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President: Mr FORMICA (Italy)

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¹ GC(59)/25.

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Abbreviations used in this record:

AAEA	Arab Atomic Energy Agency
AFCONE	African Commission on Nuclear Energy
AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ANNuR	Arab Network of Nuclear Regulators
AU-PATTEC	African Union–Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign
CNS	Convention on Nuclear Safety
ConvEx	Convention Exercise
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
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GDP	gross domestic product
GICNT	Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism
IAG	Implementation and Assessment Group
INIR	Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
INSSP	Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
MW	megawatt
NPP	nuclear power plant

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NRA	nuclear regulatory authority
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
PUI	Peaceful Uses Initiative
ReNuAL	Renovation of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories
SDG	sustainable development goal
SIT	sterile insect technique
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
TC	technical cooperation
TCDC	technical cooperation among developing countries
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WHO	World Health Organization
WMDs	weapons of mass destruction

5. Arrangements for the Conference (GC(59)/INF/6 and 7)

(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 59th session consist of all items listed in documents GC(59)/1 and the supplementary items contained in documents GC(59)/1/Add.1 and Add.2. With regard to the allocation of items for initial discussion, it had recommended that all items be taken up for discussion as indicated in those documents. It had also recommended that the order of items set out in those documents be followed.

2. It was so decided.

(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, 18 September 2015, as the closing date of the 59th regular session, and Monday, 26 September 2016, as the opening date of the 60th regular session.

4. It was so decided.

7. General debate and Annual Report for 2014 (continued) (GC(59)/7 and Additional Information)

5. Mr PODA (Burkina Faso), after welcoming the new Member States of the Agency, said that the current session was being held in challenging international circumstances characterized by threats to international peace and security. The international community was preparing to adopt the post-2015 development agenda. His country, which attached importance to maintaining a balance among the three statutory pillars, was certain that the Agency could play a role in implementing the SDGs through nuclear science and technology.

6. Burkina Faso's CPF for 2012–2016 had focused on the promotion of the peaceful uses of the atom and on safety and security measures in agriculture, health, water resources and energy. His country welcomed the positive outcomes of such cooperation, which was one of its development priorities as stated in its Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Sustainable Development.

7. Burkina Faso welcomed the Agency's technical assistance in developing its national cancer control programme and in building and equipping its first cancerology centre. It had funded the training of two radiotherapists and two medical physicists, who supported the nuclear medicine service that had been operating continuously since 2012. Patients from neighbouring countries attended the service for myocardial, bone and renal scintigraphy. As a result of fruitful cooperation between the West African Health Organization, medical faculties in West African francophone countries and the Agency, the curriculum developed for a specialized diploma in nuclear medicine would help to address the problem of the recognition at the regional level of the diplomas of nuclear doctors trained with financial support from the Agency.

8. In agriculture, Burkina Faso planned to roll out SIT to combat crop pests, specifically the mango fly. It needed the Agency's technical and financial assistance more than ever in order to benefit further from the AU-PATTEC infrastructure and equipment. Significant progress had been achieved by using nuclear and isotope techniques to improve small ruminant productivity.

9. Burkina Faso welcomed the adoption of the project on the integrated and sustainable management of shared aquifer systems and basins in the Sahel region. Its implementation would enable countries in the Sahel to benefit from the contribution of isotope hydrology to development.

10. His country was considering nuclear power as an option for tackling energy and climate change issues. It welcomed the first meeting of the West African Integrated Nuclear Power Group, which had made a major recommendation on the construction of a Community NPP under the auspices of ECOWAS.

11. Burkina Faso was committed to strengthening its regulations to ensure that radiation protection and nuclear safety measures kept pace with the introduction of ionizing radiation technologies. The National Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Authority had received multifaceted Agency support and had thus strengthened its nuclear and radiological safety legislation on the basis of Agency safety standards, reinforced its technical staff's skills through courses and training workshops, and reviewed and implemented its integrated nuclear safety plan and the related joint plan of action on safety for major events.

12. Nuclear terrorism gave cause for concern in Africa, especially in the Sahel. The utmost must be done urgently to prevent terrorists from gaining access to and using radioactive sources. Burkina Faso appealed for support for the countries in the region in that regard and welcomed the significant progress towards the entry into force of the amendment to the CPPNM, recently ratified by Italy, the United States of America and Turkey. His country had ratified the CPPNM on 2 May 2014, which attested to its commitment to combating all forms of nuclear terrorism. Such physical protection should also apply to Category 1 and 2 radioactive sources, as recommended in the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

13. Burkina Faso thanked the Agency staff and the Director General for the technical assistance provided generally and for the technical and financial assistance provided to AFRA. It encouraged the Agency and the international community to support AFCONE, established after the Pelindaba Treaty had entered into force. Fruitful partnership between AFRA and AFCONE would be a major asset in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear technologies for the development of the African continent.

14. The legislative and presidential elections to be held in Burkina Faso on 11 October 2015 would put an end to the political transition resulting from the popular uprising of 30 and 31 October 2014. Despite that situation, his country was mindful of Member States' commitment to meeting their financial obligations to the Agency so that it could implement its mandate fully. His Government was committed to making its TCF contribution for 2016.

15. Mr AMARA (Morocco), reiterating his country's support for activities that enhanced the Agency's contribution to development, peace and security worldwide, said that Morocco continued to defend the right of NPT States Parties to develop national nuclear programmes for the peaceful use of nuclear energy without discrimination, pursuant to Articles II and IV of the Treaty. It was important for the Agency to assist Member States, particularly developing countries, in availing themselves of the right to acquire and apply nuclear technology and the related necessary expertise for their sustainable development. It was also important for such technology and applications to be predicated on a culture of safety, security and non-proliferation, with emphasis on protecting the environment against exposure to harmful radiation, for the benefit of future generations, in accordance with Agency standards. Morocco regarded safety and security as absolute priorities; they had been thrown into

sharp relief by the Fukushima Daiichi accident and the nuclear safety framework and safety standards had been strengthened as a result of the lessons learnt.

16. Accordingly, Morocco had undertaken to enhance its legal provisions and to establish a national legal framework for nuclear and radiation safety, security and safeguards, while ensuring consistency with international standards and its international commitments. The new legislation provided for the establishment of a safety and security regime for sources of ionizing radiation, a national physical protection system for nuclear facilities and material, a national safeguards system, an independent nuclear and radiation safety and security authority with jurisdiction over all related fields and the monitoring of all nuclear activities in Morocco. Morocco welcomed the Agency's assistance to Member States in enhancing such regulations.

17. Owing to the rise in cross-border criminal and terrorist acts, the international community must take measures to ensure that no individual or group acquired nuclear or radioactive material for criminal or terrorist purposes. Morocco therefore reiterated its call for further regional and international cooperation to bolster the global safety and security regime.

18. As one of the founding States of the GICNT, Morocco had participated actively in its implementation and had striven to ensure its success. Furthermore, Morocco had conducted an international nuclear emergency response exercise on the malicious use of radioactive material in 2011, in which many experts from Member States had participated, and had hosted the mid-year meeting of the GICNT Implementation and Assessment Group (IAG) in February 2012. In cooperation with the Agency, Morocco had conducted a ConvEx-3 exercise in Rabat in 2013, the first such exercise for the Arab States, Africa and Asia, at which national and international planning, coordination and assistance capacities had been assessed and procedures for coordination and assistance between those States and other international organizations had been tested.

19. Morocco welcomed close and fruitful Agency-assisted cooperation with Spain in combating nuclear terrorism through joint initiatives and concerted cooperative efforts under UN auspices or under voluntary international agreements to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. An Agency-assisted simulation of a malicious act during the transport of a radioactive source from Algeciras to Tangier-Med had been planned in order to test the Agency's and the Spanish and Moroccan authorities' radioactive material transport management and coordination mechanisms.

20. As co-chairs of GICNT's IAG Response and Mitigation Working Group, Morocco and Spain were drafting a plan of action that would be submitted for approval at the summit on nuclear safety, to be held in Washington in 2016. He thanked the United States of America for its constant and active support in building Morocco's safety, security, emergency preparedness and response capacities. He also thanked the Agency and Member States for helping Morocco to organize the exercises and thus display its commitment to enhancing the safety and security of its nuclear facilities and infrastructure, in accordance with Agency standards.

21. Morocco advocated disarmament and was resolutely determined to promote the establishment of a world free of nuclear weapons through multilateral commitments. The NPT and its three-pillar system, as a cornerstone of disarmament, represented an immense collective effort for the betterment of humanity. The importance of the Agency's task of verifying States' compliance with their non-proliferation commitments had been reiterated in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and during preparatory work for the 2015 NPT Review Conference. To boost international security, however, States must make strides towards disarmament and further the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The regrettable failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference to adopt a final document might stymie promising non-proliferation developments that had occurred in recent decades, such as reductions in nuclear arsenals and nuclear testing, because such progress did not suffice and

fell far short of the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. The international community yearned for disarmament, but progress to that end had ground to a standstill and promises had not been honoured. As Morocco had always supported the strengthening of the Agency's verification capacity and had always sought to fulfil its own verification obligations, it had signed and ratified all multilateral instruments on disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, most recently the additional protocol in 2011.

