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Atoms for Peace and Development

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## Record of the Fourth Meeting

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

**Later:** Mr KYRÖLÄINEN (Finland)

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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
ARASIA	Co-operative Agreement for Arab States in Asia 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
CELAC	Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
CIEMAT	Research Centre for Energy, Environment and Technology (Spain)
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
EPR	emergency preparedness and response
EPREV	Emergency Preparedness Review
EU	European Union
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
FMCT	fissile material cut-off treaty
FORO	Ibero-American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies
GCC	Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf
GICNT	Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism
HEU	high enriched uranium
imPACT	integrated missions of PACT
INSSP	Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan
IPPAS	International Physical Protection Advisory Service

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

IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
LEU	low enriched uranium
MedNet	Mediterranean Transport Safety Network
NPP	nuclear power plant
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
P5+1	the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PUI	Peaceful Uses Initiative
ReNuAL	Renovation of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories
Rosatom	Federal Atomic Energy Agency (Russian Federation)
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SESAME	Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East
SIT	sterile insect technique
SKB	Swedish Nuclear Fuel and Waste Management Company
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNASUR	Union of South American Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
USA	United States of America
WMD	weapons of mass destruction

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

1. Mr COMISSÁRIO AFONSO (Mozambique) said that the recent International Conference on the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme: Sixty Years and Beyond — Contributing to Development was testament to the Agency's resolve to innovate and adapt to the new international development agenda with its focus on climate change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the associated SDGs, in particular SDG 7 on ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. Tremendous progress had already been made over the preceding 60 years in the use of nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes with a focus on human health, food and agriculture, water and environment and agricultural application.

2. Turning to the recent negotiation at the United Nations Conference to Negotiate a Legally Binding Instrument to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons, Leading Towards their Total Elimination of the legally-binding Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, he conveyed Mozambique's view that, once in force, the Treaty would contribute immensely to the fulfilment of the Agency's mandate to promote the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes. A world free of nuclear weapons was a cherished dream of humankind.

3. Mozambique enjoyed productive and multifaceted cooperation with the Agency through its regulatory authority and had recently strengthened that relationship through the adoption of its Nuclear Act. The act had expanded the enforcement role played by the regulatory authority and other relevant agencies relating to the use of nuclear energy in devices, equipment and tools.

4. As part of implementing the new act, Mozambique's regulatory authority had drafted the relevant regulations and the national emergency plan for radiological and nuclear accidents, making use of the Agency's technical assistance and expertise under TC project No. MOZ/9/006. The improved regulations would be presented at the National Radiation Protection Seminar in Maputo in October 2017.

5. Mozambique had just concluded the process of selecting inspectors that had been proposed by the Agency and was deeply grateful to the Agency for its continuous support through the TC programme.

6. In closing, he reiterated his country's unwavering political commitment to the Agency's mandate and purpose and to strengthening its relationship with the Agency as it strove to guarantee nuclear safety and the peaceful use of nuclear technology.

7. Mr AL-THANI (Qatar) said that, in his country's view, peaceful uses of nuclear energy played a pivotal role in promoting development, bringing peoples together and building a safer world for all. Qatar attached great importance to the development of institutions specializing in peaceful uses of nuclear energy, particularly in the areas of food, agriculture, human health and the environment.

8. Qatar was vigorously implementing a long-term plan under its national development programme: Qatar National Vision 2030. It was establishing an environment conducive to the optimum use of diverse peaceful applications, including the training of competent personnel. In that context, it greatly appreciated the Agency's cooperation and expertise and aspired to boost such cooperation in the future with a view to accelerating its development programmes and scientific progress.

9. Qatar commended the Agency's pivotal role in promoting nuclear security and strengthening international cooperation in nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety. It underscored that nuclear safety and security were important issues not only for countries that possessed or intended to establish nuclear power plants, but for the whole of humankind. It was therefore essential to consolidate international, regional and national legal frameworks, to promote transparency and information sharing, and to build confidence in such activities. It drew attention to the growing risk of cyber-attacks on the safety and security of nuclear reactors and encouraged the Agency to step up its assistance to States in enhancing their computer security.

10. He cautioned that, in the current climate of instability and nuclear proliferation, there was also a growing risk of the use of nuclear weapons. The sixth nuclear test conducted by the DPRK was the most recent example. Qatar urged the international community to take more vigorous action to achieve all the objectives enshrined in the NPT, thereby creating a world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

11. The peoples of the Middle East were more acutely aware than others of the dangers of nuclear weapons and of the need for progress towards nuclear disarmament. They were disappointed at the failure to implement the resolution of the 1995 NPT Review Conference on the Middle East 22 years after its adoption. The establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East and Israel's implementation of the relevant international resolutions and accession to the NPT were crucial steps towards those goals. Qatar called on the Agency to play a more active role in surmounting the artificial impediments to the achievement of an NWFZ.

12. Ms MEBARKI (Algeria) commended the Agency on its initiative to organize the first International Conference on the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme: Sixty Years and Beyond — Contributing to Development and encouraged it to elevate it to the ministerial level in the future. The role played by the Agency through its TC programme should be strengthened and supported. As a country which made its contributions to the Regular Budget and the Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF) regularly and in full, Algeria called on other States to help to ensure that the Agency had sufficient, assured and predictable funding in order to meet its future commitments, particularly in relation to the SDGs.

13. As part of its national cancer control programme, Algeria was implementing new medical applications of nuclear technologies. Following on the recommendations of two Agency imPACT missions, Algeria had also expanded training in radiation protection for medical physicists and relevant personnel. With the Agency's assistance, Algeria had developed a training programme for using and maintaining nuclear instrumentation which consisted of regular workshops and was open to participants from other African nations. She looked forward to signing Algeria's CPF for 2018–2023 during the current session of the General Conference.

14. As one of the original parties to the AFRA agreement, Algeria contributed to efforts to consolidate cooperation among the Member States, particularly through the four AFRA regional designated centres already in operation and the three entities soon to be designated.

15. Algeria welcomed the Agency's efforts to promote nuclear safety and security around the world. Responsibility for both nuclear safety and security rested entirely with the State and measures to strengthen those properties should not hinder international cooperation in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy or jeopardize the priorities set by the Agency's TC programme. Algeria commended the Agency's progress with regard to nuclear safety in the wake of the Fukushima Daiichi accident, which had prompted a reassessment of safety, radiation emergency preparedness and accident mitigation management measures. Algeria placed the highest priority on safety at its nuclear facilities and was carrying out a multi-cycle human resources training plan in nuclear safety with the Agency's

assistance. Algeria's national infrastructure for radiation and nuclear safety had been strengthened following the updating of its regulatory control system and the adoption of a decree in 2017 relating to the mitigation of radiation and nuclear risks.

16. Algeria believed that universal accession to the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) and the amendment thereto was of the utmost importance: for its part, it had recently brought the amendment into force. Algeria was putting its international commitments into practice by strengthening the relevant nuclear security infrastructure, specifically by opening a regional centre that provided training and support in nuclear security. In addition, Algeria's INSSP was being reviewed by the Agency.

17. The Agency's safeguards system was a foundational element of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Algeria was satisfied with the level of cooperation and mutual trust that it had with the Agency in relation to application of the provisions of its CSA.

18. The inalienable right of States to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes was recognized under the NPT. Algeria, as a party to the Pelindaba Treaty, remained firm in its commitment to the creation of NWFZs that strengthened international peace and security and strengthened the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Algeria was gravely concerned by nuclear proliferation in the Middle East by Israel and called for the establishment of an NWFZ in the region in line with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and General Assembly and the NPT Review Conference.

19. Algeria had suffered catastrophic human and environmental consequences of nuclear tests that had been conducted on its territory and was certain that the complete elimination of nuclear weapons was the only way to keep humanity safe from the threat posed by those weapons. Algeria had endorsed Austria's humanitarian initiative by taking an active part in the inclusive and transparent process that had led to the negotiation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons on 7 July 2017. Algeria was proud to have been one of the first countries to sign the Treaty the following day and its hope for a world free of nuclear weapons had been strengthened by that new instrument.

20. Mr VELTZÉ MICHEL (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that, for more than an entire decade, Bolivia had achieved significant progress in building a new society that was sustainable, equitable and respected Mother Earth and would continue to pursue greater social inclusion through the process of change in Bolivia and by implementing the country's 2025 development agenda and the national economic and social development plan for 2016–2020.

21. The Bolivian nuclear programme had been established to develop a variety of nuclear technology applications that would contribute to the country's human, sociocultural and economic development through socially and environmentally appropriate goods and services. The programme would comprise human resources training, basic and applied scientific research and capacity-building and promote a distinctive new vision for industrial and technological development with a focus on improving disease diagnosis and treatment, transforming the industrial and agroindustrial sectors, and boosting the competitiveness of various sectors of the national economy. The nuclear technology development marked a milestone in Bolivia's history, requiring the highest level of commitment and responsibility, as the dissemination of nuclear technology was inseparable from its responsible and safe use in accordance with security standards and guidelines.

