the heart of its energy mix. It would be organizing the first World Nuclear Exhibition in Paris in October. More than 6000 participants were expected to attend that event.

45. France, which was working on the CIGEO deep disposal centre, considered the development of solutions for the final disposal of radioactive waste to be essential. He was pleased that the 2014 Scientific Forum would address meeting the challenges of radioactive waste.

46. In concluding, he reaffirmed his country's support of the Agency's activities, including in promoting a safety culture, ensuring the responsible development of nuclear energy and in combating proliferation and nuclear terrorism, all of which were of particular importance in the current international context.

47. Ms GISM ALLA (Sudan) expressed appreciation of the Agency's vital role in developing international cooperation, coordinating action to strengthen the global nuclear safety regime and establishing agreed international standards applicable to peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Her delegation commended the Agency's initiatives and activities aimed at developing a nuclear safety culture, such as the organization of diverse events, and the publication of papers and reports generating awareness among States of the importance of existing standards and of their proper application in practice.

48. She reaffirmed the Agency's important role in using atoms for peace through the technical cooperation programme, notably by promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear technology in the areas of health, nutrition, agriculture, water, environmental protection, electricity generation and human resources development, and creating further opportunities for sustainable development in line with the Millennium Development Goals.

49. The Sudan stressed the need for continued action to strengthen emergency preparedness and response, prevent nuclear accidents, and promote cooperation among regional and international bodies with a view to encouraging countries to develop their nuclear infrastructure and take advantage of experience and lessons learned in that regard.

50. The Sudan appreciated the Agency's capacity building activities and looked forward to cooperating with the Agency in areas that were acquiring increased importance in African countries, such as agricultural development through the enhancement of crop productivity, action to combat seasonal pests and the development of animal husbandry techniques.

51. Turning to current developments concerning the SIT, she said that an ambitious project to combat malaria-transmitting mosquitoes was progressing satisfactorily in the Sudan thanks to close coordination between the Agency, her Government and the Islamic Development Bank. Work had begun in June on an experimental basis through the release of sterile male insects. In addition, engineering and technical design work on a mosquito production plant had been completed and construction could now begin on the first such plant capable of producing some 10 million sterile male

mosquitoes each week. The Sudan also commended the Agency's work in support of radiotherapy techniques, in particular for the treatment of cancer.

52. The Sudan had submitted its technical cooperation plan for the period 2016–2017, most aspects of which were consistent with the priorities of the country's CPF. The plan also included a number of projects designed on the basis of former AFRA projects in order to take advantage of previous efforts aimed at achieving sustainable development. It covered human health and radiotherapy; building the capacity of the responsible authority to act as an independent and effective oversight authority; use of nuclear technology to generate electricity; use of the SIT and radiation to combat mosquitoes; enhancement of agricultural crop productivity; and strengthening and sustaining the capacity to manufacture scientific and medical equipment in line with the principle of sustainable development.

53. In June 2014, the Sudan had hosted an Agency nuclear security team, which had joined a Sudanese technical team in preparing a draft INSSP for the country. The nuclear security team had also met with senior government officials and had visited the radioactive waste disposal site in Suba. In January 2014, the Agency had also provided for the air transfer of two radioactive sources from the radioisotope depository in Suba to the country of origin in an operation that had complied with all standards applicable to the secure transport of radioactive sources.

54. The Sudan had agreed to host the regional workshop on the development of guidance documents on environmental impact assessment during the period from 30 November to 4 December 2014.

55. Israeli nuclear capabilities were viewed as a threat to peace in the Middle East region and the world as a whole. While all States in the Middle East had ratified the NPT and displayed their preparedness to take practical steps to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, Israel persisted in defying the international community by stubbornly refusing to accede to the NPT and place its nuclear installations under comprehensive Agency safeguards, and by rejecting all international initiatives in that regard. Her delegation therefore called on Israel to ratify the NPT without further delay and place all its nuclear installations under the supervision of the Agency, which was the sole technical authority mandated to undertake such surveillance under nuclear verification programmes.

56. Mr CHOI Yanghee (Republic of Korea) said that many countries continued to value nuclear power as a stable source of energy for the future. His country had harnessed nuclear energy as an engine for national development for the previous 40 years and would continue to utilize nuclear energy to address pressing issues such as rising energy demand and climate change.