22. Given the importance of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) as a means of strengthening the NPT and preventing a nuclear arms race, Morocco regretted that it had still not entered into force. It was patently clear that the international community must ensure observance of a voluntary cessation of nuclear testing and work for its entry into force. Morocco had pursued that goal actively and had jointly chaired, with France, the sixth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, sparing no effort to convince States yet to sign or ratify the Treaty of its importance. Furthermore, it had urged the current coordinators to pursue those efforts to achieve the long-awaited entry into force of the CTBT.

23. As an advocate of peaceful dispute resolution, Morocco welcomed the agreement on Iran's nuclear programme as a significant multilateral achievement and a fillip for regional peace and security. The success of the unprecedented diplomatic cooperation on the Iran nuclear issue and the implementation of a zone free of nuclear weapons in Central Asia held out hope that such a zone could be established in the Middle East, as called for in the resolution on the Middle East, which had to date remained a dead letter. The call at the Sixth NPT Review Conference in 2010 for Israel to place its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards had been reiterated time and again, but had not elicited the desired response. The Agency had made laudable efforts to that end by hosting a forum on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East in 2011, which had brought all interested parties together and had seemed to be a promising step towards building confidence among the parties and intensifying efforts to hold a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons in 2012 — that conference had been postponed for reasons unknown.

24. Morocco recognized that the path to the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons was long and strewn with pitfalls and obstacles, but considered that mutual trust would be built along the way and would lead to success. Each and every State in the region must therefore accede to the NPT. In that connection, it supported the draft resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities which the Arab Group would submit in the hope that it would be adopted without a vote. It was important that the international community capitalize on the positive momentum of Palestine's recent accession to the NPT and work harder than ever to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons.

25. His country attached great importance to the Agency's TC programmes, contributed regularly to the TCF and honoured its pledged national contributions. Furthermore, it worked with its partners to ensure that the TC programme had the requisite resources to ensure that funds were used transparently and efficiently for development in Member States.

26. Morocco had been among the first Member States to seek technical assistance from the Agency in order to enhance its national nuclear legislation and establish operational facilities, including a radiation protection centre, an experimental radiation facility and the Maâmora Nuclear Research Centre at Morocco's National Centre for Nuclear Energy, Sciences and Technology. Agency assistance had been provided in many areas, such as nuclear legislation, human-resource capacity building, procurement and use of equipment, nuclear physics, water resource management, industrial development, energy planning, food security and health. Morocco's CPF, signed in 2012, had added impetus to such cooperation, as had recent visits to Morocco by the Director General and Deputy Director General for Technical Cooperation. Morocco had reaped the benefits of greater

cooperation with the Agency, including through its strategic partnerships with other UN organizations such as FAO and WHO.

27. Owing to the scientific and technical support provided by the Agency, Morocco had emerged as a regional cooperation player and had been designated as a regional centre under AFRA, for which it would hold the presidency in the 2015–2016 biennium. Morocco supported sub-Saharan countries by providing training opportunities at its own Agency-approved institutes for experts from many African countries, with particular emphasis on training for radiotherapy staff. In addition, Morocco participated in several Agency-sponsored interregional and regional projects in Africa on nuclear-technology applications and on such issues as radiation protection, nuclear and radiological emergency response and protection of the marine environment. Furthermore, as an AFRA State Party, Morocco held Agency-assisted capacity-building courses and workshops each year for African technicians and scientists and would be hosting a postgraduate educational course on radiation protection for French-speaking African countries. Morocco attached strategic importance to diplomatic relations with other African countries and thus remained at the Agency's disposal, should it wish to enter into a long-term agreement with Morocco for its continued provision of taught postgraduate courses on safety and monitoring of radioactive sources for interested African States.

28. Against the backdrop of rising interest in nuclear energy, the Agency's role in enabling energy-poor States to gain access to nuclear power as an alternative to scarce fossil fuel by providing technical assistance to meet their needs was becoming ever more crucial. Accordingly, Morocco was grateful to the Agency for its capacity-building assistance to the country in launching a nuclear power programme. Furthermore, the INIR mission scheduled for October 2015 would assess facilities containing nuclear material so that Morocco could identify areas that must be strengthened to meet international standards.

29. Mr GALLAGHER (Holy See) conveyed the best wishes of His Holiness Pope Francis to all participants in the 59th session of the General Conference.

30. The Holy See commended and supported all of the Agency's activities and considered that, seventy years after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and nearly six decades after its establishment, the Agency remained indispensable for promoting human security.

31. Many worldwide were not aware of the Agency's role in promoting sustainable and integral human development, thus opening up prospects for harnessing the power of science and technology to address pressing problems such as poverty, health and environmental degradation. The peaceful applications of nuclear technologies had enabled many States to take steps to achieve their development goals and were in keeping with Pope Francis's encyclical call for responsible stewardship of human and natural resources. Such technologies had led to improvements in agriculture, pollution control, water management, nutrition, food safety and infectious disease control. The Agency had made an invaluable contribution to fighting cancer — one of the great scourges of humankind — in particular in some of the world's poorest countries. The Agency's contributions to sustainable development, which improved the quality of life of millions of people, must be supported and enhanced in order to meet the many outstanding challenges.

32. In his recent encyclical, Pope Francis had highlighted the fundamental challenge posed by technological prowess, namely that those who had the knowledge and resources to use modern technologies held unprecedented power over the future of humanity, but there was no guarantee that such technologies would be used wisely, given the way in which they were being used. Such a situation had arisen because humanity's immense technological development had not been accompanied by development in human responsibility, values and conscience. Rather than responsibility, solidarity and cooperative security, it was necessity — defined in terms of utility and

narrow conceptions of national security — that all too often prevailed in the use made of technology, and nowhere had that been more evident than in the power unleashed by the splitting of the atom. As Pope Francis had emphasized, the horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki remained the symbol of humankind's enormous destructive power when it used scientific and technical progress in a distorted manner — and that was a lasting warning to humanity to reject war forever and to ban nuclear weapons and all weapons of mass destruction.

33. Although greatly reduced since the height of the Cold War, nuclear arsenals worldwide remained excessive, and the dubious strategic rationales for maintaining and even strengthening such bloated arsenals were morally problematic. Nuclear deterrence could hardly be the basis for peaceful coexistence among peoples and States in the twenty-first century, as it was neither widely responsive nor tailored to current security challenges and could be used in a way that would lead to severe humanitarian consequences. Instead of being a step towards nuclear disarmament, nuclear deterrence had become an end in itself; it could put the non-proliferation regime in jeopardy and undermine real progress towards a nuclear-free world. As Pope Francis had said in his message to the Vienna Conference in December 2014, nuclear weapons expenditure squandered the wealth of nations and prioritization of such expenditure was a mistake and a misallocation of resources that would be better invested in integral human development, education, health and the fight against extreme poverty. Billions were wasted each year in developing and maintaining stocks that might never be used; such expenditure could not be considered to be consistent with progress towards nuclear disarmament or with the NPT.

34. The discriminatory nature of the NPT — which supported an unsustainable and undesirable status quo — was well known. Just as wealthy nations had incurred an ecological debt that demanded that they do more to address the environmental crisis, so, too, had nuclear-weapon States incurred a nuclear debt; owing to the risks that their nuclear arsenals posed to the world, nuclear-weapon States bore the heavy moral burden of never using such weapons and of reducing their stocks substantially, while taking the lead in negotiating a nuclear ban. While it was unthinkable to imagine a world in which nuclear weapons were available to all, it was reasonable to imagine, and to work collectively for, a world in which nobody had such weapons — and that was not merely a moral ideal, but a concept that must be pursued through tangible policy initiatives, in particular by the nuclear powers.

35. The Holy See held no illusions about the inherent challenges of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. Progress had been made through the NPT, the CTBT, START, New START, unilateral initiatives and other measures, but such steps had been limited, insufficient and often frozen in time and space. It was precisely because of growing tensions that the nuclear powers should renew arms control and disarmament processes, as could have been heralded by genuine efforts to facilitate the entry into force of the CTBT, which held out the best hope of stemming nuclear proliferation and of progress towards nuclear disarmament. Far more concerted action was required, however, to break the political deadlock — evident in the failure of the recent NPT Review Conference — that had prevented other responsible institutions from playing their rightful role in non-proliferation and disarmament.