22. The development of nuclear technology for peaceful uses in Bolivia would adhere to the highest technical standards, ethics and transparency principles and fully comply with safeguards agreements and international conventions to which it was party. The Ministry of Energy had been entrusted with formulating the national nuclear-related policies and strategies and with establishing the country's first

Nuclear Technology Research and Development Centre, which would comprise a research reactor, a multi-purpose irradiation plant and a cyclotron for the production of radiopharmaceuticals. Bolivia had signed a contract with Rosatom for the construction of the centre that would be entirely funded by Bolivia.

23. In addition, the Bolivian Nuclear Energy Agency had been established recently and would be the Centre's designated operator. The Government was also strengthening the legislative framework and its national regulatory authority and was counting on the Agency's support. Bolivia was especially grateful to the Division for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Department of Technical Cooperation for its readiness to carry out nuclear energy projects in Bolivia.

24. Bolivia supported regional programmes that encouraged cooperation among neighbouring countries and made use of laboratories and reactors in the region in accordance with existing agreements and service contracts.

25. Bolivia recognized the need to foster human resources development in the field of nuclear energy and was seeking international assistance to help professionalize the teaching of nuclear sciences. Strategic alliances were needed with training centres and universities in the field of nuclear energy generally and in the fields of medicine, agriculture and mining fields specifically.

26. As a mining country rich in minerals, Bolivia wished to make greater use of nuclear technology and radioisotopes in prospecting for new minerals, including rare earths.

27. In closing, announcing that Bolivia had deposited with the Agency its instrument of ratification for the Amendment to the CPPNM, he reiterated the country's commitment to continued collaboration with the Agency to promote activities relating to nuclear security and control of nuclear power plants and nuclear-related facilities and expressed the hope that the current session of the General Conference would be a success.

28. Mr HAMMER (Australia) said that peace, health and prosperity drove the international community's agenda. The General Conference was an occasion to shape the Agency's efforts to enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to the achievement of those goals. Australia welcomed the Director General's and the Agency's tireless efforts in promoting peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology, enhancing nuclear safety and security, and implementing safeguards.

29. He congratulated the Agency on the success of the International Conference on the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme: Sixty Years and Beyond — Contributing to Development, which had showcased the Agency's excellent work to improve social, economic and environmental outcomes using nuclear techniques. Australia continued to transfer its knowledge and expertise through the TC programme. In June, it had helped to bring into force the new Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology in Asia and the Pacific, which would promote regional cooperation and its accompanying benefits particularly for developing countries.

30. As a strong advocate of gender equality, Australia applauded the Director General's commitment to championing gender equality in the Agency and was pleased to co-chair the newly established Group of Friends for Women in Nuclear, which aimed to increase the representation of women in the Secretariat, in particular in technical areas and in senior management. Attaining gender parity would further improve the Agency's performance.

31. Australia continued to support the peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology. Its newly completed large-scale molybdenum-99 processing plant had the capacity to meet one quarter of the world's current needs and to secure the global supply of the life-saving nuclear medicine. Construction of a co-located Synroc waste treatment plant would begin in 2018 and would further



demonstrate Synroc's viability for management of molybdenum-99 and other waste streams. Australia was also contributing more towards the development of next generation nuclear reactor designs. A few days earlier, it had deposited its instrument of accession with the OECD Nuclear Energy Agency, thus fulfilling its requirement for membership in the Generation IV International Forum, and looked forward to working with other Forum partners to increase the safety, sustainability and proliferation resistance of nuclear power reactors.

32. Australia was firmly committed to nuclear safety and was pleased that the majority of the Contracting Parties to the CNS had reported their compliance with the principles of the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety. Australia would host an IRRS mission in 2018, demonstrating its commitment to the international peer review system and to continuous improvement in the regulation of nuclear and radiation safety.

33. Australia appreciated the Agency's services that helped States to enhance their nuclear security regimes, in particular the IPPAS mission, the follow-up to which it would be hosting later that year. Australia congratulated the Agency on holding the successful International Conference on Nuclear Security in 2016. The resulting Ministerial Declaration had highlighted the global importance of nuclear security and affirmed the Agency's central role in that domain.

34. The essential pre-condition for cooperation on peaceful uses of nuclear energy was confidence that nuclear material and technology were not being diverted for non-peaceful uses. All Member States needed to work together to ensure that an effective Agency safeguards system ensured universal coverage. That system needed to be independent, credible and adequately funded.

35. A CSA with an additional protocol was the international standard for verification. The universalization of the additional protocol was in the national security interest of all States. Australia therefore called on those States that had not yet concluded an additional protocol to their safeguards agreement to do so as soon as possible.

36. Australia had condemned the DPRK's flagrant disregard of successive Security Council and Agency resolutions through repeated testing of nuclear weapons and weapon delivery systems. That country's behaviour posed an unacceptable threat to global peace and security. Australia would continue to urge the DPRK to abandon its nuclear and missile programmes in a complete and verifiable manner and to comply with its international obligations, including the aforementioned resolutions.

37. Australia welcomed the Director General's report that Iran was continuing to apply its additional protocol provisionally and was cooperating with the Agency in the implementation of the JCPOA.

38. The Agency's work had never been more relevant or important. Australia commended and supported its efforts to advance the peaceful uses of nuclear energy while preventing the diversion of nuclear material and technology to non-peaceful uses.

39. Ms RUDD (Canada) said that, as her country's Parliamentary Secretary for Natural Resources, she led her Government's efforts to promote nuclear energy as a clean, low-emissions technology that would help Canada meet its global climate commitments and SDGs. Her Government's discussions of the nation's energy future with its citizens had shown that nuclear energy would play a key role in reducing Canada's dependence on fossil fuels.

40. Her Government condemned the DPRK's continued nuclear and related proliferation activities as reckless and profoundly dangerous. Canada unequivocally condemned the DPRK's nuclear test in September, and those preceding it, and its aggressive ballistic missile launch programme, which included a launch on 15 September 2017 over Japan. The DPRK's actions were in flagrant violation of

its international obligations, demonstrated a callous disregard for the safety of its neighbours and undermined the integrity of the global non-proliferation regime. Canada called on the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes immediately and verifiably and to engage in meaningful dialogue to find a peaceful, negotiated and diplomatic solution.

41. A key pillar of Canada's nuclear policy was its commitment to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It was a world leader in nuclear science and technology with applications in energy, health, safety, security and the environment, and continued to push the boundaries of nuclear technology development. A decision to use nuclear technology came with important obligations regarding safety, security and non-proliferation, however.

42. The Seventh Review Meeting of the Convention on Nuclear Safety had strengthened the Convention's effectiveness and increased participation in and transparency of the review process by deciding that all national reports would be posted on the Agency's website. International peer reviews strengthened global nuclear safety. Canada had been pleased to host an OSART mission in 2016 and was preparing for an EPREV mission in 2019.

43. Canada's new nuclear civil liability legislation adhered to the principles of the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage. Canada was the tenth Contracting Party to the Convention, which supported Canada's objective of achieving a global regime for nuclear liability.

44. In support of the Agency's efforts to help Member States fulfil their nuclear security responsibilities, Canada would make an additional \$1.9 million contribution to the Nuclear Security Fund to strengthen regulatory frameworks in Latin America. Canada would soon conclude its term as Convener of the Nuclear Security Contact Group, a role that it had played since the Group's establishment by the Nuclear Security Summit. The Group had outlined actions that would help to implement its members' shared nuclear security commitments and had welcomed five new members. Canada would continue to play an active role in the Group's work under Jordan's leadership.

45. Canada welcomed the Secretariat's efforts to inform Member States on the State-level concept, which allowed the Agency to maintain and improve the effectiveness of safeguards by focusing on areas of greater proliferation risk. In States with an additional protocol in force and a broader safeguards conclusion, the implementation of a State-level approach had the potential to improve the efficiency of safeguards implementation. Canada would work with the Agency to finalize the implementation of the State-level approach for Canada.

46. The dialogue conducted by the European Union and the P5+1 with Iran had led to the conclusion of the JCPOA, which had been implemented successfully since January 2016. Canada called on Iran to grant the Agency the access it required to be able to provide assurances of the non-diversion of nuclear material and the absence of undeclared activities. Iran's ratification of its additional protocol, along with assiduous verification and detailed reporting by the Agency's Director General, would help to establish confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear activities.

47. In the six years that had elapsed since the Board of Governors had reported Syria to the UN Security Council for the clandestine construction of a nuclear reactor, Syrian authorities had not responded to the Agency's repeated requests for access to Dair Alzour and three other locations functionally related to that reactor. Canada continued to hold the view that the situation in Syria — while of deep concern to all nations — was no excuse for Syria's non-compliance with its safeguards obligations. Canada called on Syria to cooperate with the Agency. Until unresolved questions relating to Syria's past activities were definitively answered, the Agency should remain seized of the matter.

48. Ms GORDON (Jamaica) welcomed Grenada's admission to membership in the Agency, noting that small developing countries, in particular, stood to benefit from the technical assistance, capacity-building and knowledge transfer offered by the Agency. She encouraged all fellow Member States to contribute to the TCF in order to ensure that sufficient resources were available to meet the growing demand for the Agency's assistance.

49. Jamaica had joined the Agency three years after achieving independence and continued to work closely with the Agency in its efforts to peacefully harness nuclear energy for sustainable development. Jamaica was a highly-indebted middle income country, making collaboration with multilateral and bilateral partners crucial to achieving sustainable development. As a beneficiary of the Agency's TC activities, in particular in the fields of education, health and research, Jamaica had a strong interest in Agency programmes, including courses, training and PACT, and welcomed the Agency's push to align national development priorities and the Agency's assistance with the broader UNDAF.