57. Turning to efforts to promote the use of nuclear energy, he said that the Republic of Korea recognized the importance of R&D and, having obtained the world's first standard design approval for a system-integrated modular advanced (SMART) reactor in 2012, was pursuing innovative technology development to improve the reactor's safety and economics. An advanced nuclear energy system that combined pyroprocessing with Generation-IV sodium-cooled fast reactors was being developed for the efficient management of spent fuel, and the Republic of Korea was proceeding with the development of relevant technologies in the area of decommissioning, including the establishment of a nuclear decommissioning demonstration centre.

58. Under a new research reactor project, which was expected to be completed by 2018, key technologies were being developed to ensure a stable supply of medical isotopes and the export competitiveness of research reactors.

59. His Government had drawn up a nuclear energy-based creative economy action plan 2013–2017 to expand research infrastructures concerning fusion technologies, disease diagnosis and treatment, the

application of radiation and radioisotopes. It had also embarked on the development of a radiation medicine database and planned to collaborate with the Agency's nuclear medicine database.

60. His country would be conducting radiation research activities and providing education and training programmes through the recently completed Radiation Breeding Research Centre.

61. The Republic of Korea supported the expansion of PACT and sought to fulfil its responsibilities as a donor country by providing financial contributions and expanding technical support for developing countries.

62. His country congratulated the Joint Division on its 50th anniversary and commended the excellent work of both the FAO and the Agency on global food security and agricultural development.

63. The Republic of Korea greatly appreciated and fully supported the Agency's actions to enhance nuclear safety following the Fukushima Daiichi accident, including the organization of international conferences and the publication of a comprehensive report. In response to the accident, his country was making short- and long-term improvements to its emergency response capabilities and would be hosting a follow-up IRRS mission in December.

64. The Republic of Korea was contributing to building a solid international nuclear safety regime by participating in the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention. It was also promoting cooperation in nuclear safety in North-East Asia; the previous month, the President had proposed the establishment of a consultative body for nuclear safety in North-East Asia, which would be modelled on Euratom.

65. The Republic of Korea had consistently supported the Agency's diverse initiatives with respect to nuclear security and safeguards. It had joined efforts to strengthen the international nuclear regime by depositing its instruments of ratification of the amendment to the CPPNM and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. At the Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague, the President had outlined a four-point proposal to bolster the international nuclear security regime, and related follow-up measures were being implemented. The Republic of Korea had received an IPPAS mission in February, which had concluded that the country's physical protection system was robust. In addition, the International Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Security Academy, which had opened in February, had provided quality education and training programmes on safeguards and nuclear security to Member States.

66. The DPRK's pursuit of nuclear weapons undermined the foundation of the non-proliferation regime and posed a serious threat to the peace and stability of the Korean Peninsula and beyond. Despite the efforts of the international community to achieve the verifiable denuclearization of the DPRK, that country had continued its provocative actions in violation of the 2005 Joint Statement and Security Council resolutions and had even threatened to conduct a fourth round of nuclear tests earlier in the year. Moreover, there were indications of activity at the 5 MW(e) reactor at Yongbyon and of heightened activities at the nuclear test site in Punggye-ri. The international community could not accept the DPRK as a nuclear-weapon State. His country therefore once again urged the DPRK to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner in accordance with relevant Security Council resolutions and to comply fully with its NPT safeguards obligations. The Agency should not tolerate the DPRK's continued nuclear development and he hoped that a strong message would be delivered in the draft resolution on the implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement between the Agency and the DPRK.

67. In closing, he reaffirmed his Government's commitment to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and commended the hard work and dedication of the Secretariat and Director General.

68. Mr DE VIDO (Argentina) said that, since 2006 when Argentina had redesigned its nuclear plan based on the three pillars of electric power generation, scientific research and development, and public health, its nuclear sector had seen an investment of US \$11 billion and 5220 new nuclear experts had been trained.

69. The year 2014 had marked a milestone in Argentina's history in terms of electricity generation. It had seen the completion of the Atucha II nuclear power plant, which had been renamed 'President Néstor Kirchner' in honour of the leader who had decided to revitalize the nuclear sector. The plant had reached criticality on 3 June 2014 and was expected to attain its full capacity of 745 MW in the coming weeks. A total investment of US \$3 billion had been required for the project, 88% of which had been provided locally. Work on a 30-year lifetime extension of the Embalse nuclear power plant had also continued. Finance for that project was being provided by the Development Bank of Latin America — the first time that a multilateral credit institution had granted a loan to finance a purely nuclear project. Internal components for the nuclear reactor would be produced by Argentine companies.

70. The CAREM low energy nuclear reactor prototype was currently under construction using all Argentine technology and design. The reactor was expected to reach a capacity of 150–300 MW and would be attractive for supplying energy to grids that did not require high-power machines.