36. The conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and the Humanitarian Pledge endorsed by more than 100 States were positive developments that deserved support, as was the establishment of zones free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs, especially in the Middle East. The Agency's role in nuclear safety, waste disposal, verification and monitoring would become ever more important as the use of peaceful nuclear energy expanded and as the world moved towards nuclear disarmament.

37. The Holy See welcomed the Agency's participation in the verification and monitoring of Iran's nuclear-related JCPOA commitments, which it valued positively in the belief that disputes and

difficulties should always be resolved through dialogue and negotiation. The JCPOA was the result of many years of negotiation on an issue that had caused grave concern within the international community, although it was clear that further efforts and commitment by all parties involved would be required if the JCPOA were to bear fruit. He hoped that its full implementation would ensure that Iran's nuclear programme remained peaceful in nature under the NPT, which would be a definitive step towards greater stability and security in the Middle East.

38. In a region where too many conflicts already raged, agreement on such a sensitive issue would help greatly to promote dialogue and cooperation on other issues. Conflict resolution in the Middle East lay in dialogue and negotiation rather than confrontation. Such a path required courageous decisions to be made for the good of all and would eventually lead to peace.

39. In taking such steps, the world must face up to a fundamental moral challenge, in which the logic of fear and mistrust must be replaced by a new global ethic of responsibility, solidarity and cooperative security that could limit the power of nuclear technology to solely peaceful purposes and remove the global threat that it posed.

40. All States had the right to national security, yet it was overly simplistic to reduce the concept, in practice, to its military dimension, as security also required social and economic development, political participation, respect for fundamental human rights, the rule of law, cooperation and solidarity. There was an urgent need to review transparently the definition of national security used by States, in particular the nuclear-weapon States. As Pope Francis had said in December 2014, the security of each country's future was dependent on guaranteeing peace, security and stability in all other countries, too.

41. The Holy See attached great importance to the successful manner in which the Agency worked with relevant international organizations to ensure the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear technologies. The Agency deserved to receive continued support in its work to fulfil, in ever more effective ways, its indispensable role in ensuring international security and in promoting sustainable and integral human development, especially in the poorest regions of the world.

42. Mr CRNADAK (Bosnia and Herzegovina) said that his country, which had become a Member State of the Agency in 1995, had fulfilled all of its responsibilities arising from international instruments relating to non-proliferation and to the safe and secure use of ionizing radiation sources. It had accepted the most important international conventions for which the Agency was the depositary, strove to establish a stable radiation protection and nuclear safety regime and was gratified when international organizations, in particular the Agency, recognized and acknowledged its active role in such areas. It welcomed the significant support that it had received in strengthening the activities of relevant institutions and the sustainability of its system.

43. His country sought to improve the system established in compliance with the Agency's highest international standards and with EU standards. The National Regulatory Agency had issued regulations harmonized with the Agency's Basic Safety Standards and with Euratom directives in order to respond to nuclear safety and security challenges.

44. His country recognized that responsibility for nuclear safety lay primarily with the State itself and had paid particular attention to capacity building in the area of nuclear safety, notably the safety of radioactive sources. INSSP implementation activities, approved by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina in October 2014, were being conducted in close cooperation with the Agency. Bosnia and Herzegovina expected to develop sustainable capacity to meet challenges in that area in the years ahead. It was working intensively to improve its emergency response capacity. Its emergency plan of action, prepared by relevant institutions with the support of an Agency expert mission, had been adopted by the Council of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly.

45. Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was a member of the Board of Governors for 2013–2015, had always supported all decisions that contributed to regional and global nuclear security and stability and to the strengthening of the Agency's technical, financial and human resources. It had deposited its instrument of ratification of the 2005 amendment to the CPPNM in June 2010 and called on all countries that had not yet done so to ratify the amendment as soon as possible.

46. His country welcomed the Agency's efforts to assist countries in implementing their national projects and in meeting their national development goals through the TC programme.

47. Bosnia and Herzegovina was a signatory to other international agreements on nuclear energy, whose depositaries were other international organizations. It had participated in a meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management and had, for the first time, submitted its national report and participated in the peer review process. It was concerned about the construction by its neighbour, the Republic of Croatia, of a radioactive and nuclear waste and spent fuel repository near the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina. The repository would house some nuclear waste from Krško NPP, scheduled to be closed down in 2043, and was only three kilometres from a town in Bosnia and Herzegovina whose 30 000 inhabitants unanimously opposed the project. It strongly opposed the construction of the facility and hoped that the Republic of Croatia would find a more appropriate solution that did not jeopardize good neighbourly relations.

48. Lastly, Bosnia and Herzegovina would continue to implement activities to strengthen nuclear safety and security and to honour its international obligations in that area. It wished to be involved in the international community's activities to promote the safe and secure use of nuclear energy, and noted the importance of the Agency's continued support provided through the TC projects.

49. Mr DEMCHYSHYN (Ukraine), after welcoming the new Member States of the Agency, expressed support for the Agency's activities aimed at promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. He emphasized the Agency's key role in the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the crucial importance of the Agency's safeguards in ensuring that the Member States met their NPT commitments. Ukraine remained committed to the objectives of nuclear non-proliferation and consistently fulfilled its obligations under its safeguards agreement and additional protocol. Owing to its impeccable track record in meeting its obligations, the Agency had reconfirmed the broad conclusion for Ukraine in 2014 by determining that all nuclear material in Ukraine remained in peaceful activities. He acknowledged the Secretariat's professional work in preparing the IAEA Annual Report for 2014, which was based on the norms of international law, the Agency's Statute and safeguards agreements. Ukraine was determined to continue to fulfil its obligations under its safeguards agreement in accordance with the norms of international law relating to all nuclear facilities and material located on the whole territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, including the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

50. He strongly supported the Agency's efforts to improve nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety. The accidents that had occurred at Chernobyl and Fukushima Daiichi NPPs had triggered a review of and improvements to international safety standards, which Ukraine had welcomed and in which it had participated actively. Its national regulatory body had initiated a comprehensive programme to analyse and revise its nuclear safety regulations. Drawing on the results of stress tests on the country's NPPs, the Government had revised and approved a comprehensive NPP safety improvement programme, including measures to be implemented until 2020.

51. In May 2015, at the Fifth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention, his delegation had submitted its national report, demonstrating that Ukraine had fulfilled its Joint Convention obligations. Ukraine supported the Agency's activities to strengthen cooperation in

extending NPP lifetimes, maintaining knowledge continuity in the nuclear power sector, enhancing nuclear safety and regulatory capabilities, and improving transport and waste safety. Commending the Agency's efforts to improve the physical security of nuclear and radioactive materials and prevent trafficking, he acknowledged the need for more extensive international cooperation under the auspices of the Agency in order to reduce the global threat of nuclear and radioactive materials being used for terrorist purposes. Ukraine supported the strengthening of international principles and national laws on export control and the physical protection of nuclear materials.

52. He was satisfied with the current level of TC cooperation between Ukraine and the Agency. National and regional TC projects had contributed substantially to improving nuclear safety and the effectiveness of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in Ukraine. The strengthening of TC had demonstrated the Agency's ability to meet the basic needs of Member States. National experts participated regularly in workshops, training courses, inspections, working group sessions and technical meetings. Despite the complicated situation in Ukraine, training on radioactive material had been conducted recently in Chernovtsy. It was important to Ukraine to take part in the programme, as it provided an opportunity to learn about best international practices in the most challenging nuclear power development issues and to share its experience with other Member States.

53. Nuclear power would continue to be an important component of Ukraine's energy security policy in the medium and long terms, as one of the pillars of the sustainable development of its national economy. Its importance was evident from the country's updated energy strategy. Ukraine supported the Agency's activities in innovative and advanced reactor design. It participated in INPRO and had provided cost-free expert services to the Agency under that project since 2008. It participated actively in the Global Architecture of Innovative Nuclear Energy Systems Based on Thermal and Fast Reactors Including a Closed Fuel Cycle (GAINS) project, and its contribution had been highly appreciated by Agency experts.

54. Mitigation of the consequences of the Chernobyl accident remained crucially important to Ukraine, which was grateful to the countries and international organizations that had assisted and supported Ukraine in overcoming the consequences of the accident. A new, safe confinement structure was being built in order to enclose the destroyed power unit at the plant, and it would be completed by November 2017. In that regard, Ukraine relied on support from the Agency and other organizations within the United Nations system.