50. Jamaica was grateful to the Agency for its support relating to the use of nuclear and isotopic techniques, which offered a viable path towards energy sustainability. In that context, ARCAL was an important mechanism for technical cooperation in the Caribbean region, and Jamaica had taken the necessary steps to benefit from the extension of the Agreement, by depositing its instrument of acceptance earlier in 2017.

51. As a small island developing State with limited capacity and vulnerability to external shocks, including natural disasters, and as one of the world's most indebted countries, Jamaica greatly valued any bilateral, regional and international capacity-building opportunities and had made voluntary contributions to the TCF over several years. Having increased its cooperation with the Agency, Jamaica was honoured to host three Agency Regional Workshops on Security of Radioactive Material in Transport in late 2017 and early 2018.

52. Jamaica, which was home to the Caribbean's only research reactor, was working with the Agency to double the reactor's capacity, which would enable it to assist other countries in the region with their research activities. That work was particularly important in view of the growing number of countries from the region that had joined the Agency.

53. The Jamaican Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology and the International Centre for Environmental and Nuclear Sciences were working closely with the Agency to strengthen the region's regulatory infrastructure to provide for effective cradle-to-grave control over radioactive sources. The Jamaican Parliament continued to regulate activities, practices and facilities involving ionizing radiation and nuclear technology by applying the Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection Act and the Hazardous Substances Regulatory Authority, which had been in place since 2015.

54. Although Jamaica presented a negligible threat to the international order, it was regarded as a soft target for nuclear terrorism and aggression owing to the presence of dual-use technologies on its soil, its strategic geo-political location, porous borders and social and economic circumstances. Accordingly, the country maintained a long-standing commitment to total disarmament in line with the three pillars of the NPT: nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. Jamaica encouraged States that had not yet done so to accede to legally-binding international conventions and to commit themselves in earnest to negotiations geared towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

55. Her Government welcomed the recent adoption by the UN General Assembly of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which was a necessary step in the process of de-legitimizing nuclear weapons and reinforcing the norms against their use. Jamaica encouraged all States to ratify the Treaty to ensure its early entry into force.

56. For its part, Jamaica remained committed to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which had established a regional NWFZ and whose 50th anniversary was being celebrated that year.

57. Jamaica commended the Director General on his dynamic stewardship of the Agency over the preceding eight years and the heightened focus which the Agency had placed on the safe use of nuclear technology for development. She congratulated the Director General on his re-appointment and expressed her delegation's confidence that the Agency and its Member States would continue to benefit from his vision.

58. Mr CHACÓN ESCAMILLO (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela was an unquestionably pacifist country, committed to upholding the principles of general, complete and non-discriminatory disarmament. The promotion of nuclear disarmament and of cooperation among nations was enshrined in the country's constitution, which designated the geographical area of Venezuela as a zone of peace and prohibited the manufacture and use of nuclear weapons in that territory.

59. That pacifist principle was enshrined in the 1967 Treaty of Tlatelolco, and underpinned by the declaration of South America as a Zone of Peace for UNASUR in 2012, and the proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean by CELAC as a zone of peace in 2014. Venezuela reaffirmed its strict adherence to the NPT, the CTBT and the Agency's Statute.

60. Venezuela benefited extensively from the Agency's TC programmes in the development of nuclear technology; the promotion of the highest safety standards in nuclear energy and radiation protection; and the verification of the peaceful use of nuclear energy through the safeguards system. Currently, with support from the TC programme, Venezuela was involved in three national projects, sixteen regional projects and one interregional project. In the 2018–2019 cycle, the country would be pursuing four national projects on human health, radiological and environmental protection, and strengthening of the national security infrastructure and would participate in ten regional projects within the framework of ARCAL.

61. In Venezuela's view, the technical assistance of the Agency must not be subject to political, economic, military or any other conditions incompatible with the provisions of the Statute. In addition, as technical assistance was one of the Agency's statutory activities, it should be supported with sufficient, secure and predictable funding, to which end the TC programme should be financed from the regular budget.

62. Regarding other activities at the national level, he reported that the draft law on ionizing radiation had been revised, together with the regulations for the authorization, registration and control of activities associated with ionizing radiation in industry and research.

63. In terms of prevention, some 80% of the country's radioactive sources in use had been registered, based on the inspections carried out, and categorized according to risk. Venezuela had also been working on a national plan for response to radiological emergencies and was working with the country's security agencies and within the framework of regional integration organizations to develop regulations to suppress the illicit traffic of nuclear material.

64. Venezuela attached great importance to the establishment of a comprehensive national plan for nuclear safety and looked forward to support from the Agency in that endeavour. Capacity-building in the domain of nuclear safety should remain a priority for the Agency. Where nuclear security was concerned, although that was the responsibility of States, the Agency had an important supporting role in that regard.

65. In relation to verification activities and safeguards, the Agency was the only competent authority for verification and its work in that area must be based exclusively on technical

considerations and be objective and free of political and discriminatory elements that could be used against those countries that wished to exercise their right to develop peaceful nuclear programmes.

66. The Government of Venezuela defended the sovereign right of States to develop nuclear science and technology destined for peaceful purposes. It also supported the Agency's work geared towards accelerating and enlarging the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world, as expressed in Article II of its Statute.

67. Venezuela had always supported the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East, as an effective means of promoting peace and stability in the region, and believed that the establishment of the zone should not be deferred any longer.

68. He recalled the reaffirmation by Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean at the Fifth Summit of CELAC, held in January 2017 in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, of the urgent need to advance towards the main objective of general and complete disarmament under strict international control and achieve the total prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. It therefore urged the nuclear powers to take decisive steps towards the elimination of those weapons and the achievement of general disarmament, in the spirit of the new Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, whose recent adoption Venezuela applauded and in whose verification system the Agency must play a crucial role.

69. In conclusion, he reiterated his country's defence of the inalienable right of developing countries to strengthen their technological resource base and acquire the knowledge that would enable them to use peaceful nuclear energy in their development plans and thus contribute to the welfare of their people.

70. Mr SABBAGH (Syrian Arab Republic) congratulated the Director General on his election for a third term.

71. The confirmation in Agency reports that the Islamic Republic of Iran was complying with the JCPOA afforded supplementary proof of the Agency's pivotal role in guaranteeing Member States' right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The continuing successful implementation of the JCPOA depended not only on Iran but also on compliance by the other parties with their obligations.

72. Syria underscored the need to draw a clear distinction between the legal obligations incurred by Parties to the NPT and voluntary measures implemented by Member States. It therefore urged Member States to remain vigilant vis-à-vis the attempts by some States to introduce measures that were not prescribed by the Agency's Statute, the NPT, or CSAs and that diverted the Agency's work from its proper course.

73. The fact that Israel, which possessed nuclear capabilities, had failed to accede to the NPT and to conclude a comprehensive safeguards agreement was a source of deep concern for States in the Middle East and impeded the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the region. Syria stressed that the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, which provided for the indefinite extension of the NPT, must remain in force until its goals had been achieved.

74. The adoption by the General Conference of resolution GC(53)/RES/17 on Israeli nuclear capabilities had delivered a clear message from the international community, namely that Israel should accede to the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards. It was regrettable that several influential Member States, including nuclear-weapon States, applied flagrant double standards when it came to Israeli nuclear capabilities. To make matters worse, the States in question supported and assisted Israel in developing those capabilities, thereby violating their NPT obligations.

75. The Agency's Annual Report for 2016 confirmed that there had been no diversion by Syria of declared nuclear material from peaceful activities. Syria reiterated its commitment to cooperate fully with the Agency.

76. The Agency should continue to display independence, professionalism and neutrality in performing its functions under the Statute, and certain Member States should refrain from bringing pressure to bear on the Agency to promote their narrow-minded political agendas. The Board of Governors agenda item on the implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement in the Syrian Arab Republic was simply a negative manifestation of certain States' exploitation of the Agency to implement their political agendas. The Board had ignored the blatant Israeli assault on Syrian sovereignty in flagrant violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. It had adopted a resolution by vote in 2011 based on a hypothetical conclusion and a questionable inference in the absence of any hard evidence. A large number of Member States had opposed the resolution since they wished, on the one hand, to preserve the Agency's credibility and professionalism and, on the other, to support ongoing dialogue between Syria and the Agency. He reiterated Syria's full commitment to cooperating with the Agency in resolving all outstanding issues relating to the Dair Alzour site and its readiness to implement the action plan agreed upon in Damascus in 2011 between Syria and the Agency.

77. Syria commended the role of the Agency's TC programme in promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy in developing countries with a view to achieving the SDGs. Notwithstanding the difficult circumstances prevailing in Syria, it had succeeded, thanks to the tangible support of the Technical Cooperation Department, in implementing a considerable number of TC project components. It also looked forward to implementing national projects during the 2018–2019 programme cycle.

78. Syria was pleased to announce that it had deposited its CNS ratification instrument with the Director General the previous day and that it was currently studying other relevant conventions.

