



**IAEA**

*60 Years*

*Atoms for Peace and Development*

# General Conference

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## Sixty-first regular session

# Plenary

## Record of the Second Meeting

*Held at Headquarters, Vienna, on Monday, 18 September 2017, at 3 p.m.*

**President:** Ms ANGARA COLLINSON (Philippines)

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<sup>1</sup> GC(61)/25.

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**Abbreviations used in this record:**

AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
AIDS	acquired immune deficiency syndrome
ATREMIS	Integrated Review Service for Radioactive Waste and Spent Fuel Management, Decommissioning and Remediation
CNS	Convention on Nuclear Safety
ConvEx	Convention Exercise
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CSA	comprehensive safeguards agreement
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EDF	Electricité de France
EU	European Union
HEU	high enriched uranium
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
HTR	high-temperature reactor
INSSP	Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization
IPPAS	International Physical Protection Advisory Service
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
ITER	International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor
JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
LEU	low enriched uranium
MNSR	miniature neutron source reactor
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPP	nuclear power plant
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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

NSF	Nuclear Security Fund
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PUI	Peaceful Uses Initiative
ReNuAL	Renovation of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SESAME	Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East
TC	technical cooperation
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
VIC	Vienna International Centre
WHO	World Health Organization
WMD	weapons of mass destruction
WWR	water cooled, water moderated reactor – Kazakhstan

## **5. Arrangements for the Conference** (GC(61)INF/9 and 10)

### **(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 61st session consist of all items listed in documents GC(61)/1 and the supplementary items contained in documents GC(61)/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, 22 September 2017, as the closing date of the 61st regular session, and Monday, 17 September 2018, as the opening date of the 62nd regular session.

4. It was so decided.

## **8. General debate and Annual Report for 2016 (continued)** (GC(61)/3 and additional information)

5. Ms GOJKOVIĆ (Serbia), congratulating Director General Amano on his reappointment, said that Serbia highly appreciated the results of the Agency's work under his leadership and was sure that his experience and professionalism would contribute to further strengthening the Agency's reputation.

6. Serbia remained committed to the Agency's fundamental principles and goals relating to safe and secure applications of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in accordance with international instruments and practices. It would continue to support the Agency's programme to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of verification measures and efforts to develop integrated safeguards in accordance with the NPT.

7. The importance that Serbia attached to strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and to the suppression of nuclear terrorism was exemplified by a number of preparatory actions within the framework of ratification of the additional protocol to the NPT, and by various activities to raise nuclear security awareness. Of particular significance was a national seminar held in Belgrade in 2017 with the participation of the representatives of many governmental agencies and with the Agency's support.

8. The activities in nuclear and radiation safety and security were important institutional pillars of the Agency. In pursuance of its commitment to the Agency's basic goals, Serbia had actively participated in the implementation of the ConvEx-3 exercise in 2017, which had been organized by the Agency for the purpose of checking national emergency preparedness and response capabilities.

9. As part of its efforts to achieve full compatibility with the Agency's nuclear security requirements, Serbia had worked to provide the relevant instruments for a legislative and regulative framework. The Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management were in the final stage of the ratification procedure.

10. As national regulations on nuclear security provided a legal basis for the development of design basis threat and physical protection systems for operators and the elaboration of long-term plans and goals, such as the implementation of international conventions and strengthening of professional capacities in the field of nuclear safety and security, Serbia planned to adopt an INSSP, strengthen the implementation of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and enhance compliance with the Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources.

11. Serbia's capacity building and infrastructure development activities on radiation protection and nuclear safety had been acknowledged by the Agency and supported by national and international projects, which had provided relevant expertise, advice and technical assistance.

12. Although the application of nuclear energy was controlled and covered by national legal instruments, Serbia was strongly committed to strengthening its national legal and regulatory framework in that area so that it would be more comprehensive and in compliance with international safety standards and practices and with the EU acquis. It therefore supported the Secretariat's efforts to bolster international safety standards, recommendations and relevant international legal and political texts and recognized that technical assistance was an essential prerequisite for any progress.

13. In conclusion, he gave assurances that Serbia would continue to lend its full support to the Agency's work while maintaining its traditional orientation towards the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. To that end, it also counted on the support of other Member States in endorsing its candidature for membership on the Board of Governors for the period 2017–2019.

14. Mr NASALYK (Ukraine) said that his country noted the Agency's key role in the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, the importance of the safeguards system and the implementation by the Agency of the obligations of States with regard to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

15. Despite the continued aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and its illegal occupation of Crimea, Ukraine was, and would remain, committed to the objectives of the NPT and fulfilled its obligations in accordance with its CSA and additional protocol.

16. The Agency had been able to draw the broader conclusion for Ukraine in 2016 thanks to productive cooperation with the Government, the country's commitment to fulfilling its international obligations and the successful introduction of a State system of inventory control.

17. Ukraine highly appreciated the continued application of safeguards by the Agency to all nuclear facilities and materials in Ukraine in accordance with the norms of international law and the Agency's Statute. Ukraine supported the work of the Agency to strengthen the effectiveness of the safeguards system, as the progress made in implementing safeguards at the State level would enable the Agency to address new challenges relating to nuclear technologies.

18. The reduced number of verifications and associated activities since integrated safeguards had been applied in Ukraine in 2012 reflected the high level of mutual trust between Ukraine and the Agency. It was vital to continue improving the safeguards regime, which was essential for building international confidence, in order to respond effectively to the growing verification requirements of Member States.

19. Ukraine recognized the indisputable authority and independent role of the Agency in applying safeguards and drawing relevant conclusions in accordance with its Statute, the NPT, NWFZ treaties and Agency bilateral and multilateral safeguards agreements.

20. Ukraine fully supported the TC programme and appreciated its effective role in the responsible development of peaceful, safe and secure applications of nuclear science with regard to the SDGs. The increase in size and complexity and the comprehensive nature of the 2016–2017 TC programme had ensured that the contribution made by atomic energy to worldwide peace and prosperity had been increased significantly.

21. The focus for Ukraine for 2016–2017 was decommissioning and waste treatment in and around the Chernobyl NPP. Other regional projects would focus on radiological rehabilitation management in the Chernobyl area. Mitigating the effects of the Chernobyl accident and taking responsibility for contaminated areas was a priority for the Government of Ukraine, which was prepared to work actively with the Agency on those issues for the 2018–2019 TC programme cycle. Ukraine was willing to share with Member States its national experience of successful post-accident activities in the Chernobyl area, designed to transform Unit 4 into an environmentally safe system, provide for safe decommissioning and enable the safe demolition of unstable facilities and equipment. In 2016, after many years of construction and with the support of international donors, the New Safe Confinement had been installed successfully over the destroyed Unit 4 of the Chernobyl NPP. The engineering project, which was unprecedented in terms of design and construction, had led to a significant reduction in radiation exposure for personnel, the public and the environment.

22. Ukraine was particularly proud of its successful cooperation throughout 2016 and 2017, especially in relation to the Eurovision Song Contest 2017 held in Kyiv from 9–13 May 2017. The success of that major public event had depended significantly on the efficient implementation of nuclear security measures, jointly organized by the Government of Ukraine and the Secretariat.

23. Nuclear energy was, and would continue to be, an important component in ensuring medium and long-term energy safety and security in Ukraine and constituted one of the foundations for the sustainable development of the national economy. Its importance had been reflected in the corresponding updated energy strategy of Ukraine, which had been adopted by the Government in 2017.

24. Ukraine highly appreciated the Agency's efforts to improve the level of safety and security of nuclear and radioactive materials, which prevented their trafficking. As the responsibility for nuclear security rested with individual States, Ukraine wished to confirm that all its nuclear facilities were operating in normal operating conditions. Additional measures had been taken to reinforce physical protection and strengthened security for all 15 power units in operation at the country's four NPPs. Ukraine was adopting all possible measures to ensure the highest level of physical protection of nuclear facilities and material and was fully implementing its international nuclear safety and security obligations.

25. The Government of Ukraine would not allow the Russian Federation to extend its jurisdiction to nuclear materials and sites which were on the Crimean peninsula. Guarantees for safeguards in Ukraine, including within Ukraine's territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, were based on Ukraine's CSA and additional protocol and were compliant with General Assembly resolutions 68/262 of 27 March 2014, on the territorial integrity of Ukraine, 70/10 of 17 November 2015, on the 2014 Agency report, and 71/158 of 13 December 2016, on the 2015 Agency report.

