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# Plenary

## Record of the Eighth Meeting

*Held at Headquarters, Vienna, on Thursday, 20 September 2018, at 3 p.m.*

**President:** Ms ŽIAKOVÁ (Slovakia)

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<sup>1</sup> GC(62)/17.

### **Abbreviations used in this record**

CSA	comprehensive safeguards agreement
EU	European Union
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review and Extension Conference	Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
SLC	State-level concept
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
WMDs	weapons of mass destruction

## — **Report on the Scientific Forum 2018**

1. The PRESIDENT, recalling that the theme of the Scientific Forum 2018 had been “Nuclear Technology for Climate: Mitigation, Monitoring and Adaptation”, invited the Rapporteur of the Scientific Forum 2018, Ms Cara Nelson, to report on the Forum.
2. Ms NELSON (Rapporteur of the Scientific Forum 2018) read the report, which is annexed hereto.
3. The PRESIDENT thanked Ms Nelson for the report and commended her and the Secretariat on the success of the Scientific Forum 2018.

## **18. Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East** (GC(62)/6 and L.4)

4. The PRESIDENT said that item 18 had been included in the agenda pursuant to resolution GC(61)/RES/14 and that the Director General had accordingly submitted the report set out in document GC(62)/6, which had been considered by the Board. Document GC(62)/L.4 contained a draft resolution submitted by Egypt.
5. Mr YOUSSEF (Egypt) said that ridding the Middle East of nuclear weapons was a priority of Egypt’s foreign policy in the area of non-proliferation. For 40 years, Egypt had striven to achieve the universalization of comprehensive Agency safeguards, as they were the legal basis provided for by the NPT. Those efforts took the form of numerous resolutions and initiatives that Egypt had submitted to the UN General Assembly, the First Committee and the General Conference.
6. Despite the fact that the resolutions had all been adopted either by consensus or with a significant majority, none had been implemented, owing to a lack of political will. A stalemate had therefore been reached, which cast a shadow of doubt over consensus-based agreements and undermined the non-proliferation regime.
7. Motivated by its aspiration to break the stalemate, Egypt had submitted to the General Conference the same draft resolution text on the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East as it submitted every year. The text provided a strong basis for establishing an NWFZ in the Middle East and strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime.
8. A vote against the resolution demonstrated a lack of respect for States’ obligations to support the non-proliferation regime and would undermine the work of the international community to prevent nuclear proliferation.
9. All Member States were called on to honour their commitments to promote international peace and security. To that end, States needed to take concrete, practical steps without delay to implement the text of the resolution. Egypt urged the Director General to hold consultations with Member States in the region in that regard.
10. During the current session, Member States had increased their efforts to find ways to develop the Agency’s safeguards regime, in particular with regard to the SLC. Egypt would continue to participate actively in those negotiations.

11. Given the importance that it placed on developing the safeguards system, the Secretariat should place equal priority on its work to ensure the universalization of the comprehensive safeguards regime and to apply comprehensive safeguards to nuclear facilities in the Middle East, in particular those not under any verification or monitoring measures. All Member States had a duty to tackle the current challenges in line with the provisions of the draft resolution submitted, with a view to overcoming the stalemate.

12. Mr CHACÓN ESCAMILLO (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), speaking on behalf of NAM, welcomed the report set out in document GC(62)/6 and said that NAM was still committed to its principled position on the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East. It strongly believed that stability could not be achieved in a region in which one State threatened neighbouring and other States owing to the massive continuing imbalance in military capabilities caused by its possession of nuclear weapons. In its conviction that an NWFZ in the Middle East would be a positive step towards global nuclear disarmament, NAM reiterated its support for the establishment of such a zone in accordance with the relevant UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions.

13. NAM was also convinced that the effective and efficient application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East promoted greater confidence among States in the region. Achieving the universality of comprehensive Agency safeguards in the Middle East was the first practical step towards confidence-building among the States there, and was a necessary step towards the establishment of an NWFZ in that region. NAM was pleased that its members that were Parties to the NPT had concluded CSAs with the Agency as non-nuclear-weapon States.

14. All States in the Middle East, except Israel, were Parties to the NPT and had undertaken to accept comprehensive Agency safeguards. NAM highlighted the accession of Palestine as a Party to the NPT and the approval by the Board of Governors of a CSA between Palestine and the Agency in connection with NPT Article III.

15. NAM regretted Israel's continued insistence that the issue of comprehensive Agency safeguards could not be addressed in isolation from the regional peace process; there was no automatic sequence making the application of comprehensive safeguards to all nuclear activities in the Middle East dependent on a peace settlement there: in fact, the former would contribute to the latter.

16. NAM also regretted that the Director General had not been able to make further progress in fulfilling his mandate under resolution GC(61)/RES/14 on the application of comprehensive Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities in the Middle East. Considering that all Member States should cooperate in rectifying an unacceptable situation, NAM called on them to participate actively in, and give priority to, the campaign to achieve the universality of comprehensive Agency safeguards in the Middle East.

17. Noting that the Director General would continue consultations in accordance with his mandate on the early application of comprehensive Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities in the Middle East, NAM welcomed the Director General's efforts to encourage relevant new ideas and approaches that might help to move his mandate forward, and requested him to continue to brief Member States regularly thereon.