79. Syria continued to actively support the regional TC programme and the ARASIA Agreement, and it hoped that the Agency would continue to support the Agreement in view of its major contribution to cooperation among the States Parties and to their acquisition of nuclear technology.

80. Mr BOUCHAARA (Morocco) said that Morocco stressed the inalienable right of the States Parties to the NPT to develop the use of nuclear energy and techniques for peaceful purposes, in particular through international cooperation. Access to nuclear energy should be facilitated through appropriate international cooperation for the transfer of technology and the sharing of nuclear knowledge for peaceful purposes. Nuclear power had enabled some countries to overcome their energy dependency and was legitimately sought after by all countries that aspired to sustainable development.

81. Accordingly, Morocco attached particular importance to strengthening multilingualism in the Agency, in order to ensure the wider dissemination of the Agency's benefits and activities.

82. In Morocco's view, the TC programme was the principal mechanism for the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, and an important contribution to the sustainable development of Member States, in particular those in Africa. It was therefore vital to ensure that the TC programme was sustained with sufficient, secure and predictable funding, covering the staff costs necessary for the sound implementation of its projects.

83. Morocco's exemplary partnership with the Agency had enabled it to develop the infrastructure and human capacity necessary for the optimal use of nuclear applications in such vital sectors as agriculture, health, water resources management, environmental protection and nutrition. In that

context, his delegation welcomed the recent conclusion of a Practical Arrangement between the National Centre for Energy, Nuclear Science and Technology and the Agency's Department of Technical Cooperation, which would consolidate technical cooperation between Morocco and the Agency in the peaceful use of nuclear energy and strengthen triangular cooperation with African countries.

84. In pursuance of its commitment to the actions and programmes under AFRA, Morocco was contributing to the strengthening of the capacities of African countries through a range of training courses and scientific visits. Every year, more than a dozen African countries benefited from those measures.

85. Within the framework of AFRA, Morocco had also concluded triangular and bilateral agreements in the field of the peaceful use of nuclear technologies and it stood ready to share its experience in that area with all African countries, in particular the French-speaking countries. It currently hosted five centres designated by AFRA as regional centres of excellence, which, with scientific and technical support from the Agency, were providing capacity building and knowledge sharing at the regional level in such domains as radiation protection, oncology, nutrition, water resource management and non-destructive testing in industry.

86. Where nuclear safety and security were concerned, in parallel with the development of nuclear technologies and applications, Morocco was making concerted efforts to strengthen its national nuclear safety and security infrastructure in line with its international commitments. Its legislative and regulatory framework in that area had been strengthened with the adoption in 2014 of an act on nuclear and radiological safety and security and the creation in 2016 of the Moroccan Agency for Nuclear and Radiological Safety and Security as a centralized regulatory authority.

87. In addition, a national committee had been set up to draft regulatory texts, including on radiation protection in medical applications, nuclear safety, the safety of radioactive waste and spent fuel management. The Agency's continued support for Morocco's work in that area was highly appreciated.

88. Morocco was determined to maintain its commitment to strengthening nuclear safety and security at the regional level, and in particular for other African countries. Thus, in April 2017, it had hosted a regional workshop attended by 75 participants from 36 African States, to launch the Agency's project on strengthening national regulatory frameworks for nuclear security in African States. In addition, through its National Nuclear Security Support Centre, Morocco was conducting national and regional training for the sharing of knowledge and best practices in the field of nuclear security. It welcomed the regional and international partnerships forged in that area, including with Spain, and aimed to pursue its cooperation with those partners, at both multilateral and bilateral levels.

89. Drawing attention to the grave threat of terrorist acts using nuclear or radioactive material, he stressed the need for measures to prevent non-State actors from acquiring nuclear weapons and radioactive materials. In that context, Morocco remained convinced that the ultimate goal should be the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

90. Turning to the Agency's safeguards system, which Morocco regarded as an essential instrument of the non-proliferation regime, he reiterated the country's commitment to the implementation of its CSA with the Agency and its additional protocol. As a State Party to the NPT, it was Morocco's duty to contribute to efforts and initiatives aimed at limiting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In that regard, the rapid entry into force of the CTBT, an essential instrument in the non-proliferation regime, was a matter of great urgency.

91. The latest nuclear test conducted recently by the DPRK challenged the international community and raised serious concerns for peace and international security. Morocco called on that country to comply strictly with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

92. Morocco regretted that, for a number of years, no progress had been made with the implementation of the resolution on the application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East. Israel was the only State in the region that had not acceded to the NPT and had not placed all its nuclear facilities under the Agency's safeguards regime.

93. Morocco also deplored the postponement of the 2012 conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, and the inability of States Parties to agree on a consensus outcome document for the NPT Review Conference of 2015, which held back the common goal of establishing an NWFZ in the Middle East.

94. In conclusion, he gave assurances of his delegation's willingness to place its expertise at the disposal of the Agency, with a view to ensuring the success of the current session.

95. Mr FORTUNA BIATO (Brazil) said that, as a founding Member State of the Agency, his country was deeply committed to using nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes. Brazil saw nuclear energy as a source of prosperity and security for its citizens. Its diversified nuclear sector ensured that the economic, social and technological benefits of harnessing the atom were available to an increasing number of individuals. Brazil's nuclear industry sector was undergoing profound changes in response to the country's development needs. A high-level government committee had been established to ensure a coordinated policy response.

96. Brazil was investing heavily in renewable and competitively-priced energy sources. Drawing on its decades-long experience with nuclear power generation, Brazil would redouble its efforts to ensure the completion of the Angra III nuclear power plant and make nuclear generation a strategic component of its energy mix in the coming decades.

97. Brazil had made strides in increasing access to nuclear medicine but still needed to enlarge the range and quality of available radioisotopes. His Government was expanding cost-free radiotherapy services in Brazil and would make large-scale public purchases of the required medical equipment and have it assembled locally.

98. Noting that nuclear technology had limitless applications in agriculture, he pointed to the SIT as a powerful tool for increasing Brazil's food production and enhancing its position as one of the world's leading food producers.

99. He announced that the basic engineering component of Brazil's ambitious project to build a multipurpose research reactor had been concluded. Detailed design work was under way and would be developed in cooperation with Argentina.

100. Brazil was unequivocally committed to achieving high levels of nuclear safety and security at its nuclear installations, which continued to meet all the objectives of the CNS. A series of steps had been taken to incorporate the Vienna Declaration's key concepts into the country's national regulations.

101. Brazil had participated in the Agency's Level 3 Convention Exercise. It had previously conducted a nuclear security exercise at its Angra nuclear power plant and a general nuclear emergency exercise was being prepared in the coming weeks. Brazil had become better equipped and would take a more active part in future international exercises. Brazil was also committed to hosting an IRRS mission and Agency events and courses on EPR and nuclear security.



102. Brazil had acquired significant experience in dealing with nuclear security concerns at major public events while organizing the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro and looked forward to working with other States and the Agency on related matters.

103. Given the enormous potential of nuclear energy, it was imperative that it be kept from being misused for destructive purposes. The peaceful applications of nuclear energy could not be disseminated widely as long as the threat of nuclear holocaust persisted. Brazil's President would be taking part in the historic opening for signature of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, demonstrating Brazil's strong support for that Treaty, which was consistent with the NPT and would help to fulfil the nuclear disarmament obligations enshrined therein. Brazil was confident that efforts to make the Treaty and the NPT and the CTBT universally accepted would bring the international community closer to the shared goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

104. The determination of the DPRK to pursue nuclear weapons capacity further underscored the importance of advancing global nuclear disarmament without further delay. As they forged ahead towards that goal, countries would need to engage openly and constructively. The Agency had an essential role to play in that regard, given its highly regarded verification capabilities.

105. Ms PLEJIĆ MARKOVIĆ (Croatia), congratulating the President on her election, said that the increased attention paid within the Agency to gender balance was a significant boost to the dynamics of the Agency.

106. Effective verification and monitoring of the JCPOA had led to increased security and predictability in the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, in contrast with the continuing activities of the DPRK, which contravened international law. The many high-level visits made to the Agency in 2017 were an additional indication of its significant standing internationally.

107. Croatia firmly supported implementation of the NPT under all three pillars, while recognizing safeguards as the key element of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Croatia was implementing the system of integrated safeguards and all nuclear material available was being used exclusively for peaceful purposes. The Croatian Government had adopted a decision in 2017 to accede to the Additional Protocol to the Agreement between the non-nuclear-weapon States of Euratom, Euratom and the Agency in implementation of Article III, paragraphs 1 and 4, of the NPT.

108. As a Party to all major international treaties and conventions relating to nuclear safety and security, Croatia remained fully committed to their implementation and had participated in the Seventh Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the CNS in early 2017. It had already prepared the country review report for the Sixth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, which was due to be held in 2018.

109. Nuclear energy had played a major role in the stable and carbon free supply of electrical energy to Croatian citizens and industry for more than 30 years. The joint venture between Slovenia and Croatia to develop and operate the Krško NPP safely was a positive example of cooperation with Slovenia in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, which had also had positive economic and ecological effects. Croatia was committed to supporting the safe and secure operation of the Krško NPP in accordance with the bilateral agreement, fully taking into account all its obligations, including the safe management of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel.