71. The completion of the mock-up module at its uranium enrichment plant in June had helped to establish Argentina as one of the eleven countries recognized by the Agency to have uranium enrichment capacity. His country was developing other advanced enrichment methods, such as laser and centrifugal enrichment, and would be constructing a uranium dioxide production plant.

72. Argentina had recently entered into agreements with the People's Republic of China for the construction of its fourth nuclear power plant and was in negotiations with several bidders for the construction of its fifth plant.

73. In the field of nuclear medicine, he said that in addition to the training of human resources and acquisition of equipment, the nuclear medicine service was being expanded at the federal level and centres were available to the general public. The diagnostic nuclear medicine centre in Buenos Aires had been completed in 2007 in compliance with the highest international standards.

74. Argentina, which currently produced 5% of the molybdenum-99 consumed worldwide and was the third largest producer of cobalt-60, had exported technology for obtaining radionuclides to Algeria, Australia, Cuba, Egypt and Peru. It had also exported a research reactor to Australia in 2007 and was currently developing two multipurpose reactors with Brazil which, when completed, would enable both countries to supply 40% of the radionuclides on the world market.

75. With regard to safety, he said that all power plants had been adapted to comply with the new post-Fukushima international requirements

76. Turning to radioactive waste and spent fuel management, he said that Argentina continued to meet its reporting requirements under the Joint Convention. A strategic plan for the management of radioactive waste prepared periodically by the National Atomic Energy Commission was submitted to the Argentine Congress, as was an annual report on the work carried out on the management of radioactive waste. New storage facilities were being built at the Juan Domingo Perón power plant (formerly Atucha I) and at the Ezeiza Atomic Centre, and premises and systems for the treatment of solid, liquid and gaseous waste had been set up at the Néstor Kirchner power plant. Radioactive and chemical techniques had been developed to identify and quantify radionuclides with a view to expanding the information available on the radiological inventory of radioactive waste, and a new

laboratory for the characterization of radioactive waste at Ezeiza was expected to be completed by the end of the year.

77. Good progress was being made in the development by the National Atomic Energy Commission of a project for the restoration of areas where uranium extraction activities had been undertaken.

78. Argentina, whose investments in the nuclear sector were expected to reach US \$31 billion over the next 10 years, had demonstrated its commitment to nuclear development for exclusively peaceful purposes, both by complying with international safety and non-proliferation regimes and by strengthening its capacity in different fields of nuclear technology. It also contributed to the legal and political frameworks aimed at ensuring the peaceful and safe uses of nuclear power, including by leading the process for the preparation of the February 2015 diplomatic conference to consider a proposal to amend the Convention on Nuclear Safety — an event that it hoped to chair.

79. Mr OULD HADEMINE OULD JALVOUNE (Mauritania) said that his country attached importance to its CPF with the Agency for the period 2014–2018, which focused in the medium term on human and nuclear medicine and radiotherapy.

80. Impressive results had been achieved in the area of human medicine. Clinical services involving radiotherapy and nuclear medicine had been improved, and preparations were being made for the expansion of services involving radiation and the use of isotopic and similar techniques to address problems relating to human nutrition. Some of the specialists trained abroad were now working at the National Oncology Centre and others would be returning to the country shortly. Mauritania was cooperating with the Agency in establishing a quality management system for the National Oncology Centre; introducing new diagnostic techniques and treatments for non-communicable diseases; expanding radiotherapy services; and launching a national academic training programme for radiotherapy technicians.

81. Mauritania was undertaking activities that would contribute to the establishment of a national cancer control programme. It had constructed a second bunker and intended to allocate budgetary funds for the purchase and replacement of machinery in the Oncology Centre and to ensure that the equipment was in the best possible condition after 15 years in service. It trusted that an assessment of the National Oncology Centre would be carried out by a QUATRO mission.

82. In order to guarantee optimum care for cancer patients, the Ministry of Health was seeking to make appropriate arrangements to assist radiotherapy, nuclear medicine and medical physics specialists by recognizing their professions at the administrative level and by encouraging them to develop their specialized scientific capacities.

83. His country recognized the importance of nuclear security and safety and had adopted a Nuclear Energy Act on 20 January 2010, which, together with its associated regulatory provisions, provided for protection against nuclear radiation. It also enabled Mauritania to comply with all its international obligations; to develop a set of basic rules aimed at protecting health professionals and the general public from radiation sources, radioactive waste, and the illegal disposal of nuclear waste; and to establish a strict oversight regime. The Act had also provided for the establishment of a fully independent National Regulatory Authority responsible for radiation protection, nuclear safety and security, and the establishment of safeguards.