18. NAM Members that were Parties to the NPT, mindful of the consensus decision to convene, in 2012, a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other WMDs, had been profoundly disappointed that the conference had still not been convened, contrary to the letter and spirit of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East and the collective agreement of the Parties to the NPT enshrined in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

19. NAM Members that were Parties to the NPT feared that the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference to agree on the draft final document would have a negative impact on the NPT regime.
20. NAM requested the Director General to continue to consult Member States on arrangements for establishing an NWFZ in the Middle East and expected all Member States of the Agency to support his efforts to implement resolution GC(61)/RES/14.
21. NAM seconded the draft resolution submitted by Egypt on the item under discussion.
22. Ms ZAFARY-ODIZ (Israel) said that, in the past, Israel had joined the consensus on the resolution under consideration, reflecting a shared vision for regional stability and security. However, the current language of the draft resolution portrayed adherence to the NPT as a means of enhancing peace and security in the Middle East. Such a concept was inherently flawed as it did not take regional realities into account. While Israel had repeatedly expressed its commitment to the non-proliferation regime, four States in the region had failed to comply with their obligations under the NPT. Accordingly, while Israel shared the vision articulated by the draft resolution, the text lacked the required balance, given regional circumstances.
23. Israel attached high importance to the non-proliferation regime and shared its goals. Accession to the NPT was not a goal in and of itself and the geopolitical situation in the Middle East clearly demonstrated that the NPT did not provide a remedy for the unique security challenges of the region, especially considering the repeated violations of the NPT by several States Parties. Calls for universal accession to the NPT must therefore be judged against the views held by some in the region concerning the State of Israel, the existence of which was not recognized by several Arab States, and that of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which had openly and explicitly called for Israel's destruction.
24. Inasmuch as lessons learned from other regions had shown that a regional security framework could only stem from the shared political will of all regional parties to engage directly with each other and to take into consideration the security concerns of each and every State on the basis of consensus, Israel hoped that the sponsors of the resolution under consideration would take Israel's views into account and work to find an agreed text likely to lead to the reinstatement of consensus. Until such time, Israel was obliged to vote against paragraph 2 of the draft resolution and to abstain on the draft resolution as a whole. Israel accordingly requested that separate votes be taken on paragraph 2 and on the draft resolution as a whole.
25. Mr ALSHAHMAN (Iraq) called on the Agency and the international community to take the necessary steps to implement the resolutions adopted by the 1995 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences. In particular, the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East would ensure the practical application of comprehensive Agency safeguards in the region on a fair and equal basis.
26. Iraq welcomed the measures taken by Palestine and the Agency to conclude a safeguards agreement in connection with the NPT. That development would support the joint efforts of the Arab States to promote peace, safety and security in the Middle East region and in the world as a whole.
27. Mr CHACÓN ESCAMILLO (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that his country had called for general, comprehensive and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament and had voiced concern repeatedly at the situation of injustice, instability and conflict that had prevailed for decades in the Middle East, stemming from interfaith disputes and the geopolitical ambitions of some Western powers in particular. A recent additional problem was the presence in the region of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant.
28. The fourth objective of the declaration of the seventeenth summit of the Heads of State and Government of NAM held on Margarita Island, Venezuela, on 17 and 18 September 2016 recorded the

resolve of the Heads of State and Government of NAM to establish an NWFZ in the Middle East in accordance with the commitments reached during the 1995 NPT Review Conference and subsequent meetings.

29. The 2015 NPT Review Conference must be considered to have been a failure as the draft Final Document, which had envisaged a conference on the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East to be held before 1 March 2016, had not been adopted.

30. In resolution 70/24, the General Assembly had reaffirmed the right of all States to acquire and develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and called on all interested parties to adopt the measures necessary for the creation of an NWFZ in the Middle East and to accede to the NPT. It had also highlighted the need for measures to prevent military attacks on nuclear facilities and called on all countries of the region which had not yet done so, pending the creation of the zone, to agree to submit all their nuclear facilities to Agency safeguards.

31. In conclusion, he recalled that, at a number of international forums, Venezuela had stressed the urgent need for Israel to accede to the NPT immediately, place its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards and contribute to the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East.

32. Venezuela also supported the draft resolution on the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East submitted by Egypt.

33. Mr NASUTION (Indonesia) said that his country regretted deeply that resolution GC(61)/RES/14 could not yet be implemented and called for the active commitment of States in the Middle East to achieving the universality of Agency CSAs in that region, which should be adhered to unconditionally.

34. Indonesia expressed its serious concern that progress in the realization of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other WMDs, a key element in ensuring security and stability in the region, remained elusive and urged the States in the region to reach an agreement on the substance and methods of establishing such a zone. The establishment of such a zone was an important step towards the bolstering of peace and security in the region and beyond and would contribute significantly to the maintenance of international peace and security.

35. Mr GHARIB ABADI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that, since 1980, the UN General Assembly had adopted — without the need for a vote — numerous resolutions on the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East, which reflected the importance of achieving that goal in such a volatile region. A continued failure to do so would have an adverse impact on the integrity and credibility of the NPT.

36. The establishment of an NWFZ was essential in the Middle East, where the reckless nuclear activities of the Israeli regime posed a threat to the region and beyond. Although the opposition of the Israeli regime was the only obstacle to achieving that goal, the role of some powers in supporting the Israeli regime in obstructing the convening of the 2012 conference on the establishment of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East and in preventing the adoption of the Final Document of the 2015 NPT Review Conference should not be disregarded. Such support needed to be withdrawn if an NWFZ was to be established.

37. Having ratified all major treaties banning WMDs and having demonstrated its commitment to eliminating nuclear weapons, including by adhering to the NPT and placing all its facilities under Agency safeguards, Iran considered that the universal accession to the NPT and universal application of Agency safeguards would be instrumental in establishing an NWFZ in the Middle East. Iran drew attention to the accession of Palestine to the NPT and Palestine's wish to conclude a CSA with the Agency, in the hope that the CSA would apply to all occupied territories of Palestine in due course.

38. Iran regretted that the Director General had not been able to make progress towards ensuring that all nuclear activities in the Middle East were covered by comprehensive safeguards, owing to the Israeli regime's efforts to legitimize its own position and its claims that it must protect itself from security threats. Iran expressed its strong reservations about the list of Middle East States set out in footnote 1 to document GC(62)/6, as, in Iran's view, such a list could not be used in any other context or body.

39. Iran expressed grave concern that Israel, confident of the political and military support it received from certain countries, was continuing to run an illegal clandestine military nuclear programme and had not declared its intention to accede to the NPT, place its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards or abandon its WMD programme. Maintaining the current status quo was no longer an option. In an attempt to safeguard the interests of a non-party to the NPT that posed a physical threat to peace and security in the region, certain States were hindering the implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East and the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. The only conceivable way of maintaining peace and security in the region was to establish an NWFZ and apply Agency safeguards; to that end, pressure should be exerted on the Israeli regime to accede to the NPT, promptly and unconditionally, as a non-nuclear weapon party, and to place all its nuclear activities and facilities under full-scope safeguards.

