



60 Years

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# Plenary

## Record of the Third Meeting

*Held at Headquarters, Vienna, on Tuesday, 19 September, at 10 a.m.*

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

**Later:** Ms BATTUNGALAG (Mongolia)

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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
ARCAL	Co-operation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
ARTEMIS	Integrated Review Service for Radioactive Waste and Spent Fuel Management, Decommissioning and Remediation Programmes
CNS	Convention on Nuclear Safety
ConvEx	Convention Exercise
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
ECAS	Enhancing Capabilities of the Safeguards Analytical Services
EDF	Electricité de France
EPREV	Emergency Preparedness Review
EU	European Union
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
FORO	Ibero-American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies
GRULAC	Latin American and Caribbean Group
INIR	Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review
INSSP	Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan
IPPAS	International Physical Protection Advisory Service
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
Joint Convention	Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management

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

JPA	Joint Plan of Action
LEU	low enriched uranium
MOU	memorandum of understanding
NPCs	national participation costs
NPP	nuclear power plant
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
OECD/NEA	Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
PATTEC	Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
PET	positron emission tomography
PET-CT	positron emission tomography-computed tomography
PHWR	pressurized heavy water reactor
PWR	pressurized water reactor
QC	quality control
R&D	research and development
RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ReNuAL	Renovation of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEANWFZ Treaty	Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone
SEED	Site and External Events Design
SIT	sterile insect technique
SMR	small and medium sized or modular reactors
SQP	small quantities protocol

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

TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
USA	United States of America
VETLAB	Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory
WMD	weapons of mass destruction



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

1. Mr TOJAL DE VALSASSINA HEITOR (Portugal) said that his country firmly believed that the Agency and all its Member States should share the responsibility for promoting the benefits of nuclear knowledge, science and technology to overcome the critical social, economic and environmental challenges facing the world.
2. Portugal was committed to promoting the applications of nuclear science and technology, with particular focus on medical physics and radiation oncology and the connection between nuclear science and biomedical engineering. It provided training to future generations of medical physicists and nuclear health professionals, both domestically and in other Portuguese-speaking countries where it was taking steps to improve health systems. His country's activities also focused strongly on developing high-energy proton beam therapies and other advanced cancer treatments, which would be introduced over the coming years in close cooperation with its leading nuclear research facilities and the major stakeholders in its national health system.
3. Portugal was increasing its efforts to foster multilateral cooperation in science and technology in the area of complex systems engineering, with a view to pursuing an integrated approach to medical physics. It played an active role in international networks to promote industrial and research collaboration on nuclear matters worldwide.
4. He called on the Agency to promote more international initiatives in nuclear medicine, especially radiation oncology, adding that the lessons learned from international partnerships in science and technology had clearly shown that greater knowledge, an improved scientific culture and networks of opportunity were the only way to build a better future. Transparent innovation strategies with a focus on health applications could contribute to the development of nuclear science and to achieving the Agency's overarching goal of promoting peace and development. Portugal would continue to work closely with the Agency to those ends.
5. Mr VERWAERDE (France) said that the Agency's role in implementing the NPT was particularly important, since the Treaty was an extremely valuable pillar of strategic security and stability that must be preserved and consolidated. France called on all Member States to sign a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol. The two instruments combined were the sole means of obtaining adequate assurances of the lack of undeclared nuclear activities or material.
6. He was pleased to announce that France, Euratom and the Agency had signed, on the sidelines of the last series of Board meetings, amendments to the protocols annexed to their safeguards agreement under the Tlatelolco Treaty.
7. The current strategic context, characterized by rising tensions, called for stronger commitment to the international non-proliferation regime. France would not sign the recently adopted Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons because it undermined the NPT as the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime as well as the Agency's safeguards system.
8. The DPRK's continuing implementation of a nuclear and ballistic programme, in violation of international law and the non-proliferation regime, posed a threat to regional and international security. France condemned the sixth test that the country had recently conducted. The sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council must be rigorously applied. Greater pressure should be brought to bear on the

DPRK regime so that it returned to the negotiating table, realized that escalating tensions were not in its interest and agreed to work towards the complete, irreversible and verifiable dismantling of its nuclear programme.

9. The JCPOA was an essential element of the current non-proliferation regime that France was determined to preserve. All Iranian nuclear commitments must be implemented in a rigorous, transparent and sustained manner. The parties to the negotiations had a special responsibility in that regard and the Agency's role was also essential. France commended the Agency on its strict monitoring under all sections of the plan.

10. France assigned absolute priority to achieving the highest possible levels of nuclear non-proliferation, safety and security throughout the world. The Agency had a pivotal role to play in achieving that objective, while respecting the primary responsibility of States. France appreciated the results achieved by the Agency in the complementary areas of nuclear safety and security in 2017 and would continue to provide it with both technical and financial support.

11. Nuclear energy would doubtless remain an important component of the global energy mix. France was convinced that carbon-free nuclear energy would greatly assist in addressing the challenge of climate change through implementation of the Paris Agreement and the SDGs.

12. The major restructuring of the French nuclear industrial sector initiated in 2015 had now entered its final stage. The merger of activities by EDF and AREVA NP involving the design, project management and marketing of new reactors would be effective by the end of the year. AREVA, for its part, had refocused on fuel cycle activities with the creation of New AREVA Holding and a recapitalization involving new Japanese strategic partners.

13. As France remained fully committed, above and beyond energy issues, to all peaceful applications of the atom, it remained one of the main contributors to the TCF and hosted a very large number of Agency trainees and scientific visitors, amounting to 5% of the total TC programme.

14. Mr MUCINS (Latvia) said that the peaceful application of nuclear technologies could greatly benefit SDG attainment, but that the highest levels of nuclear safety and security must be maintained. That approach characterized Latvia's provision of cutting-edge nuclear medicine services, including through cyclotron technology, at its new nuclear medicine centre. Likewise, to maintain the required safety levels, new NPPs must be assigned full-spectrum Agency safety-related missions. At global level, nuclear safety must be built on transparency, international cooperation and effective information exchange among neighbouring countries.

15. Latvia was strongly committed to the implementation of the NPT and welcomed the substantial progress made under its three mutually reinforcing pillars, to which the Agency's safeguards made an important contribution. Nevertheless, serious proliferation challenges persisted that required peaceful and diplomatic solutions. Latvia welcomed the ongoing implementation by all parties of the JCPOA, a major landmark in international diplomacy. It had made extrabudgetary contributions in each of the past three years to support the Agency's central role in verification and monitoring under the JCPOA.

16. His country wholly condemned the DPRK's latest nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches, which exacerbated instability and threatened peace and security on the Korean Peninsula and worldwide. His country called for universal and complete implementation of the sanctions imposed on the DPRK by the UN Security Council and welcomed the Agency's constant preparedness to address the DPRK situation in accordance with its mandate.

17. Latvia appreciated the invaluable support provided to Member States by the Department of Technical Cooperation, particularly its guidance on regulatory frameworks to ensure high standards in safety, security and safeguards. For the 2018–2019 planning cycle, Latvia had submitted three national



projects focusing on capacity building at its secondary standards dosimetry laboratory, the enhancement of nuclear and radiation safety and the effectiveness of regulatory organizations, and the strengthening of knowledge and skills in radiation therapy.

18. His country appreciated the Agency's support for capacity building at its institutions concerned with nuclear safety and security. It would be hosting two regional training courses for medical personnel and public communications professionals from Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia in the near future.

19. Latvia was honoured to have had its representative serve as Vice-Chair of the Board, and in particular as chair of the open-ended working group for the Medium Term Strategy. It would continue its efforts to strengthen the Agency's rule-based culture and export control regimes.

20. In closing, he underscored the Agency's role in the implementation of safeguards agreements, the advancement of non-proliferation and in ensuring the effectiveness of international cooperation and dialogue on complex issues vital to international peace and security.

21. Mr ARADSZKI (Hungary) said that the Paks NPP would continue to meet the greater part of his country's electricity needs in the future once the ongoing lifetime extension of its four operating power units was complete. Site and environmental licences had been issued for the construction of two new units at the Paks site and a minister had been appointed to oversee its capacity maintenance programme. He welcomed the acknowledgement by the Seventh Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety of Hungary's compliance with the Convention's provisions and its identification of a number of its actions and initiatives as good practice.