84. Mauritania had ratified all legal instruments relating to nuclear energy applications, in particular the Early Notification and Assistance Conventions and the Joint Convention.

85. In addition to implementing its CPF, his Government was taking vigorous steps to develop action plans and strategies concerning a national health work policy, a national health sector

development programme, and a framework to expedite the county's achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

86. Ms RASOAZANANERA (Madagascar) said that her country was pleased to be represented again at the General Conference after five years of absence.

87. Madagascar, which had now regained political stability and constitutional order, was pursuing sustainable socioeconomic development. It was endeavouring to ensure that higher education and scientific research acted as a driving force for development, and its national research strategy, which had been drawn up one year previously, had a particular focus on innovation.

88. Nuclear science and technology played a valuable role in sustainable development and in fighting poverty. Madagascar was particularly grateful to the Agency, which, notwithstanding the political instability her country had experienced, had remained one of the few partners that had continued to provide assistance through the implementation of CPFs. Success stories included the near eradication of fruit flies on the high plateaux of the island through use of the SIT; the inclusion in the Ministry of Water's database of vital information on the rate of renewal and groundwater vulnerability in the semi-arid south of Madagascar; greater understanding of the caesium-137 tracer technique for studying the erosion of ferralitic soils in the high plateaux; more routine use of phosphorus-32 and nitrogen-15 tracer techniques to optimize agricultural production; and the use of nuclear medicine and radiotherapy for cancer treatment.

89. Noting that regulations concerning radiation safety and protection and radioactive waste management in Madagascar had been promulgated in January 1997, she said that the National Institute for Nuclear Science and Technology had been equipped with a secondary standards calibration laboratory and a dosimetry laboratory with assistance from the Agency.

90. Under the EU Energy Initiative Partnership Dialogue Facility, Madagascar was currently developing a new energy policy and a revised strategy for energy development. Through its CPF, her Government was cooperating with the Agency in strengthening capacity for energy planning and establishing an energy observatory and hoped that such cooperation would continue. It was also benefiting from Agency workshops and training.

91. Her country was committed to the development of science through nuclear techniques, but still needed to develop its skills and capacity in a number of fields. Areas of potential cooperation with the Agency, including cancer treatment, radiation protection, water resources management and the environment, had been highlighted during a recent Agency visit to Madagascar.

92. In closing, she said that the Government of Madagascar intended to contribute further to the development and application of nuclear science and technology in collaboration with the Agency and also with AFRA, which it had joined almost 25 years earlier as a founding member.

93. Ms BONSA (Ethiopia) said that her country was engaged in a process of rapid development with a view to becoming a middle-income country by 2025. The core development objective of the Ethiopian Government, namely poverty eradication, would be achieved through broad-based, equitable and sustainable development. The five-year Growth and Transformation Plan was in its final year of implementation and the economic growth registered had already had a significant impact on poverty reduction. Noting that the peaceful application of radiation and nuclear technology in different sectors had contributed significantly in that connection, she said that Ethiopia was participating in five national projects in the current technical cooperation cycle.

94. In the area of agriculture, Ethiopia had received technical and material support from the Agency, in particular concerning tsetse and trypanosomiasis eradication. The suppression activities had yielded remarkable improvements, including in terms of livestock, milk and meat production, and

household income, and the successes achieved should be supported through further eradication efforts using the SIT. She expressed her country's appreciation to the African Development Bank and the Agency for their technical and material assistance and capacity building support for Ethiopia's industrial irradiator, which had been inaugurated that year, and thanked the Agency for the high priority it attached to agricultural development.

95. Turning to health, she said that Ethiopia was witnessing an increasing number of cancer patients and the current treatment facilities needed to be expanded. The Government was allocating funding to extend the treatment service to five university hospitals. The technical cooperation programme, under which it was planned to construct more modern facilities, expand the infrastructure and build human capacity, was an important component in the effective deployment of radiotherapy and nuclear medicine. Ethiopia was grateful to the Agency for its assistance in that regard, particularly in ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of services for the early detection and management of cancer.

96. Ethiopia was continuing its efforts to build a non-destructive testing facility. Although it had received technical assistance for human capacity building in that regard, further cooperation with the Agency was required to train professionals locally through expert missions.