40. Mr SANTANA NÚÑEZ (Cuba) said that the achievement of nuclear disarmament had been and would remain a priority for most States, including his own. The vast majority of Member States had welcomed Cuba's accession to the NPT, which it was proud to have ratified on 30 January 2018; it was a demonstration of the political will of most of the international community to move towards complete nuclear disarmament.

41. Regrettably, the same could not be said in relation to the commitments entered into by all States Parties to the NPT to hold an international conference in 2012 to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other WMDs, which had been a key element of the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and which was yet to be held. The soonest possible establishment of such a zone would constitute a significant contribution to peace and stability, not only in that region but throughout the world. That could be achieved if the only State in that region that was not party to the NPT acceded thereto and placed all of its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive Agency safeguards. Cuba therefore urged all concerned to convene the conference without delay.

42. Mr PITSWANE (South Africa) said that the report under discussion noted that all States in the Middle East except for Israel were Parties to the NPT and had undertaken to accept comprehensive safeguards in accordance with Article III of the Treaty. His country welcomed the recent approval by the Board of a CSA between Palestine and the Agency, which demonstrated that State's commitment to the objectives of the NPT. He commended the Director General's efforts to finalize that process.

43. South Africa, which had consistently reiterated its full support for the NPT, particularly the balance between its three pillars, also continued to be a strong advocate for the universalization of the Treaty in order to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. It called once again on Israel to join the NPT and to place its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards. Such an action would facilitate the implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other WMDs, which had been reaffirmed at the NPT Review Conferences in 2000 and 2010.

44. It was disappointing that the 2012 conference to facilitate the establishment of such a zone, which had been agreed upon by consensus at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, had not been convened. The failure to implement decisions taken and commitments made could have a negative impact on the credibility of the Treaty and the nuclear non-proliferation regime in general.

45. It was important to recall that that resolution was an essential element of the outcome of the 1995 Review Conference and one of the objectives that had motivated States to agree on the indefinite extension of the Treaty. South Africa underscored that the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East remained valid until such time as its goals were realized. Strongly convinced that the implementation of the current resolution would greatly contribute towards achieving peace and security in the Middle East, South Africa continued to support its adoption.

46. The PRESIDENT recalled that Israel had requested that a separate vote be taken on paragraph 2 of the draft resolution set out in document GC(62)/L.4.

47. At the request of Egypt, a roll-call vote was taken.

48. Lebanon, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

49. The result of the vote was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Holy See, Hungary, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Zimbabwe.

50. Against: Israel.

51. Abstaining: Botswana, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, India, Jamaica, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Philippines, Togo, United States of America, Zambia.

52. There were 114 votes in favour and 1 against, with 13 abstentions. Paragraph 2 of the draft resolution was adopted.

53. Mr ANSARI (India), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation had abstained because it believed that paragraph 2 of the draft resolution contained elements that were extraneous to the Agency.

54. The PRESIDENT noted that Israel had requested a vote on the whole of the draft resolution contained in document GC(62)/L.4.

55. At the request of Egypt, a roll-call vote was taken.

56. Afghanistan, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.



57. The result of the vote was as follows:

58. In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Holy See, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Zimbabwe.

59. Abstaining: Botswana, Burkina Faso, Canada, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Israel, Jamaica, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Philippines, Togo, United States of America, Zambia.

60. There were 115 votes in favour and none against, with 13 abstentions. The draft resolution was adopted.

61. Mr HALL (United Kingdom), speaking also on behalf of France and Germany, said that all three countries had supported the resolution in the same spirit as at previous sessions. They viewed it exclusively in the context of the NPT and the Agency. The word "relevant" in operative paragraph 3 clearly related solely to the application of safeguards, in line with the title of the resolution. The United Kingdom, France and Germany continued to support efforts to promote a Middle East free of nuclear weapons and all other WMDs and their delivery systems.

62. Ms HULAN (Canada), speaking in explanation of vote, said that her country continued to call on all States that had not already done so to sign and bring into force a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol. Furthermore, it had consistently supported the establishment of a verifiable NWFZ in the Middle East.

63. Canada was disappointed that wording had been introduced into the resolution at recent sessions of the General Conference that prevented its adoption by consensus. The resolution as presented unduly politicized a forum that had historically adopted a more technical approach to such issues. It also failed to address serious non-compliance issues in the Middle East, thereby ignoring a critical aspect of the application of safeguards in the region. Canada was unable to support a resolution that failed to address fundamental concerns of non-compliance, while drawing erroneous connections between NPT ratification and safeguards applications. Canada had therefore decided to abstain on paragraph 2 and on the resolution as a whole.

64. Mr ANDERTON (United States of America) said that his country continued to support many of the goals outlined in the resolution, including the long-term goal of the universalization of the NPT and of a Middle East free of WMDs and their delivery systems, along with comprehensive and durable

regional peace. The USA also strongly endorsed a number of key elements outlined in the resolution, including the importance of confidence- and security-building measures, the need for adherence by States of the region to existing non-proliferation obligations, and the necessity of pursuing those goals in the context of broader regional peace efforts.

65. The USA was fully committed to supporting the States of the region as they pursued practical steps and inclusive, consensus-based dialogue to advance the shared long-term goal of a safer and more secure Middle East free of WMDs and their delivery systems, and as they worked to address the real-world political and security barriers that continued to hamper progress in that regard, including the lack of trust among the regional States, conflict and non-compliance in the region, the repeated use of chemical weapons by Syria, ballistic missile proliferation, and the non-recognition of Israel by some regional States.

