

# General Conference

**GC(67)/COM.5/OR.1**

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**Sixty-seventh regular session**

## Committee of the Whole

### Record of the First Meeting

*Held at Headquarters, Vienna, on Monday, 25 September 2023, at 3.30 p.m.*

**Chair:** Mr CSERVENY (Hungary)

#### Contents

Item of the agenda <sup>1</sup>	Paragraphs
– Election of the Vice-Chairs and organization of work	1–8
9 The Agency's Financial Statements for 2022	9–10
10 The Agency's Programme and Budget 2024–2025	11–18
11 Amendment to Article XIV.A of the Statute	19–21
12 Scale of assessment of Member States' contributions towards the Regular Budget for 2024	22–23
15 Strengthening of the Agency's technical cooperation activities	24–37
16 Strengthening the Agency's activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications	38–56

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<sup>1</sup> GC(67)/24

**Contents (continued)**

17	Strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of Agency safeguards	57–60
27	Personnel	61–72
	(a) Staffing of the Agency’s Secretariat	61–63
	(b) Women in the Secretariat	64–72

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

AU-PATTEC	African Union's Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign
CSA	comprehensive safeguards agreement
G-77	Group of 77
LEU	low enriched uranium
NHSI	Nuclear Harmonization and Standardization Initiative
PBC	Programme and Budget Committee
ReNuAL	Renovation of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SLC	State-level concept
SQP	small quantities protocol
TC	technical cooperation
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
VETLAB Network	Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory Network
ZODIAC	Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action



## – **Election of Vice-Chairs and organization of work** (GC(67)/COM.5/1)

1. The CHAIR, having expressed appreciation for the confidence that the General Conference had placed in him, said that he counted on delegations' support and cooperation and would endeavour to conduct proceedings in an impartial, objective, even-handed, reasonable and transparent manner.
2. He commended delegations on having done a great deal of preparatory work on the draft resolutions, and encouraged the Committee to build on the results and agreements achieved in the preceding weeks. Noting that the Committee was not working in isolation from broader social, political and economic developments, he echoed the UN Secretary-General's remarks to the effect that posturing, positioning, indifference and indecision must be avoided; there was a need to come together for real, practical solutions, and to compromise for the sake of a better future.
3. He had been informed that, following group consultations, the G-77 and the Group of Western European and Other States had nominated Ms Navarro Angel of Colombia and Ms Callesen of Denmark to serve as Vice-Chairs of the Committee of the Whole.
4. He took it that the Committee, pursuant to Rule 46 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, wished to elect Ms Navarro Angel and Ms Callesen as Vice-Chairs of the Committee.
5. It was so agreed.
6. The CHAIR drew attention to document GC(67)/COM.5/1, which listed the agenda items referred to the Committee by the General Conference.
7. He proposed that the Committee take up the items contained in document GC(67)/COM.5/1, as far as possible, in the order in which they were listed. He also proposed that, in line with past practice, the Chair report orally on the Committee's deliberations at a plenary meeting of the General Conference. In addition, he took it that the Committee wished to continue, to the extent practicable, the practice of clustering the draft resolutions to be recommended to the General Conference for adoption.
8. It was so agreed.

## **9. The Agency's Financial Statements for 2022** (GC(67)/4)

9. The CHAIR, noting that there were no requests to take the floor, took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the draft resolution on page i of document GC(67)/4.
10. It was so decided.

## **10. The Agency's Programme and Budget 2024–2025** (GC(67)/5)

11. The CHAIR drew attention to draft resolutions “A. Regular Budget Appropriations for 2024”, “B. Technical Cooperation Fund Allocation for 2024”, and “C. Working Capital Fund for 2024”, contained in document GC(67)/5.