97. Although the development of an isotope hydrology laboratory through technical cooperation had made a meaningful contribution to Ethiopia's water resource management efforts, knowledge of groundwater occurrence, movement and quality was limited. Ethiopia looked forward to enhancing its hydrogeological expertise to promote large-scale irrigation development in different areas of the country. Further isotope hydrology studies would facilitate the implementation of her Government's five-year strategic plan concerning the hydrogeological mapping of the south-western and south-eastern parts of the country for the selection of areas for groundwater development.

98. All the activities that she had mentioned were being carried out in full compliance with the Agency's requirements and standards.

99. Ethiopia attached great importance to the Agency's mandate and functions in ensuring non-proliferation and the peaceful and safe application of nuclear technology for economic and social development. It was party to a number of relevant agreements and conventions and continued to pay its assessed contributions in full and on time. Her country was particularly grateful for the technical assistance it had received from the Agency and hoped that its technical cooperation activities would be further strengthened. She was pleased to report that Ethiopia, which recognized the importance of ensuring that resources for the TCF were sufficient, assured and predictable, would pledge and pay its full share of the target for 2015.

100. She noted with satisfaction that the 2014 Scientific Forum would address the issue of radioactive waste. Ethiopia's central radioactive waste processing and storage facility, which included an interim storage facility for conventional radiation sources and other radioactive nuclear materials, had been inaugurated that month. The facility, which would help to build public confidence in the safe and effective management and disposal of radioactive waste, had been funded fully by the Government, demonstrating the importance her country attached to the safe and sustainable utilization of radiation technology for social and economic development.

101. Ms RADEBE (Lesotho) commended the Agency's efforts to implement its responsibilities under the NPT, in particular with respect to Article III concerning the application of safeguards, and Article IV providing for the inalienable right of all parties to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The Agency's safeguards regime served as the cornerstone for verifying the non-diversion of nuclear energy from peaceful uses, and Lesotho therefore called on all parties to cooperate with the Agency in facilitating the application of safeguards on peaceful nuclear activities. It looked forward to the holding of the Symposium on International Safeguards in October.

102. Her country attached particular importance to its cooperation with the Agency in addressing development challenges in the areas of human health, agriculture and food security, water resources management, sustainable energy development, and radiation and waste safety. It appreciated the Agency's assistance in implementing projects in those thematic areas.

103. Lesotho recognized the steps being taken by the Agency, upon request, to support the efforts of States in establishing and strengthening national nuclear security regimes. It encouraged those Member States that had not yet acceded to the amendment to the CPPNM to do so without further delay.

104. Her Government acknowledged the technical, scientific, financial and administrative support that the Agency had provided in support of AFRA programmes over the previous 25 years. Despite such assistance, which had benefited end users immensely, AFRA continued to face challenges including a shortage of qualified human resources in the field of nuclear science and technology. Lesotho therefore encouraged Member States from other regions to cooperate with AFRA.

105. Her country, which was a relatively new member of the Agency and AFRA, was pleased that it had been given the opportunity to host AFRA's 25th Technical Working Group Meeting and the Meeting of National Liaison Officers in May, and was grateful for the support it had received in that regard. It was committed to discharging its chairmanship duties and would provide proactive leadership and efficient coordination to ensure the implementation of the AFRA programme and the Regional Strategic Cooperative Framework 2014–2018.

106. Mr OSMAN (Bangladesh) said that Bangladesh's enviable relationship with the Agency stemmed from its inherent confidence in the Agency's pivotal role in coordinating international efforts to strengthen global nuclear safety and in using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

107. Bangladesh's Constitution acknowledged the State's responsibility to ensure food, health and energy security for its people. His Government was working towards the implementation of Vision 2021, with the aim of transforming Bangladesh into a knowledge-based, technology driven, digitized middle-income country. It recognized the extended use of atomic energy in various sectors, and believed that Agency support would further the country's socioeconomic development.

108. Although Bangladesh had strong credentials for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, it had decided only recently to embark upon nuclear power generation. As a late entrant, it would be able to use the latest technology to ensure safety and security, and learn from the experience of others. Through the Rooppur nuclear power plant project, which was being implemented with cooperation from the Russian Federation, nuclear power was expected to be added to the national grid by the beginning of the following decade, enriching the energy mix and unlocking development potential through enhanced productivity and sustained growth.

109. Bangladesh had already been working with the Agency and the Russian Federation, among others, to address current shortcomings in terms of trained human resources and the application of new generation technology, and the Government would continue to ensure that investment in capacity building remained a strategic policy priority.