110. In line with the requirements set out in the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management and in Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom, a community framework for the responsible and safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste had been established and the State office for radiological and nuclear safety had

drafted a national strategy implementation programme. The assessment of the proposed national programme had taken into account the need for high safety standards for protection of human health and the environment and also all international obligations, including the Espoo and Aarhus Conventions, and it was therefore expected that the national programme would be adopted by the Croatian Government in the near future. Croatia continued its bilateral cooperation with Hungary and Slovenia in the field of nuclear safety and security.

111. A protocol on the means of information and data exchange between the regulatory bodies of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina had been concluded in 2013 and a similar agreement was currently being negotiated with Serbia.

112. The most important aspects of cooperation between Croatia and the Agency in 2017 had taken place within the framework of the TC programme at the national and regional level. The TC programme cycle for 2016–2017 had included the implementation of four national TC projects, covering the introduction and use of various techniques in medicine, the upgrading of dose management in medicine, and isotope investigation of ground and surface water. Croatia had proposed five national projects and one regional project for the 2018–2019 cycle, in line with the priorities for technical cooperation with the Agency which had been set in the 2014 CPF.

113. Ms ANGELL-HANSEN (Norway) said that her country continued to support fully the manner in which the Agency conducted its statutory functions. The Agency played a key role in the implementation of the NPT, to which Norway attached the utmost importance.

114. Norway was deeply concerned by the DPRK's nuclear weapons and missile programme and strongly condemned its repeated violations of international law, which were unacceptable and required a strong and united response from the UN Security Council and the international community.

115. Norway welcomed the Agency's continued readiness to play a role in nuclear verification of the DPRK and the formation of a dedicated DPRK team within the department of Safeguards as the Agency was the only international body that could perform that important function.

116. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation remained high on the foreign policy agenda of the Norwegian Government, which continued to work actively for non-proliferation and disarmament based on the balanced, mutual, irreversible and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons.

117. It was pleasing that the JCPOA was being implemented successfully, as Norway had contributed substantially to its timely entry into force. The Islamic Republic of Iran was urged to continue cooperating fully with the Agency by, for example, always providing access in a timely manner when requested. All Parties to the JCPOA should fulfil their obligations to ensure that that important agreement was upheld.

118. The Agency's system of safeguards was a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and Norway called for universal accession to the NPT and for all Member States to conclude CSAs with the Agency and to sign and ratify additional protocols.

119. The Agency was to be commended on the manner in which it was implementing its safeguards mandate, notwithstanding resource constraints. New instruments, such as the modernization of safeguards information technology, and new rational methods, in particular the work to implement the State-level concept, were welcomed.

120. Nuclear energy would continue to provide a sizeable portion of the world's energy supply and Norway had, over a long period of time, assisted several Member States in improving their safety culture and framework.

121. Norway was pleased with the pace and direction of the Agency's safety work and stood by the principles of the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety. Safety and emergency preparedness needed to be improved further and coordination should be enhanced in order to make effective use of existing expertise.

122. Norway strongly supported the CNS and the Joint Convention and encouraged all Member States to address the challenges that had been identified during the Seventh Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the CNS. Adherence to nuclear liability conventions needed to be strengthened and Norway therefore welcomed the recent issuing of a number of important safety requirements and the approval of the Guidance on the Management of Disused Radioactive Sources.

123. All Member States were urged to carry out regular self-assessments and regularly host IRRS and other Agency peer review missions. Norway was planning for an IRRS mission in 2019.

124. As a coastal State, transport safety remained an important issue for Norway. As the informal dialogue between coastal and shipping States had proved very effective in fostering mutual understanding, building confidence and enhancing communication, all interested Member States were urged to take part in such dialogues.

125. The imminent deployment of floating and transportable NPPs highlighted the need to address the growing gap between the existing safety framework and the requirements associated with the deployment and operation of such facilities. The Agency must step up its consideration of all aspects of safety and security by clarifying and developing the scope and applicability of existing requirements and instruments. In due course, a full review and gap analysis of the existing safety standards and various codes and instruments applicable to floating NPPs should be conducted. Norway was grateful to other interested Member States, including the Russian Federation, which were engaging constructively with that issue.

126. Norway welcomed the ministerial declaration adopted at the International Conference on Nuclear Security: Commitments and Actions, in December 2016, which had reaffirmed the central role of the Agency in coordinating international cooperation on nuclear security, and urged the Agency to continue organizing such conferences every three years.

127. The minimizing and eventual elimination of the use and stockpiling of HEU by converting to non-HEU alternatives remained a priority for Norway. A total of 22 Member States had signed up to the Joint Statement on Minimizing and Eliminating the Use of Highly Enriched Uranium in Civilian Applications. The third International Symposium on HEU Minimization in June 2018 would be hosted by Norway in cooperation with the Agency and all interested Member States were invited to participate.

128. Norway encouraged work to prevent the smuggling of nuclear and other radioactive materials and to enhance international cooperation. The Agency and relevant international organizations should assist Member States to do their utmost to prevent nuclear terrorism and ensure that the Agency's activities in that area did not rely solely on extrabudgetary funding. In addition, it was vital that all the core activities of the Agency continued to receive the necessary funding as a robust safety and security regime enabled the peaceful use of nuclear energy and technology.

129. As a member of the Group of Friends of Women in Nuclear, Norway noted with satisfaction the increasing proportion of women in the professional staff category of the Secretariat and encouraged the Secretariat to continue its efforts in that regard.

130. The Agency had an important role to play in efforts to attain the SDGs. Norway was fully committed to the Agency's TC programme and a strong supporter of the PUI.

131. Mr SHOJA'AADIN (Yemen) said that the exceptional circumstances prevailing in Yemen for the past three years, which were unprecedented in the country's modern history, were the result of an assault by the armed Houthi militias and Ali Abdullah Saleh on the constitutional order on 21 September 2014, which posed a threat to peace in Yemen and to the security of neighbouring countries. War had broken out as a result of the uprising against the President and the legitimately elected authorities and the assault on Sanaa. The goal of the military intervention by the Arab coalition was to counter the insurrection and to restore legitimacy.

132. Yemen had been about to hold a referendum on a new constitution based on the outcome of a comprehensive national dialogue conducted throughout the country, including among the forces involved in the insurrection. The new constitution had provided for a federal system in which all residents would enjoy equality.

133. The Government, with the support of the Arab coalition, had succeeded in recovering more than 80% of the territory and had begun to perform its functions and to restore normal life in those regions.

134. Yemen was committed to ending the suffering of its people, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2216 (2015), the outcome of the national dialogue and the GCC initiative. Unfortunately, the rebel forces persisted in rejecting calls for peace. The failure of all peace negotiations had exacerbated the suffering of the Yemeni people. It had also undermined the Agency's projects in the areas of nuclear medicine, radiation treatment, agriculture, livestock production and human capacity building.

135. Yemen urged all Member States to take advantage of peaceful uses of nuclear energy under the umbrella of the non-proliferation regime and associated regulations, in particular the Agency's comprehensive safeguards agreements, whose role should be strengthened to ensure equality among all States in the interests of international peace and security.

136. Yemen attached great importance to the TC programme and continued to benefit therefrom in line with its national priorities. It welcomed the successful convening in May 2017 of the first international conference on the Agency's TC Programme — the International Conference on the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme: Sixty Years and Beyond – Contributing to Development, and urged the Agency to convene such conferences on a regular basis in view of the importance of technical cooperation for Member States, especially developing countries. The competent authorities in Yemen were keen to implement TC projects with the Agency in the areas of nuclear medicine, radiation treatment, agriculture, livestock production and human capacity building, notwithstanding the difficult circumstances prevailing in the country. They encouraged the Agency to continue seeking alternative procedures and facilities that would enable countries, such as Yemen, which were experiencing exceptional circumstances to continue implementing TC projects.

137. Yemen was grateful to ARASIA for its efforts to coordinate action by Member States in the area of technical cooperation and to provide training opportunities for Arab States relating to peaceful applications of nuclear technology under Agency supervision.

138. Yemen supported the Agency's measures to strengthen the nuclear security regime, to prevent terrorist groups from gaining access to nuclear material, and to combat illegal trafficking in radioactive nuclear material. Joint and coordinated action among Member States was essential to enhance security throughout the world and to combat terrorism. It was hoped to convene a meeting between competent authorities in Yemen and the Agency to promote cooperation on nuclear security.

139. Yemen underscored the right of all countries to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in accordance with the NPT and without being subjected to political restrictions. It was also essential to

ensure full compliance with comprehensive Agency safeguards and to strengthen the Agency's role as the mainstay of the NPT.

140. Yemen supported all non-proliferation initiatives and the establishment of NWFZs, especially in the Middle East, a region fraught with instability and a sense of insecurity owing to military imbalance and the existence of nuclear activities that were not subject to the NPT regime.

141. Action should be taken to implement the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 NPT Review Conference, which called for the establishment of a zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the region. Yemen was also committed to the action plan set forth in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, which listed the steps that should be taken to achieve that goal. Persistent stalling and procrastination in that regard would have a major negative impact on the Middle East, since peace and security in the region depended on the elimination of nuclear weapons.