66. The USA remained convinced that efforts to advance that objective should be pursued by the States of the region in an inclusive, cooperative and consensus-based manner, taking into account the legitimate concerns of all regional States. For many years, the resolution had been adopted by consensus pursuant to a mutually agreed approach among regional States, which had unfortunately been abandoned in recent years in favour of a resolution that could not command regional consensus and which was pursued alongside a divisive and politically motivated agenda item aimed solely at isolating one State in the region. The USA deeply regretted that development and urged the sponsors of the resolution to re-engage with their regional neighbours to pursue a return to a consensus approach to those issues, so that they could be addressed in a more collaborative and productive manner.

67. Mr YOUSSEF (Egypt) thanked all Member States that had voted in favour of paragraph 2 of the resolution and the resolution as a whole. The adoption of the resolution by a majority of 115 votes would play an important role in ensuring that the necessary steps were taken to ensure that Agency safeguards were applied to all nuclear facilities that were currently outside its verification system in the Middle East.

## **19. Israeli nuclear capabilities**

(GC(62)/1/Add.1, GC(62)/14)

68. The PRESIDENT said that item 19 had been included in the agenda at the request of Arab States that were Members of the Agency. It was covered by an explanatory memorandum in document GC(62)/1/Add.1 and by document GC(62)/14.

69. Mr AL-THANI (Qatar), speaking on behalf of the Arab Group, said that the Arab States had striven for more than four decades to seek a solution to their concerns about nuclear material, programmes and facilities that were not under international safeguards and thus posed a threat to their security and stability. The Arab States had preferred to join the international non-proliferation and disarmament regime rather than join a regional arms race that could be disastrous for international peace and security.

70. With a view to promoting dialogue and cooperation with the international community, the Arab States had ratified the NPT, believing that all other Parties were seriously committed to achieving universality of the Treaty and mutual security for all States without discrimination. They had welcomed Palestine's request to sign a CSA with the Agency following its ratification of the NPT in early 2015, and had called on the Agency to conclude the agreement at the earliest opportunity as that would further bolster efforts to strengthen regional and international peace and security.

71. As Israel was still the only State in the region that refused to accede to the NPT and to place its nuclear programmes and facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards, the Arab States had appealed to the NPT Review Conferences, the Agency, the UN General Assembly and the Security Council to take action to promote Israel's accession to the NPT and to ensure compliance with the Agency's norms and regulations in furtherance of international peace and security, while reaffirming their aspiration to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East in order to guarantee the security of all States in the region.

72. The adoption by international bodies of dozens of resolutions supporting the Arab States' initiative had regrettably proved to be merely rhetorical owing to the lack of international will to ensure their implementation. The resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference had been a core component of the agreement on the indefinite extension of the Treaty, and the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference contained a decision to launch a process leading to the implementation of the 1995 resolution. In addition, the Agency's General Conference had adopted a number of resolutions since the 1980s calling on Israel to accede to the NPT, the most recent being resolution GC(53)/RES/17 on "Israeli nuclear capabilities" adopted in 2009.

73. The Arab States reaffirmed that the 1995 resolution was a matter of the utmost priority, and emphasized the responsibility of the co-sponsors to achieve its implementation. Attempts by any international party to delay implementation must be rejected. The Arab States affirmed their support for the outcomes of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and the 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences, particularly with regard to the Middle East.

74. Israel categorically refused to implement the aforementioned resolutions, deliberately debasing the NPT and describing it as ineffective in the Middle East. Its refusal to accede to the NPT constituted a threat to regional and global peace and security, particularly in light of its development of nuclear weapons, the existence of which had been acknowledged by numerous Israeli officials and discussed in many international reports.

75. The unprecedented protection provided to Israel by certain international powers, which enabled it to flout international law without fear of being called to account, had undermined and weakened the global non-proliferation regime. Indeed, while the international community inexplicably remained silent, Israel extracted concessions and received technical and military support that was denied to NPT States Parties.

76. It was critically important for Israel to accede to the NPT because of the significant security and safety risks stemming from the lack of Agency oversight over Israel's ageing nuclear facilities, particularly the nuclear reactor near Dimona, which had the potential to cause a nuclear accident with catastrophic repercussions for the entire Middle East region.

77. The Arab States considered that such treatment of an issue that adversely affected Arab security and the stability of the Middle East was totally unacceptable and they were indignant that the 2015 NPT Review Conference had been scuppered in order to safeguard the interests of a non-party to the NPT. They stressed that it was a core responsibility of the General Conference to request a State to accede to the NPT and to place its nuclear facilities and programmes under comprehensive international safeguards, and warned that attempts to stifle such requests had undermined the credibility of the NPT and the non-proliferation and disarmament regime and had eroded confidence in the regime's ability to achieve the aims of related international treaties to which they had acceded.

78. Faced with continuous attempts to thwart their efforts to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East, the Arab States were continuing consultations on ways to facilitate the successful adoption of a draft resolution on Israel's nuclear capabilities and thanked Member States that had supported the draft resolution at previous sessions. While they continued to display flexibility

and had refrained from submitting a draft resolution at the current session, that did not mean that no such resolution would be submitted at future sessions.

79. The Arab States urged the international community and, in particular, the three co-sponsors of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, to shoulder their responsibilities and support efforts to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East at the 2020 NPT Review Conference.

80. Ms STIX-HACKL (Austria), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Norway, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia and San Marino aligned themselves with her statement.

81. While welcoming the Arab States' constructive decision not to submit a resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities at the current session of the General Conference, the EU regretted that the issue had again been included in the Conference's agenda. It was convinced that a consensual approach was the only way to make progress towards implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East.

82. Mr CHACÓN ESCAMILLO (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), speaking on behalf of NAM, said that NAM strongly believed that stability could not be achieved in a region in which one State threatened neighbouring and other regional States, owing to a massive continuing imbalance in military capabilities, due to its possession of nuclear weapons.

83. NAM was pleased that its members that were Parties to the NPT had concluded CSAs with the Agency as non-nuclear-weapon States, under Article III.1 of the NPT. NAM noted that all States in the Middle East, except Israel, were Parties to the NPT and had undertaken to accept comprehensive Agency safeguards.