55. Having survived the Chernobyl accident and supported Japan in tackling the consequences of the accident at Fukushima, Ukraine strongly believed that emphasis must be laid on safety in all nuclear power activities and that a high level of safety culture must be an integral part of the world community's global sustainable development strategies. His country welcomed joint efforts by the United States of America and France to introduce a global civil liability regime for nuclear damage and would consider taking similar action nationally. He commended the IAEA Annual Report for 2014 and the Director General and Secretariat for their contribution to the development of nuclear science, technology and medicine and to the promotion of cooperation among countries in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

56. Mr YAMANI (Saudi Arabia) said that his country attached great importance to nuclear energy and its vital peaceful applications and hoped that they would bring many benefits to the country and people in general and boost its development. Nuclear technology and its peaceful applications could make an important contribution to sustainable development, if all complied scrupulously with the best principles of nuclear safety and non-proliferation and the highest standards of transparency in the application of safeguards. Accordingly, Saudi Arabia had made solid progress towards fulfilling the requirements for a national nuclear energy programme by developing the requisite legal and

regulatory infrastructure, building human capacity, earmarking sufficient financial resources, engaging in regional and international cooperation and acting in full transparency.

57. 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. It continued to implement its strategic partnership agreement with Finland's Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority for the provision of technical support and the expertise required to regulate Saudi Arabia's nuclear energy sector. Staff would be trained with a view to the establishment of a national nuclear regulatory authority, for which a provisional organizational chart had been drawn up, as had instructions for its safety, security and safeguards departments. Regulations and detailed guidance had been drafted to enable it to meet growing demand as the use of nuclear energy expanded in Saudi Arabia, and to become an independent entity in future.

58. Saudi Arabia had acted to pass domestic laws in order to regulate the nuclear energy sector. Practical training and qualification programmes were being developed locally and were supported and monitored by staff in specialized national academic programmes, while young specialists were being sent to more advanced countries in order to raise the technical level and qualifications of its human resource pool.

59. Saudi Arabia had recently undertaken a regulatory review and safety assessment for the country's first research reactor construction project, which had subsequently been authorized. It was to install a small reactor for the training of Saudi human resources in Riyadh at the King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology, which would be the operator.

60. As Saudi Arabia had always striven to expand its cooperation with States more advanced in the use of the peaceful applications of nuclear energy, its range of options was broad and its programme was highly transparent and open to competition. In 2015, it had signed new cooperation agreements with the Russian Federation and Finland and many new memoranda of understanding with partners from France, the Republic of Korea and China, covering various fields.

61. His country set great store by the Agency's efforts to implement the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety and looked forward to the implementation of its deliverables by the Agency's departments. While acknowledging that ultimate responsibility for nuclear safety lay with the State, Saudi Arabia hoped that greater efforts would be made to establish a high safety culture, with emphasis on best regulatory practices, and called on all nuclear reactor-operating countries to accede to all conventions on nuclear safety and to increase international cooperation and the sharing of expertise in that area. Saudi Arabia welcomed the Agency's efforts to enhance safety generally and rebuild confidence in NPPs by promoting global safety standards and by publishing nuclear safety standards and requirements. It had taken all developments into account when planning its nuclear power programme.

62. Saudi Arabia was gratified that the recently published Fukushima Daiichi accident report and its five technical volumes were available to specialists and the public alike, which would boost transparency in nuclear reactor safety and confidence in the inclusion of nuclear power in a State's energy mix, while helping to avoid the causes that had led to the accident. It appreciated the Agency's attempts to meet the aspirations of States, such as Saudi Arabia, which were embarking on a nuclear power programme, and stressed the importance of self-assessment tools to the safety-monitoring infrastructure.

63. Given its strong desire to support the Agency in its work, Saudi Arabia had always met its financial obligations under the Regular Budget and had made voluntary contributions to the TC programme for 2015. It supported the Agency's efforts to strengthen its safeguards system in order to verify the peaceful nature of nuclear activities, as the Agency was the only international entity with such a mandate, but considered it important for the Agency, in the interests of transparency, to inform

Member States of any change to the scope of the verification method and to submit full details to the IAEA General Conference for approval.

64. The country's hope that the 2015 NPT Review Conference would lead to positive steps towards nuclear disarmament and the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons had been dashed by the lack of agreement on the final document. Saudi Arabia was nonetheless committed to the principles of disarmament and to eliminating the very real threat that nuclear weapons posed to humanity. The NPT was the only international instrument under which States were required to destroy nuclear weapons and take steps to prevent their proliferation. It was vital that States Parties hold themselves accountable and comply strictly with their NPT obligations.

65. Saudi Arabia looked forward to the full implementation of the JCPOA with a view to establishing the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme and ensuring that Iran did not possess any form of nuclear weapon. Calling for maximum transparency in its implementation, he stressed that, although it had been agreed by only a few States, the JCPOA had implications for all States, in particular those in the Middle East. Agreements such as the JCPOA were infinitesimal in the grand ambition of establishing a Middle East zone free of WMDs.

66. In closing, he expressed his country's hope that the goals to which the entire international community aspired could be achieved in a world in which security, stability, prosperity and good will prevailed.

67. Mr BORGES (Angola) praised the skilful, dedicated, transparent and coherent way in which the Director General had conducted the Agency's affairs. His country welcomed the programmes and activities carried out by the Agency since the previous session of the General Conference.

68. Angola had monitored the negotiations with Iran, which had culminated in the signing of the historic JCPOA. It endorsed the deal and was convinced that it would pave the way for peace in the Middle East.

69. He commended the valuable contribution made by the Agency through the Department of Technical Cooperation to developing and bolstering the use of nuclear technology. The Government thanked the Agency for its technical assistance in agriculture, veterinary science and, above all, cancer therapy, which, by lowering the costs of transporting patients overseas and reducing the number of deaths, was an essential form of assistance in minimizing the country's shortcomings in those fields.

70. Angola considered PACT to be an important tool that enabled Member States to introduce, expand and enhance their control capabilities by integrating radiation treatment into their national cancer control programmes and by developing the capacity and infrastructure required for safe cancer diagnosis and treatment. Angola applauded the Agency's participation in the ninth Stop Cervical, Breast and Prostate Cancer in Africa Conference (SCCA), held by the Forum of African First Ladies Against Breast and Cervical Cancer in July 2015 in Nairobi.

71. He also commended the activities of the Advisory Group on Increasing Access to Radiotherapy Technology in Low and Middle Income Countries (AGaRT) and encouraged the Agency to follow its recommendation to place emphasis in the cycle of activities for 2015–2019 on increasing access to the relevant technology and on providing affordable quality and sustainable radiotherapy services for all.

72. Angola emphasized the urgent need to transfer the ownership and operation of the Virtual University for Cancer Control and Regional Training Network (VUCCnet) to Africa and to replicate the project in other regions, and it encouraged PACT to seek partnerships and mobilize resources to finance TC anti-cancer ventures.

73. Angola acknowledged the Agency's efforts with regard to the ReNuAL project in Seibersdorf and applauded the Agency's endeavours in the field of nuclear technology to develop key areas of nuclear energy, human health, food production and agriculture, water resources management and environmental preservation. It praised the cooperation and support provided by the Secretariat to Member States, including through TC projects aimed at strengthening capabilities and sharing experiences and expertise in SIT developed to eradicate or control malaria-transmitting mosquitoes, as malaria was one of the leading causes of death in Angola.

74. His country supported cooperation between the Secretariat and the African Union in conducting the Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign (PATTEC), which had raised awareness of the use of SIT to eradicate endemic tsetse and trypanosomosis. Further measures were nonetheless required to eradicate the tsetse fly completely within a reasonable time frame.

75. Angola required the Agency's technical assistance to reduce soil erosion, conduct research into aquifers in desert regions and establish new cancer treatment and diagnosis centres under PACT in other areas of the country.

76. Angola was wholeheartedly committed to the Agency's ideals and objectives; it had therefore honoured its Regular Budget payment obligations as a Member State and had contributed to the TCF. Eight African States listed as least developed countries had also paid their full share into the TCF. Angola therefore encouraged other Member States to undertake to maintain and bolster the Agency's TC activities by following suit. He suggested, however, that if a Member State lost the capacity to pay its share as a result of adverse circumstances or events, its right to benefit from the Agency's TC projects should not be forfeited.

77. The Government congratulated the Agency on its efforts to reduce the lapse factor, but expressed concern at the low representation of African States in the Agency's staff, in particular in senior positions. He urged the Secretariat to cooperate with developing countries in identifying a qualified and skilled workforce from Africa and other regions and called on the Agency to review its staffing policy in order to increase the representation of Africa.

78. Angola applauded the dedicated efforts of experts from Member States and regulatory agencies, who were working tirelessly to mitigate the effects of the accident at Fukushima Daiichi NPP, and requested that their findings be provided to Member States so that lessons could be learnt.

79. His country was endeavouring to ratify a number of legal instruments on the use of nuclear energy, such as the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency, and the respective amendments thereto.

80. Angola remained completely committed to cooperating with the Agency in order to secure peace, development and well-being for all States.

