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Chair: Mr CSERVENY (Hungary)

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¹ GC(67)/24

Abbreviations used in this record

CSA	comprehensive safeguards agreement
IT	information technology
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
SIR	Safeguards Implementation Report
SLC	State-level concept
SQP	small quantities protocol
USA	United States of America

17. Strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of Agency safeguards (continued)

(GC(67)/16; GC(67)/COM.5/L.8)

1. The CHAIR recalled 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 on strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of Agency safeguards, contained in document GC(67)/COM.5/L.8. He invited the Committee to make general comments on it.
2. The representative of CHINA said that, with regard to the proposal concerning nuclear propulsion submitted by Australia in the open-ended working group, his delegation would continue its consultations with Australia with the aim of producing a text that objectively reflected the facts.
3. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, noting that his delegation had a number of proposals and concerns regarding certain paragraphs of the draft resolution, said that he was committed to cooperating with the relevant delegations and was very hopeful that consensus would soon be reached.
4. The representative of ROMANIA said that, as co-penholder of the draft resolution for the European Union, she reiterated her commitment to cooperating with all delegations to achieve a positive outcome.
5. The representative of EGYPT said that his delegation was committed to reaching consensus on the draft resolution, which it believed was very close. He could not agree to retain the same wording as that used in the previous year's resolution, however, and wished to propose a number of amendments to the text.
6. The CHAIR suggested that the Committee consider the text page by page in order to narrow down the differences of views on specific issues.
7. With regard to paragraph (h), the representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION said that, during informal consultations, her delegation had proposed the replacement of "Recognizing" with "Emphasizing" and "makes" with "shall make". In a spirit of flexibility, however, she suggested retaining the word "Recognizing" but replacing "makes" with "makes and shall continue to make" in order to give the text a more future-oriented slant, in view of the growing challenges to the safeguards system.
8. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN said that, while the proposal made during informal consultations had been more acceptable to his delegation, in a spirit of compromise he could support the proposal just made.
9. The representative of the UNITED KINGDOM, welcoming the flexibility shown by the delegation of the Russian Federation, said that, while his delegation had rejected the amendment proposed in the open-ended working group, the new proposal moved in a better direction and required further consideration.
10. The representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA said that the constructive proposal just made by the Russian delegation was an improvement on the previous one as it recognized that the

Agency would continue its activities but steered clear of micromanaging its work, something which her delegation wanted to avoid. The proposal therefore merited further consideration.

11. The representative of FRANCE, supported by the representative of SWEDEN, said that her delegation would consider the proposal, which was more constructive than the one made in the open-ended working group.

12. The representative of GERMANY, noting that his delegation remained sensitive to micromanaging the Agency's work, welcomed the flexibility shown by the Russian Federation and took note of its latest proposal.

13. The representative of ROMANIA said that, while the proposal provided a good way forward, her delegation would continue to carefully consider the text so as to avoid agreeing upon wording that gave the impression that any criticism was being directed at the Secretariat, which would be misguided.

14. The representative of ITALY thanked the delegation of the Russian Federation for its willingness to seek a compromise and said that his delegation could support the proposal.

15. The CHAIR, noting that there were no more comments, suggested that the Committee move on to the next page.

16. With regard to paragraph (i), the representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN recalled that, during informal consultations, his delegation had proposed the following amendment: "Expressing grave concern that any or all attacks, including cyberattacks, or threats of attacks on, against or in the vicinity of nuclear facilities and sites devoted to peaceful purposes constitute a violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the Statute of the Agency as well as a serious threat to the entire Agency safeguards regime and can impede the Agency in conducting safeguards activities in accordance with relevant safeguards agreements". Such wording was consistent with that found in other resolutions and used by the Director General himself when describing certain situations around the world.

17. If delegations were willing to accept the reference to "all attacks" and "sites", in a spirit of flexibility he would amend his proposal as follows: "Expressing grave concern that all attacks or threats of attacks on, against or in the vicinity of nuclear facilities and sites devoted to peaceful purposes can impede the Agency in conducting safeguards activities in accordance with relevant safeguards agreements".

18. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION commended the flexibility shown by Iran and said that her delegation could be in a position to support the new wording.

19. The representative of ROMANIA, expressing appreciation for the Iranian delegation's efforts to accommodate the concerns expressed by her delegation in the open-ended working group, said that she would give the latest proposal further consideration.

20. The representative of SWEDEN said that, before considering the proposal to include a reference to nuclear sites, it was necessary to gain a better understanding of what the term actually encompassed.

21. The representative of FRANCE agreed that a better understanding of the term "sites" was needed, as it might be redundant to use both the phrases "in the vicinity of" and "nuclear facilities and sites".

22. The representative of the UNITED KINGDOM, recalling that the original wording of the paragraph had been carefully crafted the previous year, said that — as had been made clear in the open-ended working group — his delegation was not in a position to accept the words "any or all".

While he was less concerned about the addition of the reference to nuclear sites, he agreed with the representative of Sweden that it was necessary to consider the term further in order to ensure accuracy.

23. The representative of GERMANY recalled that the paragraph under discussion reflected an important balance that had been reached after difficult negotiations in previous years. While he welcomed the Iranian delegation's flexibility, he did not believe that adding more elements to an already complicated text would enhance its readability and understandability. For that reason, his delegation preferred to retain the current wording of the paragraph.

24. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN said that the wording proposed by his delegation was by no means new, as it could be found in many other documents, resolutions and decisions of the Agency, including in a previous resolution on safety. Moreover, the Director General himself had referred to nuclear sites in his "seven indispensable pillars for ensuring nuclear safety and security during an armed conflict".

25. The CHAIR suggested that the Committee move on to the next page.

26. The representative of EGYPT, referring to paragraph (j), proposed adding "which was first concluded in connection with the NPT and entered into force in 1972" at the end of the paragraph so as to achieve a balance between paragraph (j) and the other paragraphs in the draft resolution that referred to legal instruments that had been adopted or had entered into force in certain years.

27. The representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA said that she would prefer to retain the original wording as, in her view, there was already an adequate balance between paragraphs (j) and (k). Both paragraphs referred to the CSA, and paragraph (l) mentioned the Model Additional Protocol.

28. The representative of FRANCE said that, as the paragraph already included a reference to the NPT, she did not believe there was a need to add another one.

29. The representative of EGYPT said that the CSA did not enter into force in and of itself, but in connection with the NPT. In fact, the text of the agreement between Finland and the Agency, which was the first CSA to enter into force in 1972, read as follows: "The text of the agreement between Finland and the Agency for the application of safeguards in connection with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons". It therefore made sense to include such wording in paragraph (j). As for the balance of the paragraph, there was no reference whatsoever to the first entry into force of the CSA, unlike in the case of the Model Additional Protocol, which was why such a reference should be included in the text.

30. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION said that her delegation was in a position to support the proposal made by the representative of Egypt.

31. The representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, supported by the representative of ROMANIA, suggested deleting the reference to the date in paragraph (l) as a possible solution.

32. The representative of SWEDEN said that the wording proposed by the delegation of Egypt was not factually correct, as it was the individual CSA between Finland and the Agency that had entered into force in 1972, not the CSA template itself.

33. The representative of EGYPT said that his delegation could consider the proposal made by the representative of the USA, but he would have to consult his national authorities first.

34. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, turning to paragraph (r), proposed the following alternative wording: "Notes with concern that the Agency has not been able to undertake the verification of nuclear material from dismantled nuclear weapons".

35. The representative of SOUTH AFRICA said that it was of fundamental importance for his delegation to retain the original wording of the paragraph as it related to South Africa's dismantling of its nuclear weapons, which constituted a historic act. As a compromise, he suggested that the amendment proposed by the Iranian delegation could be inserted at the end of the paragraph, but only if that helped to achieve consensus.

36. The representative of FRANCE, supported by the representatives of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA and the UNITED KINGDOM, said that she strongly preferred to keep the original wording of the paragraph.

37. The representative of SWEDEN said that he would support retaining the existing wording of the paragraph. If, however, the text were to be expanded along the lines proposed by the Iranian delegation, then it should take a more positive tone.