142. Mr IERONYMIDES (Cyprus) said that the Agency had a key role in strengthening the international nuclear safety and security framework by promoting and implementing relevant international legal instruments, enhancing international cooperation and assisting States in nuclear safety and security capacity building. As a party to all major international treaties and conventions relating to nuclear safety and security, Cyprus was committed to the full implementation of those instruments. It welcomed the entry into force of the Amendment to the CPPNM and looked forward to participating in the International Conference on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities, to be held in November 2017. In 2016, Cyprus had ratified the amendment to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and the associated Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment.

143. Cyprus condemned the DPRK's latest nuclear test and all its activities that threatened international peace and security. It therefore welcomed the unanimous adoption of UN Security Council resolution 2371 (2017) imposing further sanctions on the DPRK.

144. While Cyprus did not operate any nuclear power or research reactors or other nuclear installations, and its energy plans for the foreseeable future did not include nuclear energy, it attached great importance to the Agency's nuclear safety and security standards as a means of ensuring nuclear safety worldwide. It supported all measures and initiatives to strengthen nuclear safety, both nationally and internationally, and urged all Member States to ensure that their nuclear facilities complied with the highest levels and standards of safety and security.

145. Given the potential transboundary impact of nuclear accidents, international and regional cooperation in nuclear safety and security were also of great importance. Transparency, public information and consultation with neighbouring countries likely to be affected in the event of such an accident were needed throughout the operational life of nuclear facilities. The nuclear security factor should not be underestimated, particularly in politically unstable regions with an increased risk of terrorist or cyber attacks.

146. The TC programme played a valuable role in enhancing the responsible development of the peaceful applications of nuclear technology. Cyprus had benefited from various TCF-funded projects in the areas of technical knowledge and expertise and also stood ready to continue hosting Agency workshops and training courses.

147. With a view to further strengthening radiation, transport and waste safety, emergency preparedness and response and radiation protection, Cyprus had recently revised its legislative and regulatory framework on the safety of installations, in line with the relevant EU directives. The revision took account of the recommendations and suggestions of the IRRS peer review mission

conducted in February 2017, while the national radiation emergency preparedness and response plan for radiological or nuclear accidents or incidents had been aligned with relevant Agency standards and reflected lessons learned from the response to the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident.

148. Ms ALIFERI (Greece) said that Greece attached great importance to the Agency's mission to promote the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear technologies.

149. Greece urged all States to adhere to the NPT, which was the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. It was crucial to pursue way of engaging nuclear weapon States in a dialogue on nuclear disarmament during the current and critical NPT Review Cycle. Greece also called upon all States to sign and ratify the CTBT to ensure its entry into force.

150. Greece condemned the DPRK's violations of international law and relevant UN Security Council resolutions and called on it to comply with its international obligations, return to the NPT, implement Agency safeguards and engage in meaningful dialogue with the international community for the promotion of peace and stability in the wider region.

151. Greece fully supported the establishment of a zone free of WMDs in the Middle East. It also welcomed the continuing implementation of the JCPOA and commended the Agency for fulfilling its mission of verification and monitoring of Iran's nuclear-related commitments. All parties needed to remain committed to that historic agreement, which proved the value of multilateral diplomacy.

152. While nuclear power was not part of Greece's national energy mix, it acknowledged all States' legitimate right to the peaceful and cautious use of nuclear energy provided that the most rigorous safety conditions for the protection of people and the environment were in place, in particular in regions with dynamic seismic and earthquake activity.

153. While nuclear security remained the responsibility of the States, the Agency played a central role in coordinating international efforts. Greece encouraged States to use the Agency's advisory services and to host peer review and associated follow-up missions. Further measures should be taken nationally and internationally to enhance the global nuclear security framework.

154. Greece had actively participated in the Agency's Nuclear Security Conference, the Seventh Review Meeting of the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the TC Conference and looked forward to participating in the forthcoming International Conference on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities.

155. The Greek Atomic Energy Commission, which had been the country's national authority for nuclear-related issues for 30 years, collaborated closely with the Agency. It had recently hosted two regional seminars: a regional workshop on emergency preparedness and response, to promote nuclear security, and a train-the-trainers course for radiation protection officers, to promote nuclear safety. In addition, many Greek scientists had participated in the Agency's TC programme.

156. Later that year, Greece would host a follow-up IRRS mission. Greece continued to upgrade its facilities and regulatory controls for temporary radioactive source and radioactive waste storage. It had also installed 11 new radioactive source tracking systems at two customs checkpoints and had taken part in the ConvEx-3 exercise in Hungary.

157. Through its regulatory authority, Greece, a maritime nation, was chairing the Mediterranean Network for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Materials (MedNet). A Greek expert would serve on the Director General's Advisory Group on Nuclear Security for a three-year period.

158. Mr BADDOURA (Lebanon) said that Lebanon was still contending with serious political, economic and security problems owing to its geographical situation in the Middle East and the impact of the Syrian war, particularly terrorism and the unprecedented refugee crisis.

159. Despite all the difficulties and challenges that it faced, Lebanon remained proudly committed to its membership of the Agency and to the rights and duties that such membership entailed. It was also committed to close and transparent cooperation with the Agency on diverse TC projects that met its medical, agricultural and industrial needs. The competent authorities persistently endeavoured to enhance legislation, standards and technical expertise in nuclear applications and to adopt the highest nuclear safety and security standards. As Lebanon had achieved a TC project implementation rate of nearly 100%, it warmly thanked the Agency for its guidance, field visits and cooperative staff.

160. Lebanon was currently chairing ARASIA, which provided a valuable framework for regional development, and it commended the Agency on its increased support for projects involving training and capacity building in nuclear science and technology.

161. Lebanon also commended the Agency on its constructive support for the implementation of the INSSP, including the repatriation of radioactive and disused sources to the State of origin, the enhancement of physical protection at the premises of the Lebanese Atomic Energy Commission and the orphan source store, training of human resources in detecting and combating trafficking in radioactive material, promotion of a nuclear safety culture, and training in information protection and security systems. Lebanon also thanked all donor States that had provided extrabudgetary funds for TC and nuclear security projects. It hoped that the Chamber of Deputies would shortly complete the procedures for ratification of the Amendment to the CPPNM.

162. Lebanon was aware that, notwithstanding the progress that it had made, major steps were still required to draw fully on the Agency's diverse services, in particular with a view to updating its legislation, ratifying certain conventions, strengthening its regulatory bodies, benefiting from PACT and building human capacity in the area of science.

163. It was essential to provide the Agency with the resources that it required to play its pivotal role, and to ensure that TCF resources were sufficient, assured and predictable. Member States should observe the Agency's standards in a serious and credible manner, and should cooperate with the Secretariat in upholding the Agency's independence, which entailed balanced geographical distribution of the staff and participation by all Member States in the Policy-Making Organs, in particular the Board of Governors, in accordance with the principle of equality of member States of international organizations.

164. As a Party to the CTBT and the NPT, and in line with its conviction that nuclear weapons posed a threat to humankind, Lebanon condemned the latest nuclear test by the DPRK, which had heightened tensions in North-East Asia to an unprecedented level, threatening the peoples of the region and international peace and security. At the same time, Lebanon urged all parties to exercise restraint and to seek to resolve the crisis through peaceful dialogue and diplomacy.

165. Similarly, Lebanon underscored the need for an objective approach to non-proliferation rather than a selective approach based on narrow-minded political interests. The forbearance displayed by certain influential States vis-à-vis Israel and their refusal to hold it accountable for disregarding the NPT, the resolutions of the NPT Review Conferences and all the principles governing the Agency's work were a source of deep concern. Their biased approach had led to the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference. The inclusion by the Arab States of the item on Israeli nuclear capabilities in the Conference agenda was thus a legitimate attempt to shed light on the threat that Israel's secret nuclear programme posed to the non-proliferation regime and to the safety and security of all peoples of the region. It was regrettable that the international awareness that had led in 2009 to the adoption of

the resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities had died away owing to the pressure imposed and campaigns waged to ensure that Israel remained unaccountable.

166. Nuclear disarmament was a goal espoused by all peoples who believed in international safety. Lebanon was keenly interested in international initiatives to that end, in particular the recent adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. It had voted in favour of the Treaty in the light of the principles, values and objectives that it enshrined. The litmus test, however, would be whether the Treaty would actually be implemented. Lebanon hoped that, when it entered into force, the Treaty would not simply be an additional international instrument that imposed legal obligations on peaceful States that did not possess or wish to possess nuclear weapons, but that it would require nuclear-weapon States to take serious practical steps to alleviate the threat posed by nuclear arsenals pending their total elimination.

167. Mr ISTRATE (Romania) said that, as a non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the NPT, his country believed that the NPT remained the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and offered the possibility of a world free of nuclear weapons. Romania continued to participate in working towards the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament, taking into account the evolving security context, by focusing on the entry into force of the CTBT and starting the negotiations for an FMCT.

168. The implementation of the NPT must be strengthened in every respect, in particular regarding the application of Agency safeguards. All Member States should support the Agency fully in implementing its mandate, and nothing beyond its mandate, as effectively and efficiently as possible. The application of the State-level concept would allow the Agency to improve efficiency while maintaining and strengthening the effectiveness of safeguards implementation for each State within the existing legal framework of that State, as set out in the State's safeguards agreements, and additional protocol where applicable.