26. Mr MALLAM (Nigeria) congratulated the Director General on his election for a third term.

27. Nigeria had continued to reap the benefits of nuclear science and technology applications for national development, particularly in the areas of agriculture, human health, water resources, training and capacity development. It was grateful to the Agency for its assistance and assured the international community that it would continue to ensure compliance under its national nuclear programme with international best practices and applicable national and international treaties and conventions.

28. An IRRS team had conducted a 10-day mission in Nigeria in July 2017. In its preliminary assessment, the team had recognized Nigeria's strong commitment to improving nuclear and radiation safety. The Nigerian Government was awaiting the final report and would ensure that its recommendations and suggestions were implemented.

29. Progress had been made in Nigeria's quest to acquire a multipurpose research reactor. The relevant documents had been forwarded to the Agency for a review in order to ensure that the reactor was operated with the highest consideration for safety and security.

30. Specific attention had been given to postgraduate programmes under the country's nuclear power programme and other nuclear application programmes. Significant achievements had been recorded with support from the Agency and from other countries. Nigeria appreciated the Agency's continued support for fellowships, training meetings, workshops, conferences and other activities for the benefit of its citizens.

31. Nigeria also appreciated the Agency's support for the expansion and equipment of its national cancer control centres. It would host an expert mission to assess the state of the facilities and to carry out a needs assessment. Significant progress in cancer management had been achieved through nuclear medicine and radiotherapy.

32. Nigeria was particularly pleased with the progress recorded in the regional Sahel TC project. The Agency's deployment of isotope hydrology methodology in the region's shared aquifer zones had produced tangible results and data that Nigeria and other affected States found very useful. Nigeria expressed its gratitude to the States that had provided the resources and looked forward to the commencement of the second phase of the project.

33. In line with Nigeria's commitment to the nuclear non-proliferation regime and to compliance with its national nuclear security obligations, the 30 kW MNSR at the Zaria Centre for Energy Research and Training was undergoing core conversion from HEU to LEU fuel. Nigeria acknowledged the support provided by the Agency and other development partners in that regard.

34. In 2016, the Agency had approved Nigeria's hosting of the African Regional School on Nuclear Security, which was due to start work in November 2017. The school was expected to be attended by several African Member States. Arrangements for the successful running of the school were being finalized, and Nigeria was optimistic that the programme would significantly enhance participants' capacity in areas relating to nuclear security and the safe operation of nuclear facilities in the region.

35. Despite resource constraints due to global economic challenges, the Agency continued to ensure the prudent and judicious management of human and financial resources. Nigeria commended the Agency on its action to ensure that Member States had unfettered access to information on nuclear science and technology for their social and economic development within the ambit of the three cardinal objectives of safety, security and safeguards.

36. Mr BOZUMBAYEV (Kazakhstan) said that the Director General's report reflected the Agency's balanced and effective policy on nuclear safety, security and non-proliferation and that his country fully supported its main provisions.



37. Practical steps must be taken to reduce the threat posed by nuclear weapons, including multilateral initiatives to reduce countries' nuclear arsenals that brought together all de facto nuclear-weapon States and threshold States. The process of drafting a nuclear weapons convention should begin at the earliest opportunity. It was also important to develop a legally binding system that prohibited the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon States.

38. Kazakhstan voiced concern at the escalation of the DPRK's nuclear military programme and called on that country to fulfil its obligations pursuant to relevant Security Council resolutions and to resume the six-party negotiations. It supported the Agency's efforts to rein in the DPRK's nuclear programme.

39. As a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the 2017–2018 term, Kazakhstan was, as a matter of priority, supporting efforts to bolster the nuclear non-proliferation regime, impede the further development of nuclear weapons and enhance nuclear security. It supported the work of the Nuclear Security Contact Group and was making every effort to promote implementation of the outcomes of the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit

40. In 2006, Kazakhstan's WWR-K research reactor had begun operating on LEU. Kazakhstan was continuing its research on ways to convert other research reactors in Kazakhstan to operate on LEU. Kazakhstan was also working on HEU-free radioisotope production technologies and was developing economic mechanisms to encourage the adoption of the non-HEU technologies that had been supported by Nuclear Security Summit participants. Without effective economic incentives, States were unlikely to stop using HEU in industry.

41. The Agency LEU Bank had opened in August 2017. At the opening ceremony, the President of Kazakhstan has proposed the consolidation of existing global non-proliferation initiatives and had underscored Kazakhstan's readiness to host the next Nuclear Security Summit.

42. Kazakhstan believed that implementation of the JCPOA would strengthen regional and global security. Full transparency of Iran's nuclear programme would strengthen the non-proliferation regime and would enable NPT States Parties to exercise their legitimate right to peaceful nuclear activities.

43. Kazakhstan was concerned that the amendment to Article 6 of the Statute of the Agency had been ratified by only 60 countries. Further efforts were needed to ensure the entry into force of that amendment and a balanced approach should be adopted when determining the affiliation of Member States to regional groups of the Agency. It was, moreover, a cause of regret to Kazakhstan that, despite being an active and responsible Member of the Agency, it was excluded from participating in its policy-making bodies. It understood that its unfair exclusion was attributable to the existing rules and procedures and called on the Secretariat and Member States to resolve that issue so that Kazakhstan could participate fully in the Agency's work.

44. Mr BININGA (Congo) said that his country continued to appreciate the Agency's efforts to foster development, international peace and security and social and economic progress. He welcomed the conclusions from the Technical Cooperation Conference and the second International Conference on Nuclear Security and conveyed his country's gratitude to the Agency for its response to requests submitted by the Congo during the 60th session of the General Conference.

45. The peaceful use of nuclear applications and technologies significantly benefited Member States, making progress possible in the fields of energy, agriculture, medicine, industry, research and others. Mindful of the challenges of protecting people and the environment against the harmful effects of ionizing radiation and fighting against nuclear, radiological and environmental terrorism, the Congo had established three priorities: first, to update its national nuclear legal framework to meet international requirements; second, to establish a regulatory body for radiation

protection and nuclear safety and security; and third, to ratify international conventions on nuclear safety and security.

46. Guided by those priorities, the Congo had implemented a draft act on regulating the use of nuclear applications in collaboration with the Agency. The act aimed to regulate all activities involved in the promotion and use of nuclear applications and technologies and to protect people, users and the environment from the harmful effects of ionizing radiation. It had been prepared in line with international standards and principles and covered all areas of monitoring and nuclear regulation. In addition, it provided for mechanisms that would allow regulations to be applied by an independent body, thus allowing the Congo to honour its international commitments. The independent body would be operational from 2018 once the act setting it up had been promulgated.

47. The Congo intended to sign several documents that week during the current session, including the Agreement Concerning the Provision of Technical Assistance by the IAEA to the Republic of Congo, AFRA, a letter of support for the Agency's Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Resources and its additional guidelines, and a letter of approval of the INSSP plan. In addition, the Congo was continuing work to ratify a number of international conventions on nuclear safety and security and reaffirmed its willingness to make multilateral cooperation with the Agency central to the strengthening of its capacities.

48. In its conviction that protecting the well-being of current and future generations was a collective responsibility, the Congo encouraged all States that had not yet done so to adhere to the NPT as soon as possible. His country was confident that the 61st session of the General Conference would offer a valuable opportunity to strengthen international cooperation and efforts to fulfil commitments.

49. Ms DAMJANOVIĆ (Montenegro) said that Montenegro had become a formal member of NATO on 5 June 2017 and had been in the negotiation process with the EU since 2012 with 28 negotiating chapters opened and three that were provisionally closed. Those important developments opened up opportunities for Montenegro to enhance its cooperation with the Agency.

50. Montenegro had adopted its new CPF in October 2014. Its national priority areas for cooperation were nuclear sciences and applications, sustainable development and the environment, health, radiation protection, nuclear safety and security and human resource development. In line with the principles enunciated in its Constitution, Montenegro considered environmental sustainability a key component in its decision-making process. In that sense, it welcomed the Agency's valuable technical and expert assistance in creating the conditions to enhance environmental protection.

51. Another important area of cooperation with the Agency was human health, in particular the application of nuclear technologies in medicine. The Agency had provided valuable support in radiology and oncology, and in improving Montenegro's nuclear medicine capacities.

52. Montenegro focused particular attention on strengthening the national security framework by implementing international instruments and fostering cooperation to prevent trafficking in nuclear and radioactive materials and terrorism, and participated in various non-proliferation initiatives, such as the knowledge management system in the area of trafficking in south-east Europe.