22. Hungary commended the successful convening of the International Conference on Nuclear Security: Commitments and Actions and also the Board's approval of the Nuclear Security Plan 2018–2021, since to keep the Agency at the centre of nuclear affairs it was essential to provide it with the required technical, human and financial resources. For its part, following the designation of its Centre for Energy Research as an official Collaborating Centre, Hungary looked forward to supporting the Agency with innovative solutions in nuclear forensics. It had hosted a follow-up IPPAS mission in 2017, which had positively assessed Hungary's implementation of the recommendations arising from its full-scope IPPAS mission in 2013.

23. Hungary strongly condemned the DPRK's nuclear and ballistic missile tests in the preceding two years, which were part of an alarming trend. Such violations of General Conference and UN Security Council resolutions posed a serious threat to regional and global security and stability.

24. The implementation of the JCPOA had set a positive example for resolving controversial issues in line with the principles of the NPT. Hungary had contributed through in-the-field training opportunities for safeguards inspectors and continued to offer its safeguards-related capabilities to the Agency. It fully supported the international community's goal of ensuring that the Iranian nuclear programme complied with international norms and the highest standards of nuclear safety. Hungary was ready to assist in strengthening Iranian regulatory capacity under the umbrella of the Agency and the EU in order to enhance nuclear safety, and had signed an MOU with the Islamic Republic of Iran in April 2017 on the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

25. He announced that Hungary was making a voluntary contribution of €60 000 to the TCF and would offer its facilities and experts to the Agency in the framework of the 2018–2019 TC programme for Europe. In closing, he expressed Hungary's appreciation for the tremendous work of the TC programme over the preceding 60 years.

26. Ms MAJOLA (South Africa) noted that the General Conference coincided with the official opening for signature and ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and

encouraged all Member States to take advantage of that timely opportunity. The treaty was a historic milestone in the global efforts to establish and maintain a world free of nuclear weapons. It would provide a powerful normative framework alongside the NPT, the various NWFZ treaties and the CTBT.

27. South Africa appreciated that nuclear science and technology as drivers of socioeconomic development had become a central focus for the Agency, whose positive contributions under the 'Atoms for Peace and Development' motto were shaping the global development agenda, including the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the SDGs.

28. The TC programme provided vital support to African Member States in realizing their development goals, particularly through the use of nuclear techniques to combat zoonotic pathogens, which were said to be involved in 70% of human communicable diseases. In that context, South Africa supported the Agency's VETLAB network, which was strengthening regional and national veterinary laboratories concerned with the early detection of zoonotic diseases in wildlife and livestock, boosting the competitiveness of the African livestock industry and thus facilitating its access to international markets. The network had grown to over 44 laboratories in Africa and 19 in Asia. She stressed that funding for the TC programme had to be sufficient, assured and predictable and called on Member States to honour their assessed commitments on time and in full.

29. The Agency's nuclear applications laboratories were at the core of its R&D and training, and facilitated capacity building, the sharing of expertise and enhanced collaboration with Member States. South Africa welcomed the completion of the first phase of the ReNuAL project, made possible through Member States' generous contributions, and called on them to pledge additional resources to maintain the momentum towards its successful completion.

30. South Africa was committed to ensuring that effective nuclear security measures were in place for all nuclear and other radioactive materials, in accordance with its national and international obligations, and thus welcomed the entry into force of the Amendment to the CPPNM. Its own efforts to ratify the Amendment were at an advanced stage.

31. South Africa welcomed the consensus adoption of the Nuclear Security Plan 2018–2021, which would go a long way in guiding the Agency's support of Member States' efforts to strengthen their nuclear security regimes.

32. Her country attached great importance to the implementation of States' safeguards agreements in accordance with the Agency's legal mandate and States' own obligations. The SIR for 2016 had confirmed that South Africa's nuclear programme was exclusively used for peaceful purposes.

33. South Africa had an excellent safety record in more than 50 years of operating the Koeberg NPP. With nuclear power integral to its energy mix, and in order to ensure energy security and reduce its carbon footprint, South Africa was seeking to expand its nuclear power programme. It had hosted an IRRS mission in December 2016 in order to strengthen its regulatory framework and was busy developing an action plan to address the mission's findings.

34. Her country's national report presented to the Seventh Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety demonstrated its high levels of nuclear safety and how broader national efforts had been made to incorporate the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety. It welcomed the Agency's initiatives to promote wider adherence to the Joint Convention and was honoured to have been elected President of the Joint Convention for 2018.

35. South Africa had also been honoured to have its representative serve as Chair of the Board in a period that had seen the consensus adoption of the Medium Term Strategy 2018–2023, the Programme and Budget 2018–2019 and the Nuclear Security Plan 2018–2021, as well as the reappointment of the

Director General. She thanked Member States for their support and the African Group for having entrusted South Africa with that responsibility on its behalf.

36. Mr LEE Jin Gyu (Republic of Korea) observed that nuclear energy had fuelled his country's economic growth for the preceding four decades, during which it had achieved self-reliance in nuclear technologies, sharing them with the international community and becoming recognized as a unique nuclear success story. The safety of the population was at the forefront of his Government's nuclear policy, which also placed particular focus on reinforcing NPP safety, preparations for decommissioning and spent-fuel management. With a view to strengthening the safety of the NPPs in operation, his Government was promoting R&D and revising its regulations on accident prevention in accordance with the CNS and the principles of the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety. It had completed the regulatory steps for the safe decommissioning of Kori-1 following its permanent shutdown.

37. His country sought continuously to develop technologies for safe spent fuel management and processing. It welcomed the Agency's increased efforts in nuclear safety, decommissioning and spent fuel management and looked forward to collaborating with Member States to share technology and experience in those areas.

38. Nuclear energy had constantly driven innovation and, in that regard, his country highly valued the Agency's efforts to contribute to SDG attainment through the TC programme. Korea would continue to promote nuclear medicine technologies and support the related Agency activities under its RCA. It would continue to pursue innovative nuclear applications in the aerospace, marine and polar science fields, among others, driven by its conviction that greater application of radiation technologies would bring substantial benefits to humanity.

39. In the face of continuous warnings from the international community, the DPRK's sixth nuclear test had constituted a grave act of provocation that undermined the foundation of the global non-proliferation regime. The explosive yield had far exceeded the sum of its five preceding tests and demonstrated that the DPRK's nuclear programme was reaching a new level of threat. The DPRK's continuing nuclear activities, including operation of the 5 MW reactor and enrichment facility in Yongbyon, were in clear violation of UN Security Council resolutions.

40. In response to such conduct, his Government would work in close coordination with the international community and the Agency. While welcoming UN Security Council resolution 2375 (2017) as a demonstration of the international community's strong resolve to counter the DPRK nuclear threat, the Republic of Korea called for the General Conference to adopt a stronger resolution on the implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement between the Agency and the DPRK, in order to further strengthen international unity in responding to the DPRK's growing nuclear ambitions and threat.

41. The Republic of Korea urged the DPRK to heed the international community's calls and abandon its nuclear weapons and programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner and to comply fully with its obligations under the NPT and its safeguards agreements.

42. The fastest and safest way to use atoms for peace and development was to combine Member States' political will and nuclear capacities with the Agency's central role in promotional activities. In that way, nuclear technology could contribute to a prosperous future for humanity, and his country was committed to working at the forefront of those efforts.

43. Mr SEIDOU (Benin) said that the many and varied benefits of peaceful nuclear uses were already well known, but further innovation and R&D would both alleviate, and enhance the success of, the difficult work of contributing towards the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

44. Benin had recently signed a new CPF for 2017–2021 and the identified areas of action conformed fully with the strategic focus of his Government's programme of action for that period.

45. His country's National Assembly had recently adopted a nuclear and radiation safety act to provide a national legislative framework for its peaceful nuclear activities.

46. The benefits of the Agency's technical cooperation activities to support his country's drive towards sustainable and inclusive development could be felt in contexts such as training to strengthen staff and institutional capacities, the introduction of a legal framework for radiation and nuclear safety, the development of infrastructure and equipment for peaceful nuclear applications, and the application of sustainable soil and water management to improve soil fertility and increase farmers' income.