12. With regard to the draft resolution on Regular Budget appropriations for 2024, he recalled that the draft Programme and Budget for 2024–2025 had been issued on 10 March 2023. The Working Group on the Regular Budget and TCF Targets for 2024–2025 had considered the document at a number of meetings and through intensive group and bilateral consultations. Following the recommendation of the PBC in May 2023, a proposal had been approved by the Board in June 2023. Accordingly, the Board had recommended to the General Conference a regular budget for 2024 of €432 591 195, including a price adjustment of 2.4%.

13. Noting that no Committee members wished to take the floor, he took it that that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it approve a total Regular Budget for 2024 of €430 202 873 for the operational portion and €6 144 000 for the capital portion, on the basis of an exchange rate of US \$1.00 to €1.00, and, accordingly, that it adopt draft resolution A contained in document GC(67)/5, entitled “Regular Budget Appropriations for 2024”.

14. It was so decided.

15. The CHAIR also took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it approve a target for voluntary contributions to the TCF for 2024 of €96 000 000 and, accordingly, that it adopt draft resolution B contained in document GC(67)/5, entitled “Technical Cooperation Fund Allocation for 2024”.

16. It was so decided.

17. The CHAIR further took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it approve a Working Capital Fund level of €15 210 000 for 2024 and, accordingly, that it adopt draft resolution C contained in document GC(67)/5, entitled “The Working Capital Fund for 2024”.

18. It was so decided.

## **11. Amendment to Article XIV.A of the Statute** (GC(67)/6; GC(67)/COM.5/L.10)

19. The CHAIR, having drawn attention to document GC(67)/6, said that document GC(67)/COM.5/L.10 contained the text of the decision adopted by the General Conference on the subject in 2023, updated for 2024. The Committee might wish to recommend the updated text as a decision to be adopted by the General Conference at its sixty-seventh regular session.

20. Noting that there were no requests to take the floor, he took it that the Committee wished to recommend that the General Conference adopt the draft decision set out in document GC(67)/COM.5/L.10.

21. It was so decided.

## **12. Scale of assessment of Member States' contributions towards the Regular Budget for 2024**

(GC(67)/12)

22. The CHAIR, noting that there were no requests to take the floor, took it that the Committee wished to recommend that the General Conference adopt the draft resolution on page 3 of document GC(67)/12.

23. It was so decided.

## **15. Strengthening of the Agency's technical cooperation activities**

(GC(67)/INF/5 and Supplement; GC(67)/COM.5/L.7)

24. The CHAIR drew attention to a draft resolution on strengthening the Agency's TC activities, set out in document GC(67)/COM.5/L.7.

25. The representative of BRAZIL, speaking on behalf of the G-77 and China and introducing the draft resolution, said that the text reflected technical updates and new wording proposed by Member States. He thanked the sponsors of the draft resolution for their support and Member States for their contributions throughout several rounds of consultations.

26. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN said that, in view of differing cultural, religious and social interpretations, his delegation could not accept the term "gender equality". Instead, "gender balance" should be used, as it was more in line with the aim of the draft resolution.

27. The representative of the UNITED KINGDOM, disappointed that such a significant change was being proposed so late in the process, said that his delegation could not accept the proposal because the two terms were not interchangeable.

28. The representative of COSTA RICA said that his delegation supported retaining "gender equality".

29. The representative of CANADA said that, while gender balance and gender parity were purely numerical concepts, the more holistic term "gender equality" concerned the full and meaningful participation of women and should therefore be retained.

30. The representative of BRAZIL, emphasizing the importance of the draft resolution, said that "gender equality" was the agreed wording from 2022. He questioned why the proposal was being made at such a late stage.

31. The representative of SPAIN, noting the essential role of the Agency's TC activities in supporting the achievement of the SDGs, the failure to raise the issue in the working group, and the fact that the wording had been agreed in 2022, said that "gender equality" should not be changed.

32. The representative of AUSTRALIA said that, given the support already expressed by Member States, there was strong reason to maintain the current wording. He questioned why the issue was only being raised at the current stage.

33. The representative of the PHILIPPINES, noting that gender equality was being promoted throughout the UN system to achieve the SDGs, said that his delegation supported the original wording.

34. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN said that he would consult with his capital.

35. The representative of CHILE said that, as “gender equality” was the agreed wording and was the term used in the Director General’s report, it should be maintained in the draft resolution.

36. The CHAIR, noting strong support for the current wording and thanking Iran for agreeing to consult with its capital, took it that the Committee supported the draft resolution on an ad referendum basis.

37. It was so agreed.

## **16. Strengthening the Agency’s activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications**

(GC(67)/11 and GC(67)/INF/4; GC(67)/COM.5/L.1, L.2, L.4, L.6 and L.9)

38. The CHAIR drew attention to a number of documents containing draft resolutions on strengthening the Agency’s activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications, including non-power nuclear applications in general (GC(67)/COM.5/L.6); support for AU-PATTEC (GC(67)/COM.5/L.1); ReNuAL (GC(67)/COM.5/L.2); the ZODIAC project (GC(67)/COM.5/L.4); and nuclear power applications (GC(67)/COM.5/L.9).

39. The representative of MALAYSIA, speaking on behalf of the G-77 and China, introduced the draft resolution contained in document GC(67)/COM.5/L.6 (“A. Non-power nuclear applications. 1. General”). He said that that the document included new paragraphs highlighting the support provided through the VETLAB Network; the Agency’s work on antimicrobial resistance; Agency support for radionuclide-based assessment of carbon sequestration in vegetated coastal areas, and the International Symposium on Trends in Radiopharmaceuticals held in April 2023; and a request to the Secretariat to continue identifying the potential uses of artificial intelligence — in close consultation with Member States.

40. The CHAIR took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the resolution contained in document GC(67)/COM.5/L.6.

41. It was so decided.

42. The representative of BRAZIL, speaking on behalf of the G-77 and China, introduced the draft resolution on support for AU-PATTEC contained in document GC(67)/COM.5/L.1 (“A. Non power nuclear applications. 2. Support to the African Union’s Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign (AU-PATTEC)”). He said that the text contained technical updates and reflected the good progress made in eradication in some parts of Africa.

43. The CHAIR took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the resolution contained in document GC(67)/COM.5/L.1.

44. It was so decided.

45. The representative of SOUTH AFRICA, speaking on behalf of the G-77 and China and introducing the draft resolution contained in document GC(67)/COM.5/L.2 (“A. Non power nuclear applications. 3. Renovation of the Agency’s Nuclear Applications Laboratories at Seibersdorf”), said



that the text included technical updates. He thanked the Secretariat for its technical advice and the sponsors of the draft resolution for their support.

46. The CHAIR took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the resolution contained in document GC(67)/COM.5/L.2.

47. It was so decided.

48. The representative of SOUTH AFRICA, speaking on behalf of the G-77 and China and introducing the draft resolution on the ZODIAC project contained in document GC(67)/COM.5/L.4 (“A. Non power nuclear applications. 4. Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action (ZODIAC) Project”), said that the text included technical updates. He thanked the Secretariat for its technical advice and the sponsors of the draft resolution for their support.

49. The CHAIR took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the resolution contained in document GC(67)/COM.5/L.4.

50. It was so decided.

51. The representative of FRANCE, introducing the draft resolution on nuclear power applications contained in document GC(67)/COM.5/L.9, said that Slovenia wished to be added to the list of sponsors. She had endeavoured to reflect all points of view expressed during the extensive consultations and several open-ended working group meetings. Changes had been made to take into account the Agency’s activities related to nuclear power, including fusion power plants, small modular reactors and new initiatives such as the Lise Meitner Programme, Atoms4NetZero and the NHSI, while supporting the non-duplication efforts. She thanked Member States for their constructive efforts on the text.

52. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, referring to paragraph (c) of section B.3 on the nuclear fuel cycle and waste management, proposed moving “recognizing the importance of assurance of supply and availability of LEU for eligible Member States” to a new paragraph (b) bis, as the issue was important for Member States in general — in particular the Russian Federation and the USA — not only for the LEU Bank.