169. Romania welcomed the continuing implementation of the JCPOA by all parties. Significant progress had been made, but there was still much to be done. The JCPOA was founded on verification, vigilance and enforcement and it was essential that all of its provisions should continue to be observed. The role of the Agency therefore remained essential in monitoring the implementation by Iran of its commitments under the JCPOA.

170. The nuclear test carried out by the DPRK on 3 September 2017 and recent missile tests constituted further blatant violations of the relevant Security Council resolutions and a major threat to international peace and security. Romania condemned those acts in the strongest possible terms and urged the DPRK to comply fully, unconditionally and without delay with all its international obligations.

171. The risk of nuclear terrorism was a worldwide concern and the significant results of the Nuclear Security Summit process had brought Member States decisively closer to the common goal of securing nuclear material and thus preventing nuclear terrorism. Romania fully supported the transition of the Nuclear Security Summit process towards a more inclusive format, under the auspices of the Agency, and encouraged all Member States to join the Nuclear Security Contact Group, which convened in the margins of the General Conference and other high-level events. The recent adoption by the Board of Governors of the Nuclear Security Plan 2018–2021 was a step in the right direction, providing a road map to assist Member States in upgrading their nuclear security standards.

172. Romania participated fully in international efforts to prevent nuclear terrorism and welcomed the role played by the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT). It would be hosting the Olympus Reloaded Regional Exercise on Nuclear Forensics in Support of Investigations, in partnership with the GICNT, in Bucharest in November 2017 and would seek to identify and discuss challenges in building a case to prosecute criminal and terrorist acts involving radiological and nuclear



material. The outcome of the exercise would be shared with all GICNT partners and presented at future Agency nuclear security-related events.

173. Nuclear forensics, which constituted an essential component of regional and international nuclear security and a strong deterrent of nuclear terrorism, had recently flourished in Romania through the dedication of young experts and Practical Arrangements had recently been concluded between the Agency and the Horia Hulubei National Institute for Research and Development in Physics and Nuclear Engineering, regarding cooperation in the field of nuclear forensics.

174. Romania was a strong supporter of the TC programme and of the statutory right of all Member States to be eligible for TC projects. Romania had benefited greatly from the TC programme through several nuclear security and safety projects and also offered regular in-kind contributions and sharing of expertise at a regional and international level.

175. Romania appreciated being able to use the Agency's extrabudgetary programme, under which the activities of the Regional Excellence Project on Regulatory Capacity Building in Nuclear and Radiological Safety Emergency Preparedness and Response in Romania were being carried out. The project had been developed by the National Commission for Nuclear Activities Control in cooperation with the Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority and the Agency under the EEA and Norwegian Grants 2009–2014 with a budget of over 4 million euros and had been completed successfully in 2017. Under the International Framework for Nuclear Energy Cooperation, Romania's Nuclear and Radioactive Waste Agency had hosted an international workshop on the Industry View of Nuclear Security and Stakeholder Engagement for Radioactive Waste Management in May 2017, with the participation of Agency experts, recognizing the major role played by Romania in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

176. Mr de SALAZAR SERANTES (Spain) said that Spain currently had the 12th largest pool of energy-related nuclear facilities in the world in terms of installed capacity. Together with the European Union, the country was making every effort to adapt the safety standards in its nuclear power plants to the new criteria and requirements. As the world's nuclear facilities aged, however, it was vital for the Agency to play a preeminent role in fostering international cooperation to ensure their technological safety and the safety of waste management and of dismantling and environmental recovery programmes for end-of-life facilities.

177. Threats to physical security also required the continuous updating of preventive measures, whose principles were reflected in the resolution co-sponsored by the European Union which would be submitted for adoption by the Conference.

178. Spain had continued its efforts to develop standards for the application of the CPPNM and its amendment, with a view to enhancing the response to sabotage and terrorist attacks related to nuclear and radioactive materials and facilities and to preventing such attacks.

179. In that context, he drew attention to Spain's cooperation with Morocco, which would be extended to Spanish-speaking countries, involving collaboration in national security matters between the Guardia Civil and the Agency under a 2016 agreement on the strengthening of national capacities in combating nuclear terrorism and in developing security systems.

180. The adoption of a new physical security plan for 2018–2021 required flexibility from all involved. Spain would continue working to improve the content of its programme documentation, to ensure that the Agency had sufficient and sustainable resources through the regular budget to finance its core activities as mandated by its Statute. As Member States' demand for activities was constantly growing, balanced and realistic budget management was of vital importance.

181. In its conviction that cooperation was key to facing the challenges of the modern world, Spain was engaged in the Agency's TC programme in activities to promote technologies, strengthen regulatory infrastructures, train human resources, comply with international standards and provide various services in Member States.

182. Spain's Nuclear Safety Council was an active member of FORO, which, 20 years since its founding, continued its endeavours to attain high levels of nuclear, radiological and physical safety in its 10 member countries and, by extension, throughout the region.

183. The country's nuclear regulatory body was also contributing to a range of technical and cooperation projects, the development of peer review missions, and the drafting and revision of the Agency regulations, along with their translation into Spanish as a contribution to multilingualism.

184. He also noted the strategic partnership between the CIEMAT research centre and ARCAL and cooperation in the field of nuclear medicine under the agreement between the Spanish Medical Association and the Agency.

185. Spain considered that CSAs and their additional protocols provided an essential framework for the maintenance of global confidence in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In view of the special sensitivity of that issue for many countries and the aspiration to a world without nuclear weapons, it was vital to move towards the universalization of the NPT and the entry into force of the CTBT, together with the creation of an NWFZ in the Middle East.

186. Noting the diplomatic breakthrough achieved with Iran and Security Council resolution 2231 (2015), he recalled that other nuclear cases, such as that of Syria, still awaited investigation and lasting political solutions. At the same time, Spain called on the DPRK to comply with all the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, definitively cease its nuclear tests and programme and nuclear tests and implement its safeguards agreement.

187. In closing, he congratulated the Director General on his re-election, and conveyed Spain's gratitude to him and his team for their efforts to ensure that the Agency remained effective and dynamic.

188. Mr ALKAABI (United Arab Emirates) said that the UAE deeply appreciated the Agency's sustained assistance to Member States to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to develop national nuclear energy programmes. Much progress had been achieved in that regard and he commended the efforts of the Director General and the Secretariat to that end.

189. Nuclear power continued to play an important role by helping to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions while delivering large-scale energy to support economies and meet the needs of growing populations. The UAE's nuclear power programme was progressing well: the construction of four nuclear reactors at the Barakah NPP was more than 82% complete and the construction of Barakah Unit 1 more than 96% complete. The UAE acknowledged the Agency's indispensable role in supporting the development of its national programme.

190. The UAE looked forward to hosting the International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century in Abu Dhabi in October 2017, at which participants would discuss how nuclear power could facilitate the achievement of the SDGs. The UAE trusted that Member States would participate in the Conference at high or ministerial level, with a view to facilitating its success.

191. His country had paid close attention to nuclear safety and remained in full compliance with its obligations under the nuclear safety conventions. It participated actively in the review meetings of those conventions and had submitted its third national report for the forthcoming Seventh Review

Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, which had been held in March and April 2017.

192. The Agency's peer review missions were an important mechanism to ensure that nuclear energy programmes were in line with safety standards and best practices. Since 2011, the UAE had received eight major peer review missions. The UAE also underscored the importance of the CNS and its peer review mechanism, and urged States with significant nuclear activities, such as the Islamic Republic of Iran, to accede to that Convention as soon as possible.

193. The UAE commended the Agency on its work to transfer knowledge and technology under its TC programme to facilitate efforts by Member States to attain the SDGs. The UAE had received invaluable support for the infrastructure and human resource development required to make its nuclear power programme safe, secure and successful.

194. The UAE continued to share best practices and forge strategic partnerships with the Agency and its Member States; in 2017, for the third time, it had hosted an Agency Nuclear Energy Management School.

195. The UAE commended the Agency and the Government of Kazakhstan on their efforts to establish the Agency LEU Bank, which would facilitate the responsible expansion of the peaceful uses of nuclear technology.

196. The UAE recognized the threat posed by unsecured nuclear material and facilities, along with the threat of nuclear terrorism, and acknowledged the pivotal role played by the Agency in efforts to enhance nuclear security through its promotion of international cooperation and the sharing of best practices. The UAE had been an active participant in the Nuclear Security Summit series since its inception, and fully endorsed the outcome of the 2016 IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Security. The UAE had developed a national nuclear security framework in line with international nuclear security instruments and complied with its obligations under the international security conventions that it had ratified.

197. The UAE called on Iran to comply fully with its obligations pursuant to the JCPOA and to refrain from activities that contravened the spirit or the letter of that Agreement. Iran's full and transparent implementation of the JCPOA was an essential prerequisite for increasing confidence in the peaceful nature of its nuclear activities.

198. The UAE continued to support all efforts to facilitate the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East and looked forward to continuing to work with the Agency and the international community in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy, together with nuclear safety and security and non-proliferation.

199. Mr SNIR (Israel) said that collaboration with the TC programme remained one of the pillars of Israel's activity as a member of the Agency. Accordingly, Israel had considerably increased its contribution to the TCF in recent years and, under the programme, had developed new initiatives in education, medicine, agriculture and other areas. Within the TC regional group, Israel and its partners in the Middle East had undertaken a ground-breaking regional programme to ensure food security for populations in the area.