47. Benin had also been enabled to develop methods of evaluating biological nitrogen fixation and nutrient efficiency. Several TC projects had enhanced legume production in crop systems and developed biofertilisers for producers. The Agency had also improved the technical capacity of Benin's food health laboratory, helping to raise the quality of agricultural export products such as pineapples.

48. Several regional TC projects had been instrumental in enhancing his country's capacity to handle fallout radionuclide methods for assessing soil erosion.

49. In human health and nutrition, the new CPF covered measures to support the fight against cancer and the establishment of a nuclear medicine and radiotherapy centre at the university hospital complex planned under the Government's programme of action; the provision of equipment and expertise to launch an *in vivo* nuclear medicine service at the mother and baby unit currently under construction; assistance in establishing the optimal diagnostic reference levels to use with ionizing radiation; SIT for strengthening nutrition and addressing malnutrition; the creation of a service for isotopic measuring of parasite chemosensitivity to anti-malarial medication and vector chemosensitivity to insecticides; strengthening of the national quality control laboratory for medicines and medical consumables; and the establishment of a multidisciplinary laboratory to improve control and follow-up of cancers, cardiovascular diseases – in particular hypertension – and hereditary diseases such as sickle cell anaemia.

50. In closing, he thanked the Agency's Soil and Water Management and Crop Nutrition Section for its help in mobilizing funding through the Islamic Development Bank for an irrigation project in Benin following its successful participation in two AFRA regional projects.

51. Mr HERDAN (Germany) said that his country respected the sovereign right of every nation to choose its own energy mix and supply. Germany had decided to phase out nuclear power by the end of 2022, but would continue to be a constructive and reliable partner of the Secretariat and all Member States. The process of transforming Germany's energy system had been divided into three areas: improving energy efficiency, increasing the proportion of renewables and enhancing flexibility, all of which called for new infrastructure, on-site management, storage and close cooperation with neighbouring countries. Two important new sets of regulations for the end of the fuel cycle had entered into force in Germany in 2017. The process of sourcing a final disposal location had begun: Germany's NPP operators had contributed over €24 billion to a public fund that would finance interim and final disposal, and they would be responsible for decommissioning the plants. Having left nuclear power production behind, Germany would continue striving to be a leader in nuclear technology, medicine and research.

52. Germany had supported the modernization of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories at Seibersdorf under ECAS, ReNuAL and ReNuAL+ since 2011, had made extrabudgetary contributions worth around €10 million and, the previous day, had announced an additional contribution of €1 million to the ReNuAL+ project. Germany appealed to all Member States in a position to do so to make a financial contribution to ReNuAL, highlighting the important role of nuclear technology in fighting poverty and improving living conditions for people worldwide. He recalled that Germany had funded

one of the first national support programmes for Agency safeguards, which was to celebrate its 40th anniversary in 2018.

53. Germany welcomed the fact that more countries had adopted an additional protocol since the previous year and supported the further structured and objective evolution of individual State-level approaches.

54. Nuclear safety would remain a top priority for Germany. Self-assessments and international peer reviews conducted in cooperation with the Agency were particularly important. In 2019, the Agency would conduct an IRRS mission to review Germany's nuclear safety oversight system and the country would receive its first peer review under ARTEMIS, which would place particular emphasis on decommissioning and waste management.

55. Regarding nuclear security, Germany was preparing to host an IPPAS mission in September 2017. In 2016, Germany had hosted an international workshop on the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, which had highlighted that the security of radioactive sources for civilian use, particularly in research, medicine and industry, would continue to be a challenge for years to come. Germany welcomed the success of the International Conference on Computer Security in June 2015 and congratulated the Agency and Kazakhstan on the recent official opening of the IAEA LEU Bank, which was a key step towards ensuring global LEU supply.

56. With the NPT at its foundation, the JCPOA represented a significant step towards nuclear non-proliferation and proved that diplomacy could resolve highly complex political and security challenges. Germany commended the Agency on its professionalism in the verification and monitoring of the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear related commitments. Iran must strictly abide by all of its commitments under the Agreement, and all other parties to the Agreement should fulfil theirs in good faith. Having committed €4 million in extrabudgetary funds to the Agency's activities under the JCPOA and the JPA, Germany was committed to the full and sustained implementation of the JCPOA and was prepared to make further substantial contributions. His country encouraged other Member States to assist the Agency in conducting its long-term verification and monitoring mission.

57. Germany condemned the DPRK's flagrant disregard and continued violation of UN Security Council resolutions. The DPRK's nuclear and ballistic missile activities represented a clear threat to international peace and security. Germany strongly urged the DPRK to abandon immediately all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner and to cease immediately all related activities. Germany supported the international community's united efforts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict.

58. Mr MANUKYAN (Armenia) highlighted the importance his country attached to developing its relations and strengthening its cooperation with the Agency.

59. The non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, accomplished by implementing commitments under the NPT and applying suitable standards, was crucial to the further development of nuclear energy. Armenia had provided all the documents, reports and official statements required under its safeguards agreement with the Agency and had advanced the application of safeguards nationally. His country was continuing to implement the recommendations from the Agency mission to review its regulatory framework for nuclear and radiation safety and from its consultation mission on physical protection, in line with ratified work plans. Armenian representatives had participated in a ConvEx under the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Convention on Assistance in Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency and the country would host a mission in November 2017 intended to follow up with a schedule of activities aimed at enhancing physical protection levels.

60. He stressed that the Armenian Nuclear Power Plant (ANPP) was a top priority for his Government. It would host a regular session of the Nuclear Energy Safety Council under the President of Armenia in October 2017, during which reports from the ANPP and the Armenian Nuclear Regulatory Authority would be presented and discussions held on issues such as the implementation of programmes to enhance the design and operational safety of the ANPP and the status of implementation of the Unit 2 lifetime extension programme. Armenia was entitled to a sovereign loan and a grant to fund the extension programme under an agreement signed with the Russian Federation and was developing partnerships with various other countries to enhance the peaceful uses of atomic energy, including the People's Republic of China, with which a preliminary agreement had been drafted. Armenia's partnership with the Russian Federation had yielded tangible results in the sphere of education and training, as Armenian students were gaining knowledge and skills in the nuclear field at leading Russian universities. Armenia had collaborated with the US Department of Energy to open a training centre at the State Engineering University of Armenia (SEUA) which provided professional development courses to staff working at the ANPP, the Ministry for Emergencies and other interested institutions. The ANPP and the SEUA had signed an agreement to establish a nuclear forensics laboratory with the technical support of the US Department of Energy.

61. Armenia had implemented all previous recommendations on seismic safety, as acknowledged in the Agency's latest final mission report. The final draft of the expert report on the ANPP stress test had been submitted in September 2016 and the resulting list of activities included in the action plan for the Unit 2 lifetime extension. The conclusions of the various experts involved showed that safety at the ANPP complied with international standards.

62. Armenia had developed a strategy for managing radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel with the technical support of the EU, following ratification of an amended concept paper by the President of Armenia in January 2017. In accordance with its commitments under the Joint Convention, Armenia was completing its second national report, which would be submitted to the Agency in October 2017. Armenia had submitted a separate national report in 2016 in compliance with its commitments under the CNS, after which it had addressed all 92 follow-up questions raised, as well as additional questions put by Member States and international organizations at the Seventh Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety. Armenia was thus fulfilling its commitments and was open and ready to engage in constructive dialogue and mutually beneficial cooperation.

63. As a steadfast advocate of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the peaceful uses of atomic energy, his country had established close cooperation with the Agency on a broad range of issues related to nuclear safety, including physical protection of nuclear materials, a partnership that Armenia highly valued. In that regard, Armenia had submitted an application for membership of the IAEA Board of Governors in 2013 and thanked the Eastern Europe Group for endorsing its candidacy for the 2017 elections to the Board. If elected, Armenia would spare no effort in further developing and deepening cooperation with the Agency to strengthen nuclear safety and security and contribute to the achievement of the SDGs through active cooperation in nuclear science and technology. Armenia reiterated its full support for the Agency's activities aimed at further developing the peaceful and safe uses of atomic energy.

