

General Conference

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Plenary

Record of the Twelfth Meeting

Held at Headquarters, Vienna, on Friday, 24 September 2021, at 10.15 a.m.¹

President : Mr MARAFI (Kuwait)

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The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(65)/INF/14

¹ In view of the COVID-19 pandemic and following consultations conducted by the Chair of the Board on the Agency's working arrangements, the Board met in a physical–virtual manner, with some participants attending in person and others using the Interprefy platform.

² GC(64)/19

Abbreviations used in this record

COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EU	European Union
MW(e)	megawatt electrical
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
PMO	Policy-Making Organs
TC	technical cooperation
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
WMDs	weapons of mass destruction

12. Appointment of the External Auditor (resumed) (GC(65)/6 and Add.1)

1. The PRESIDENT reiterated that, since no candidate had obtained the required majority of votes for the position of external auditor, a second ballot would be held. Pursuant to Rule 80 of the Rules of Procedure, it was restricted to the two candidates who had obtained the largest number of votes in the first ballot: the German Supreme Audit Institution and the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.
2. A vote was taken by secret ballot.
3. Mr Powell (Australia) and Ms Maurer-Neuman Matto (Uruguay) again acted as tellers.
4. The PRESIDENT proposed that the General Conference take up item 20 while the votes were being counted.

20. Implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement between the Agency and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (GC(65)/22)

5. Mr LULASHNYK (Canada), introducing the draft resolution set out in document GC(65)/L.11, said that, in accordance with long-standing practice, it had been negotiated by a group of countries in consultation with China and the Russian Federation and was being presented on behalf of 64 Member States.
6. In negotiating the resolution, the Core Group, China and the Russian Federation had sought to build upon the text that had been adopted by consensus by the General Conference at its sixth-fourth regular session, as contained in document GC (64)/RES/14. While recognizing the unique negotiating environment caused by the pandemic, the Core Group had considered it important to include factual updates to the resolution to reflect recent developments as reported by the Agency.
7. New developments with respect to the DPRK's nuclear activities, such as the "deeply troubling" indications at the Yongbyon Site of the operation of the 5 MW(e) reactor and the completion of a reprocessing campaign at the Radiochemical Laboratory noted in the report contained in document GC (65)/22, continued to be a serious cause for concern. It was therefore important that the General Conference send a strong and united message to the DPRK which reflected the significance of the facts on the ground.
8. The draft resolution supported diplomatic engagement and international cooperation—including dialogue between the USA and the DPRK, and between the Republic of Korea and the DPRK—while encouraging participants to implement fully their previous commitments, including the DPRK's commitment to the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. It reiterated the need for the DPRK to abandon all its nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, and immediately cease all related activities, in line with its obligations under UN Security Council resolutions. The resolution also recalled the Security Council's affirmation that it

would keep the DPRK's actions under continuous review and was prepared to strengthen, modify, suspend or lift measures as required.

9. The draft resolution reaffirmed the international community's strong opposition to the DPRK's possession of nuclear weapons and recognized that a Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons would contribute positively to regional and global peace and security. It welcomed the continued intense efforts by the Secretariat to monitor the DPRK's nuclear programme and restated support for the Agency's continued enhanced readiness to play its essential role in monitoring and verifying the DPRK's nuclear programme, within the framework of a political solution to be reached by the countries concerned.

10. He thanked those who had contributed to the preparation of the draft resolution for their hard work and constructive collaboration. It was important that the international community continued to send a united message that the DPRK could not have the status of a nuclear-weapon State, that it must end, once and for all, its illicit nuclear programme and return to cooperation with the Agency in implementing its safeguards obligations. Given the broad support the draft resolution had garnered, he believed that it was ready to be adopted by consensus.

11. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to adopt the draft resolution contained in document GC(65)/L.11.

12. It was so decided.

13. Mr HIKIHARA (Japan), thanking Member States for supporting the resolution, said that his country welcomed its adoption and highly commended the stewardship of the representative of Canada and his team in achieving consensus on it. Earlier in September 2021, the DPRK had launched ballistic missiles in clear violation of UN Security Council resolutions and Japan had condemned those actions in the strongest terms. The DPRK's recent nuclear and missile activities posed a threat to the peace and security of Japan, the wider region and the whole international community. Japan believed that, given the current situation, the resolution sent a united and timely message from the international community on the issue.