81. Mr DE VIDO (Argentina) said that Argentina had been honoured to assume the chair of the NSG for a further term in June 2015, which had reaffirmed the participating governments' trust in Argentina's contribution to international efforts in the area of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

82. The nuclear sector was expanding worldwide, with more than 67 reactors under construction, exponential development in nuclear medicine, a sharp rise in the number of newcomer countries to the sector and new areas of nuclear power applications. Argentina had been the first Latin American country to establish an NPP. In the nuclear sector's 65-year history, there had been phases of intense development and periods such as the so-called neoliberal decade from 1990 to 2002, during which the

State had ceased to pursue nuclear activities, projects had stagnated and the human resources pool had been depleted.

83. The Government had decided in 2003 to revive the sector and to bring it up to speed with global technological progress, and had attained specific objectives and targets. It had invested US \$11 billion and planned to invest \$31 billion in the coming decade. Since 2003, 5220 new nuclear specialists had been trained, raising their number to 8220. There were 129 designated national companies in the nuclear sector, whereas there had been none in 2003. Three NPPs were currently in operation in the country with a total capacity of 1755 MW, covering nearly 10% of energy consumption. The 745 MW Néstor Kirchner NPP had reached full capacity in February 2015, the most important milestone in Argentine nuclear activity in the past 30 years, for it was one of the projects that had stagnated in the 1990s. To ensure its completion, Argentina had, through the State company Nucleoeléctrica Argentina, performed the role of designer, engineer and constructor, after the company originally in charge of construction had abandoned the project. The fuel and heavy water had been manufactured domestically, as had 88% of the components.

84. In the area of health, two public nuclear medicine centres had been built and nine were under construction to cover the entire country. The centres met the highest international standards for cardiological, oncological and neurological diagnosis and treatment. A national linear accelerator was being developed to produce a high neutron flux to treat malignant tumours through boron neutron capture therapy. Argentina, which produced 5% of the molybdenum-99 consumed worldwide and was the third largest producer of cobalt-60, had exported radionuclides production technology to Algeria, Australia, Cuba, Egypt and Peru. Most private clinics used the nuclear technology promoted by the State. Argentina was a regional leader in medicine. It was developing with Brazil the RA10 and RMB multipurpose reactors that would enable both countries to supply 40% of the radionuclides on the world market. It had exported a turnkey research reactor to Australia in 2007, and that had been the acme of Argentina's greatest export technology.

85. Only Argentine technology and design were being used in the CAREM low energy nuclear reactor prototype, which 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.

86. The Pilcaniyeu gas diffusion uranium enrichment plant was being recovered and the completion of the mock-up module in June 2014 had helped to establish Argentina as one of the 13 countries recognized by the Agency as having uranium enrichment capacity. Other advanced methods such as centrifuge and laser technology were being developed, so that the country could become a leader in three types of enrichment. A plant was being built to produce 460 tons of uranium dioxide per year.

87. The capacity of the industrial heavy water plant was being boosted to supply the three NPPs and to produce the initial load for the future fourth NPP. US \$3 billion had been invested in work to extend the lifetime of Embalse NPP by 30 years and to increase its power by 35 MW. Argentine companies had broken new ground by manufacturing the internal reactor components, which had built its capacity to provide new nuclear components for future plants, both domestically and internationally. The Development Bank of Latin America had granted a loan of \$240 million and was the first multilateral credit institution ever to fund a purely nuclear project. Work on the lifetime extension of Juan Domingo Perón NPP (formerly Atucha I) by 362 MW had also continued.

88. Argentina had begun work on uranium enrichment technology. It had designated seven reactor suppliers, namely Westinghouse, General Electric, the China National Nuclear Corporation, Rosatom, KEPCO, ATMEA and AREVA. It had signed State-level agreements with the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation, thus ensuring progress towards final agreements on the construction of three new NPPs by Nucleoeléctrica Argentina, including an 800 MW plant using domestic natural

uranium and heavy water, and 70% locally manufactured components. Argentina would design, engineer and construct the project, and would not relinquish those roles under any circumstances. Argentina would begin to use enriched uranium technology for the first time in another 1000 MW NPP, in which 50% of all components had been produced domestically. Negotiations were under way with Rosatom on another 1200 MW enriched uranium plant, also with 50% locally produced components. The total capacity of the three new NPPs would be 3000 MW, which would raise the country's installed nuclear power by 171%. All NPPs met the post-Fukushima Daiichi requirements.

89. Technology transfer was enshrined in the agreements with the Russian Federation and China, which would ensure independence, energy sovereignty, the development of national technology and industry and possible collaboration on NPP construction in other countries.

90. Argentina had chaired the Diplomatic Conference convened on 9 February 2015 to consider a proposed amendment to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, at which the Contracting Parties had adopted the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety, which had established basic principles for NPP design, construction and operation and had strengthened the consultation and coordination mechanism for the review meetings. An international meeting of nuclear regulators would be held in Buenos Aires in November 2015 as a follow-up to the Vienna Declaration in order to strengthen and consolidate technical nuclear security worldwide.

91. His country continued to meet its radioactive waste and spent fuel management reporting requirements under the Joint Convention. A strategic radioactive waste management plan, drawn up periodically by the National Atomic Energy Commission, was submitted to the Argentine Congress. Three storage areas and four silos, totalling 1300 m², had been constructed to store waste when components were dismantled during NPP lifetime extension work. A long-term storage facility had been built to process and store waste from nuclear installations. Radiochemical techniques had been developed to identify and quantify radionuclides in order to increase information on the radiological inventory of radioactive waste, and a laboratory for radioactive waste characterization had been built. Environmental restoration projects had been implemented.

92. Argentina, as an original Contracting Party, welcomed the swift entry into force of the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage, which was crucial to establishing a global liability regime that would promote regional and global cooperation to increase safety in accordance with the principles of international collaboration and solidarity. He urged States that had not yet done so to accede to the Convention.

93. In the previous decade, Argentina had signed agreements, understandings and memoranda of cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and non-proliferation with Algeria, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, China, Cuba, Ecuador, India, Italy, Jordan, Libya, Mexico, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, the United Arab Emirates, Uruguay and Vietnam.

94. Argentina's geopolitical openness demonstrated its readiness for collaboration and commitment to nuclear development in accordance with international safety and non-proliferation regimes. It was essential to enhance joint endeavours, to provide new investment opportunities and to continue to demonstrate that objectives were met and that activities were carried out safely. The Agency played a central role in that process. Argentina was resolutely following that path and was ready and willing to take on major responsibilities and challenges in the nuclear area in the coming years.

95. Mr BOUDEN (Tunisia) commended the Director General's efforts to achieve the goals set for the Agency, in particular, preservation of the independence of the Secretariat and appointment of a greater number of women from developing countries to senior posts at the Agency.

96. Tunisia commended the preparation of the Fukushima Daiichi accident report, from which lessons must be learnt.

97. While it did not possess any nuclear facilities, nuclear safety was a matter of great importance to Tunisia on account of the large-scale devastation of a nuclear accident and as Tunisia was likely to install nuclear facilities at some time. Such a venture had been momentarily deferred but remained a strategic option that was still under consideration. The requisite legislative, regulatory and institutional infrastructure was being established in the interim and human resources were being developed.

98. Tunisia was convinced that nuclear terrorism had become a very real threat owing to current security challenges in the Middle East and North Africa, the rise of terrorism, its link to smuggling and coincident political crises. In its attempts to combat the terrorist threat, it had reviewed its anti-terrorism law and had addressed the issue of nuclear terrorism by adopting provisions consistent with UNSC resolutions, including resolution 1540 (2004), and with its commitments under the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. In taking preventive measures, Tunisia had focused on capacity building, training and installation of the necessary equipment. Those isolated efforts did not, however, suffice to address the threats posed regionally and internationally and the Agency was thus obliged to provide assistance in nuclear security and emergency preparedness to States in the region. Tunisia therefore called on the Secretariat to develop a nuclear security programme for States in the region, duly taking into consideration all field data and those States' needs to bolster capacity to combat nuclear terrorism and reduce the inherent threat as much as possible.

99. Since becoming a Member in 1957, Tunisia had always sought to increase cooperation with the Agency and had implemented some very fruitful cooperation programmes, on the use of nuclear cancer treatment techniques in particular, through which new treatment facilities and health services had been established. Tunisia would continue to support the use of such therapy, remain abreast of technological advances and bring such services closer to patients. The dearth of cancer treatment facilities in vast swathes of the country was a serious obstacle to early diagnosis by means of nuclear technology. While striving to overcome such obstacles, Tunisia nevertheless continued to rely on the Agency's support to bring those services to the people in those areas.

100. Tunisia's commitment to honouring its financial pledges to the Agency matched its desire to take up opportunities for cooperation with the Agency. Accordingly, it undertook to make its TCF contribution in line with the assessed amount for the coming year. Bolstering scientific cooperation with its fraternal allies was important to Tunisia, in particular under the aegis of the AAEA, which had its headquarters in Tunisia. The delegation welcomed the Secretariat's continued support for the AAEA, in particular through ANNuR, which was hosted on the Agency's website by the Global Nuclear Safety and Security Network. It urged the Secretariat to support ANNuR, which played a role in promoting nuclear safety and security regionally and internationally.