64. Mr ŠATŪNAS (Lithuania) praised the Agency's central role in helping Member States to establish and maintain rigorous safety standards while developing and using nuclear power, and called upon Member States to remain committed to the continued transparent, responsible and non-selective implementation and improvement of those standards. His country valued the Agency's efforts to strengthen a global nuclear security architecture that was all-inclusive, built to international standards and implemented in a transparent manner, and which had brought about a significant decline in global stockpiles of nuclear weapon-usable materials. Lithuania welcomed the approval by consensus of

improved Agency safety standards and the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety following the Fukushima Daiichi accident.

65. Each country had the right to develop nuclear power provided that international obligations on nuclear safety were properly addressed and the possible transboundary impact of national decisions were considered. New Member States must be especially diligent in implementing international standards and should, following best practice, invite relevant Agency missions. Nuclear safety was indivisible: safety failure in a single area could threaten the safe operation of entire NPPs. Even flawless technology could fail if an unsuitable location were chosen or if construction and operation requirements were not followed. A comprehensive approach to safety was therefore crucial.

66. The best way of solving a problem was prevention, a goal that the Agency was well equipped to pursue in the form of its specialized missions. In the wake of the Fukushima Daiichi accident, Member States had been encouraged in General Conference resolutions to strengthen nuclear safety by more actively requesting Agency peer review services, and the recent growth in demand for such missions demonstrated their increasing confidence in them. Lithuania regretted to note, however, that some new Members had adopted a selective approach towards nuclear safety and were using the Agency brand and its review services to manipulate public opinion. Such behaviour undermined public support and understanding not only in those countries but also in their neighbouring countries.

67. Agency specialized missions would contribute maximum expected added value if all the relevant modules were fully implemented at appropriate stages of project development. Member States should not be allowed to compromise the quality of evaluations by selecting certain modules and not others. In order to ensure comprehensive evaluation, the Agency should provide an indivisible package of services. Further, follow-up missions would help countries to ensure that all Agency-recommended safety improvement measures were implemented. Lithuania therefore urged all Member States, particularly newcomers, to make use of Agency review services and to focus on safety rather than the project implementation schedule. Beneficiaries of technical assistance should consider safety requirements and recommendations to be mandatory and use follow-up missions to ensure strict adherence to Agency safety standards.

68. Countries developing nuclear power must follow the principles of transparency and responsibility throughout the entire NPP life cycle, from proper selection of nuclear sites to decommissioning and the final management of spent fuel and radioactive waste.

69. The grave risks posed by the proliferation of nuclear weapons highlighted the urgent need for nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States to jointly assume leadership in paving the way towards a safer world. Lithuania strongly condemned the repeated illegal acts committed by the DPRK in violation of multiple UN Security Council resolutions and urged the DPRK to fulfil all its commitments without further delay. The gravity of the most recent violation called for a determined international response that used all diplomatic measures available.

70. Lithuania remained committed to the NPT, which was the foundation of global nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and further development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. As a supporter of the progressive approach of seeking practical ways to make tangible progress in nuclear disarmament, it feared that any efforts undertaken without the involvement of nuclear-weapon States might cause dissension in fundamental international deliberations on nuclear security. The entry into force and universalization of the CTBT would be crucial to non-proliferation processes and a fundamental step towards disarmament.

71. Lithuania strongly supported the commitments defined in the Amendment to the CPPNM and had confidence in the Convention itself as a key international undertaking in the physical protection of

nuclear material. In that regard, Lithuania was proud to announce that it would host an IPPAS mission in October 2017.

72. Lithuania was developing collaborative capabilities through international organizations in order to address the threats from illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive materials and the involvement of non-State actors. The regional Nordic-Baltic high-level workshop held in Vilnius in June 2017, organized jointly by the Governments of Lithuania and the USA together with the Proliferation Security Initiative, had been a particularly noteworthy voluntary international attempt to halt trafficking of WMD and their delivery systems and the transfer between State and non-State actors of such weapons or related materials.

73. The development of nuclear technologies required comprehensive international collaboration and constant oversight, especially in view of the gravity of nuclear accidents and radiological emergencies. Every country had the right to develop nuclear power but also bore the responsibility to do so in a transparent, safe and secure manner. The role of the Agency in ensuring global nuclear security should be strengthened.

74. Lithuania was strongly committed to developing nuclear power responsibly with nuclear safety as a political and technical priority. It remained a staunch supporter of the global efforts to strengthen nuclear safety and security and assured the Agency of its continuous support.

75. Ms TRPEVSKA (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) praised the Agency's important role in verifying that activities carried out in Member States were performed for peaceful purposes and in compliance with the NPT.

76. It was essential to apply stringent measures to ensure the safe and secure application of nuclear technology for the benefit of human society, in accordance with international standards and requirements. There was need of a strong international safeguards system in order to promote shared security, given the growing complexity of global threats and challenges. Her country continued to rely on the Agency to deliver effectively on its mandate in order to create a safer and more prosperous world and looked forward to witnessing the contribution of nuclear science and technology to achieving the SDGs.

77. Her country was strongly oriented towards integration with the EU and thus committed to meeting all its obligations under the EU Stabilisation and Association Process, in which it placed particular emphasis on nuclear safety and safeguards. The safety and security of radiation and nuclear energy in her country was regulated by the Ionizing Radiation Protection and Safety Act.

78. Her country was party to all the relevant conventions. In 2009, it had ratified the Joint Convention, under which it had submitted two national reports and was in the process of preparing a third. In 2011, it had ratified the Amendment to the CPPNM.

79. The Macedonian Radiation Safety Directorate had submitted reports to the Agency in accordance with the law ratifying its additional protocol. At the request of the Directorate, the first IRRS mission to her country was scheduled to be held before the end of 2017. Its objective was to assess the regulatory framework for nuclear and radiation safety in her country for conformity with Agency standards. Employees of the Radiation Safety Directorate had also participated regularly in training sessions organized by the Agency during 2017, which had provided the Directorate with the knowledge to help strengthen its administrative capacities and human resource capabilities.

80. The expertise, training, education and equipment provided to her country by the Agency's TC programme were crucial to accomplishing its goals in areas including nuclear safeguards, safety and security, regulatory infrastructure, radiation medicine and diagnostics, cultural heritage and agriculture.



81. With substantial governmental support, a national TC project to introduce the use of PET into clinical practice had been completed and, in December 2015, the independent University PET Institute had been established. The Institute was equipped with a complete production capacity, including a cyclotron, two PET laboratories compliant with good manufacturing practice and one for therapeutic radiopharmaceuticals, two QC laboratories, a research laboratory and a complete clinical facility with one PET–CT scanner and room for a second. The Institute, which had been inaugurated by the Director General in May 2017, was ready to introduce new PET and therapeutic radiopharmaceutical procedures, in addition to nuclear medicine procedures.

82. The priority sectors for nuclear development in her country were those to which TC activities could contribute. It continued to participate extensively in regional and interregional TC projects to complement its national activities, in particular in the areas of nuclear institution and human resource development, human health, radiation protection and nuclear applications. It had contributed actively to the TC programme by hosting workshops, scientific visits and fellowships and by offering its expertise to other Member States in areas including nuclear security, human health, food safety and veterinary medicine.

83. In closing, she expressed her country's strong support for the Agency's commitment to further expansion of nuclear technology uses for the benefit of humanity, further strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the enhancement of international security. Her country intended to participate actively in future Agency activities in order to meet its statutory obligations.

84. Mr GROSSI (Argentina) said that international cooperation was the key to broadening the benefits of nuclear energy and its applications to achieve development objectives. He highlighted the vital role of the Agency in promoting the peaceful uses of technology, particularly in nuclear power generation as the basis for ensuring reliable energy supplies.

85. The nuclear industry worldwide was at an important juncture, one which could lead to a new era if the current significant challenges were met with proper planning and suitable technology. The current revolutionary changes in energy generation technologies were likely to initiate a paradigm shift that could not be ignored.