84. NAM considered that the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East would be a positive step towards attaining the objective of global nuclear disarmament and reiterated its support for the establishment of such a zone in accordance with relevant resolutions of the UN General Assembly and Security Council. It also considered that the selective approach to the issue of nuclear capabilities in the Middle East had undermined the viability of the Agency's safeguards regime and had resulted in the preservation of unsafeguarded Israeli nuclear facilities and activities, despite repeated calls on Israel to place them under comprehensive Agency safeguards.

85. NAM was gravely concerned about the dire consequences for international security of Israel's nuclear capabilities, which posed a serious threat to neighbouring and other States, and about the continuing provision to Israeli scientists of access to the nuclear facilities of one nuclear-weapon State.

86. It called on all Member States to cooperate in rectifying that unacceptable situation and in achieving the universality of comprehensive Agency safeguards in the Middle East by implementing resolution GC(53)/RES/17 as a first step to that end. NAM regretted Israel's continued insistence that the issue of Agency safeguards could not be addressed in isolation from the regional peace process. There was no automatic sequence rendering the application of comprehensive safeguards to all nuclear activities in the Middle East dependent on a peace settlement; in fact, the former would contribute to the latter.

87. NAM reiterated its call for the transfer to Israel of nuclear-related equipment, information, material, facilities, devices and other resources, and for the provision to Israel of other assistance in nuclear-related scientific or technological fields to be totally and completely prohibited.

88. Referring to past statements by Israel to the effect that it valued the non-proliferation regime, acknowledged its importance and had conducted a responsible policy of restraint in the nuclear domain, NAM noted with regret that Agency documents had attested to the contrary, notably, General

Conference resolutions adopted prior to 1994 condemning Israel's military and nuclear collaboration with the racist regime of apartheid South Africa.

89. Mr ALSHAHMAN (Iraq) said that all States, in particular developing countries, enjoyed an inalienable right to benefit from peaceful uses of nuclear energy, without interference by a particular group or imposition of mandatory international conditions prejudicial to a State's interests. Yet the application of the norms and principles of the non-proliferation regime was subject to double standards in the Middle East region. Although the NPT was the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime, there was a tendency to disregard the fact that all States in the region, apart from Israel, had ratified the NPT. Furthermore, the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference had been attributable wholly and exclusively to the defence of Israel.

90. Relying on spurious arguments to the effect that the previous political regimes of certain States, including Iraq, had breached the safeguards regime, Israel contended that the safeguards regime and the NPT were incapable of guaranteeing security. Iraq totally rejected such arguments and requested the international community to shoulder its moral and professional responsibility to implement paragraph 5 of UN Security Council resolution 487 (1981), which clearly stipulated that all Israel's nuclear facilities should be placed under the safeguards regime, and to ensure that Israel acceded to the NPT. Those key steps would help to build the trust in the region that Israel itself called for, to strengthen regional peace and security, and to pave the way for the establishment of an NWFZ.

91. It was essential to proceed with efforts to convene the conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East in accordance with the action plan contained in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and the resolution adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, in view of its potential positive impact, in both political and security-related terms, on the sensitive Middle East region.

92. Iraq supported the request of the Arab Group to maintain the item on Israeli nuclear capabilities on the agendas of the Agency's Policy-Making Organs.

93. Mr HAMZE (Lebanon) said that the item on Israel's nuclear capabilities had been included on the agenda because the Arab Group was committed to the principles of non-proliferation and the use of nuclear energy for exclusively peaceful purposes. It sought to raise awareness of the threat posed to the Middle East by Israel's nuclear capabilities and to promote the placement of Israel's nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards, in accordance with multiple international resolutions, in particular General Conference resolution GC(53)/RES/17 of 2009 and UN Security Council resolution 487 of 1981.

94. A further aim of the agenda item was to compel Israel to accede to the NPT in order to promote its universality. All Arab States had acceded to the NPT, and Palestine had recently sought to conclude a CSA with the Agency. Nuclear weapons would never promote peace and security in the Middle East but would thwart all attempts to build confidence between Israel and the States of the region.

95. Recalling the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, Lebanon called on the international community to redouble its efforts to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East, bearing in mind that Israeli nuclear capabilities remained the stumbling block to achievement of that goal and that no progress had been made towards convening a preparatory conference on the establishment of such a zone.

96. Notwithstanding global appeals for strict application of the principle of non-proliferation, Israel had never been called to account. The success and sustainability of the non-proliferation regime depended to a large extent on the rejection of double standards, which fomented discord among States, and the adoption of a balanced approach in international relations.

97. Lebanon called for such factors to be given due attention in the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference, to be held in New York in 2019, with a view to ensuring the success of the Conference and the sustainability of the non-proliferation regime. Lebanon stood ready to consider any serious initiative to reinvigorate international efforts to convene the conference on the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East, in accordance with the action plan contained in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

98. Mr NASUTION (Indonesia) said that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation remained high on his country's agenda. The ultimate aim was general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. Furthermore, efforts to achieve nuclear non-proliferation should be made in parallel to nuclear disarmament efforts. The universality of the NPT was an important element in that regard.

99. Indonesia strongly supported the speedy establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East, in accordance with resolutions of the UN General Assembly and Security Council. The establishment of such a zone would enhance peace and stability in the region and contribute to the achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons. Indonesia considered that permitting a country to develop nuclear weapons capabilities outside the NPT and to keep its nuclear material and facilities outside the Agency's comprehensive safeguards regime was tantamount to betrayal of the commitment to nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation in general and, in particular, the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East, while endangering peace and stability in the region.

100. Mr SABBAGH (Syrian Arab Republic) said that Israel's persistent clandestine efforts to strengthen its nuclear military capabilities had been shielded from international oversight by certain nuclear-weapon States, in clear violation of their obligations under the NPT. The Arab States had expressed grave concern regarding Israel's nuclear capabilities, which posed a threat to the Middle East region and to international peace and security, and had drawn attention to its continuing assaults on Syria and other Arab States.