53. Since 2007, Montenegro had successfully participated in numerous national, regional and interregional TC projects and hoped to continue those positive and effective activities in the future. In that context, she noted the initiative to establish a South-East European International Institute for Sustainable Technologies, designed to promote collaboration between science, technology and industry and provide platforms for the education of young scientists and engineers based on knowledge and technology transfer from European laboratories. Real international cooperation, bringing people together in the spirit of science for peace, could greatly contribute to the development

of the economic situation, improve the standard of living, reduce unemployment, in particular for young people, and reverse the brain drain, a serious problem facing her region.

54. She also drew attention, in that context, to the project proposals on a fourth generation synchrotron light source, which could provide a broad spectrum of research and industrial applications, and a facility for cancer radiation therapy and biomedical research with protons and heavy ions.

55. The initiative, which had been supported from the outset by the Government of Montenegro and was now embraced by the whole region, was making good progress in both political and scientific terms. Montenegro was keenly aware of the importance of training to scientists, engineers and technicians in increasing their expertise and forming a sufficient critical mass of staff members to operate future machines, and in developing the capabilities of user communities. Noting the key role played by the Agency in the training programme in ensuring the success of the SESAME project, jointly carried out in Jordan by countries of the Middle East, Montenegro would welcome comparable support from the Agency for the International Institute for Sustainable Technologies.

56. Ms LUO (Zambia) said that the Agency's achievements had been exemplary under Mr Amano's leadership and that his re-appointment as Director General for another term was an acknowledgement of his remarkable competence.

57. Zambia had become a Member of the Agency in 1969 and, since that time, the use of nuclear techniques had constantly contributed to its growth in such areas as health care, food security and environmental protection. To sustain and promote the application of nuclear techniques, with assistance from the Agency, Zambia had embarked on a number of initiatives designed to build human resources capacity within the country.

58. Zambia applauded the sustained efforts by the Agency to ensure that nuclear technology was not diverted for military purposes. To that end, it fully supported the Agency safeguards and called on other Member States to be steadfast in their implementation of those safeguards.

59. She drew attention to measures adopted in Zambia to ensure effective protection of the public and the environment from harmful effects of ionizing radiation, including measures to strengthen the country's regulatory capacity and tools to assess exposure to radionuclides. Those measures had involved a review of the associated legal framework, human resource capacity and infrastructure and the development of an autonomous regulatory authority.

60. With assistance from the Agency, Zambia had launched a review of its radiation regulatory system and had been taking steps to close existing gaps in the associated legal framework. The revised legal framework would help to strengthen the capacity of the radiation protection authority in such areas as radiation protection infrastructure and human resource development, with the establishment of a fully functional radiometric laboratory and the development of a national nuclear energy policy. Steps were also being taken to transform and relocate that authority to a neutral institution.

61. Zambia was also committed to the expansion of its cancer control programmes. With support from the Agency, great strides had been made in cancer care and access to such care had risen to some 16 000 new cases over the previous 10 years. Training in radiation therapy was now available at the Cancer Diseases Hospital and training would also be provided in clinical oncology, medical physics and oncology nursing, lowering the costs of such training, previously only available abroad.

62. Zambia had launched a national cancer control strategic plan and the construction of two further radiotherapy centres was at an advanced planning stage, thanks to the contribution of the Agency's TC programme through specially tailored national projects that had improved service delivery.

63. Turning to the issue of food safety and security, she reported that mycotoxin food contamination was a persistent problem, leading to stunting and reduced immunity. In response, the country had launched a programme to monitor hazardous substances in foodstuffs, including veterinary drug residues, pesticides and heavy metals, and looked forward to continued support for that work from the Agency to ensure that the health of the population was not compromised by the food which it needed.

64. Given the critical importance of energy to economic growth and industrialization, poverty eradication and provision of basic human needs, Zambia welcomed the continued efforts by the Agency to strengthen energy planning and management.

65. Given that over 90% of Zambia's electricity supply was from hydropower and therefore highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, and that, with its current economic and population growth rates, Zambia's demand for energy was likely to increase dramatically, there was a critical need to increase the diversity and resilience of the country's energy supply options. Accordingly, at the 59th session of the General Conference, Zambia had announced its intention to pursue nuclear power with a view to diversifying and strengthening its energy supply. To that end, Zambia had sought technical assistance from the Russian Federation to develop the required human resource capacity, to strengthen its legal framework, and to meet the Agency's 19 Milestones.

66. Zambia had also embarked on the creation of a nuclear science and technology centre, which would house a multipurpose research reactor, an irradiator and a nuclear medicine facility. In addition to its bilateral cooperation with the Russian Federation, Zambia looked forward to continued and strengthened technical cooperation with the Agency, in the hope of speeding up realization of its nuclear energy programme.

67. In Zambia, local counterpart funding was provided to TC projects under a financing mechanism which the country aimed to expand, so as to enhance the system of cost-sharing between the Agency and its Government. In that context, she reaffirmed the country's support for the Agency's TC activities within the framework of AFRA. Commending AFRA on its promotion of TC activities among its member States, she was pleased to be able to report that Zambia had hosted a number of AFRA events since the last session of the General Conference and gave assurances that the country would pay its full contribution to the TC and AFRA funds.

68. Mr KAYA (Lesotho) said that the theme of the 2017 Scientific Forum was highly relevant to Lesotho's efforts to establish its first radiotherapy facility and introduce the use of nuclear medicine in its health care system.

69. Lesotho faced significant challenges related to both communicable and non-communicable diseases. According to the WHO global burden of disease, cancer accounted for 17.2% of non-communicable diseases and caused 4% of all deaths in the country. Moreover, the high incidence rates of communicable diseases, including HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis, had also exacerbated the country's cancer rates. Lesotho had adopted a strategic plan on non-communicable diseases with the aim of reducing overall mortality rates from cancer, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and chronic respiratory diseases by 25% by 2025. In that regard, Lesotho deeply appreciated the partnership established between the Agency and the Ministry of Health with a view to establishing a well-equipped and adequately-staffed radiotherapy facility that could provide high-quality cancer care to patients and facilitate the country's efforts to achieve SDG 3 on ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages.

70. Through its TC programme, the Agency continued to support the use by Member States of nuclear technologies to facilitate the achievement of their national development goals. The impact of the programme had been further bolstered by the Agency's efforts to promote South-South and North-South cooperation. Lesotho had therefore welcomed the convening in May 2017 of the

International Conference on the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme: Sixty Years and Beyond — Contributing to Development. The TC programme had supported Lesotho's use of nuclear technologies to enhance livestock productivity and combat animal diseases, including emerging and transboundary diseases. Indeed, the TC programme had enabled Lesotho to procure necessary equipment and train staff on the use of nuclear techniques to make accurate livestock disease diagnoses and detect livestock pregnancies at an early stage.

71. The Agency was also working with Lesotho to formulate the country's second CPF, which would cover the period 2018–2023. The CPF would identify priority areas in which the Agency, through its TC programme, could provide technical support to promote development, including in areas such as human health, agriculture and food security, water resources, energy planning and economics, environmental protection and monitoring, and radiation safety and legal frameworks. Lesotho looked forward to continuing to work with the Agency with a view to completing and signing its Framework.

72. The Government of Lesotho was mindful of the urgent need to establish effective radiation and nuclear safety oversight mechanisms. The establishment of a national radiation protection agency would enhance Lesotho's management of radiation sources with a view to safeguarding human health and the environment from the harmful effects of ionizing radiation. In that connection, a draft radiation protection agency act had been approved by the Government and submitted to the relevant parliamentary committee for review. Although adoption of that act had been impeded by the frequent changes of government that had taken place in recent years, the Government remained committed to its adoption at the earliest opportunity. Lesotho urged the Agency to continue to support its efforts to train relevant radiation protection personnel in preparation for the launch of that agency.

73. In December 2016, Lesotho had participated at ministerial level in the International Conference on Nuclear Security: Commitments and Actions, which had provided an opportunity to discuss countries' experiences and achievements in terms of strengthening nuclear security, identifying trends and enhancing capacities to detect and respond to nuclear-related threats. Lesotho was grateful for nuclear security capacity building activities organized by the Agency for personnel from many of its national authorities.

74. In closing he commended the Agency's tireless work to strengthen the effectiveness and improve the efficiency of its safeguards regime, and the assistance that it provided to States to help them implement their safeguards agreements. The Government of Lesotho stood ready to support the Agency in that regard and would continue to comply with its obligations under its safeguards agreement.

75. Ms TCHUINTE (Cameroon) congratulated the Director General on his election for a third term and wished him every success.

