



60 Years

IAEA *Atoms for Peace and Development*

General Conference

GC(60)/8

Date: 15 June 2016

General Distribution

Original: English

Sixtieth regular session

Item 5(c) of the provisional agenda
(GC(60)/1)

Streamlining the Work of the General Conference: Changes to the Time Limit on Statements During the General Debate

1. On 20 May 2016, the attached proposal by Brazil was communicated to the Board of Governors.
2. On 9 June 2016, as proposed by Brazil, the Board recommended to the General Conference to change the time limit on statements during the general debate from 15 minutes to 7 minutes for representatives of all Member States and observers as of the 61st regular session of the General Conference in 2017.

Explanatory memorandum

Streamlining the Work of the General Conference: Changes to the time limit for statements during the general debate of the IAEA General Conference

In the last few decades, the number of IAEA Member States has risen significantly (from 113 in 1989 to 167 in 2015), as has the number of statements delivered to the General Conference (from 84 in 1989 to 131 in 2015).

In 1989, the General Conference adopted decision GC(XXXIII)/DEC/8, which, in an effort to streamline the work of the Conference, authorized a maximum of **15 minutes** for each statement made during the general debate. However, the significant increase in the number of IAEA Member States has led to extended evening meetings during the general debate on Tuesday and Wednesday of the General Conference. In 1989, the Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon meetings closed at 5.20 p.m. and 6 p.m., respectively; in 2015, they were closed at 9.30 p.m. and 10.20 p.m.

These late evening meetings have a number of disadvantages, in particular: (i) the very small audience they attract; (ii) the inconvenience to delegations; and (iii) the increased interpretation and other conference services costs incurred by the Agency.

In order to redress these problems, and in conformity with the Member States' established procedures for the speakers' list, including continuing the practice of giving special priority to Ministers, it is proposed that the current time limit of 15 minutes for statements during the general debate be changed to **7 minutes** for all Member States and observers.

It is estimated that, with the proposed new time limits, an average of 7 to 8 statements would be delivered per hour (compared to an average of 5.2 statements per hour in 2015). The duration of the general debate from Monday morning to Thursday morning of the General Conference would allow for approximately 150 statements to be delivered, within the regular morning (10 a.m. to 1 p.m.) and afternoon (3 p.m. to 6 p.m.) meetings on those days. In 2015, 131 speakers delivered statements totalling 25 hours. If the time limits proposed above had been applied in 2015, the general debate would have had a duration of less than 16 hours.

The implementation of the above limits would avoid the inconvenience for delegations of speaking at late hours, and the additional interpretation and other services costs incurred by the Agency for the evening meetings. The total interpretation costs incurred by the Secretariat for each additional evening meeting is estimated at up to US \$18,000.

Notwithstanding the new proposed time limit for statements, Member States and observers would be entitled to continue the current practice of circulating the extended versions of their respective statements, and having them available for download at the General Conference section of the IAEA website.

It is proposed that the Board make a recommendation to the General Conference to change the time limit for statements as described above. It is envisaged that the agreement of the General Conference in September 2016 would enable this change to come into effect as from the 61st regular session of the General Conference in September 2017.

* * *