53. The representative of FRANCE proposed simply swapping the order of the two parts of the paragraph.

54. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION accepted France’s amendment.

55. The CHAIR took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the resolution contained in document GC(67)/COM.5/L.9, as amended.

56. It was so decided.

## **17. Strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of Agency safeguards** (GC67/16; GC(67)/COM.5/L.8)

57. The CHAIR said that the Committee had before it a report by the Director General on strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of Agency safeguards, contained in document GC(67)/16 and a draft resolution contained in document GC(67)/COM.5/L.8.

58. The representative of AUSTRIA, speaking on behalf of the European Union, introduced the draft resolution contained in document GC(67)/COM.5/L.8. She said that consultations on the text were ongoing and therefore only technical updates and those amendments nearing agreement had been included in the document presented. The references to anniversaries had been deleted from paragraphs (j) and (l) recalling the importance of the CSA. Proposed amendments to those two paragraphs, to paragraph 34 on the 14th Symposium on International Safeguards and to paragraph 38 on COMPASS were under discussion. Although there appeared to be broad support for retaining the wording agreed in 2022 for paragraphs 24–32 on the SLC, some proposed amendments had been received. Proposals concerning SQPs, nuclear naval propulsion and AUKUS — which was a controversial topic — were being considered. She thanked Member States for their constructive contributions during several rounds of open-ended consultations.

59. The CHAIR said that Member States should continue their consultations to find consensus. He proposed that the Committee suspend its consideration of the draft resolution under agenda item 17 and take up agenda item 27.

60. It was so agreed.

## **27. Personnel**

### **(a) Staffing of the Agency's Secretariat**

(GC(67)/18; GC(67)/COM.5/L.5)

61. The representative of the PHILIPPINES, speaking on behalf of the G-77 and China, introduced the draft resolution on staffing of the Agency's Secretariat, contained in document GC(67)/COM.5/L.5. He said that the draft resolution, which enjoyed broad cross-regional support, highlighted achievements since 2021 and the gaps to be addressed and included reference to the UN Geographical Diversity Strategy in order to better align the assessment of the Agency's work with that of work within the United Nations. The draft resolution maintained and built on the concept of securing personnel of the highest standards of efficiency, technical competence and integrity, with due respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, and emphasis on recruitment from unrepresented and under-represented Member States, in particular to Professional, senior and policy-making posts.

62. The CHAIR took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the resolution contained in document GC(67)/COM.5/L.5.

63. It was so decided.

### **(b) Women in the Secretariat**

(GC(67)/19; GC(67)/COM.5/L.3)

64. The representative of the PHILIPPINES, speaking on behalf of the G-77 and China, introduced the draft resolution on women in the Secretariat, contained in document GC(67)/COM.5/L.3. He said that the document highlighted notable gains since 2021, including the increase in the proportion of women in the Professional and higher categories to more than 40% and the launch of the Lise Meitner Programme. The draft resolution was an assessment of the progress made on the Director General's commitment to achieving gender parity by 2025 in Professional and higher categories and had received broad cross-regional support.

65. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN reiterated that the term “gender equality” was not acceptable to his delegation and should be replaced with “gender balance”.
66. The representative of the UNITED KINGDOM said that his delegation could not accept changes in relation to such an important concept so late in the process.
67. The representative of FRANCE said that the term was the agreed wording and was aligned with the SDGs and should therefore be retained. Her country wished to join the list of sponsors of the draft resolution.
68. The representatives of ARGENTINA, AUSTRALIA, BRAZIL, CHILE, SOUTH AFRICA and SPAIN said that the agreed wording should be retained.
69. The representative of COLOMBIA said that she preferred “gender equality” because it had been used in the Director General’s report on the topic.
70. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN said that he would consult his capital on the matter.
71. The CHAIR took it that the Committee supported the draft resolution on an ad referendum basis.
72. It was so agreed.

**The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.**