200. Israel strongly supported regional initiatives to promote peaceful applications of nuclear technologies and had donated US \$5 million to the International Centre for Synchrotron Light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East (SESAME), located in Jordan, of which it was a founding member. In addition, Israel looked forward to participating later in the year in the forthcoming International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century, to be organized by the Agency in the UAE.

201. Israel strictly followed Agency guidance on the safety and security of its nuclear facilities and the protection of materials used in nuclear research and applications. It also maintained the highest safety and security standards within its facilities, which it continuously upgraded, both for routine purposes and for emergency preparedness.

202. Israel took part in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, the Nuclear Security Contact Group and many more nuclear security-related initiatives, committees and exercises under the Agency. As the Head of the Israel Atomic Energy Commission, he called upon his Arab colleagues to join forces with Israel in tackling the common challenges related to nuclear security in their region. While Israel had repeatedly expressed its willingness to cooperate with any State in the Middle East to strengthen nuclear security and safety, the Arab Group regrettably continued to abuse that technical forum in order to attack Israel politically. The item on Israeli nuclear capabilities, included on the agenda every year, was politically motivated and in contravention of the Agency's Statute and mandate and Israel strongly objected to its inclusion.

203. The continuing unrest in the Middle East threatened peace and security worldwide and required the attention of all Member States. Such unrest provided fertile ground for the proliferation of WMD capabilities and knowhow. It was a matter of regret that two nations in the Middle East were playing a leading role in destabilizing the region. Iran continued to develop, test and deploy long-range ballistic missiles in direct violation of UN Security Council resolutions and supported terrorist groups throughout the Middle East. Two years after signing the JCPOA, Iran had yet to earn the international community's trust, owing to its longstanding record of obstruction, aggression and concealment and it should fulfil its nuclear-related commitments in good faith, fully and transparently. The international community must send a strong message of zero-tolerance and make it clear to Iran that it remained under close scrutiny.

204. Ten years before, the clandestine nuclear reactor at the Dair Alzour site in Syria had been revealed to the international community. Many questions remained regarding that clear breach of the country's safeguard agreements and international commitments. Syria's lack of cooperation and transparency was a source of significant concern, and set a dangerous precedent. Israel therefore strongly supported the Director General's call on Syria to cooperate fully with the Agency on issues relating to all relevant sites. The international community must persist in demanding that Syria urgently remedy its non-compliance and provide full access to all information, sites, material and persons.

205. In conclusion, he looked forward to meaningful discussions in that forum, and to continuing Israel's fruitful relationship with the Agency in the years to come.

206. Ms FERTEKLİGİL (Turkey) said that Turkey welcomed the Agency's continued support for its members in the use of nuclear science and technology to tackle global development and non-proliferation challenges and supported the Agency's efforts to contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

207. Sustainable development was not possible for people if they continued to suffer from debilitating diseases and conditions. Accordingly, Turkey applauded the Agency's selection of nuclear techniques in human health: prevention, diagnosis and treatment, as the theme for the 2017 Scientific Forum.

208. Turkey attached great importance to enhancing its capacity in the medical uses of nuclear technology. With its newly established Proton Accelerator Facility and Secondary Standard Dosimetry Laboratory, the country had improved its radiopharmaceutical production capacity for medical applications and standardization in its radiation dose measurements. In that context, she noted the important function performed by the Nuclear Application Laboratories in Seibersdorf in extending

the benefits of nuclear technologies to Member States. In its commitment to the Agency's role in sustainable development, Turkey was supporting the ReNuAL Plus project.

209. Turkey was determined to carry forward its nuclear power projects with the aim of increasing and diversifying its energy supplies and industrial development. It currently had three NPP projects in various stages. The most advanced of those was the Akkuyu NPP, being developed in cooperation with the Russian Federation. In February 2017, the design parameters of the Akkuyu NPP site had been approved by the Turkish Atomic Energy Authority, following which site licensing had been completed and the construction license phase launched. The Sinop NPP project was at the feasibility stage and the third NPP project at the site selection and technology evaluation stage.

210. Turkey was meticulously taking all precautions to ensure the safe generation of nuclear power. It followed the Agency's safety standards and guidance and drew on the principal international mechanisms in that area. It had also participated actively in the Seventh CNS Review Meeting. The Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management was on its national agenda. It took due account of the latest Agency safety standards and international best practices. In addition, the Turkish Atomic Energy Authority had signed bilateral cooperation agreements with its Chinese, Finnish, French, Japanese, Russian, Ukrainian and US counterparts in the field of nuclear and radiation safety and, in 2017, the Turkish Atomic Energy Authority and the Agency had initiated a TC project on the hosting of Agency technical safety review services for the Akkuyu NPP.

211. The importance which Turkey attached to nuclear safety also extended to ageing NPPs, which it regarded as a matter of particular concern. It therefore called on the relevant Member States to review and enhance the safety of such NPPs, in line with the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety and updated Agency safety standards. In that context, she noted that Turkey expected to host an IPPAS mission in 2018.

212. In the domain of nuclear safety and security, she drew attention to significant events over the previous year and confirmed that Turkey was implementing the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and welcomed the new supplementary Guidance on the Safety and Security of Disused Radioactive Sources, approved by the Board of Governors the previous week.

213. Turkey was resolutely committed to the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons and reaffirmed the vital importance of the NPT as the principal international legal framework in that domain. It favoured an incremental approach to nuclear disarmament, in the belief that divergence in preferred instruments would not undermine or weaken the NPT.

214. Turkey had concluded both a CSA and an additional protocol and the broader conclusions provided by the Agency since 2012 confirmed that all nuclear materials in Turkey remained in peaceful activities.

215. Turkey strongly condemned the nuclear test conducted by the DPRK on 3 September 2017 and was seriously concerned about that country's continuation and further development of its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes. It was pleased to see that the Director General's reports on the JCPOA indicated Iran's continued adherence to its nuclear commitments and it looked forward to the uninterrupted and full implementation of the JCPOA.

216. It also noted the Director General's recent report on Syria and trusted that, through continued engagement with Syria, the Agency would be able to eliminate ambiguities and eventually close that file.

217. The failure to convene a conference on an NWFZ in the Middle East in 2012 was a major disappointment and Turkey called on all parties to reach agreement on the way forward.

218. Turkey assigned great importance to the Agency's TC programme and its invaluable guidance and assistance in such challenging areas as the creation of an appropriate legal and regulatory framework, the site selection for NPPs and the formulation of radioactive waste management policies and strategies. In conclusion, she conveyed Turkey's hope that the Agency would give continued priority to those Member States developing or implementing nuclear power programmes and reaffirmed Turkey's commitment to the Agency's founding principles.

219. Ms EDUARDS (Sweden) said that the Agency's strengthened safeguards system formed a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The additional protocol, adopted exactly 20 years previously, had proved to be an indispensable tool for the Agency safeguards and, together with the CSA, had become the current verification standard pursuant to article III of the NPT. Member States must provide the necessary support so that the Agency could perform its task of verifying the correctness and completeness of Member States' declarations and it was vital, for the efficient and effective use of resources for safeguards verification, that the Agency maintain its staff competence.

220. Sweden also welcomed the Agency's efforts to apply the State-level concept to all Member States with a safeguards agreement in force, as part of the continuing evolution of global safeguards implementation.

221. The DPRK's provocative actions posed a serious challenge to the non-proliferation regime and threatened international peace and security. Accordingly, Sweden called on that country to cooperate promptly with the Agency in the complete and effective implementation of the Agency's comprehensive safeguards and welcomes the Agency's readiness to resume its verification work in the DPRK.

222. Sweden also strongly supported the Agency's work in verifying the implementation of the JCPOA. Implementation of that agreement would continue to enhance dialogue with Iran and further strengthen the NPT. To that end, Sweden would make an additional extrabudgetary contribution of 1 million Swedish kronor.

223. Sweden had taken yet another step towards a governmental licensing decision on the construction of a repository for spent nuclear fuel and court hearings in that regard were currently under way, during which the application submitted by the licensee SKB would be assessed by the court in accordance with the Environmental Act.

224. Additional steps had been taken by Sweden to enhance the level of safety in the its NPPs: it had prioritized work to implement the National Action Plan in line with the EU stress test and, by the end of 2017, the licensees would have to take decisions on the design and installation of the bunkered independent core cooling system. Those measures demonstrated Sweden's commitment to nuclear safety in line with the Vienna Declaration and with the conclusions of the Sixth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety.

225. Nuclear science and technology, as disseminated through the Agency, would play a significant role in advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Sweden also supported the Agency's TC programme and its contributions in such diverse fields as human health, food security and water management. In that regard, Sweden had provided voluntary contributions in support of water resource management in the Sahel and believed that the success of TC projects would be greatly enhanced if the standpoint and needs of the project stakeholders, including women, were taken into consideration.

226. Technical cooperation was also of great importance in fostering nuclear safety and security. Sweden was engaged in long-standing cooperation in that domain with Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

227. Sweden attached great importance to gender equality at the Secretariat and to gender mainstreaming in the Agency's programmes and activities, which would also benefit Member States. In that regard, it supported efforts by the Director General and the Secretariat to recruit more women to management positions in the Agency.

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