86. In response, Argentina was seeking to transform its nuclear sector by creating clean, cost-efficient and sustainable energy sources. In addition to the indispensable elements of nuclear safety and security, it would pursue an agenda geared to the three concepts of innovation, transparency and sustainability.

87. The nuclear field had long been an important source of worldwide technological development and innovation, and Argentina hoped to maximise the latter aspect to overcome the challenges it faced, especially in relation to fuel and waste.

88. Argentina had embarked on an era of long-term, sustainable and economically viable nuclear projects that also met one of the major challenges facing the nuclear industry at the international level: that of offering a safe, clean and cost-effective energy alternative.

89. In line with its intention to promote the highest international standards in all its nuclear projects, Argentina had recently been accepted as a full member of OECD/NEA and currently chaired the steering group of the International Framework for Nuclear Energy Cooperation, a body that brought together the public and private sectors and was ideally placed to tackle the kind of challenges he had mentioned.

90. Argentina currently had three NPPs and was in the final stages of negotiations with the Chinese National Nuclear Corporation to commence building two new ones, a PHWR in 2018 and an HPR-1000 PWR not later than 2020.

91. After completing the lifetime extension of the Embalse NPP on time and on budget, Argentina hoped to recommence the plant's commercial operation in the second half of 2018. Construction of the nationally designed prototype CAREM 25 modular reactor was under way. His country envisaged a major role for such SMRs in the future.

92. Argentina continued to develop and strengthen its nuclear medicine capacities, with priority for human resource training and R&D. Construction of its proton therapy centre, the first of its type in Latin America, continued following a redesign to improve its outreach.

93. With the threat from nuclear terrorism in mind, Argentina had embarked on an ambitious programme of nuclear security measures including the equipping and training of the security forces responsible for protecting its nuclear assets. It was working constantly with neighbouring countries and the international community to strengthen its own and regional security capacities.

94. He was pleased to announce that Argentina would receive an IRRS mission at the end of 2018 or the beginning of 2019 and congratulated FORO on reaching its 20th anniversary.

95. In closing, he observed that peaceful nuclear energy activities rested on an effective international non-proliferation regime. The provocative events in the DPRK provided tangible proof that real threats existed that must be confronted decisively and responsibly. Argentina's endeavours to make a positive contribution to the strengthening of non-proliferation had led to its Resident Representative to the International Organizations in Vienna, Ambassador Grossi, being endorsed by GRULAC for the presidency of the 2020 NPT Review Conference, an event essential to the consolidation of the NPT's existence as the cornerstone of nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful nuclear energy applications.

**Ms BATTUNGALAG (Mongolia), Vice-President, took the Chair.**

96. Mr TAGHI-ZADA (Azerbaijan) said that his country was satisfied with the Agency's nuclear non-proliferation, counterterrorism and safety regime-strengthening activities.

97. The entry into force in 2016 of the CPPNM Amendment was an example of the Agency's success in introducing new, effective mechanisms for maintaining the global nuclear security regime. Azerbaijan was in the process of aligning its domestic legislation with the provisions of the Amendment, working with the Agency to establish an effective and solid national nuclear security regime.

98. Azerbaijan was committed to its obligations under the NPT and its safeguards agreement, convinced that the Agency's safeguards system was both important and effective in supporting the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Azerbaijan stood ready to assist further in developing measures to strengthen safeguards application mechanisms.

99. His country had benefited from close cooperation with the Department of Safeguards in implementing its plan for improving the national safeguards system. Its strict adherence to its safeguards responsibilities had been confirmed during inspections by the Department of Safeguards. In 2017, Azerbaijan and the Agency had agreed on the text of additional provisions to their safeguards implementation agreement.

100. Azerbaijan's main priority in technical cooperation remained medical applications of nuclear technology, especially for cancer diagnosis and treatment. In 2016, the nuclear medicine centre within the National Centre of Oncology had become operational; in cooperation with the Agency it had implemented a project to introduce PET-CT into clinical practice. The core activities of the National Centre of Oncology involved developing human resources through international cooperation and exchange of experience, an example being the regional training course run in cooperation with the Agency in September 2017, on radiation protection in fluoroscopy-guided intervention procedures, which had been attended by 13 physicians from nine different countries in Europe and Asia.

101. The successful use and development of nuclear technologies in all areas of human activity was only possible where safety culture was given paramount importance. Azerbaijan continued to adhere strictly to the Agency's standards and recommendations in implementing its project to create a sterilization unit for the radiation treatment of materials. In 2017, the project had seen the completion of the process to license the import of cobalt-60 sources and the unit had registered an overall activity level of 300 kCi. In accordance with international standards and the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, the necessary measures were taken to ensure the safe transportation, installation and use of sources to ensure security and emergency readiness at all times. Measures for the safe disposal of spent sources had also been established.

102. The creation of a sustainable national infrastructure to train and educate staff in radiation safety called for qualified trainers within the country. To that end, as part of wider cooperation with the Agency, a regional course for trainers of radiation protection instructors had been held from 3 to 7 July 2017 in Baku for 18 participants from 13 different countries in Europe and Asia.

103. Azerbaijan valued highly its cooperation with the Agency to integrate the peaceful uses of nuclear technology and would continue to develop its priorities in that area and strive to achieve its CPF goals.

104. Azerbaijan was stepping up its activities to stop the illegal trafficking of radioactive and nuclear materials and to counter the escalating threat of nuclear terrorism, guided by the principles of the Agency.

105. In cooperation with international partners, it continued to develop a multilateral national system of export control. However, owing to the continued occupation by Armenia of one-fifth of Azerbaijani territory, such measures could not be put in place in Nagorno-Karabakh and seven surrounding regions. Those territories currently remained unprotected from smuggling, including the illegal trafficking of nuclear materials. The first step to establishing a coherent nuclear safety structure in the region was for Armenia to relinquish the territories it had occupied.

106. Azerbaijan had repeatedly raised awareness among the international community of the threat from Armenia's Metsamor NPP, whose technology and continuous operation dated back to 1976. Armenia's decision to extend its operational lifetime and build a new unit in the same dangerous seismic zone was reckless and had raised safety concerns in Azerbaijan and neighbouring countries.

107. Mr PHAM (Viet Nam) said that, over the previous 10 years, his country had continued with its peaceful policy of using atomic energy to promote research and applying radiation and radioactive isotopes for socioeconomic development, while ensuring optimal nuclear safety and security.

108. Under its CPF for 2016–2021, Viet Nam continued to receive Agency assistance through TC projects involving the application of radiation and radioactive isotopes in the fields of health, agriculture, industry, environmental protection and climate change, food security and nuclear infrastructure development.

109. In the important sector of agriculture, the enormous potential of atomic energy was being harnessed for plant quarantine; agricultural product preservation; the production of biological active ingredients from agricultural by-products; soil, fertilizer and plant nutrition management; environmental protection; and plant protection. By the end of 2016, Viet Nam had created 67 new mutant plant varieties, thus significantly enhancing national food security. Food irradiation helped to keep produce fresh, which generated added value prior to exportation. SIT was being used to control insect damage over some 1000 hectares of dragon fruit plantations.

110. The most widely used and effective application of atomic energy in Viet Nam was in health care. Currently, Viet Nam had 12 PET-CT centres and six cyclotron centres, and the Dalat research reactor had produced radioisotopes for use in nuclear medicine and other economic and technical fields. Agency

cooperation and support had played an important role in helping Viet Nam to achieve those important goals.

111. The Prime Minister of Viet Nam had recently approved the National Radiation and Nuclear Emergency Response Plan. In addition, many provinces had approved provincial response plans and implemented emergency response exercises.

112. In nuclear safety and security, Viet Nam was implementing a project to store disused radioactive sources in a centralized facility. Within the framework of the INSSP, Viet Nam had enhanced its detection capability by installing radiation detection portals at Noi Bai international airport.

113. In addition to strengthening its cooperation with the Agency, Viet Nam attached great importance to bilateral and multilateral cooperation, including with the USA, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation and the European Council, in the areas of safety, security, safeguards and nuclear liability and compensation. It was cooperating with the Russian Federation to launch a nuclear science and technology centre with new research reactors, and with other countries to research and implement nuclear technologies and ensure effective nuclear regulation.