101. Given the importance of the Agency's role as a source of invaluable information for Member States, the Secretariat should ensure that the Agency's website was constantly accessible in Member States and that it provided content appropriate for experts, decision makers and the general public. It was usually geared to experts only and, owing to the plethora of portals, it was difficult to find important information posted by Agency experts for use by Member States. The situation could be remedied by reviewing the Agency's information policy and by streamlining and improving access to information based on a unified database.

102. Tunisia had worked hard in recent years to open up new cooperation avenues with several States, including the United States of America through an agreement with the National Nuclear Security Administration, under which Tunisia had continued to receive assistance in making the

necessary preparations for the introduction of the additional protocol. In that connection, he expressed his country's appreciation to the United States Government for its assistance in areas such as safeguards and nuclear security. Tunisia had also continued to enhance its nuclear security capacities under other programmes.

103. Work was under way in Tunisia to establish a new independent regulatory body and a new legislative framework to regulate the various uses of nuclear energy and techniques in accordance with international standards and the various conventions ratified by Tunisia. The team of experts established for that purpose had developed an integrated system which had been reviewed by Agency experts and comprised mechanisms for the implementation of international conventions that had entered, or were about to enter, into force for Tunisia, such as the additional protocol and the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage.

104. Tunisia had been in a transitional phase following the popular uprising. Plans to introduce the new system had been shelved, as priority had been given to the adoption of a new constitution and laws governing the transition to democracy. Tunisia had held its course well and parliamentary and presidential elections had been held in 2014. Despite the number of political, economic, social and security-related obstacles that had periodically prompted a review of governmental and parliamentary priorities, Tunisia remained determined to adopt legislation and regulations for nuclear activities and to ratify the above-mentioned agreements, as it believed in the importance of fulfilling its international commitments.

105. Tunisia supported all initiatives aimed at enhancing the efficiency of the safeguards system and resolving differences through dialogue, and welcomed the agreement reached recently between Iran and the international community. Tunisia hoped that JCPOA requirements would be met within the specified time frames and that the JCPOA would be the first step towards meeting the calls of most States in the region for the establishment of a Middle East zone free of WMDs, in particular nuclear weapons, and for all nuclear facilities in the region, including Israeli nuclear facilities, to be placed under Agency safeguards. He therefore called on Member States to support the draft resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities submitted by the Arab Group with a view to ridding the Middle East of nuclear weapons.

106. Ms BONSA (Ethiopia) said that the Ethiopian economy had grown robustly and consistently, as indicated by its average GDP growth of 10.5% in the past decade. Its economy was therefore one of the fastest growing in the world. Such growth by a non-oil-producing country was remarkable, and the principal reason for that economic success was her Government's determined and strong leadership, its development strategies and the policies that it had pursued. The successful implementation of the first five-year Growth and Transformation Plan had not only made a critical contribution to the country's astounding economic performance but had also laid a solid foundation for its future economic prosperity. In its efforts to achieve a better life for Ethiopians in line with the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, her Government was embarking on the second phase of the next five-year Growth and Transformation Plan, which focused on various sustainable development issues, would doubtless achieve Ethiopia's long-term vision of becoming a middle-income State by 2025.

107. Science and technology were of paramount importance to the country's continued mission of national development and economic growth. The transfer of technology and know-how was critical to Ethiopia's vision of development. Ethiopia, in collaboration with the Agency, had undertaken a number of activities in order to achieve its socioeconomic development goals through the application of various technologies and peaceful nuclear techniques in a number of national and regional projects.

108. The Southern Rift Valley Tsetse Eradication Project (STEP), a major project aimed initially at eradicating the tsetse fly from a 25 000 km² area, had been rolled out to cover large infested areas of

the country, employing SIT. Ethiopia's National Institute for Control and Eradication of Tsetse Fly and Trypanosomosis currently focused on three major components: suppression of the existing tsetse fly population; centrally operated sterile insect production and actual field operation of fly population control; and eradication using SIT technology. Although much work remained to be done, tangible progress had been made in reducing the prevalence of trypanosomosis among livestock in treated areas. Field assessment of the aerial release of sterile male tsetse flies had indicated that significant success had been achieved in the suppression activities carried out to date.

109. In order to address effectively and sustainably the huge challenges that Ethiopia faced in those areas, the Government planned to provide short- and long-term training courses for professional and technical staff in order to upgrade their knowledge and skills, with a particular emphasis on the tsetse fly. She therefore called on the Agency and all development partners to enhance their support for the successful implementation of the project so that experience and information could be shared and exchanged with other African States similarly affected by those diseases.

110. Under another important project, a modest national infrastructure was being built for the application of nuclear medicine and radiotherapy. Ethiopia had only one radiotherapy centre and the infrastructure was inadequate to serve more than 90 million people. According to a preliminary data assessment, about 30 000 cancer patients were treated annually at the radiotherapy service centre, although new cancer cases were estimated at 115 000 per year. In addressing that growing challenge, Ethiopia, in collaboration with the Agency, had developed an action plan to expand radiotherapy and nuclear medicine services to five university hospitals in Addis Ababa and other regions of the country. Her Government had shown its commitment by allocating budgetary funds from its own meagre resources. Assistance and cooperation from the Agency and partner countries were required for the successful completion of the project, which would help to save thousands of Ethiopian lives.

111. The project on the application of isotope techniques to manage the country's surface water and groundwater resources had been designed to build basic capacity to generate useful isotopic data for sustainable exploitation of groundwater resources. The isotope hydrology laboratory at Addis Ababa University was being strengthened, a national groundwater database system was being established and training was being provided to personnel. The laboratory was providing sample analysis services to a number of MSc and PhD students and national and regional institutes. Plans had been made to accredit the laboratory as a regional centre of excellence.

112. Legal and institutional mechanisms had been put in place for the registration and licensing of all nuclear safety and security activities. The National Radiation Protection Authority was the competent governmental body that controlled the use of ionizing radiation and related practices, and was drafting framework legislation for the re-establishment of an appropriate regulatory body.

113. Her Government continued to attach great importance to the Agency's mandate and functions in enhancing the peaceful use and application of nuclear energy and other technology, and it appreciated the Agency's continued efforts to implement international safeguards. Ethiopia had demonstrated its unwavering commitment to supporting that noble task by signing and ratifying several treaties relating to peaceful applications that were highly significant and relevant to global nuclear safety and security. She thanked the United States Department of Energy for its assistance in strengthening Ethiopia's regulatory capacity under the Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI) regarding nuclear and radiological materials located at civilian sites. She hoped that similar assistance would be provided for other regulatory activities.

114. Ethiopia was undertaking its own self-assessment, followed closely and monitored by the IRRS, in order to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of its regulatory infrastructure for radiation safety, radioactive waste and transport safety, and the security of radioactive sources. That undoubtedly

required continuous capacity-building activities to enhance the country's safety, security and safeguarding functions. Ethiopia had participated actively in regional projects supported by the Agency. Waste management, radiation safety and security, energy planning, non-destructive testing and molecular detection of drug resistance in malaria and tuberculosis were the major areas in which the required basic capacity had been built and useful data was being generated. With regard to regional cooperation programmes, she commended the role of the regional AFRA initiative from project inception to ensuring results sustainability. The efforts being made under AFRA to strengthen TCDC and to devise national and regional human resource development strategies in nuclear science and technology merited recognition and encouragement by the Agency and its Member States.

115. Ethiopia remained committed to the peaceful application of nuclear technologies, with due respect for global, regional and national security and safety, and held firmly to its vision of a world without any nuclear threat under the long-standing "Atoms for Peace" motto. It therefore strongly supported the Agency's core mission of ensuring a nuclear-free world through complete nuclear disarmament and the implementation of all relevant international agreements and treaties, including the CTBT and the Pelindaba Treaty.

116. She commended the leadership and commitment shown by the Director General and his dedicated staff and thanked all partner countries for the support and cooperation extended to Ethiopia in implementing the aforementioned national and regional projects and in its efforts to employ peaceful and safe applications of nuclear technology in order to implement its inclusive and transformative national development agenda.

117. Ms VLAHOVIC (Montenegro) said that, since its establishment in 1957, the Agency had contributed greatly to the maintenance of international peace and security, and to social, economic and environmental development through nuclear applications. Montenegro, one of the six republics of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, was very proud to have been one of the founders of the Agency, and, in its negotiations on accession to the EU, had referred extensively to its positive experience of nuclear sciences and their applications gained through the Agency.