101. While all Arab States had acceded to the NPT with a view to promoting its universality, Israel steadfastly refused to accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State and to place its nuclear programmes and facilities under the Agency's comprehensive safeguards regime. Israel also continued to develop its nuclear arsenal, as had been acknowledged by numerous Israeli officials and underscored by the Israeli Prime Minister in a statement made in December 2006. It was offered unprecedented protection in that regard by certain influential countries, particularly the USA.

102. The adoption by the General Conference of resolution GC(53)/RES/17 on Israeli nuclear capabilities had reflected the deep concern of many Member States and 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. Israel had persistently ignored the resolution, just as it had ignored all other relevant resolutions adopted by international organizations and forums. It was deplorable that several influential States, including nuclear-weapon States, applied flagrant double standards, advocating the universality of the NPT, on the one hand, and disregarding that principle when it came to Israeli nuclear capabilities, on the other.

103. It was of the utmost importance to draw attention to the massive threat to regional and international peace and security posed by Israel's nuclear capabilities. Israel consistently rejected and thwarted all initiatives and resolutions aimed at establishing a zone free of WMDs, particularly nuclear weapons, in the Middle East, as evidenced by its furtive tactics aimed at thwarting the implementation of the 2010 NPT Review Conference decision to convene a conference on the establishment of such a zone in 2012.

104. The international community must shoulder its responsibility to oppose Israel's perilous practices and set aside its policy of condoning them. It must take a clear decision and serious practical steps to compel Israel to accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State and to place all its nuclear facilities, unconditionally and unreservedly, under Agency safeguards.

105. Mr ALWAZZAN (Kuwait) said that his country attached great importance to the NPT and the application of the Agency's safeguards regime to all nuclear activities and facilities in the Middle East region, since the Agency was the authority mandated to verify the peaceful nature of nuclear programmes, in line with NPT obligations, and to promote the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East, which would have a direct impact on the region's stability and would contribute to international peace and security.

106. The resolution on the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East, which was adopted each year by the General Conference, affirmed the urgent need for all States in the Middle East to forthwith accept the application of full-scope Agency safeguards to all their nuclear activities. The Director General's reports on the subject also stated each year that all States of the Middle East region except for Israel were parties to the NPT and had undertaken to accept comprehensive Agency safeguards.

107. Discussions in the Agency's Policy-Making Organs focused on the importance of strengthening all aspects of the nuclear safety and security environment and of enhancing the Agency's ability to fulfil its verification mandate and to apply the safeguards regime effectively and efficiently. During the discussions, Kuwait was taken aback by the attitude of certain influential parties, who persistently turned a blind eye to the risks stemming from Israeli nuclear capabilities.

108. Unfortunately, notwithstanding the ratification of the NPT by all States in the region, as well as the recent accession by Palestine, and the implementation by the States concerned of comprehensive safeguards agreements, Israel still obstinately rejected all initiatives and refused to take any serious steps towards enabling the Agency to apply comprehensive safeguards throughout the Middle East, which would pave the way for the establishment of a region free of nuclear weapons and WMDs. Israel's nuclear programme undermined the region's safety and security, exacerbated existing tensions and flagrantly violated many international resolutions adopted in diverse forums.

109. Kuwait underscored the importance of achieving tangible progress in the implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, which was part of the deal that had led to the indefinite extension of the NPT. It was also fully committed to the conclusions of the 1995, 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences, especially those concerning the Middle East, including the 2010 action plan.

110. Kuwait called upon the international community to shoulder its responsibility and to urge Israel to accede to the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards.

111. Kuwait also called for the maintenance of the item concerning Israeli nuclear capabilities on the agenda of the Agency's Policy-Making Organs.

112. Mr ALI ABADI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that it was promising that all States in the Middle East region, except for the regime of Israel, were Parties to the NPT and had undertaken to accept comprehensive Agency safeguards. His country welcomed the conclusion of comprehensive safeguards agreements with the Agency by the States in the Middle East in fulfilment of their obligation under Article III.1 of that Treaty, as non-nuclear-weapon States.

113. However, the acquisition of a clandestine nuclear capability by Israel posed a serious and continuing threat to the security of neighbouring and other States. Unfortunately, Israel continued to ignore and even brazenly flout all international regimes governing WMDs; it represented the only obstacle to the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East.

114. The Israeli regime had ignored legitimate international concerns by refusing to accede to the NPT and continuing to advance its unlawful nuclear capabilities with the unquestioning support of some countries and the covert involvement of others, in flagrant violation of all international norms and regulations. The credibility and reliability of the global non-proliferation regime were in danger. The regrettable failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference due to the obstructive position of a few countries, in support of a non-party to the NPT, would have dire consequences for regional and international security. Moreover, a selective approach to the issue of nuclear capabilities in the Middle East undermined the viability of the safeguards regime and had resulted in the continued and dangerous presence of unsafeguarded Israeli nuclear facilities and activities.

115. As a first step, the transfer of all nuclear-related equipment, information, material, facilities, resources or devices to Israel, as well as all nuclear-related scientific and technological assistance, must be prohibited. That required the active participation of all Member States in achieving the universal application of comprehensive Agency safeguards in the Middle East and in reversing the current unacceptable situation.

116. Maintaining the status quo in the Middle East was no longer an option, and protecting the Israeli regime was no longer in the best interests of the region or the international community. The current critical situation could only be addressed by exerting sustained pressure on the Israeli regime to accede promptly and unconditionally to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State and to place all of its nuclear activities and installations under safeguards. In the meantime, the issue of Israeli nuclear capabilities should remain high on the Agency's agenda.

117. Ms KHRIES (Jordan) welcomed the request by Palestine to conclude a CSA and hoped that an agreement would be signed at the earliest opportunity.

118. Her country attached great importance to the comprehensive safeguards regime as the cornerstone of international endeavours to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to confine the use of nuclear energy to peaceful applications.

119. Underscoring the scale of the threat posed by nuclear weapons and other WMDs to international peace and security and, in particular, to stability in the Middle East, which continued to suffer from the failure to implement resolutions on the establishment of an NWFZ in the region, Jordan stressed the need for Israel to accede to the NPT and to place all its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards, thereby universalizing the NPT and facilitating the establishment of an NWFZ. Such action would contribute to peace and security and create an incentive for States to focus on economic and social development rather than on an arms race that would hinder development and exacerbate tensions.