76. Cameroon welcomed the Agency's strategic decision to boost its support for the application of nuclear and isotopic techniques to improve agricultural and livestock production, human health, water resource management and the environment. As such action could promote the achievement of the SDGs, Cameroon encouraged the Agency to bolster its programme based on those priorities.

77. Cameroon also encouraged the Agency to maintain its assistance to Member States in combating zoonotic epidemics and transboundary animal diseases, notably H5N1 avian influenza, which had struck a number of countries, including Cameroon, in 2016. Her Government was deeply grateful to the Agency for its support under the TC programme for the National Veterinary Laboratory, which played a major role in the fight against emerging animal diseases at the national and subregional level.

78. Cameroon appreciated the Agency's technical support for energy planning and evaluation of the potential contribution of nuclear energy to the sustainable satisfaction of national electricity needs. At the same time, it urged the Agency to step up its efforts to develop innovative means of radioactive waste management. Cameroon greatly appreciated the successful repatriation of three disused sources in 2016, since the management of category 1 and 2 disused radioactive sources remained a challenge for developing countries that lacked appropriate waste storage facilities. The Agency's TC programme on the tracking and control of orphan radioactive sources should therefore be further developed.

79. Cameroon welcomed the convening of the International Conference on Effective Nuclear Regulatory Systems in April 2016, and the exchange and training activities launched by the Agency to promote the harmonization of national regulatory infrastructures for radiation safety, including in emergencies. The Agency's guidance documents provided valuable support for the alignment of national approaches to nuclear and radiation safety and security.

80. Member States displayed a growing interest in the Global Nuclear Safety and Security Network and associated regional networks, such as the Forum of Nuclear Regulatory Bodies in Africa. Cameroon, which currently chaired the Forum, thanked the Agency for its continuous support for the Forum's activities aimed at improving national nuclear safety and security infrastructures.

81. AFRA also played an important role in promoting the contribution of nuclear technology to socioeconomic development in its member States. Cameroon urged additional African States to join those which provided regular support for the programme.

82. The International Conference on Nuclear Security held in December 2016 had offered an opportunity to reassess national responsibility for nuclear security, to identify threats to nuclear security and to recognize the Agency's pivotal role in facilitating and coordinating international cooperation.

83. Cameroon expressed gratitude to the Agency for its assistance in implementing nuclear security measures during the 2016 Africa Women Cup of Nations. Agency expert missions had provided training for security personnel in the use of equipment to detect nuclear material and radioactive substances. Cameroon hoped to receive similar Agency assistance during the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations football championship.

84. Cameroon had ratified the Amendment to the CPPNM in July 2015 and was delighted that the Convention, which was of vital importance for nuclear security, had finally entered into force in May 2016. It had also ratified an additional protocol in July 2015. It commended the Agency on its efforts to enhance Member States' capacities to meet their safeguards obligations. Cameroon had participated in regional courses, for instance in collaboration with the United States National Nuclear Security Administration, for personnel tasked with running and monitoring State systems of accounting for and control of nuclear material. Act No. 2016/015 of 14 December 2016 assigned responsibility for establishing and preserving the Cameroonian national system to the National Radiation Protection Agency. Cameroon thus demonstrated unwavering support for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and global disarmament with a view to achieving lasting world peace.

85. Mr KUMA (Ethiopia) said that Ethiopia was engaged in a wide-ranging programme to attain middle-income status by 2025 and, over the previous 13 years, had achieved double digit economic growth, placing it among the countries of the world with the fastest economic growth. The Government had extensively involved the public in carrying out the second phase of the country's growth and transformation plan, which had been launched in 2016 and was expected to sustain its double digit growth until 2020 and beyond.

86. The application of appropriate science, technology and innovation was critical to efforts to accelerate the country's growth and prosperity. In particular, the peaceful use over the years of nuclear science and technology had been critical in tackling developmental problems in key social and economic sectors, such as agriculture and food security, human health, water resource management, environment, radiation protection and industry.

87. In the agricultural sector, Ethiopia attached high importance to the sustained support rendered to the Southern Ethiopian Tsetse Fly Eradication Project, which was aimed at eradicating tsetse fly from the Southern Rift Valley through the sterile insect technique. The enhanced and sustainable use of disease control technologies (chemotherapy, and vector control and eradication techniques), with the active participation of communities, would provide sustainable tsetse-free areas and new opportunities for improved crop and livestock farming.

88. Ethiopia welcomed the theme for the IAEA Scientific Forum in 2017 on Nuclear Techniques in Human Health: Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment, which was a clear demonstration of the Agency's close alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

89. Nuclear medicine and radiotherapy services in Ethiopia were being expanded beyond the capital to at least six teaching hospitals, construction of which was nearing completion. Work was under way to prepare the necessary human resources and essential equipment was being procured with technical support from the Agency. In addition, encouraging progress was being made by the radiotherapy and nuclear medicine centres in Addis Ababa, which had launched local-level postgraduate programmes to meet current and future staffing needs.

90. Given the indisputable importance of science, technology and innovation in tackling the multiple problems facing Africa, investment in the continent's scientific capabilities was crucial to sound policymaking, good governance and industrial development.

91. Accordingly, Ethiopia sought the continued support of the Agency and the country's development partners in such areas as the use of nuclear technologies for agriculture and food security; nuclear medicine and radiotherapy in the health sector; the use of isotope hydrology to assess the potential of ground water resources and in their management; and the use of nuclear technologies in industry and for research and development.

92. As a current Member of the UN Security Council, over which it had presided in September 2017, Ethiopia strongly condemned weaponization of nuclear technology in any form and degree.

93. Recent developments in the DPRK were a growing matter of concern not just for the Korean Peninsula, but for global peace and security. The latest nuclear test by the DPRK represented a dangerous escalation with potentially catastrophic consequences and the international community should use all diplomatic and political solutions at its disposal to address that issue.

94. Ethiopia set high store by the Agency's leadership in ensuring that nuclear technology was deployed throughout the world exclusively for peaceful causes.

95. Mr ROBLES TICAS (El Salvador) congratulated the Director General on his election for a third term and wished him every success. His visit to El Salvador in January 2016 had led to closer cooperation with the Agency on strategic national development projects, in particular in the area of health.

96. The Agency played a primordial role in promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy in support of countries' scientific and economic development and their achievement of 9 of the 17 SDGs of the 2030 Agenda. El Salvador benefited from nuclear technology in priority areas such as electricity generation, health, agriculture, food security, hydrology, industry and the environment.

97. The Member States of the Agency should join forces to promote the use of nuclear energy to enhance the quality and coverage of health care, and to support food production and supplies, more effective prevention and reduction of the adverse impact of climate change, enhancement of the capacity to address natural disasters, and provision of a sustainable energy supply that was accessible to all and consistent with protection of the environment.

98. El Salvador appreciated the Agency's support for its use of nuclear applications to enhance the well-being of the population, in particular in the areas of health, radiotherapy, nuclear medicine, the environment, and water and soil management. The Agency was currently supporting the implementation of a national cancer prevention and control strategy. The social and economic impacts of cancer in the country had stimulated a joint effort by governmental institutions and civil society to develop a comprehensive health-care response.

99. The Ministry of Health had taken the following steps to provide comprehensive care for non-communicable diseases, including cancer: creation of a department of non-communicable diseases; development of a national cancer prevention and control policy and an action plan; introduction of hospital-based cancer registers; development and implementation of cancer treatment standards; steps to launch a national radiotherapy unit, which would have two linear accelerators and provide brachytherapy; and creation of the National Alliance for Cancer Prevention and Control composed of health sector institutions, non-governmental organizations and civil society.

100. El Salvador strongly supported all mechanisms and initiatives aimed at promoting the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the elimination of WMDs. It urged Member States to accede to the NPT and called on all Member States that possessed WMDs to take vigorous action to eliminate their nuclear arsenals. El Salvador formed part of a group of countries that firmly believed that nuclear energy should be used only for peaceful purposes, and that condemned the threat to humankind posed by nuclear weapons and the conduct of experimental nuclear tests.

101. As a country that neither possessed, produced, imported nor stockpiled WMDs in a region that was completely free of nuclear weapons, El Salvador reaffirmed its commitment and right to strive for nuclear disarmament. It had strongly supported the UN negotiations on a binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons and would sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons when it was opened for signature on 20 September 2017. El Salvador urged all countries to sign the Treaty as soon as possible. The total elimination of nuclear weapons was the sole means of ensuring that they would not be used to the detriment of humankind.

102. The Government of El Salvador was grateful to the Agency for its cooperation through the TCF. The diverse projects, training courses, workshops and exchanges of experts had built the capacity of national institutions in the areas of water and soil management, the environment, human health and nuclear medicine. El Salvador looked forward to further cooperation with the Agency and was confident that the projects it supported would help to achieve the goals of the Government's five-year plan.