110. In implementing its first nuclear power plant project, Bangladesh attached the utmost priority to radiological protection, safety and security. His country was committed to strengthening the independence and effectiveness of national regulatory authorities in order to regulate and oversee the safety and physical protection of nuclear material and installations, safeguards, import and export control, the State system of accounting for and control of nuclear material, transport and waste safety, and emergency preparedness and response. Civil liability for nuclear damage in connection with the nuclear power programme would be regulated by Bangladesh's domestic law. Agency codes,

guidelines and standards, and other internationally accepted practices, would be strictly followed in all phases of design, construction, operation and maintenance.

111. As a State party to the NPT, Bangladesh looked forward to participating in the 2015 NPT Review Conference and to sharing the progress it had made in various aspects of nuclear non-proliferation. Bangladesh reaffirmed the need for the speedy establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East in accordance with the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

112. Through its technical cooperation programme, the Agency had been assisting Bangladesh in human resources development and capacity building for the introduction, development and peaceful use of nuclear techniques in various economic sectors. His country hoped that such support from the Agency would continue in future.

113. Bangladesh was confident that the RCA would continue to be a powerful tool for the promotion of regional capabilities and expertise in different areas such as energy, health, agriculture, industry, the environment, research reactors, radioactive waste management, nuclear safety, and radiation protection.

114. Mr YAMANI (Saudi Arabia) said that diverse peaceful applications of nuclear energy were of great benefit to humanity and contributed to economic growth and progress. The current session of the General Conference would provide a further opportunity for promoting such applications, bearing in mind the importance of best practices and safety measures, a commitment to the principle of transparency, and application of the safeguards regime to all nuclear materials and facilities. It commended the Agency's vital role in that regard.

115. Saudi Arabia had taken vigorous steps to meet the requirements of its national nuclear energy programme, including the establishment of a legal and regulatory framework; development of human, financial and economic resources; promotion of regional and international cooperation as well as of full transparency. It was providing for the sustainability of the programme by developing an R&D infrastructure and a national nuclear industry and services.

116. The King Abdullah City for Atomic and Renewable Energy was committed to the highest international nuclear safety standards through the effective organization of nuclear energy activities and practices, and had entered into a strategic partnership agreement with the Finland's Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority. Under that agreement, which covered a period of several years, the Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority would provide technical support and the expertise required to organize Saudi Arabia's nuclear energy sector. It would also assist in training and selecting the requisite human resources and in developing the training programmes required to establish a national nuclear regulatory authority, applying the highest international safety and transparency standards. Such action was crucial for facilitating the implementation of a peaceful and ambitious nuclear energy programme that provided Saudi Arabia with highly sustainable, alternative sources of energy.

117. The King Abdullah City for Atomic and Renewable Energy had finished drafting the Saudi Nuclear Act and the Act concerning Civil Responsibility for Nuclear Damage. The two draft laws were currently being reviewed and revised by national and international partners prior to their submission for adoption by the national legislative authorities.

118. Practical training and qualification programmes for human resources were currently being developed at the local level, through support and monitoring of specialized national academic programmes, and at the international level through cooperation programmes with a number of countries and international agencies.

119. Saudi Arabia was also seeking to develop the capacity of the national industrial sector so that it could manufacture a large proportion of the components required for local nuclear power plants.

120. As Saudi Arabia attached great importance to communication with the general public and national partners, it had organized numerous workshops and seminars with different stakeholders that had played a role in designing the strategy for the national nuclear energy programme. Furthermore, the King Abdullah City for Atomic and Renewable Energy had set up a website, which was regularly updated, with a view to maintaining close contact with different sectors of society.

121. In line with its longstanding policy of supporting the Agency, his country had paid its contribution to the 2014 Regular Budget in full as well as its voluntary contribution to the TCF.

122. Saudi Arabia had consistently supported the Agency's vital action in the area of nuclear security, both by participating in related Agency activities and by attending relevant international events such as the Nuclear Security Summit. It was important to reaffirm that basic responsibility for nuclear security lay with individual countries and that nuclear security efforts should in no way impede support for peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

123. Turning to safeguards and verification, he said that Saudi Arabia, which consistently fulfilled its obligations under the NPT and was planning and implementing numerous projects as part of an ambitious plan under its national nuclear energy programme, had informed the Agency of its intention to convert its safeguards agreement from a small quantities protocol into a comprehensive safeguards agreement, allowing the Agency to monitor its activities more closely and in a fully transparent manner in the future.