120. Universalization of the NPT in the Middle East constituted a major challenge and an urgent priority for the international community. Israel's refusal to accede to the Treaty and place its nuclear facilities and military programmes under international oversight fuelled distrust, and threatened regional and international peace and security.

121. The international community had adopted dozens of resolutions in international forums calling for the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East, including, first and foremost, the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. Yet no progress had been made towards implementation of that resolution because of Israel's refusal to accede to the Treaty. Jordan considered that the time had come for the international community to take affirmative action on the Middle East NWFZ initiative.

122. Jordan deplored the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference to reach agreement on the final document, thereby thwarting efforts to establish an NWFZ in the Middle East. Security in the region



would remain under threat for as long as nuclear facilities and programmes remained outside the Agency's comprehensive safeguards regime.

123. Mr SANTANA NÚÑEZ (Cuba) said that his country attached great importance to the agenda item on Israeli nuclear capabilities, as the issue had serious implications for regional and international peace and security.

124. Cuba reaffirmed its support for the early establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East, which would make an essential contribution to the peace and security of all peoples in the region.

125. Israel was still the only country in the Middle East which had not acceded to the NPT despite repeated calls to do so by the international community. That was a serious obstacle to creating an NWFZ in the Middle East. Establishing such a zone would represent a considerable step forward towards nuclear disarmament and would be a contribution to the peace process in the Middle East.

126. Transforming the Middle East into a zone of peace and security for all required genuine political will, the elimination of double standards, rejection of the indulgent attitude towards Israel shown by a number of States and unanimous insistence on the destruction of Israel's nuclear arsenal under international control.

127. Mr SHOJA'AADIN (Yemen) said that the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East had become increasingly urgent because of the major threat posed by such weapons to the security and stability of the countries of the region and their detrimental impact on the balance of power. Israel's continued refusal to accede to the NPT and to place its nuclear installations under the Agency's comprehensive safeguards constituted a serious challenge for the States concerned, all of which had acceded to the NPT and complied with all international instruments on nuclear non-proliferation.

128. Israel's insistence on maintaining its nuclear capabilities could lead to a regional arms race that would exacerbate regional instability and seriously undermine efforts to achieve peace and stability. Yemen welcomed in that context the decision by Palestine to conclude a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the Agency.

129. The adoption of resolution GC(53)/RES/17 had reflected Member States' deep concern regarding Israel's nuclear capabilities and their possible impact on peace and security in the Middle East. The General Conference had called upon Israel to accede to the NPT and to place all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards. Israel's nuclear facilities also had the potential to cause a nuclear accident with catastrophic repercussions for the region's inhabitants and environment.

130. It was therefore of crucial importance for the international community to redouble its efforts to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East, in accordance with the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and the action plan contained in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference.

131. Mr ANDERTON (United States of America), welcoming the Arab Group's constructive decision not to submit a resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities, said that his country regretted that the item had once again been included on the agenda, as Israel had not violated any agreements with the Agency and was a substantial contributor to the Agency's technical work. The USA noted that no other Member State in comparable circumstances was subject to similar criticism.

132. Many of the statements delivered under the present agenda item were counterproductive to the shared goals of NPT universality and a Middle East free of WMDs and their delivery systems. Divisive statements aimed at singling out one State in good standing for criticism failed to advance the shared

goals in relation to regional security and arms control. On the contrary, they undermined the trust and confidence necessary for regional dialogue and detracted from the Agency's technical work.

133. He called upon the States in the region to abandon divisive and politically motivated approaches to the issue, and to instead pursue practical steps and direct dialogue with their neighbours in a manner aimed at building regional trust and confidence and addressing the legitimate security concerns of all parties. That was the only way to achieve meaningful progress towards the shared goal of a Middle East free of all WMDs and delivery systems.

134. Ms MEBARKI (Algeria) welcomed the accession of Palestine as a State party to the NPT and the approval by the Board of a CSA between Palestine and the Agency, meaning that all countries in the region, excluding Israel, were party to the NPT.

135. She reaffirmed her country's commitment to the establishment of a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the Middle East. Algeria remained deeply concerned about Israel's nuclear capabilities and the threat they posed to the Middle East region, which faced the threat of annihilation as the Israeli Government continued to ignore relevant UN Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, and also NPT Review Conference resolutions. Remaining faithful to its principles, Algeria worked unflinchingly towards a world free of nuclear weapons and hoped that the spirit of war would finally yield to a desire to build peace and security for all.

136. Ms ZAFARY-ODIZ (Israel) regretted that the agenda item had been included once again at the General Conference at the request of the Arab Group. The issue was totally unrelated to the agenda of the General Conference and was beyond the scope of the Agency's mandate. It greatly politicized the Agency, harmed its professional integrity and diverted attention from the real problems facing the Agency and the non-proliferation regime.

137. By rejecting unconstructive and political draft resolutions under the agenda item in the past, Member States had reaffirmed their position that politically-motivated initiatives aimed at singling out any Member State had no place at the General Conference. That outcome had also sent a clear message to the sponsors of the draft resolution that direct dialogue among all regional States was the only way forward to securing agreement on any security or arms control arrangements. Trust and confidence were essential building blocks of regional security, none of which would be achieved by avoiding the challenges that lay ahead and opting instead to single out Israel for political reasons.

138. Israel strived to live in a safe, secure and peaceful region and believed that its neighbours did likewise. However, the path to regional safety and security could not be paved with contentious resolutions and active denunciations of Israel. Her country's efforts aimed at generating a productive regional dialogue based on a broad range of security issues had been reciprocated with biased resolutions, political attacks, and the continuing refusal of several states in the region, including Iran, to even recognize the State of Israel.

139. Israel wished to use the opportunity to call upon the Arab States to honour the will of Member States, cease their obstructive behaviour, and to refrain from the inclusion of the agenda item in future General Conferences.