103. Ms BITADZE (Georgia) commended the Director General on his leadership, dedication and hard work in fulfilling the Agency's mandate. Georgia valued highly all the Agency's activities, from verifying compliance with the NPT and increasing nuclear safety and security to promoting the peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology. She assured the Agency of Georgia's unwavering support.

104. Georgia condemned the recent nuclear tests in the DPRK, which had flouted the international norms against nuclear proliferation and endangered the entire world. It called on the DPRK to comply fully with its obligations, cooperate promptly with the Agency and ensure its full and unconditional compliance with all relevant Security Council resolutions.



105. The rise in the number of threats from terrorist groups — some of which had already expressed an interest in acquiring WMDs — increased the likelihood that security vulnerabilities would be exploited for criminal purposes. The proliferation of nuclear and radioactive materials remained a matter of serious concern for Georgia, given its close proximity to the region that posed the highest risk of proliferation. In recent years, several attempts to smuggle nuclear and radioactive materials had been recorded in areas of Georgian territory outside the Government's control, which further amplified the sense of danger. Fortunately, Georgian law enforcement agencies had been able to prevent those activities. In the absence of an international presence in Georgia's occupied territories, however, it had become virtually impossible to conduct any type of verification activities on the ground, as a result of which the risk of proliferation of WMD-related materials and their transfer into and out of those regions had increased considerably.

106. Georgia played an essential role in supporting the existing global security architecture by implementing such measures at national level, upholding its commitments to the relevant international legal instruments and joining global security initiatives. The Government attached great importance to the Agency's core responsibilities and its decisive role in the fields of non-proliferation, nuclear energy, nuclear safety, nuclear security and technical cooperation. As nuclear safety was a global issue that required multilateral cooperation and support, Georgia would continue to work with the Agency with the aim of achieving lasting peace worldwide for current and future generations.

107. Georgia supported all measures to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the Agency's safeguards system, which was an essential part of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. Given the importance of preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, Georgia called on all countries to sign a comprehensive safeguards agreements and an additional protocol, which was the global standard for verifying compliance with the NPT.

108. In the light of the current international concerns and its national needs, Georgia had adopted national legislation to regulate all activities related to nuclear non-proliferation guarantees, which set out, in a clear, precise and understandable manner, the responsibilities of the Georgian regulatory body and of all physical and legal persons in possession of nuclear materials. In addition, an initiative for acceding to the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency had been approved by the Government and submitted to Parliament for finalization.

109. Georgia accorded great importance to the Agency's technical cooperation programme, which remained the main tool for improving nuclear and radiation safety and security. Georgia's technical cooperation with the Agency was due to increase over the 2018–2021 period, a sign of its success and also a source of new responsibilities.

110. Georgia enjoyed a successful partnership with the EU. In addition to the projects that had already been implemented, Georgia was planning, in cooperation with the Swedish Nuclear Regulatory Authority, to embark on an ambitious research project on the feasibility of building new repository and processing facilities, which would be in full compliance with the Agency's standards and European standards.

111. Georgia highly appreciated the crucial role that the US Department of Energy and Nuclear Regulatory Commission had played in enhancing the Georgian regulatory system and developing the relevant infrastructure.

112. Georgia's adoption of a national strategy on radioactive waste management was a huge step towards meeting the relevant national and international standards and requirements. The strategy approved by the Government was supplemented by an action plan which would be reviewed and renewed every two years and would ensure the step-by-step achievement of the strategy's goals, with

the aim of constructing a new sophisticated repository facility and improving the national regulatory system.

113. She expressed her country's thanks for the continuous and substantial contribution that the Agency, the EU and all Georgia's partner countries had made throughout the years. Georgia remained ready to continue its open and constructive cooperation with those partners.

114. Mr PIOTROWSKI (Poland) said that, in January 2014, the Council of Ministers had adopted Poland's nuclear power programme, which constituted a road map to the development of nuclear power. The programme was currently being updated by the Polish Government and envisaged the construction of the first NPP in Poland, which would enable the Ministry of Energy to secure long-term electricity supply at a reasonable cost while also respecting environmental protection imperatives, as it would lead to a significant annual reduction of carbon dioxide emission levels in the Polish electricity generation sector.

115. Certain issues, such as the final selection of the location, reactor technology, and financing model, needed to be resolved before the Government could make a decision in principle on the project, preferably by the end of 2017. Poland therefore planned to request an INIR mission in 2018 after reaching the Milestone for Phase 2.

116. Poland continued to attach the utmost importance to ensuring the highest achievable level of nuclear safety and the IRRS follow-up mission in 2017 had concluded that the country had fulfilled all of the recommendations and suggestions of its 2013 initial IRRS mission. The outstanding success of the follow-up IRRS mission demonstrated how hard Poland had worked to strengthen its national regulatory and legislative framework.

117. Poland's nuclear regulatory authority was well established and was working intensively with the Agency and other Member States to achieve regulatory readiness for the introduction of nuclear power to Poland. The opportunity to work with the Regulatory Cooperation Forum had proved to be especially beneficial.

118. In October 2017, Poland would host an ARTEMIS review, which would provide an independent international evaluation of its national radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel management plan.

119. In its final report, published in 2017, the Ministry of Energy's advisory committee on high temperature reactors (HTRs), established in 2016, had recommended the use of HTRs as a source of industrial heat. The Ministry of Energy was currently analysing plans for launching a government HTR construction and deployment programme and Poland had become a member of the Technical Working Group on Gas Cooled Reactors.

120. Poland attached the utmost importance to preserving the highest standards of nuclear security, both in the development of its nuclear power programme and in other peaceful applications of nuclear energy, as demonstrated by its assumption of the chair of the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The NPT remained the cornerstone of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and the ongoing review process and the successful outcome of the 2020 NPT review cycle were therefore of great importance. A progressive approach to nuclear disarmament should be followed which centred around the NPT and the relevant international institutions and agreements. The nuclear disarmament agenda could only be advanced in any genuine way by strengthening organizations such as the Agency. Poland had demonstrated its commitment to nuclear disarmament by strengthening the security of its nuclear facilities. In 2016, thanks to international cooperation and Poland's participation in the Global Threat Reduction Initiative, the remaining HEU that had been used for its research

reactor had been removed from Polish territory and from that point only LEU fuel would be used. Poland would continue to support efforts to minimize the use of HEU in civilian applications.

121. Poland continued to attach great importance to the TC programme, which was a tried and tested mechanism for sharing knowledge, experience and good practices in the area of peaceful use of nuclear energy. In 2017, as in previous years, Poland had pledged a full contribution to the TCF and it remained committed to contributing to the programme, both financially and as a participant in national and regional TC projects.

122. Monsignor DUFFÉ (Holy See) conveyed to all participants in the 61st General Conference the best wishes of His Holiness Pope Francis.

123. The Holy See commended and supported all the Agency's activities, which had contributed greatly to preventing nuclear proliferation and promoting nuclear disarmament and to fostering development through international cooperation regarding the peaceful use of nuclear technology.

124. Safeguards were an indispensable component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The Agency's involvement in the verification and monitoring of the Islamic Republic of Iran's commitments under the JCPOA was helping to promote greater peace and security in the Middle East.

125. The DPRK nuclear programme was of the utmost concern, as it threatened peace and security in the region and undermined the integrity of the non-proliferation regime. A military response was not the solution. The Holy See supported the continued and patient efforts of the international community to revive the denuclearization negotiations and to make it possible for the Agency to resume its essential verification role in the DPRK.

126. At the same time, the international community needed to work tirelessly to achieve nuclear disarmament. For that reason, the Holy See had supported the negotiations on and adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons as a step towards moving beyond nuclear deterrence to a world without nuclear weapons. The Agency was contributing substantially to that goal through its safeguards activities.

127. The first International Conference on Applications of Radiation Science and Technology and the International Conference on the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme, both held earlier in 2017, had highlighted the need to strengthen partnerships in order to build on the Agency's considerable achievements in the area of promoting peaceful nuclear energy and technology in order to foster development and ensure humanity's stewardship of God's creation. The Agency's technical cooperation projects in such fields as human health, agriculture, nutrition, food safety, animal health, pest management, drinking water and environmental protection had helped to alleviate poverty and improve the ability of countries to meet their development goals in a sustainable manner.