124. Cooperation between Saudi Arabia and the Agency was continuously increasing. During the previous year, his country had participated in many international, regional and national activities and events organized by the Agency, including international conferences and regional workshops. It had also hosted a number of workshops in the context of national technical cooperation projects in such areas as nuclear safety and security, radioactive waste management, and identification and analysis of sites for nuclear power reactors.

125. Saudi Arabia subscribed to the principles of nuclear disarmament. The NPT remained the sole international instrument that legally bound all States to eliminate nuclear weapons and take measures to prevent their proliferation. It was therefore vital to ensure that all States parties complied strictly with their obligations under the Treaty. Saudi Arabia again expressed deep regret at the failure to convene the conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

126. Monsignor CAMILLERI (Holy See) conveyed the best wishes of His Holiness Pope Francis to all participants in the General Conference's current session.

127. The Holy See commended and supported all the Agency's activities that contributed to authentic human development and fostered peace and prosperity throughout the world. It praised the Agency's contribution to improving living conditions for large numbers of people, particularly in developing countries, through technical cooperation projects in such fields as food and agriculture, water resources management and prevention of environmental pollution. Undoubtedly, the Agency's greatest contribution to the development of the human person had been in the area of health care, where the application of radiation techniques, including through PACT, had revolutionized the diagnosis and treatment of many diseases.

128. Greater use of modern means of communication and deeper cooperation with civic and political authorities would lead to improved public awareness and recognition of the Agency's significant achievements.

129. The activities mentioned were compatible with the call for fraternity that Pope Francis had made in his message for the 2014 World Day of Peace when he had highlighted the need to secure for people, who were equal in dignity and in fundamental rights, access to capital, services, educational resources, health care and technology so that every individual had the opportunity to develop fully as a person.

130. Preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons was paramount in order to achieve a lasting peace. To that end, special emphasis must be given to worldwide nuclear disarmament, particularly by States that possessed nuclear weapons or were seeking to develop or acquire them. As Pope Francis had stated earlier in the year “as long as so great a quantity of arms are in circulation as at present, new pretexts can always be found for initiating hostilities”. The Holy See once again called for strenuous, concerted efforts founded on due respect for the fundamental rights of all persons and on mutual trust, with a view to achieving nuclear disarmament. That task was all the more pressing given that the threat of the use of nuclear weapons was increasing because of proliferation, vulnerability of command and control networks to cyber attacks, and the possible use of such weapons by non-State actors, in particular terrorist groups.

131. The Holy See called on governments and politicians to do everything within their power to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

132. The 100th anniversary of the beginning of the First World War and the 75th anniversary of the Second World War, which were being celebrated during the current year, served as a reminder of the death and destruction that conflict could cause. Modern nuclear weapons were significantly more powerful than those used in 1945, and the Holy See therefore supported the view that their existence was absurd, considering arguments in support of their use an affront to the dignity of all human life. Its conviction was based on the appalling consequences that could come from a nuclear explosion and a sobering assessment of the immense resources required to maintain nuclear arsenals. The Holy See therefore continued to support all efforts to ensure peace, including initiatives relating to the impact of nuclear weapons in the humanitarian sector. It commended Austria’s decision to host the Third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons later in the year.

133. The entry into force of the CTBT and achievement of a comprehensive outcome at the 2015 NPT Review Conference would constitute vital steps towards nuclear disarmament, and the Holy See hoped that the international community would work together to find the wisdom, courage and conviction to review the disarmament process.

134. Through its principal functions and tasks, including its efforts to strengthen nuclear security, and its monitoring and verification activities, the Agency contributed to building a deeper trust among States regarding their nuclear programmes.

135. In the area of nuclear safety, continued efforts must be made to prevent accidents at facilities and minimize any consequences in the event of an accident. The Holy See encouraged and supported innovative approaches for the management and safe disposal of radioactive waste, particularly long-lived and high-level waste. Pioneering projects made an important contribution to enhancing the safety and security of populations and protecting the environment.

136. In closing, he said that the Holy See attached great importance to the Agency’s successful cooperation with other UN organizations such as the WHO and the FAO. The Joint Division, which would be celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2014, had contributed much to the development of the poorest regions of the world through the effective application of nuclear technology and biotechnology to agricultural sectors. The Holy See was confident that such cooperation would be developed and intensified further.

137. Mr STUART (Australia) said that his country continued to value highly the Agency's technical cooperation programme, which played an important role in fostering economic and social development, and had pledged to pay its full TCF target share for 2015 in full and on time.

138. Australia had recently ratified the amendment to Article XIV.A of the Statute to enable the Agency to formally introduce biennial budgeting.