118. Montenegro had adopted a new CPF for 2014–2020, which identified nuclear sciences and applications, sustainable development and the environment, health, radiation protection, nuclear safety and security, and human resource development as priority areas for cooperation. The time frame had coincided with Horizon 2020, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, in which Montenegro had been participating fully on an equal footing with EU countries since 1 January, 2014. Montenegro would be drafting a new strategy for scientific research activity in early 2016 and would strive to harmonize its future cooperation with the Agency with its accession to the EU.

119. Montenegro, a small non-nuclear country, had been defined in its Constitution as an Ecological State, which meant that all major decisions and action must be considered from an environmentally sustainable standpoint. Her Government recognized the significance of cooperation with the Agency with respect to sustainable development, environmental issues and enhancing the quality of life for its citizens. It was grateful for the Agency's invaluable technical assistance, which had helped to enhance environmental protection, promote development based on the principle of sustainability and establish an institutional framework based on international standards and principles. Montenegro had acceded to the CNS and was fully aware that further activities in the field of legislation would strengthen its cooperation with the Agency and the EU.

120. The application of nuclear technologies in medicine remained a significant tool for enhancing human health. In the 2012–2013 cycle and beyond, the national TC programme had focused on upgrading the quality assurance/quality control system for diagnostic radiology in the national breast screening programme. Montenegro highly appreciated the support provided by the Agency in

radiology and oncology, and in improving Montenegro's nuclear medicine capacities. Her Government considered medicine to be one of its national priorities and looked forward to further support from and cooperation with the Agency in that field.

121. Since 2007, Montenegro had participated successfully in numerous national, regional and interregional TC projects, from which it had derived significant benefits, including medical capacity building, upgrading the regulatory infrastructure and the environment. Her country was grateful to the Division for Europe for its assistance in implementing its national TC projects and thanked the Department of Technical Cooperation for its further support to Montenegro, primarily in connection with three national projects. It was grateful to the Department of Nuclear Sciences and Applications for its recent intensified cooperation.

122. Her country was committed to strengthening further its national security framework by implementing international instruments and fostering cooperation to prevent terrorism and trafficking in nuclear and radioactive materials. Montenegro took part in numerous non-proliferation initiatives, including a programme for the establishment of a system for knowledge management in the area of trafficking in chemical, biological, radioactive and nuclear substances and weapons in its region. New strategies and laws would be adopted shortly to foster international and EU cooperation.

123. Her country's authorities and institutions would continue to contribute actively to the Agency's work and to the implementation of the resolutions of the General Conference.

124. Mr YOSHIAKI (Japan) said that the Agency's activities were becoming increasingly important as the 60th anniversary of the adoption of its Statute approached. Japan would continue to do its utmost to support the Agency in fulfilling its important mission under the leadership of the Director General.

125. The Government of Japan welcomed the release of the report on the Fukushima Daiichi accident set out in document GC(59)/14, took its contents seriously and expressed appreciation to all contributing experts, Member States and international organizations. It was grateful to the international community, including the Agency, for its support in decommissioning the plant and in managing contaminated water, and undertook to continue to disseminate information proactively to local communities and the international community. Decommissioning and contaminated water management would be conducted transparently. Progress was being made step by step in rebuilding the lives of people who had been affected by the accident. As a result of progress achieved in decontamination work and the development of vital infrastructure and, after residents had been consulted, evacuation orders had been lifted in three municipalities since April 2015, and people could return to their home towns.

126. After the Fukushima Daiichi accident, Japan had made efforts to enhance nuclear safety markedly. In September 2012, the Nuclear Regulatory Authority (NRA) had been established as a highly independent regulatory body. In July 2013, the NRA had introduced new regulatory requirements that called for greatly enhanced protective measures. As a sign of close cooperation with the Agency, the Tokyo Electric Power Company had welcomed an Agency OSART mission in June 2015 and the NRA was eagerly preparing to receive an IRRS mission in January 2016. In cooperation with the Agency, efforts to enhance nuclear safety would continue.

127. It was Government policy to restart the NPPs as an important baseload power source once they had met safety standards that had been raised in the light of the experiences and lessons learnt from the Fukushima Daiichi accident. Unit 1 at Sendai NPP had been restarted on 10 September 2015 after more than two years of rigorous legal and regulatory procedures under the new regulatory requirements. In July 2015, the Government had formulated a long-term energy supply and demand outlook based on its Strategic Energy Plan, indicating that nuclear power would account for 20–22%

of total electricity generation by 2030. Comprehensive efforts would be made to achieve a realistic and well-balanced energy mix. The Japan Atomic Energy Commission was developing basic guidelines on overall nuclear power policy, setting the direction for research and development and the use of nuclear power. Japan maintained a firm policy of not possessing reserves of plutonium without specified purposes and continued to manage and use plutonium appropriately, taking into account the balance of supply and demand.

128. The Government recognized the need to promote efforts to enhance nuclear safety and international cooperation. Japan would develop its nuclear technology in order to strengthen nuclear safety and would share its experience with people around the world. In February 2015, the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety had been adopted unanimously by the Contracting Parties to the CNS. The Government welcomed the declaration, which included various measures to strengthen global nuclear safety, and strongly encouraged all Contracting Parties to implement it. It welcomed the entry into force of the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage (CSC) in April 2015, following Japan's acceptance of the Convention in January that year, which it hoped would lead to an enhanced international nuclear liability regime.

129. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was to be adopted in late September 2015. Nuclear science and technology contributed to international socioeconomic development in a wide range of areas such as medicine, food, agriculture and water management. The Government strongly supported the Director General's "Atoms for Peace and Development" initiative. At the 2015 NPT Review Conference, Japan had announced that it would contribute US \$25 million in the following five years to the Agency's PUI. The benefits of nuclear applications should be delivered to a larger number of people, in wider areas, more safely. To that end, Japan would disburse some \$1.2 million to support regional TC projects in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and the Asia-Pacific region.

130. Japan continued to make its best efforts to enhance nuclear security. In 2014, the Integrated Support Centre for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Nuclear Security in Tokai, Japan, had provided training courses on nuclear security and related topics to approximately 400 experts from Asian and other countries. A total of 1500 experts had been trained since the Centre's inception in 2010. Japan had supported the Agency's efforts to promote the entry into force of the amendment to the CPPNM and had encouraged States that had not yet done so to accept the amendment as soon as possible. Japan continued to address domestic concerns about nuclear terrorism and to contribute to the enhancement of global nuclear security.

131. The Agency's safeguards system was critical to ensuring nuclear non-proliferation, and Japan continued to support the strengthening of its effectiveness and efficiency. The Government highly appreciated the strenuous efforts made by all negotiating parties to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue and welcomed the JCPOA, which would strengthen the international non-proliferation regime and lead to stability in the Middle East region. It hoped that it would be implemented steadily; Japan would provide support with a view to achieving that goal. The role of the Agency was vitally important to its implementation, and each State should therefore make an appropriate contribution in a responsible manner in order to enable the Agency to carry out the necessary activities.

132. Japan strongly condemned the DPRK's continued development of nuclear and missile programmes that posed a serious threat to peace and security in North-East Asia and globally. Japan urged the DPRK to refrain from taking any further provocative actions; to take concrete steps toward complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization and cease all related activities immediately; to comply fully with the 2005 joint statement of the Six-Party Talks and relevant UNSC resolutions; and to return to compliance with the NPT and Agency safeguards. Japan fully supported the Agency's continued involvement in the issue. Japan had taken over the chair of the Asia-Pacific Safeguards Network (APSN) from Australia in September 2014 and hoped to revitalize the APSN by

strengthening the capacities of safeguards authorities and further developing the network, in close cooperation with the Agency and other regions.

133. Japan wished to play a more proactive role in maintaining world peace, prosperity and stability and would continue to conduct peaceful nuclear activities, while ensuring non-proliferation, nuclear safety and nuclear security. In advance of the important milestone of the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the Agency's Statute, Japan, as a responsible member of the international community, expressed its firm determination to contribute further to ensuring and promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

134. Mr ARADSZKI (Hungary) said that, among the many challenges facing the world in the early twenty-first century, climate change remained one of the major problems that must be addressed multilaterally by all States. Governments around the world were preparing to negotiate a universal agreement at the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris at the end of 2015. As nuclear power had an essential role to play in progress towards a low-carbon economy, greater emphasis must be placed in current discussions on the role of nuclear power and its potential contribution to combating climate change.

135. Hungary welcomed the agreement on the JCPOA and strongly supported the Agency's long-term mission of verification and monitoring of Iran's nuclear-related commitments set out in the agreement.