128. It was important not to ignore the negative impact of nuclear weapons on the poor. Through the eyes of the poor, it was possible to see more clearly how inequality and nuclear weapons were interwoven. As Pope Francis had said, squandering money on nuclear weapons was a misallocation of resources which would be far better invested in the areas of integral human development, education, health and the fight against extreme poverty.

129. The Agency's role in promoting nuclear safety and security was also of the utmost importance, in particular in view of the political instability and crises experienced in several regions. Efforts to ensure nuclear safety and to develop a safety culture had been greatly improved by the Agency's publications, peer review missions, training sessions and other programmes. The International Conference on Nuclear Security held in Vienna in December 2016 was a testament to the Agency's role as the global platform for strengthening nuclear security. The broader goals of nuclear

non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear technology were all dependent on first achieving nuclear security.

130. A new global ethics of responsibility, solidarity and cooperative security must replace the ideology of isolationism, self-interest and fear. The Holy See therefore appealed to all political leaders to collaborate in good faith on what should be the common goals of achieving nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, promoting the peaceful use of nuclear technology and ensuring integral human development.

131. Mr ULLOA (Panama) said that, under the Director General's leadership, the Agency would continue to play an important role in promoting sustainable development. The SDGs were a clear reflection of the importance that the international community attached to fulfilling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was a sine qua non for shared prosperity and international peace and security. Panama was the first country in the region to have published a national plan for achieving the SDGs, in which it sought to align its national development with the 2030 Agenda

132. Panama welcomed the progress made by the Agency in the areas of technology transfer and capacity building in Member States and in using nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes in the areas of health, nutrition, farming and environmental protection, as reflected by the numerous expert missions, lectures, regional and interregional training courses and scientific scholarships and visits carried out during the previous year. Those activities had improved the quality of life of countless individuals by facilitating access to radiological cancer treatment services, building capacity for the evaluation of nutritional programmes, providing clean energy to help develop an environment suitable for human habitation and promoting the use of nuclear applications in industry and research.

133. Panama had benefited from the Agency's technical cooperation for more than 50 years, in particular in the areas of human health, nutrition and radiological protection. Over the period 2012–2017, those technical cooperation benefits had been valued at more than €1 million. For the 2018–2019 period, technical cooperation activities in Panama would focus on providing radiological protection and building national capacities for the use of nuclear applications, areas in which Panama had made a commitment at the highest level.

134. The benefits provided by nuclear techniques in the areas of radiological diagnostics, nuclear medicine and radiation oncology were essential for the diagnosis, treatment and management of serious diseases, including non-communicable diseases. The Agency was helping to run specialized training courses and build the necessary infrastructure in Panama to enable the country to use nuclear techniques to overcome challenges such as cancer, malnutrition, obesity and chronic disease. Nuclear techniques could also be used to assess the immune response of infected individuals and monitor for drug resistance. All such activities were clearly oriented towards improving the quality of life of Panamanian citizens.

135. In that connection, Panama welcomed the IAEA Scientific Forum 2017 and thanked the Secretariat for the invitation to participate in the opening session.

136. Panama was pleased to see that the Agency was committed to promoting gender equality throughout its activities and that the percentage of women in senior management positions had risen to 28% in 2016, the highest level in the Agency's history. Panama urged the Agency to continue its efforts in that regard.

137. Reviewing events of great importance to the international community being held that same week, including the 61st session of the General Conference, the 72nd session of the General Assembly, the Conference on Facilitating Entry into Force of the CTBT and the opening for signature of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, he echoed the words of the President

of the 72nd session of the General Assembly, recalling that, although the UN had been created for the people, the average person was not involved directly in any of its formal processes; it was therefore all the more important that efforts were made to ensure that their voices were heard.

138. Mr MUAKASA (Democratic Republic of the Congo) said that, having chosen to take advantage of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy to foster social and economic development for the benefit of its population, his country was grateful to the Agency for its support in that area, which had enabled significant developments in the country's capacities and nuclear science and technology infrastructure.

139. Experience in operating its two research reactors had enabled the Democratic Republic of the Congo to improve its nuclear and radiological safety. Nuclear facilities came under the control of a legal, regulatory and institutional framework, combined with the national infrastructure for radiological and nuclear safety. The country's reactors were therefore protected through inspections and on-site recommendations. Radiological facilities belonging to users of radioactive sources in different national sectors were subject to periodic regulatory inspection to ensure their safe and secure use.

140. His country had undertaken to develop a plan for decommissioning its nuclear facilities, as the outcome of a major initiative by the Kinshasa Regional Nuclear Research Centre, an operating organization, in collaboration with other governmental agencies to develop a technical strategy to manage decommissioning at the research reactor site. The strategy should meet international standards and practices in all areas that the national nuclear regulatory authority deemed appropriate to ensure that facility safety remained a priority. The Democratic Republic of the Congo therefore welcomed the encouraging results of the international expert mission from 13–17 October 2016 to examine and consolidate the decommissioning plan, which included management of nuclear fuel and the resulting radioactive waste.

141. The Democratic Republic of the Congo expressed its gratitude to the Agency and its Member States for the assistance provided under the TC programme and through various national TC projects and AFRA.

142. To ensure that the Agency had the means to implement its policy, the Democratic Republic of the Congo had resolved to meet all its contribution commitments to the Working Capital Fund, the Regular Budget, the TCF and AFRA. In response, it expressed the wish that more of its nationals might be employed within the Secretariat to exchange and share experience and expertise.

143. The Democratic Republic of the Congo considered that the IAEA Scientific Forum 2017 on Nuclear Techniques in Human Health: Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment, was an excellent platform for the sharing of knowledge on disease prevention through better nutrition, and on the challenges which countries faced in ensuring the safe use of nuclear medicine for the early detection, diagnosis and treatment of diseases, and the use of radiotherapy to treat cancer, while highlighting the importance of a multidisciplinary approach to best care for patients. It was grateful to the Agency for agreeing to share the cost of acquiring a new gamma camera unit to strengthen its national nuclear medicine activities. In that context, he reported that his country had undertaken to establish its first national oncology centre specializing in the prevention and treatment of cancer.

144. In its determination to ensure the peaceful and exclusively development-oriented use of nuclear energy, the Democratic Republic of the Congo had ratified the NPT in 1972, signed its additional protocol in 2003, and ratified the Pelindaba Treaty in 2005. It therefore urged other States to make comparable commitments to working towards a world without nuclear weapons.

145. Turning to nuclear security, his country welcomed the significant human and technological resources mobilized to tackle the illicit trafficking and smuggling of nuclear material at regional and

international levels and expressed its determination to fight those two growing threats alongside other States and regional and international structures. It also welcomed the memorandum of understanding concluded with the European Commission, on cooperation in nuclear security, in particular in combating the smuggling of nuclear materials. Controls along the country's borders were now being strengthened thanks to a human resources development programme and donated detection equipment.

146. Reacting to the tragic events of 11 September 2001 and in response to Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), his Government had established two nuclear security support structures: the National Nuclear Security Council and the National Counter-Terrorism Coordination Committee. In collaboration with the Nuclear Regulatory Authority, those two structures clearly demonstrated the Government's determination to combat the illicit trafficking in radioactive material and the threat of nuclear terrorism.

147. In 2016, at the request of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Agency had organized a national workshop on threat assessment and design basis threat. The country would then host an IPPAS mission in December 2017, which it hoped would strengthen the nuclear security regime in its nuclear and radiological facilities.

148. The Democratic Republic of the Congo called once again for a multilateral approach to issues of common interest and looked forward to the Agency's continued work to promote the peaceful applications of nuclear energy, in particular in pursuit of the development goals and a world free of nuclear weapons.

149. Mr LINHART (Austria) said that his country was honoured and privileged to host the Agency. He congratulated the Director General on his election for a third term and gave assurances that the Agency could continue to count on Austria's full support.

150. Austria regarded the TC programme as an integral component of the Agency's activities. While it had reservations regarding nuclear energy generation, it fully supported peaceful non-power applications of nuclear science and technology. Austria would therefore continue to contribute to the TCF in 2018.

151. The DPRK had conducted its sixth and strongest nuclear test two weeks previously and had fired a ballistic missile over Japan into the Pacific the previous week. The Austrian Foreign Minister had strongly condemned such dangerous and provocative action and had summoned the representative of the DPRK in Vienna. The behaviour of the DPRK posed a direct challenge to the Agency's core objective of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Security Council resolution 2375 (2017) demonstrated the determination of the international community to react decisively to the DPRK nuclear weapon programme. Austria was convinced that a negotiated agreement was the sole means of resolving the issue. The JCPOA could serve as a model, since it demonstrated that the most difficult problems could be resolved by means of serious dialogue and negotiations. Austria attached the utmost importance to the implementation of the JCPOA and to the Agency's crucial monitoring role.