140. With regard to nuclear safety, the only potential danger posed by her country's nuclear reactors stemmed from the threats made by Iran, and its proxies in the region, to attack those reactors.

141. Ms ENEMER (Libya) said that her country called upon Israel to accede to the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards. It should follow the example of Libya, which had decided to dismantle its nuclear programme in the 1990s in the interests of peace and security.

**The meeting rose at 6 p.m.**

**IAEA Scientific Forum 2018**

***Nuclear Technology for Climate: Mitigation, Monitoring and Adaptation***

**Report to the 62nd IAEA General Conference**

**Ms Cara Nelson**

**(Expert in Area-wide SIT Management)**

**Madam President, Acting Director General, Distinguished Delegates,**

I am honoured to be given this opportunity to present to the General Conference the report on the IAEA Scientific Forum 2018, the theme of which was *Nuclear Technology for Climate: Mitigation, Monitoring and Adaptation*.

As you know, the annual IAEA Scientific Forum is organized parallel to the General Conference and seeks to showcase and advance the peaceful application of nuclear science and technology to contemporary challenges.

This year, the Director General gave priority to nuclear technology for climate, to highlight the essential role of nuclear techniques in combatting one of the biggest environmental challenges of our time. Whether this is through the use of nuclear energy as a low-carbon energy source, or by using nuclear techniques to monitor climatic changes and to adapt to its impacts.

The Forum held during the past two days covered a wide range of topics that proved to be of great interest and relevance, as could be seen from the extensive participation of Member State representatives.

The Forum was structured into three thematic sessions and was opened with the statement of the Director General Yukiya Amano delivered by IAEA Deputy Director General of Nuclear Sciences and Applications Mr Aldo Malavasi, emphasizing the IAEA's commitment to helping countries make optimal use of nuclear science and technology to protect the environment and respond to climate change.

The first keynote speaker, HRH Princess Sumaya bint El Hassan of Jordan, highlighted the integral role of nuclear technology as one of the key and innovative means of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions. She emphasized that policy makers "must make the notion of nuclear technology for climate accessible to all and that it is our duty to ensure that the wider world is aware of the importance of nuclear technology in combating climate change."

Next His Excellency Mr Yeafesh Osman, Bangladesh Minister of Science and Technology, spoke about the vulnerability of developing countries in the face of global warming, drawing attention to his own country which is including a role for nuclear technology in both adaptation and mitigation to climate change in its national Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

His Excellency Mr Francis Mokoto Hloaele, Lesotho's Minister of Energy and Meteorology, spoke about the support of the IAEA in soil and water management, livestock husbandry and the mapping of groundwater resources in the country's quest to achieve the goals set out under its Climate Change Strategy, adopted last year.

The Chairman of the Board of the China National Nuclear Corporation, Mr Jianfeng Yu stressed that nuclear energy has almost zero emissions, and noted that, compared with renewables, it is more stable and less constrained by meteorological circumstances. Mr Yu highlighted the integral role of nuclear energy in China's mitigation policies, referring to the 13 nuclear power reactors under

construction in the country. Chinese nuclear capacity has doubled in five years and this, he argued, has had a major positive environmental impact.

Director General Bernard Bigot of the ITER Organization was the next speaker and stressed the vital role of innovation to effectively combat climate change. He spoke of the pressing need to make nuclear fusion as a source of electricity a reality as the global community is working to combat climate change.

The Opening Session closed with Ms Hillary Diane Andales, winner of the 2017 Breakthrough Junior Challenge, making the case that a great barrier to nuclear technology in having a greater role in the fight against climate change is public perception. “People should assess things according to evidence; and evidence says climate change is a real problem and that nuclear technology can help solve it,” she said.

The first session entitled “Role of nuclear power in limiting CO<sub>2</sub> emissions” highlighted how nuclear power can simultaneously reduce greenhouse gas emissions and secure sufficient energy generation to drive economic growth. Presenters spoke of the benefits of nuclear power as a low-carbon source of energy and how it can possibly work in tandem with other low-carbon energy sources, and also explored certain challenges that may obstruct its use. In addition, a panel discussion was held on the theme of innovation for the potential future expansion of nuclear power, where panellists discussed next-generation nuclear technologies and institutional innovations that could make a positive impact on the share of nuclear power in the world’s energy mix.

The second session entitled “Monitoring and measuring the change”, emphasized the need for accurate and timely data to inform mitigation strategies, and how nuclear techniques are advancing our understanding of climate change and its impacts. Presenters detailed how nuclear and isotopic techniques are used to measure ocean acidification and how Member States can be assisted in managing their freshwater supplies. Furthermore, the session shed light on the effects of agriculture on the environment, and highlighted the overall relevance of nuclear technology in assessing climatic effects.

In the third session entitled “Adapting to a changing environment,” the presenters addressed the challenges of food scarcity and the loss of ecosystems. They explored how nuclear techniques can be used to manage agricultural challenges, breed more resilient crops, enhance animal productivity, address risks to food safety, and fight insect pests and diseases.

The closing panel discussion presented a platform to review the topics discussed over the last two days and take stock of areas where the IAEA could help Member States to maximize the use of nuclear technology in addressing climate change. Mr Mikhail Chudakov, Deputy Director General of the Department of Nuclear Energy and Mr Aldo Malavasi, Deputy Director General of the Department of Nuclear Sciences and Applications, participated in the discussion alongside:

- HE Mr Jose Fidel Santana Nuñez, Vice Minister of Science, Technology and Environment, Cuba
- Mr Paulo Eduardo Artaxo Netto, Professor, Applied Physics Department, Institute of Physics, University of São Paulo, Brazil

The panel concluded that nuclear science and technology can indeed make a greater contribution in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and in helping countries monitor and adapt to climate change effects. The panellists found that in two of today’s most pressing climate related challenges, namely energy and food security, nuclear technology can play an essential role. The importance of continuing to raise public awareness of this contribution, as well as the role of the IAEA to assist Member States in accessing the peaceful applications of nuclear energy, particularly through capacity building, was highlighted.