136. Taking into account international and EU emission targets, challenges relating to security of supply and Hungary's current energy structure, the country had opted for the long-term maintenance of nuclear power in its energy mix. The lifetime extension programme for Paks NPP was being duly carried out: in December 2014, the Hungarian Atomic Energy Authority had granted a licence to extend the operating lifetime of the NPP's Unit 2 by 20 years until 2034. On the basis of the Hungarian–Russian intergovernmental agreement concluded in 2014 on the construction of two new NPP units, three implementation agreements had been signed in December 2014 stipulating contractual obligations and conditions for the new-build project at the Paks site.

137. A round table discussion with the Agency had been held on the initiative of his Government in Vienna in April 2015 and had provided an excellent opportunity for senior government officials and policymakers to share experiences and exchange information on the Paks NPP capacity maintenance project and to explore specific areas of mutual cooperation. As a follow-up to the discussions, Hungary intended to conclude a practical arrangement with the Agency to establish a solid framework for strengthening its nuclear power cooperation with the Agency.

138. Hungary placed special emphasis on creating and sustaining a sound legislative and regulatory framework for ensuring nuclear and radiation safety and security. Accordingly, relevant legislation had been approved in 2015 to increase the number of regulatory body personnel in order to fulfil future tasks relating to the Paks NPP capacity maintenance project. The Government had, moreover, decided to invite the Agency to send an expert IRRS mission to assess the Hungarian regulatory system and practices in the light of recommended Agency standards. He was confident that the findings would help to improve the activities of the Hungarian Atomic Energy Authority and other competent authorities in order to enhance nuclear safety and security further. On the basis of the review mission report, a national action plan would be finalized for implementation in the coming years.

139. The Agency had conducted an independent expert mission to assess the operational safety of Paks NPP for the third time in its history. Hungary considered the outcomes of the OSART mission to be an opportunity to enhance the safety of the plant's operation further. A follow-up mission was expected in the following autumn.

140. Hungary regularly provided in-field training opportunities for safeguards inspectors as part of the Hungarian Safeguards Support Programme, under which a complementary access exercise for Agency safeguards inspectors had been conducted in April 2015, and several members of the Iran Task Force had participated. Owing to the success of the programme, Hungary had been requested to hold another training course in autumn 2015 for inspectors to be deployed in Iran.

141. Comprehensive national strategies that fulfilled internationally endorsed criteria and standards were essential to radioactive waste management. He was therefore pleased to report that the Hungarian Parliament had approved in April 2015 the national radioactive waste and spent fuel management policy, laying down fundamental principles, requirements and objectives for national spent fuel and radioactive waste management in accordance with the relevant EU directive. The Government had, moreover, drawn up a national spent fuel and radioactive waste management programme, detailing the technological implementation and schedules of the national policy. In that process, Hungary had followed the Agency's recommendations and safety principles closely. Those developments had helped to create a solid foundation for the national radioactive waste management framework so that future challenges could be taken up successfully and flexibly.

142. Ability to innovate was crucial to the future of nuclear technology and its application. Hungarian experts had contributed to the development of improved fuel assemblies to enable NPPs to switch from a 12-month to a 15-month operating cycle, which was in line with international trends, enhanced performance, increased cost-efficient operation and further reduced the radiation exposure of employees.

143. Hungary attached great importance to the Agency's TC programme activities. It was an honour to greet the new Deputy Director General for Technical Cooperation, Mr Yang. Hungary was certain that under his leadership, cooperation between the Secretariat and Member States would be further enhanced, resulting in successful projects in various fields of nuclear techniques. Hungary contributed to the TC programme by sharing its experience with States embarking on nuclear power programmes. It had hosted six workshops and training courses in 2014 and looked forward to organizing further TC events in 2015.

144. The Agency was an excellent platform for enhancing and extending bilateral cooperation between Member States. He was therefore pleased to report that Hungary had signed memoranda of understanding with the Republic of Turkey and the People's Republic of China in 2015 on the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Those agreements enabled cooperation among educators, researchers and experts for the provision and development of practical and theoretical training and the transfer of knowledge about topics such as NPP maintenance and operation, radioactive waste management and public acceptance of nuclear energy.

145. At a time of global energy and climate challenges, effective cooperation among States in the field of nuclear energy was more important than ever. In conclusion, he expressed his country's appreciation for the Agency's outstanding work in promoting the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear energy for the benefit of people worldwide.

146. Mr ASHAIEKH (Sudan) commended the Agency's vital role in expanding the peaceful uses of nuclear technology, particularly in nuclear power, health, food, agriculture, water resource management and environmental protection. His delegation stressed the importance of strengthening the Agency's activities and adjusting and enhancing the Agency's efforts to numerous areas relating to nuclear energy, including its development and practical applications for peaceful purposes, in particular in the least developed countries.

147. He reaffirmed the Agency's fundamental role in using atoms for peace through the TC programme, notably by promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear technology in health, nutrition,

agriculture, water, environmental protection, electricity generation, human resources development, industrial applications and energy planning, and as a means of creating sustainable development opportunities. He called for General Conference resolution GC(58)/RES/12 on strengthening the Agency's technical cooperation activities through the development of effective programmes with well-defined outcomes and its section on the implementation of the principles expressed in the Istanbul Declaration, and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020 to be taken into account during the discussions and meetings at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit 2015.

148. His delegation took note of the Agency's forecasting and assessment activities in response to NPP emergencies and stressed the need to persevere in efforts to improve emergency preparedness and response and strengthen cooperation among authorities regionally and internationally, thus helping States to develop their nuclear infrastructure, bolster assistance and response in the event of an emergency and draw on lessons learnt and on experience gained in the area. Accordingly, his delegation welcomed the Fukushima Daiichi accident report as a means of learning from the accident and avoiding any future recurrence.

149. His delegation set great store by the Agency's efforts to develop the nuclear safety culture through reports and publications stressing the importance of standards and their application. It looked forward to coordinated efforts in that regard and the establishment of internationally agreed standards for the development of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, without any form of politicization.

150. The Agency's close cooperation with the Sudan in capacity building and human resource development in various areas was highly valued and the Sudan looked forward to working with the Agency in its priority areas, including the development of the agricultural sector by enhancing crop productivity, controlling seasonal pests and raising livestock productivity, which would help to boost productivity and achieve the SDGs. The Agency's constructive cooperation with his country in SIT development for malaria-bearing mosquito control was most welcome. His Government had been pleased with work on the project, which had been ably supported by the Islamic Development Bank and the Agency, and looked forward to the results in the near future. In August 2015, Agency experts had assessed progress under the project and visited the sterile male mosquito rearing and field sites. The local contractor selected for the mass-rearing stage had been approved by the Islamic Development Bank in Jeddah.

151. In April 2015, the Sudan had signed its CPF with the Agency for 2015–2019. In its effort to establish the necessary nuclear infrastructure, the Sudan Council of Ministers had passed a law regulating nuclear and radiological activities in March 2015. The organizational and operational chart of the National Nuclear and Radiological Regulatory Authority had been established and five draft regulations on site assessment for the nuclear facility, its management systems, licensing, the design of power reactors and the authorization procedures for nuclear facilities had been drawn up. To bolster those efforts, the Sudan had established a number of national authorities, namely the nuclear safety commission, composed of representatives of the National Nuclear and Radiological Regulatory Authority, the Sudan Atomic Energy Commission, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and security services, and the radiation emergency commission, composed of representatives of civil and national defence bodies, the Ministries of Health and Foreign Affairs, the Sudan Atomic Energy Commission and the National Nuclear and Radiological Regulatory Authority. A commission of seven national experts had, moreover, been established to advise, and thus strengthen, the National Nuclear and Radiological Regulatory Authority.

152. In strengthening its implementation infrastructure for its nuclear power reactor project, the Sudan had established a commission to draft regulations for the various project implementation stages and had drawn up a programme-specific human resource development plan, which had been reviewed

by Agency experts during a workshop in Khartoum. Work was under way to turn that strategic approach into an action plan and training programmes had begun in earnest both at home and abroad. Site and technology selection was being finalized. A national energy plan had, moreover, been drawn up by the energy planning department of the Ministry of Petroleum. The department had been approved as a regional centre of excellence in that domain in 2012.

153. The Sudan had met the requirements for participation, together with other African States, in the nuclear research reactor project, and the commission that it had established to conduct an updated feasibility study for the installation of a research reactor was scheduled to complete its task by the end of 2015.

154. The Sudan looked forward to a world free of nuclear weapons and all other WMDs, as did many peace-loving States, and considered that all initiatives to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons served the goal of achieving peace and stability in the region. Its delegation therefore reiterated its call for Israel to be obliged to accede to the NPT without delay and to place all of its nuclear facilities under Agency supervision, as the Agency was the only technical body mandated to conduct verifications.

155. In closing, he expressed his delegation's hope that resolutions and recommendations would be adopted at the 59th session of the IAEA General Conference to uphold the right of States, particularly the least developed countries, to develop the peaceful uses of nuclear energy as a means of combating poverty, hunger and disease and achieving sustainable development.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.