152. The precarious situation on the Korean Peninsula also demonstrated the need to boost non-proliferation efforts based on the NPT and Agency safeguards. Non-proliferation must be combined with far more vigorous action to achieve nuclear disarmament. The new Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons would shortly be opened for signature. As the Treaty had given rise to intense debate in the Agency, he pointed out that Article 3 required States Parties, as a minimum, to comply with their Agency safeguards obligations. Accordingly, it actually bolstered the safeguards regime. He also pointed out that additional protocols set higher standards of non-proliferation monitoring than those enshrined in the NPT.

153. Austria continued to support the modernization of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories in Seibersdorf. It greatly appreciated the progress achieved to date and thanked the Friends of ReNuAL Group for its invaluable financial cooperation and also the other parties that had contributed to the project.

154. The cost and impact assessment of NPPs should fully take into account all negative factors, such as possible accidents and the impact of scenarios such as radioactive water disposal on public health and the environment. As Austria was deeply convinced that nuclear energy could never be competitive or safe, it advocated a worldwide controlled phasing-out of nuclear energy production. Firmer action was required to make full use of renewable energy and to enhance global energy efficiency and energy savings. While respecting States' sovereign right to opt for nuclear power, Austria was promoting a transparent and open dialogue with neighbouring countries concerning the whole nuclear cycle.

155. Full implementation of the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety would require safety improvements in all 440 existing NPPs. Austria expected the Agency to fully support the achievement of that objective by Member States. As nuclear safety must be a top priority, it was vital for the Agency to take into account existing expertise, such as the Director General's report on the Fukushima Daiichi Accident and the Vienna Declaration, when developing its nuclear safety strategy and programme of work.

156. Mr STEINMANN (Switzerland) said that the nuclear test conducted by the DPRK on 3 September 2017 demonstrated how much was at stake in the context of nuclear non-proliferation. Switzerland strongly condemned the test and called on the DPRK to comply with relevant Security Council and Agency resolutions, to return to the NPT and to resume the implementation of its safeguards agreement. The test had demonstrated the urgent need for the entry into force of the CTBT as a legally binding instrument in order to prohibit nuclear tests once and for all.

157. Switzerland had succeeded in having the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety included in the agenda of the Seventh Review Meeting of the CNS in March and April 2017, thereby ensuring that future country reports and reviews would take the Declaration into account. Switzerland would continue to promote its global implementation.

158. As 2016 had been a crucial year for nuclear security, Switzerland commended the Agency's efforts to play a global coordinating role in that regard. It had contributed to the NSF and would continue to support an enhanced role for the Agency.

159. Switzerland supported the development of the safeguards system and the implementation of the State-level concept. It was vital for the Agency to optimize the safeguards system in order to address future challenges and to channel its resources into the areas of greatest sensitivity in terms of nuclear proliferation. Accordingly, the State-level concept should not imply preservation of the status quo under another label but should entail tangible, substantial and measurable benefits for the Agency and its Member States.

160. In May 2017, the people of Switzerland had accepted a new energy law that provided for the implementation of the 2050 Energy Strategy. It was based on energy efficiency and the promotion of renewable energy, in line with climate goals and security of supply. Electricity generation by the existing NPPs would be strictly monitored by the Federal Nuclear Safety Inspectorate, and no new NPPs could be constructed. The public authorities would be required to take vigorous action to support energy efficiency and renewable energy. The Confederation, cantons, communes and public corporations were committed to fulfilling that task. Switzerland expected the Agency to play a similar pioneering role in respect of energy consumption in its buildings, mobility and resource management. Switzerland had sought, through its donation of an energy-monitoring screen for the VIC rotunda and

other contributions, to enhance the transparency of energy and electricity consumption, and to raise staff and management awareness of the fact that the cheapest kilowatts per hour were not those of nuclear or solar origin but those that were economized.

161. The first decommissioning of a Swiss NPP would take place in December 2019. That decision had been taken by the operator on the basis of economic considerations along with current electricity market prices and prospects. The decommissioning and elimination of radioactive waste would cost almost 20 billion Swiss francs. The operators of NPPs made annual contributions to an independent fund established for the purpose. The responsible Swiss authorities were well aware of the risks involved in such funding, since most power generating enterprises had incurred losses in 2016.

162. A clear majority of the Swiss population supported the decision to abandon nuclear power. At the same time, the authorities would have to give top priority to nuclear safety and security measures at both the national and international level, since nuclear accidents could have consequences well beyond the country's borders. To that end, Switzerland would continue to cooperate closely with the Agency in the areas of research and technology, and counted also on international cooperation.

163. Mr LOUGHHEAD (United Kingdom) said that, following his Government's announcement of its intention to leave the Euratom Treaty, he wished to reaffirm the United Kingdom's continuing strong support for the civil nuclear industry, the highest standards of nuclear safety, security and safeguards, the development of peaceful applications of nuclear technology and the Agency's central role in achieving those goals.

164. The United Kingdom's key objectives for the year ahead were to uphold its commitment to civil nuclear energy at both national and international levels; to maintain robust nuclear safety and security, emergency preparedness and response and safeguards regimes and support their implementation; and to promote the peaceful uses of new and existing civil nuclear technologies around the world, while ensuring an effective international nuclear non-proliferation regime.

165. Turning to the recent developments in the DPRK, he said that the United Kingdom called on the DPRK to halt its nuclear and missile development programme. The recent nuclear weapon test was reckless and posed an unacceptable further threat to international peace and security. The international community had universally condemned the test and must join forces in applying increased pressure on the DPRK's leaders to stop their destabilizing actions. The DPRK must resume compliance with its safeguards agreements and cooperation with the Agency, and abandon its nuclear programme in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

166. Nuclear energy currently provided around 25% of the United Kingdom's electricity needs. In the coming decades, many of the country's existing plants would reach the end of their operational lives, while the demand for low-carbon energy was increasing. New nuclear technologies would have a key role to play in the years ahead and there were many opportunities to be found in that sector in the United Kingdom.

167. Hinkley Point C, the country's first new nuclear power plant for over 20 years, would provide 3.2 gigawatts of secure, low-carbon electricity for 60 years, meeting around 7% of the country's energy needs. EDF Energy had made excellent progress; in March 2017 the first concrete had been poured for the power station galleries. The first reactor was due to come online in 2025, and the second the following year.

168. The United Kingdom was committed to maintaining its status as a world leader in nuclear research and development and sustaining and developing its existing international collaboration in that field. It would maintain and enhance its world-leading fusion expertise and seek continued participation in international fusion projects, such as the Joint European Torus project at Culham and



the ITER project in France. Furthermore, the United Kingdom recognized the potential of small modular reactors for producing low-carbon energy, whether small versions of existing types or new designs.

169. The United Kingdom remained open for business and was ideally placed to continue supporting opportunities across the civil nuclear fuel cycle. It would continue to meet its obligations in a proactive and transparent manner and to share expertise with the aim of strengthening nuclear safety and improving radioactive waste management. It was an active contracting party to the CNS and the Joint Convention and looked forward to engaging fully with the Joint Convention process in 2018. It was pleased to note that the Seventh CNS Review Meeting had the highest participation levels to date and had identified a number of cross-cutting safety issues that should be tackled as a priority by Member States with the Agency's support.

170. The United Kingdom had welcomed an OSART follow-up mission to the Sizewell B plant in April 2017 to assess the facility's adherence to international standards of best practice, and had planned another mission to the Torness NPP in 2018. The Government looked forward to receiving the findings from those missions and was committed to transparency with regard to the outcomes, ensuring public confidence in the country's ability to safely deliver nuclear energy. The United Kingdom encouraged all Member States to host OSART missions.

171. In addition, the Government was committed to maintaining the highest standards of emergency preparedness and response programmes and was reflecting the latest standards from Euratom and the Agency in its domestic regime as part of its commitment to continuous improvement. The United Kingdom also strongly supported the Agency's central role in promoting robust nuclear security regimes and assisting in their implementation. In that context, he reported that the United Kingdom had contributed a further £8.5 million in 2017 to the NSF and its experts had supported IPPAS missions and he called on other Member States to provide funds and expertise to support the Agency's nuclear security work.

172. Commending the Agency on the success of its International Conference on Nuclear Security: Commitments and Actions, in December 2016, he expressed the hope that its work would help in tackling current and emerging security challenges. In that context, he reported that the United Kingdom was continuing to work with the Agency to assist States in their capabilities to respond to nuclear security events and to develop the effectiveness of the International Nuclear Security Advisory Service. It encouraged continued coordination between the Agency and other international bodies, such as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and INTERPOL, in order to deliver training and exercises.