114. Viet Nam had always fulfilled its obligations to the Agency through payment of the necessary TC resources and its NPCs, and had made an in-kind contribution in 2017. Together with the Agency, Viet Nam had organized a number of workshops and training sessions.

115. Viet Nam thanked the Agency's staff for their dedication and hard work and hoped that the Agency would continue to extend its valuable cooperation and assistance to help developing Member States achieve their goals relating to the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear energy in support of their socioeconomic development.

116. Mr MIKHADZIUK (Belarus) observed that many States were currently placing their hopes on nuclear power as an economic and environmentally friendly energy source that could facilitate their sustainable development. His country was among them: in the near future, around a quarter of its energy needs were expected to be met by the Astravets NPP currently under construction, which would ensure reliable supplies of environmentally friendly, affordable electricity. The establishment of a new high-technology nuclear power sector was yielding positive results, with new developments in manufacturing leading to job creation in various sectors, from basic science to transport, machine building and construction.

117. In the area of nuclear safety, Belarus appreciated the Agency's key role in helping to establish the highest standards at all stages of the NPP life cycle, from design and construction to decommissioning, providing a forum for the exchange of experience and actively promoting greater cooperation among Member States.

118. The Agency's work to further the universalization and implementation of the multilateral conventions on nuclear safety and nuclear security and liability adopted under its auspices was of particular significance. In that connection, Belarus welcomed in particular the Agency's hosting of the Seventh Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety. It was important to continue to promote professional and practically-oriented cooperation under that Convention.

119. The growth in the Agency's independent expert review services demonstrated their relevance and practical use to Member States. Belarus had hosted an IRRS mission in October 2016 and a SEED mission in January 2017. That cooperation would continue with an EPREV mission to Belarus in March 2018, as well as a Pre-OSART mission and an INIR mission nearer to the commissioning of the NPP. Belarus was grateful to the Secretariat for its constructive cooperation in planning and conducting those missions.

120. Belarus welcomed the increased awareness of the Agency's role, through the TC programme, in helping Member States to attain their sustainable development goals and noted that it was one of the most significant achievements of recent years. Promoting the use of nuclear technology as well as ensuring its accessibility in areas that provided people with tangible benefits — whether power, medicine or agriculture — should become the Agency's identifiable brand.

121. Technical cooperation projects in Belarus were contributing to more effective training of staff for the nascent nuclear power sector, to the promotion of nuclear and radiation safety, to significant development in the area of nuclear medicine, and to dealing with the particular challenge of the sustainable development of the areas affected by the Chernobyl accident. In that regard, Belarus was now not only a beneficiary of Agency technical and advisory assistance, but also a donor. It had become traditional to hold Agency regional postgraduate training courses in Belarus on radiation protection and on the safety of radiation sources, and his country's scientific research in the Chernobyl zone radioecological reserve was of interest to the Agency and its Member States. His country highly valued the Agency's contribution to international Chernobyl-related cooperation. Over the course of many years, the Agency had helped Belarus on many levels and was regarded as one of the main partners in implementing the UN initiative to foster the sustainable development of the affected areas.

122. The TC programme demonstrated that often not only was the quantifiable amount of assistance important, but also its depth and professionalism and how well targeted it was towards creating situations in which the donor was the most knowledgeable expert. That was the niche the Agency should occupy as a fundamentally professional organization for promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

123. Belarus noted the Agency's intensive work to verify the application of safeguards in accordance with the NPT, a fundamental and peerless component of the international security system. His country fully supported further strengthening of the Agency safeguards system. It was paramount to maintain a clear, objective, depoliticized, technically-based safeguards system on the basis of agreements concluded between the Agency and its Member States.

124. Ms MUZENDA (Zimbabwe) said that her country attached great importance to the Agency's mandate and work, and appreciated the multifaceted assistance and support that it continued to receive from the Agency in fields including cancer detection and management, radiotherapy, animal disease control and production, crop production, tsetse fly eradication and soil fertility.

125. During recurrent droughts over the years, the Agency had provided her country with assistance to develop drought- and disease-resistant crop varieties and to help in the fight against foot and mouth disease and tsetse fly infestation. With the rebuilding of the national cattle herd underway, the Agency-supported artificial insemination project planned for the third CPF in 2017–2021 would be an important aspect of future bilateral cooperation

126. Cancer had emerged as the leading cause of death in her country. To help fight it, the Agency had provided technical advice, fellowships for medical radiation users and specialized equipment. Her country welcomed the continuation of that cooperation into the third CPF.

127. Other areas of collaboration with the Agency included energy planning, water resources management, radiation safety and strengthening of the country's laboratories and institutions involved in nuclear science and technology, accreditation and ISO certification.

128. While Zimbabwe took primary responsibility for its nuclear technology-related development, the assistance and support it received from the Agency was absolutely essential for sustaining ongoing TC projects as well as launch new ones.

129. Her country welcomed the Director General's intention to conduct an official visit in the near future. Zimbabwe would be honoured to receive him so that he could see for himself the fruits of the cooperation she had mentioned.

130. Zimbabwe firmly believed in the positive role of cooperation and peaceful coexistence, rather than reckless brinkmanship and threats to peace, in the conduct of relations between and among nations. The situation on the Korean Peninsula called for more constructive engagement and dialogue, and less inflammatory rhetoric.

131. Zimbabwe welcomed the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons as an important milestone in the prohibition and total elimination of nuclear weapons. It followed that her country rejected the so-called progressive approach to nuclear disarmament.

132. Mr TUN (Cambodia) recalled that his country had become a Member State of the Agency in 1958, two years after the Agency's establishment, remaining a member until 2003 before rejoining in 2009.

133. The constitution of Cambodia explicitly prohibited the manufacture, use and storage of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. Additional extensive legislation governed the control of activities involving nuclear and other radioactive materials. A comprehensive nuclear law covering safety, security, safeguards and civil liability was currently being prepared under the TC programme.

134. In Cambodia, the Ministry of Mines and Energy was the competent institution for managing nuclear and radiation safety, security and safeguards, while the National Chemical Weapons Authority was responsible for ensuring nuclear non-proliferation. The National Counter-Terrorism Committee was responsible for counter-terrorism issues that involved nuclear and radiation sources. Other ministries and agencies at the national level were also working with the Agency and other States on aspects such as the legal application of nuclear technology in the sectors of health, industry and agriculture and the safety, security and safeguarding of nuclear materials.

135. Cambodia was fully committed to nuclear non-proliferation and ensuring nuclear safety, security and safeguards at national, regional and global levels. It was thus party to many Agency agreements and had signed the NPT in 1972 and the SEANWFZ Treaty in 1997. Cambodia had also signed an additional protocol and SQP to further strengthen its commitment to safeguards, and hoped to accede in the near future to other relevant conventions and treaties.

136. Thanks to the assistance provided under the TC programme since 2009, Cambodia had successfully implemented projects in the agricultural sector in such areas as soil fertility, crop management and livestock production, and had established a national cancer centre to improve its cancer treatment and general nuclear medicine capabilities. The Agency's support had also been instrumental in the establishment of a future nuclear regulatory authority; a nuclear law would be enacted in the near future.

137. Cambodia was firmly committed to the development of a so-called soft infrastructure, including the necessary regulatory framework and capacity building and the establishment of safety and security regulations and standards, and hoped that the Agency would offer its active support. The signing of her country's second CPF, for the period from 2017 to 2023, during the current General Conference, represented a significant milestone in its cooperation with the Agency.

138. Cambodia looked forward to further cooperation with the Agency in the use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

139. Ms ŽIAKOVÁ (Slovakia) said that nuclear energy remained a key strategic area for Slovakia and continued to occupy a stable position as one of the main pillars of its national energy policy. Two additional units were under construction at the Mochovce NPP and a new nuclear source was being

considered for the Bohunice NPP. Finalization of those additional units would enable the Slovak nuclear power programme to meet national energy demand for years to come.

140. With its low-carbon benefits, large capacity and dispatchable outputs, nuclear power could contribute significantly to meeting the Paris Agreement goals of limiting the rise in global temperatures to below 2°C and mitigating climate change, and play an important role in achieving the SDGs. Slovakia commended the Agency's efforts to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear technology in those contexts and reiterated its full support for them.