14. The statement delivered by Mr Inoue during the current session of the General Conference had stressed the importance of progress in specific actions towards the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement of all WMDs and ballistic missiles of all ranges by the DPRK. Verification was indispensable in achieving the denuclearization of the DPRK and the use of the Agency's expertise, knowledge and experience was therefore of utmost importance.

15. Mr BONO (United States of America), welcoming the adoption by consensus of the resolution, said that Member States had once again spoken clearly and with one voice to deplore the DPRK's continuing nuclear activities and called upon the DPRK to return to the NPT and Agency safeguards.

16. The resolution restated the need for the DPRK to comply fully with all its obligations under relevant UN Security Council resolutions and called on all Member States to implement their own obligations under those resolutions.

17. The USA joined other Member States in calling on the DPRK to implement its commitments to work towards the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and stood ready to engage in the necessary diplomacy to achieve that important outcome.

18. The USA thanked the Director General and the Secretariat for their continuing and sustained focus on the issue. The country continued to support the Secretariat's efforts to remain ready to play its essential role in verifying the DPRK's nuclear programme.

19. Mr SHIN Chae-hyun (Republic of Korea), welcoming the adoption of the resolution, said that the united voice of the 173 Member States represented the international community's strong support for efforts to achieve the complete denuclearization of the DPRK and establish permanent peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. The resolution highlighted the importance of creating favourable conditions for a diplomatic and peaceful resolution of the issue.

20. Diplomatic efforts over recent years had yielded a clear commitment to a common objective, namely the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, and laid out a mutually agreeable approach to achieving that goal. In close cooperation with its partners, the Republic of Korea was striving to overcome decades of mistrust and tensions and fundamentally change the security situation on the Korean Peninsula and achieve complete denuclearization and permanent peace. The resolution and the report contained in document GC(65)/22 echoed the Republic of Korea's belief that DPRK nuclear issues should be addressed urgently through diplomacy and dialogue.

21. His Government was making every effort within the framework of the Korean Peninsula peace process to facilitate the early resumption of dialogue between the USA and the DPRK, and the Republic of Korea and the DPRK — and urged the DPRK to respond to its call for the resumption of dialogue.

22. In September 2021, at the seventy-sixth session of the UN General Assembly, President Moon Jae-in had once again called on the international community to mobilize its strength for a declaration of the end of the war on the Korean Peninsula, which could bring irreversible progress in denuclearization and usher in an era of complete peace. The Republic of Korea counted on the international community's continued support towards that common goal.

23. The Republic of Korea welcomed the Agency's efforts to enhance readiness to play its essential role in monitoring and verifying the DPRK's nuclear programme as soon as an agreement had been reached by the parties concerned. Sincere thanks were also due to the co-sponsors of the resolution — to Canada for its stewardship and to the Core Group, China and the Russian Federation for their important and constructive input — and to the Member States who had joined the consensus. The Republic of Korea also commended the President for leading the sixty-fifth regular session of the General Conference to a successful conclusion.

The meeting was suspended at 10.45 a.m. and resumed at 11.15 a.m.

12. Appointment of the External Auditor (resumed) **(GC(65)/6 and Add.1)**

24. The PRESIDENT announced the result of the ballot for the selection of the External Auditor.

25. In the selection of the External Auditor, the result of the vote was as follows:

<u>Ballot papers returned:</u>	126
<u>Invalid votes:</u>	0
<u>Abstentions:</u>	4
<u>Valid votes:</u>	122
<u>Required majority:</u>	62

Votes obtained

German Supreme Audit Institution 55

Comptroller and Auditor General of India 67

26. Having obtained the required majority, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India was duly appointed as External Auditor for the financial years 2022 to 2027.

27. The PRESIDENT congratulated the Comptroller and Auditor General of India on his appointment

29. Report on contributions pledged to the Technical Cooperation Fund for 2022 **(GC(65)/21)**

28. The PRESIDENT said that GC(65)/21/Rev.1 contained details of TCF contributions for 2022 which governments had made to the Director General by 5 p.m. on 23 September 2021.

29. Since that document had been sent for printing, one more Member State had communicated a pledge: Rwanda (€2732). That brought the total amount pledged by the end of the sixty-fifth regular session of the General Conference to €29 171 890, representing pledges from 80 Member States and accounting for 30.3% of the TCF target for 2022. The 80 Member States that had pledged represented 46% of Member States.