139. An effective safeguards system provided the necessary assurances about the peaceful nature of nuclear activities. That was the basic foundation for nuclear trade, cooperation, security and continuing progress on nuclear disarmament. To be most effective, a safeguards system must have universal coverage. Australia continued to call on all NPT States that had yet to fulfil their obligations under the Treaty to conclude comprehensive safeguards agreements without delay. Credible verification was also required in order to provide confidence that the Agency could detect both the misuse of declared facilities and the existence of undeclared facilities or activities. Australia commended those States that had brought an additional protocol into force since the last session of the General Conference and strongly encouraged the States that had yet to sign, ratify and implement an additional protocol to do so as soon as possible.

140. Australia welcomed the Secretariat's efforts over the previous 12 months to engage Member States in discussion of the State-level concept for safeguards implementation. While such transparency and responsiveness to Member States' questions was welcome, it was important for all Member States to respect and promote the Agency's independence in monitoring safeguards globally and to support adequate resourcing to meet the growing verification challenge.

141. Australia continued to work with the Agency to encourage all countries to develop and implement effective safeguards, including by using its role as chair of the Asia-Pacific Safeguards Network to promote best practice in safeguards implementation as well as the overall non-proliferation regime in the Asia-Pacific region. It commended the Ministry of Science and Technology of Myanmar for hosting the very successful annual meeting of the Asia-Pacific Safeguards Network in September 2014. The Australian safeguards support programme, which had been in place since 1980, continued to make valuable contributions in such areas as analytical services for environmental sampling and safeguards guides.

142. Regrettably, a few States remained in breach of their safeguards obligations. Australia had welcomed, and actively supported, the Agency's Framework for Cooperation with Iran and the Joint Plan of Action. It acknowledged the steps taken by all sides to implement the JPA and the ongoing negotiations aiming at a comprehensive, lasting solution. Australia was still hopeful of a positive outcome. It was concerned, however, that Iran had made little progress in clarifying possible military dimensions of its nuclear programme. As an NPT State, Iran had an obligation to prove to the rest of the world that it was developing its nuclear programme for purely peaceful purposes.

143. The DPRK continued to be in non-compliance with its safeguards obligations and to act in defiance of Security Council resolutions. Australia remained deeply concerned about the DPRK's continuing attempts to develop, produce, modernize and proliferate weapons of mass destruction, its threats to undertake a new form of nuclear test, its efforts to develop nuclear facilities, including by building a light water reactor at Yongbyon, and its reported expansion of a centrifuge enrichment facility. His country continued to urge the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. It opposed that country's claim to have a 'right' to conduct further nuclear tests and called on the DPRK to comply with its obligations under the NPT and Agency safeguards. The Agency should remain ready to play a central role in verifying the DPRK's nuclear programme.

144. Australia had long supported the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Full compliance by all States in the Middle East with their non-proliferation obligations was critical to building mutual confidence and security in the region. Australia encouraged all States to work constructively towards that goal.

145. The Nuclear Security Summit held in The Hague in March 2014 had reaffirmed, at the highest level, the ongoing commitment of countries to securing their nuclear facilities and material. In support of the Agency's Nuclear Security Programme, his country had contributed 1 million Australian dollars to the NSF in 2014. Australia was also continuously looking to improve its practices and had held its first IPPAS mission in November 2013, which had already led to improvements in the country's nuclear security arrangements.

146. Australia acknowledged the Agency's efforts in implementing the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. The encouraging progress made in a number of areas, including with respect to the conduct of stress tests and peer review processes, provided greater confidence in nuclear safety and emergency preparedness and response.

147. The Agency had also worked with UNSCEAR on the publication of a study on the health and environmental effects of the Fukushima Daiichi accident — the first authoritative account of the radiological consequences of the accident. Australia recognized that frank discussion was vital to maintain trust in the nuclear industry and applauded the Committee's initiative in engaging the public and media.

148. Australia was committed to the safe and environmentally sound mining, processing and transport of uranium. It sought to engage in discussion with other prospective uranium mining countries and would be hosting a side event during the General Conference concerning responsible uranium mining.

149. He was pleased to report that the first licence for the molybdenum-99 processing plant had been approved by the independent national regulator in June and that construction was under way. When operational in 2016, the plant would be able to supply a significant proportion of global demand. Production at the new plant would be fully LEU-based, thus continuing to advance global nuclear non-proliferation efforts by minimizing the civilian use of HEU. Waste would be treated in a co-located treatment plant based on Australia's innovative Synroc technology.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.