141. Nuclear safety was one of the key preconditions for nuclear energy application. Slovakia supported the Agency's efforts aimed at globalizing nuclear safety by networking, integrating safety-related activities, assisting Member States to implement safety standards and promoting adherence to the relevant international conventions, in particular the CNS and the Joint Convention.

142. Slovakia had actively participated in the Seventh Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety. It had met all four of its challenges emanating from the previous review meeting and its Country Group had identified four areas of good performance by Slovakia and assigned it two new challenges for the next review cycle.

143. The new amendment to her country's Atomic Act had entered into force in August 2017. It fully transposed the amended Euratom directive on nuclear safety of 2014 as well as selected provisions of the Euratom Basic Safety Standards Directive of 2013, and also incorporated into national legislation all new provisions introduced in the 2014 Nuclear Safety Directive, thus further enhancing and strengthening Euratom's nuclear safety regime.

144. Slovakia fully supported the Agency's TC programme and appreciated its actions aimed at more efficient and effective TC management and project implementation, and its continuing application of the principles of transparency and accountability. The first International Conference on the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme: Sixty Years and Beyond — Contributing to Development had provided participants, including his country, with a useful platform for discussion and the mutual exchange of experience and good practice.

145. Given the correlation between sufficient funding and efficient implementation in TC projects, the resources of the TCF needed to be sufficient, assured and predictable. Slovakia therefore supported the Agency's efforts to strengthen the current guidelines on the application of the due account mechanism, and encouraged all Member States to pay their share of the TCF target on time and in full.

146. Slovakia welcomed the commencement of activities by the Group of Friends for Women in Nuclear since its announcement at the June 2017 Board, and was ready to assist the Group's work to strengthen the position and increase the number of capable women in the field of nuclear energy.

147. Since the previous General Conference, the DPRK had carried out yet another nuclear test and a number of ballistic missile launches. Such actions were flagrant violations of multiple UN Security Council resolutions and constituted a threat to regional stability and international peace and security. Slovakia called upon the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapon and missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, cease all related activities and engage in constructive dialogue.

148. Furthermore, her country called upon the DPRK to recommit to the NPT and to comply with its comprehensive safeguards agreement and international obligations. Slovakia supported the Agency's essential role in verifying the DPRK's nuclear programme and appreciated its readiness to immediately resume its verification tasks in the country, once that was possible.

149. Mr SARAKA (Côte d'Ivoire) said his country appreciated the driving role of the TC programme and hoped that the International Conference on the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme: Sixty Years and Beyond — Contributing to Development could be held on a regular basis and at ministerial level. Recognizing the importance of the TC programme, Côte d'Ivoire had regularly paid its financial contributions to the Agency.

150. The Government of Côte d'Ivoire was grateful to the Agency for the successes achieved in certain key areas of the country's socioeconomic life. Agency assistance had focused particularly on building national human resource capacity in vital sectors such as agriculture, human health, animal health and water resources management and in the National Regulatory Authority.

151. In the field of human health, in addition to donating equipment, including a gamma camera, the Agency was providing support to the Nuclear Medicine Institute (IMN) in Abidjan. In 2017, a radiation protection expert had conducted an assessment mission to ensure the building's compliance with international radiation protection standards.

152. Côte d'Ivoire had also requested that the Agency send an assessment mission to the Abidjan Radiotherapy and Oncology Centre, which was under construction.

153. The Agency was assisting his country in building staff capacity at the IMN and the Radiotherapy and Oncology Centre, as well as health institutions engaged in the diagnosis of emerging and re-emerging zoonotic diseases.

154. In the area of animal health, the staff capacity at the country's virology laboratory had been strengthened through the introduction of better quality documents and the ISO/IEC 17025 standard, and by raising awareness of biosafety and environmental quality systems.

155. In agriculture, the Agency's technical and financial support had focused on the use of radioisotopic methods for mutation and biotechnology, as well as innovative farming practices to combat soil erosion. In addition, the SIT equipment acquired thanks to the Agency had enabled Côte d'Ivoire to combat fruit pests, including the mango fruit fly.

156. Côte d'Ivoire was working to strengthen its legislative and regulatory framework in accordance with its international commitments in nuclear safety and security. It had therefore asked the Agency to organize a workshop in Abidjan, from 16 to 20 October 2017, for the biennial review of its INSSP.

157. In the area of radiation protection, safety and security, the skills necessary to the functioning of the Regulatory Authority were constantly being strengthened. On 30 and 31 May 2017, two Agency inspectors had conducted site verification in Abidjan of certain structures using radioactive material, together with a training workshop.

158. Côte d'Ivoire was satisfied with the quality of its cooperation with the Agency and was grateful to the Director General and his staff for their continued professionalism on behalf of Member States.

159. Finally, Côte d'Ivoire reaffirmed its support for the continuation of the Agency's missions to address challenges to peace, improve the wellbeing of the populations of the Member States and maintain international security.

160. Mr CABAL SANCLEMENTE (Colombia) said that his country was strongly committed to world peace, the disarmament regime and the non-proliferation of WMD. Colombia's safeguards agreement and additional protocol complied with its commitments under the NPT and the Tlatelolco Treaty.

161. The latter's status as the pioneer treaty in the creation of NWFZs had made Latin America and the Caribbean the political, legal and institutional reference for the creation of other such zones.



162. Colombia thanked the Agency for supporting the effective implementation of the international instruments on nuclear safety and nuclear security to which Colombia was a party. The project to consolidate spent high-activity radiation sources was one of the most important being undertaken in terms of security, entailing extensive worldwide efforts in terms of number of sources, their activity and distances travelled.

163. He extended his country's appreciation to the US Department of Energy for its continuing cooperation in the framework of the two countries' MOU on the safety of radiation sources. That support had contributed to Colombia's development of a sustainable security infrastructure in compliance with the international control regime.

164. Colombia could look with satisfaction on its experiences of technical cooperation with the Agency, as in the case of the successful project on the application of isotopic techniques to manage underground water resources in the gulfs of Morrosquillo and Urabá. The project had strengthened the water resource management capacities of those regions by improving the environmental authorities' analytical infrastructure and specialized equipment.

165. Also important to Colombia were the activities developed within the framework of ARCAL and the work of FORO. Concerning FORO's strategic guidelines and the challenges and obstacles it had outlined for the period 2017–2022, he emphasized that it was important to focus on convergence with the Agency's strategy on matters of common interest. Colombia hoped that the existing synergy with the Agency would continue to allow FORO's results to be disseminated in the interest of security to all regions of the world, as a contribution to the Agency's statutory work to develop safety standards.

166. Colombia had actively participated as a non-nuclear-weapon State Party in the first Preparatory Committee for the NPT Review Conference, which had provided an excellent opportunity to renew the commitments made under the Treaty, strengthen the review process and reiterate support for full implementation of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation architecture.

167. He extended his country's congratulations to the Government of Canada on being elected to lead the negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, pursuant to UN General Assembly resolution 71/259, and expressed Colombia's appreciation for the invitation to participate in the preparatory group of experts for that negotiation as well as its conviction that a possible treaty must be non-discriminatory, multilateral, international and effectively verifiable.

168. He highlighted his country's participation in the Nuclear Security Contact Group as further evidence of its willingness to contribute to nuclear security.

169. Finally, Colombia strongly condemned the nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches conducted by the DPRK, which clearly violated the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime as well as the provisions of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. In that regard, he reaffirmed Colombia's uncompromising commitment to the sanctions adopted in response by the Security Council. Colombia urged the DPRK to return to the Agency's safeguards system and resume the six-party talks, and thus permit further progress on the path of dialogue and consensus building.

170. Ms ACCILI SABBATINI (Italy) said that her country highly valued the full range of Agency activities and would continue to support the Agency both financially, as the seventh largest contributor to the regular budget, and politically, especially in its capacity as a member of the Board of Governors from 2017 until 2019.

171. The Agency's system of safeguards was multilateral, impartial, professional and responsible. It provided a fundamental level of security and was essential in fulfilling the goals of the NPT.