30. The percentage of the TCF target pledged by the end of the sixty-fifth regular session was 1.5% lower than the previous year. He urged all delegations that had not yet done so to make their 2022 pledges and pay their contributions in full at the earliest opportunity, to enable the Secretariat to submit to the Technical Assistance and Cooperation Committee in November 2021 a draft TC programme and budget for 2022 based on the level of pledges received and then to implement the approved programme without hindrance or uncertainty.

— Closing of the session

31. The PRESIDENT said that the current session of the General Conference had been attended, in person and in a virtual manner, by high-level representatives of Member States, including one President, two Vice-Presidents and 55 ministers. During the general debate, 135 speakers had taken the floor. A total of 83 side events had taken place.

32. Mr FARHANE (Morocco) congratulated the President on his wise leadership. The successful conduct and conclusion of the General Conference truly reflected Member States' commitment to multilateral action and the consensual 'Vienna spirit' to address the world's social and security issues.

33. Ms ŽVOKELJ (Slovenia), speaking on behalf of the EU, thanked the President for his skilful leadership of the sixth-fifth regular session of the General Conference. Thanks were also due to the Vice-Presidents and the Secretariat, whose hard work was much appreciated, and to the support staff who had worked tirelessly to ensure that the session ran smoothly.

34. Ms HÄMÄLÄINEN (Finland), speaking on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States, commended the President on his leadership and excellent guidance during the sixty-fifth regular session of the General Conference. The Conference had been conducted successfully in a hybrid format in exceptional circumstances, which was a significant accomplishment.

35. The Group expressed its appreciation to the Vice-Presidents and to all those nominated to serve in General Conference functions. It commended Mr Bilodeau of Canada and his Vice-Chair on their skilful leadership of the Committee of the Whole and the constructive nature of the Committee's deliberations. Furthermore, it extended its appreciation to all the coordinators of the General Conference resolutions.

36. The Group warmly thanked the Director General and the Secretariat, in particular the translators and Conference Services Section, for their tireless efforts and hard work in making the sixty-fifth session of the General Conference such a success. It commended all Member States on constructive deliberations and discussions, which had maintained the 'Vienna spirit'.

37. Mr SADLER (Australia), speaking on behalf of the South East Asia and the Pacific Group, thanked the President for his effective and highly efficient guidance of the sixty-fifth regular session of the General Conference. Gratitude was also extended to the Chair of the Committee of the Whole and his Vice-Chair for their collaborative and constructive approach to guiding the work of the Committee.

38. The Group expressed its deep appreciation to the Director General and the Secretariat for their tireless and professional efforts in delivering a well-orchestrated and effectively run Conference, and to all delegations for the cooperative, patient and flexible manner in which they had worked to achieve strong outcomes.

39. Mr ALOBAIDI (Kuwait), thanking Member States for placing their trust in his country, expressed pride at his Ambassador's election as President and his skilful handling of session. He conveyed his thanks to the members of the Bureau, the Director General, the Secretariat of the PMO and the Agency's other staff.

40. The PRESIDENT, acknowledging the delegations' kind words, said that it was an honour and privilege, for both himself and his country, to serve as President of the General Conference. The sixty-fifth regular session of the General Conference had taken place in unusual circumstances, owing to the constraints imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks, however, to the cooperation and support shown by all Member States in addressing the issues at hand, the difficulties faced during the Conference had been overcome.

41. Before concluding, he expressed his thanks for the support and assistance he had received, enabling him to undertake his responsibilities successfully and efficiently. He also expressed his sincere appreciation to the Chair of the Committee of the Whole, together with his Vice-Chair, for the skilful way in which they had guided the Committee's deliberations. He thanked the Vice-Presidents and the members of the General Committee for their valuable contribution to the work of the Conference.

42. He also thanked the Director General and the Agency's able and dedicated staff — including the interpreters, translators, précis-writers, conference officers, general services staff and the Secretariat of the PMO — for their valuable support in exceptional circumstances. He further thanked the Austrian authorities and the city of Vienna for their hospitality.

43. Lastly, in accordance with Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure, he invited the Conference to observe one minute of silence dedicated to prayer or meditation.

All present rose and stood in silence for one minute.

44. The PRESIDENT declared the sixty-fifth regular session of the General Conference closed.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.