173. In 2017, the United Kingdom's Office for Nuclear Regulation had launched a new regulatory framework, the Safety Assessment Principles, which enabled industries to design security solutions aligned with their business needs. That would increase security competence within the civil nuclear sector and assign higher priority to protection against emerging threats.

174. Turning to safeguards, he said that the global safeguards regime was central to the peaceful use of nuclear technologies. The United Kingdom supported the Agency in its efforts to strengthen and verify compliance with safeguards obligations and welcomed the continued development of State-level safeguards.

175. He called on all States that had not yet done so to ratify their CSAs and additional protocols in order to ensure their universalization. As part of the preparations for its departure from the EU, the United Kingdom was establishing a domestic nuclear safeguards regime that would meet existing Euratom standards. That would ensure that the Agency retained its right to inspect all civil nuclear

facilities and would continue to receive all current safeguards reports, ensuring the continued robust international verification of the United Kingdom's safeguards activities.

176. The United Kingdom remained a strong supporter of the TC programme and had pledged more than £3.6 million to the TCF, continuing its record of paying its voluntary contributions on time and in full. He called on other Member States to do the same.

177. He congratulated the Secretariat on the success of the recent International Conference on the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme: Sixty Years and Beyond — Contributing to Development and welcomed its continued implementation of the results-based management approach. He encouraged the Secretariat and Member States to assess project outcomes and implement lessons learned.

178. The United Kingdom was committed to the NPT as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation architecture and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and recognized the Agency's vital role in support of the Treaty. The first Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held in May 2017, represented a positive step forward and the United Kingdom looked forward to a constructive meeting of the NPT Preparatory Committee in 2018.

179. With regard to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, his country's position was well known. It would not sign or ratify it, nor would it be bound by it. That Treaty was not a matter for the General Conference.

180. He welcomed the Director General's report confirming that the Islamic Republic of Iran was adhering to its nuclear-related commitments as outlined in the JCPOA. It was important for all parties to the JCPOA to implement the agreement fully. Iran's continued cooperation with the Agency was required, and Member States should assist by continuing to provide financial support to the Agency's monitoring and verification activities.

181. In the light of the Board's previous conclusion that the Syrian Arab Republic was in non-compliance with its safeguards agreement, the United Kingdom urged the Syrian regime to cooperate with the Agency to resolve all outstanding issues, including through concluding and implementing an additional protocol as soon as possible.

182. In order to meet the challenges of realizing the global benefits of nuclear technology, it was important that the Agency's resources were managed efficiently and sustainably so that it could deliver its key priorities within existing funding envelopes. The United Kingdom also emphasized the importance of improving diversity in the Secretariat's staffing and senior appointments, and welcomed efforts in that regard to date.

183. Ms BERRO AMADEÏ (Monaco) congratulated the Director General on his re-election as head of the Agency, warmly recalling his official visit to Monaco in 2016, which had once again shown the importance of his work and had been an opportunity to further consolidate the excellent relations between the Agency and Monaco.

184. The 61st session of the General Conference was being held in a new context after the first UN Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, held in June 2017. That conference had concluded with a call for action highlighting the impact of human activity on the marine environment and pointing out achievements in that area. Her country underlined its strong cooperation with the Agency's Environment Laboratories, exemplified by the visit by Prince Albert II to Vienna to introduce and sponsor the Scientific Forum on Nuclear Technology for the Sustainable

Development Goals. The Prince had said that Monaco was fully committed to building a peaceful and better world by using nuclear energy for sustainable development.

185. He had also said that scientific progress and environmental conservation were not mutually incompatible, but that there was an intrinsic link between sustainable peace and development, as embodied in the Agency's slogan: "Atoms for peace and development", and reiterated Monaco's strong support of two aspects of the peaceful uses of nuclear technology: environmental protection and the advancement of global health, two of the pillars of sustainable development.

186. Monaco's close historical connection with the Mediterranean Sea meant that it had long been involved in crucial environmental work, including marine conservation. Since 1961 it had hosted the IAEA Marine Environment Laboratories, replaced by the IAEA Environment Laboratories in 2010, and in 2012 the Ocean Acidification International Coordination Centre had been established within the Laboratories. Monaco took great pride in those facilities and invited all Member States to visit them on 13 October 2018.

187. Turning to the issue of health, another area of concern, she reported that Monaco had been involved in PACT for many years since cancer was one of the main causes of illness and mortality in the world, particularly in developing countries. Countries without the necessary scientific, financial or human resources to control cancer were severely affected and countries with such resources were duty-bound to support them. Radiotherapy had been proved to benefit over half of all patients in cancer treatment and it was therefore a priority for her country to participate in improving the quality of radiotherapy and to facilitate access to it by less advantaged countries.

188. The peaceful uses of nuclear energy could aid thousands of people worldwide. In 2012, Monaco had therefore joined the PUI, which underscored how atoms could be used to promote peace and development.

189. In conclusion, she reiterated her country's unfailing support for the Agency and reaffirmed that it would continue its active partnership.

190. Mr OYUGI (Kenya) said that his country's cooperation with the Agency continued to grow, as reflected in the priority projects being implemented under the recently signed CPF for the period 2017–2022 in the areas of food and agriculture, human health, water resource management and industrial applications.

191. Kenya had selected nuclear power as suitable technology to meet its demand for electricity, since it was safe, reliable and environmentally friendly. During the past year, the Agency had provided technical advice and expert reviews on site selection, reactor technology assessment, industrial involvement, and the development of radioactive waste management and nuclear fuel cycle policies and strategies.

192. Kenya was establishing the legal and regulatory infrastructure required to support the development of its nuclear power programme. The Nuclear Regulatory Bill 2017 sought to establish an independent regulatory body and had been submitted to the relevant institutions for approval. The necessary procedures for accession to relevant conventions on nuclear safety had also been initiated.

193. As stakeholder participation was crucial in all phases of a nuclear power programme, Kenya had organized several awareness forums, including an international and regional nuclear energy week in Nairobi in March 2017, in which various States and international organizations had participated. Training had also been provided, with Agency support, for the local media, and media coverage of nuclear-related issues had improved as a result.

194. As cancer was the third most common cause of death in Kenya, after infectious and cardiovascular diseases, the Government was committed to implementing a comprehensive national cancer control programme and to building the capacity of national referral and other health institutions, with Agency support, to ensure adequate management of cancer and related diseases. Furthermore, with a view to improving the cancer management infrastructure, the Government had rationalized the National Health Insurance Fund through a private-public partnership arrangement. Under a subsidized health scheme, private health-care facilities had eased the pressure of demand for radiotherapy services in public institutions, thereby reducing waiting time and saving many lives. Kenya appreciated the Agency's assistance through the PUI for the equipment of health-care institutions and the building of human resource capacity for diagnosis and treatment.

195. Kenya had conducted activities, in collaboration with international partners, aimed at upgrading the physical security of facilities with category I and II radioactive materials. The Government had reviewed and updated the INSSP for Kenya and developed a three-year nuclear security action plan.

196. Agency safeguards inspectors had visited Kenya in May 2017 and the Government was implementing their recommendations on the national nuclear safeguards regime.

197. In July 2017, Kenya had hosted the first regional meeting of African States on the Regulatory Infrastructure Development Project for radioactive sources.

198. The Institute of Nuclear Science and Technology at the University of Nairobi was the focal point for training on peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology. Kenya benefited from Agency funding for the training of personnel and the procurement of scientific equipment. Applications of nuclear science and technology in industry had greatly contributed to the country's economic development.

199. The Kenya Bureau of Standards, in partnership with the Agency, had established a radiotracer laboratory. Kenya was grateful for the Agency's assistance for two projects in the areas of dosimetry and non-destructive testing.

200. The Ministry of Water and Irrigation had conducted water resource assessments in partnership with the Agency with a view to ensuring proper management and use of water resources.

201. Kenya's economy was based on agriculture and the country faced persistent challenges, particularly in maize production, due to increased drought spells. Accordingly, the Government had decided to use nuclear techniques in agriculture under the TC programme in order to develop schemes for irrigation and the testing of resistant maize and other species.

202. He drew attention to the fact that his country had developed a Strategic Action Plan for nuclear institutions under an AFRA project.

203. Kenya greatly appreciated the Agency's unwavering support for the use of nuclear science and technology in the country's quest for sustainable development.

**The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.**