172. Italy strongly supported the verification and monitoring activities undertaken by the Agency under the JCPOA and intended to maintain its annual voluntary contribution for those activities. The international community should take every action to ensure the continued success of JCPOA as part of the global efforts against the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Agency's confirmation that the Islamic Republic of Iran had continued to comply with the provisions of the JCPOA was welcome. The full and thorough implementation of UN Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA by all parties in good faith would strongly benefit regional security and encourage mutual trust.

173. Italy strongly condemned the most recent nuclear test conducted by the DPRK as a grave and irresponsible provocation that violated the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Italy therefore welcomed the unanimous adoption of UN Security Council resolution 2375 (2017), which had greatly strengthened the sanctions regime against the DPRK. As Chair of the Security Council Sanctions Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), Italy would maintain a keen focus on the effective implementation of sanctions by all UN Member States. Italy called on the DPRK immediately to abandon the development of its nuclear and missile programme and to comply with the NPT.

174. Italy was deeply committed to promoting the universal adoption of nuclear, biological and chemical non-proliferation and disarmament agreements. It was regrettable that a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other WMD had not yet been convened and that the Agency had not been able to make progress in the application of uniform and comprehensive safeguards to all nuclear activities in the region. Italy would continue to support every initiative to resume inclusive dialogue among Middle Eastern countries.

175. Italy remained fully committed to achieving improved global nuclear security and called on all States that had yet to do so to conclude and implement an additional protocol. As part of its efforts to promote nuclear security culture and capacity building worldwide, Italy continued to fund the International School on Nuclear Security, which was run jointly by the Agency and the International Centre for Theoretical Physics in Trieste.

176. Italy was proud to contribute to the education of clinical medical physicists from across the world, and especially from developing countries, through the master's programme on Advanced Studies in Medical Physics, run jointly by the University of Trieste and the International Centre for Theoretical Physics.

177. Italy would continue to apply its national policy for the decommissioning and safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste in close cooperation with the Agency.

178. An ARTEMIS mission had been hosted in July 2017 by the Nuclear Plant Management Company of Italy. It was the first peer review of its kind conducted in Italy by the Agency and had strengthened national stakeholders' confidence in the value of international cooperation.

179. Italy's regulatory authority had hosted an IRRS mission in late 2016, which had conducted a full peer review of the national regulatory framework for nuclear safety and radiation protection based on the Agency's safety standards.

180. An international workshop on sustaining capacity building for nuclear safety and security was being organized by the Italian Government in cooperation with the European Commission, the Agency and various technical institutions, and would be held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in Rome on 11 October 2017.

181. Italy looked forward to welcoming the Director General to Rome in October 2017 for the 20th Edoardo Amaldi Conference to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Agency and of Euratom.

182. Mr COULIDIATI (Burkina Faso) said that his country had begun to implement its third CPF, for the period 2017–2022.

183. Under the TC programme, work had started on building a cancer centre in Ouagadougou in March 2017. His Government had made 13 billion CFA francs available for the project for 2017. To help run the future centre, two doctors of nuclear medicine and three radiotherapy doctors were being trained in Dakar and Morocco respectively, using funding from the State budget and a contribution from the Agency. Burkina Faso thanked the Agency and the aforementioned host countries.

184. Burkina Faso had also benefited under PATTEC from the installation of a regional insectarium in Bobo-Dioulasso and the acquisition of a cobalt-60 gamma irradiator. The Bobo-Dioulasso insectarium, opened in February 2017, represented a national priority and allowed SIT to be used more extensively to tackle malaria and dengue fever as well as crop pests, in particular the mango whitefly.

185. In the area of the use of nuclear techniques to improve agricultural yield, the Agency's support had enabled researchers in his country to create 170 mutants of high-yield rice, including a variety of sticky rice low in amylose.

186. Moreover, nuclear isotopic techniques had been introduced at a subregional molecular genetics laboratory, whose first PhD students would complete their training by the end of 2017.

187. Burkina Faso welcomed the successful completion of TC project RAF7011 on integrated and sustainable management of shared aquifer systems and basins of the Sahel region. The project had enabled the countries of the Sahel region to gain a good understanding of their underground water resources.

188. In the areas of radiation protection, nuclear safety and security, technical assistance provided by the Agency and AFRA during past TC programme cycles had enabled Burkina Faso, through its National Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Authority (ARSN), to strengthen its inventory of ionizing radiation sources across the whole of the country; strengthen the radiation protection and safety regulations governing the transportation of radioactive sources; and enhance the technical capacities of the ARSN for quality control of radiological installations and radiological environmental monitoring.

189. His country encouraged other Member States to ratify the Amendment to the CPPNM, as it had done in 2014, convinced that the Amendment could contribute to the fight against all types of nuclear terrorism.

190. He expressed his country's satisfaction with the work of the Agency's staff and thanked the Director General for the technical assistance that his country received. Burkina Faso also welcomed the technical and financial support given by the Agency to AFRA. It encouraged the Agency and all its partners to continue to provide meaningful support to the African Commission on Nuclear Energy, which had been established after the entry into force of the Pelindaba Treaty.

191. Burkina Faso remained convinced that the establishment of a fruitful partnership between AFRA and the African Commission on Nuclear Energy would be a major asset in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear technology for the development of the African continent.

192. Emphasizing that Member States' compliance with their financial obligations to the Agency allowed it to fulfil its mandate better, he pledged his Government's contribution to the TCF for 2017–2018.

193. In conclusion, he reiterated the readiness of his Government to continue to strengthen its cooperation with the Agency.

194. Mr AZZOPARDI (Malta) reiterated his country's absolute and unwavering support for the NPT, which was the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation regime and essential to the efforts to

increase cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear technology while striving to achieve nuclear disarmament. Malta thus welcomed the successful first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference.

195. His country regretted that a conference on the establishment of a zone free of WMD and their delivery systems in the Middle East had not yet been convened. Despite the lack of substantive progress in that regard, Malta believed that the goals of the Resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 NPT Review Conference remained as valid as ever.

196. The dangerous behaviour of the DPRK continued to escalate as a global concern. Malta condemned in the strongest terms the nuclear test conducted by the DPRK on 3 September, as well as the continuing missile-related activities, particularly the launches on 4 and 28 July, 29 August and 15 September, which were inherently provocative and in clear violation of international obligations. They also served to aggravate tensions in the region and constituted a grave threat to international peace and security as well as to the global non-proliferation regime. Malta called on the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons and ballistic programmes, to cease all nuclear testing and to immediately re-engage in dialogue with the international community.

197. The Syrian Arab Republic's continuing non-compliance with its safeguards agreement also remained a cause for concern. His country called upon Syria to cooperate fully and promptly with the Agency to address all unresolved issues, and to bring an additional protocol into force without delay.

198. Malta continued to view the significant and historic JCPOA in a very favourable light. His country welcomed the ongoing implementation of the JCPOA by all parties and encouraged the early ratification and full implementation of its additional protocol by the Islamic Republic of Iran, as foreseen in the agreement. Malta was encouraged by the level of adherence to the JCPOA, which reflected the potency of effective multilateralism in the field of non-proliferation. His country commended and fully supported the central role that the Agency continued to play in the verification and monitoring of Iran's nuclear activities.

199. As an island State and a leading maritime flag State, Malta retained a special interest in ensuring that the highest standards of preparation, communication and cooperation were followed at sea, to the same extent as on land. Malta emphasized that the consequences of an incident at sea could be devastating, with severe environmental risks.

200. Malta was a member of the Mediterranean Transport Safety Network, which had been established through an Agency project under a contribution agreement with the European Commission. As a central hub in the Mediterranean Sea, Malta had participated actively and, as a result, had benefited immensely from a hugely successful project that had established a more direct link between all the countries involved and a drive to harmonize procedures and processes. Malta wished to see continued support from the Agency for that and similar regional networks around the world.

201. The TC programme enabled the Agency to work closely with Member States in a safe and secure nuclear technology environment. His country continued to attach great importance to the TC programme, since it had witnessed at first hand the tangible and important benefits it could bring. Malta thanked the Agency for its assistance, cooperation and technical support, and looked forward to participating in future programmes.

**The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.**