38. The representative of BRAZIL agreed that the original, positive wording of the paragraph was important and should be retained. In the interests of compromise, however, his delegation was willing to consider the addition of wording along the lines proposed by the delegation of Iran.

39. The representative of EGYPT said that the Iranian proposal was unacceptable to his delegation in view of the importance that it imparted to paragraph (r). He would, however, consider the inclusion of additional text if consensus wording could be found.

40. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN said that he could consider the constructive suggestion made by the representative of South Africa.

41. The CHAIR suggested that the Committee move on to the next page.

42. The representative of FRANCE proposed the inclusion of an additional paragraph after paragraph (bb), which would read as follows: "Bearing in mind the importance of cooperating with the Agency for resolving past and present issues stemming from relevant safeguards obligations". The aim of the amendment was to take into account all situations in which there were a number of questions for the Agency to which the Director General had referred in his reports to the Board and on which there was a need for progress and cooperation between the Agency and the States concerned.

43. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN said that, as the matter was already addressed in numerous preambular paragraphs in the draft resolution, there was no need to repeat it.

44. The representative of EGYPT recalled that both paragraphs (y) and 4 emphasized the obligation of States to cooperate with the Agency in order to facilitate the implementation of safeguards agreements. Moreover, the implementation of any safeguards agreement would have to include the resolution of issues. It was therefore superfluous to include an additional paragraph on the subject.

45. The CHAIR recalled that the legal requirement for States to cooperate with the Agency was set out in document INFCIRC/153. Without cooperation, there would be no safeguards application.

46. With regard to paragraph (w), the representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN proposed deleting "is the reference point and".

47. The representative of SWEDEN, supported by the representatives of ROMANIA, GERMANY, the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, the UNITED KINGDOM, FRANCE, ARGENTINA, AUSTRALIA and NORWAY, said that, as a great deal of effort had previously gone into finding consensus wording for the paragraph, he would prefer the previous year's wording to be retained.

48. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION proposed replacing the words "is the reference point" with "remains the reference point".

49. The CHAIR, recalling that the Division of Concepts and Planning had been following the clear guidance on the SLC given to it by the Committee in 2022, said that it would be useful to know how much importance the Division attached to the Supplementary Document² and whether it was considered to be a reference document.

50. The DIRECTOR OF THE DIVISION OF CONCEPTS AND PLANNING said that his division considered the Supplementary Document to be an important reference document for both its internal guidance and its engagement with Member States, as, together with the Report on the Conceptualization and Development of Safeguards Implementation at the State Level³, it was the only document that provided guidance on the SLC and how it should be implemented. While his Division had continued to improve its internal processes and procedures for implementation, the SLC itself had not changed.

51. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, supported by the representative of BRAZIL, said that while she did not dispute the importance of the Report on the Conceptualization and Development of Safeguards Implementation at the State Level, it was high time to reflect the fact that an update to the report was needed.

52. Lastly, she noted that paragraphs (w) and 28 were interconnected and so could be considered together.

53. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN said that his amendment should be made as it was important to take into account the fact that there were different views on the matter. He proposed inserting a paragraph (bb) bis that would read: “Stressing the importance of a transparent and effective procedure for protection against disclosure of classified safeguards information within the IAEA’s organizational structure in the light of paragraph D of Article 3 and paragraph F of Article 7 of the Statute of the Agency”. Noting that the Secretariat had not responded to his requests for details about its confidentiality regime for handling highly sensitive safeguards information, he underlined the need to have clear and stringent confidentiality procedures in place and to make information about those procedures available to all Member States.

54. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION said that her delegation supported the proposal in principle. It was unfortunate that the important issue had not been reflected in the draft resolution, despite having been raised in previous years.

55. The representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA said that her delegation needed more time to reflect on the proposal because it had not previously seen the text.

56. The representative of SWEDEN, supported by the representative of FRANCE, said that the proposal was redundant. He added that the relevance of the cited paragraphs of the Statute was unclear.

57. The representative of GERMANY said that Iran’s proposal did not improve the strength or readability of the draft resolution. Moreover, his country had no reason to question the Secretariat’s confidentiality procedures.

58. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, emphasizing the seriousness and legitimacy of his concern, said that his delegation’s proposal had been reflected in the first version of the draft resolution. He asked the Secretariat to clarify whether it had a confidentiality regime and, if so, why it was so opaque.

² GOV/2014/41

³ GOV/2013/38

59. The HEAD OF THE NON-PROLIFERATION AND POLICY-MAKING SECTION OF THE OFFICE OF LEGAL AFFAIRS said that the Agency's regime for the protection of safeguards confidential information, contained in document GOV/2959, had been approved by the Board in December 1997. It included general principles and associated measures for the handling of confidential information; conditions of staff employment relating to the protection of confidential information, including the confidentiality undertaking signed by all staff and contractors; procedures in cases of breaches or alleged breaches of confidentiality; and references to the procedures for the handling of safeguards confidential information, contained in document SEC/NOT/956.

60. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, drawing attention to page 2 of document GOV/2959, said that the Board had requested the Director General to continue to review and update the established procedures for the protection of safeguards confidential information and to periodically review the regime pursuant to Article 15 of the Model Additional Protocol.

61. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, noting that those reviews and updates were long overdue, said that the paragraph needed to reflect the need for a transparent and effective confidentiality regime. He questioned whether the current regime was still fit-for-purpose in the light of the many technological developments since 1997.

62. The DIRECTOR OF THE DIVISION OF CONCEPTS AND PLANNING, referring to the Agency's information security policy previously contained in Section 19 of Part II of the Administrative Manual issued in 2015, said that all Agency staff members were prohibited from disclosing any industrial secret or other confidential information learned in the course of their official duties for the Agency, as reflected in the confidentiality undertaking signed by all staff. The aim of the policy was to provide a system, including physical and electronic measures, to ensure that all staff and contractors observed that obligation in the discharge of their responsibilities.

63. In that regard, the architecture of the current safeguards confidentiality regime did not need updating, as information flow — the focus of the regime — remained unchanged. In contrast, the Secretariat's layered information security approach, including physical protection, related policies and procedures, technical controls, documentation, classification and human factors, was constantly evolving to keep pace with new IT threats. The most sensitive safeguards information was kept in an isolated IT environment disconnected from the Internet, with classification and access control strictly enforced through an authorization management system. The most recent SIR referenced the Secretariat's ongoing work to tackle security threats.

64. The CHAIR, seeing that there were no further comments, suggested that the Committee continue its consideration of page 3.

65. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, turning to paragraph 2, proposed deleting the second half of the text and inserting, at the beginning of the paragraph, wording to the effect that the General Conference underlined that international cooperation and safeguards obligations encompassed the rights and responsibilities of each Member State and were fundamental pillars of the non-proliferation regime that needed to be implemented without discrimination. International cooperation was crucial for Member States lacking the necessary facilities and equipment for efficient and effective safeguards implementation.

66. The representatives of CANADA, GERMANY, ROMANIA and SWEDEN said that the original wording should be retained, as the proposal went beyond the scope of the draft resolution.

67. The representative of FRANCE, agreeing with the previous speakers, said that Iran's proposed wording was confusing: there could be no excuse for not implementing obligations.

68. The representative of the UNITED KINGDOM, echoing the previous speakers, said that the chapeau and paragraph 6 stated that safeguards would be implemented in accordance with Member States' safeguards agreements.

69. There being no further comments, the CHAIR suggested that the Committee proceed to the next open paragraph.

70. The representative of EGYPT, referring to paragraph (v), proposed strengthening the text by ending it with "including through continued dialogue and consultation with Member States on the implementation of respective safeguards agreements".

71. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION proposed adding "as well as in-depth understanding by Member States of the modalities of safeguards implementation" before Egypt's proposed wording, in order to reflect the importance of such understanding alongside transparency and confidence.

72. The representative of ROMANIA, thanking Egypt for responding to concerns raised in the open-ended working group, said that the references to consultation with Member States and to respective safeguards agreement required further reflection. The value of the Russian Federation's proposal was unclear, however, as the Secretariat already held technical briefings and meetings to improve Member States' understanding of safeguards implementation. She preferred the original text, which clearly stated how the Secretariat should continue to engage with Member States to foster transparency and confidence.

73. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN expressed support for adding the Russian Federation's proposal followed by Egypt's proposal.

74. The representative of the UNITED KINGDOM, thanking the representative of Egypt for his moderated proposal, said that the repeated reference to continued dialogue might be redundant. He opposed the Russian Federation's proposal, as many documents were available on the subject.

75. The representative of PAKISTAN, recognizing that Egypt had greatly moderated its suggested wording, said that he supported both proposals in principle.

76. The representative of CANADA, expressing appreciation for Egypt's flexibility, said that the modified proposal was more acceptable but might need refining.

77. The representative of FRANCE, thanking the representative of Egypt for producing a more acceptable proposal, said that the aim of the Russian Federation's amendment was unclear, and the proposal was therefore unsuitable.

78. The representative of BRAZIL, noting that it might be useful to highlight the need for more dialogue and consultation with the Secretariat, said that he could be flexible on the two proposals. He suggested inserting "and consultation" after "open dialogue".

79. The representative of ARGENTINA, welcoming both proposals, said that he supported Brazil's suggested wording.

80. In the absence of any further comments, the CHAIR proposed that the Committee continue through the draft resolution.

81. The representative of AUSTRALIA, providing an update on consultations regarding a preambular paragraph on naval nuclear propulsion, said that there was still no consensus. The inclusion of the topic in the SIR and in Board deliberations needed to be recognized in the safeguards resolution. She proposed inserting a short, neutral and factual paragraph that would read: "Noting the

Director General's reports and updates to the Board of Governors on naval nuclear propulsion and relevant discussions in the Board of Governors". Her delegation had made efforts to accommodate other views by considerably paring down its original proposal made in the working group and would continue discussions, especially with the delegation of China, to achieve consensus.

82. Thanking the representative of Australia for the update, the CHAIR proposed that the Committee proceed to page 4 of the draft resolution.

83. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, moving on to paragraph 5, proposed rewording the text to read: "Stresses the importance of States complying with all their obligations under the Statute and their respective safeguards obligations, as well as international cooperation".

84. The representative of the UNITED KINGDOM said that the original wording captured all the elements in a simple manner.

85. The representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, supported by the representatives of AUSTRALIA and GERMANY, said that the proposal was irrelevant to the draft resolution. She added that the Statute had a mechanism for addressing non-compliance with its provisions.

86. The representative of FRANCE said that the CSA, not the Statute, was the standard for safeguards implementation. If the original text was changed, her delegation would be forced to retable its withdrawn amendments.

87. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION proposed compromise wording that read: "Stresses the importance of States complying fully with all their respective safeguards obligations".

88. The CHAIR, seeing that there were no further comments, suggested that the Committee continue its consideration of page 4.

89. Referring to paragraph 3 and to the definition of "site" in the 2022 edition of the IAEA Safeguards Glossary, the representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN proposed rewording the text as follows: "Urges all Member States to refrain from all attacks or threats of attacks on, against or in the vicinity of nuclear facilities and sites devoted to peaceful purposes, as such attacks or threats of attack undermine, inter alia, the State's related safeguards obligations and hinder the Agency's ability to conduct safeguards activities in accordance with relevant safeguards agreements".

90. The representative of the UNITED KINGDOM, supported by the representatives of FRANCE, ROMANIA and the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, said that the text from 2022 should not be changed. He added that "in the vicinity of" implied sites.

91. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN said that "in the vicinity of" did not adequately cover "sites". Moreover, it was important to reflect that attacks or threats of attack against nuclear facilities prevented the Agency from conducting safeguards activities, and Member States from fulfilling their safeguards commitments.

92. There being no further comments, the CHAIR invited the Committee to continue its consideration of page 4.

93. Referring to paragraph 9, the representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, supported by the representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, reiterated her country's request to delete the reference to document GOV/2014/41.

94. The representative of the UNITED KINGDOM said that his delegation could not agree to the Russian Federation's proposal without further consultation.

95. The representatives of FRANCE and ITALY said that the reference should be retained.

96. The representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, expressing a strong preference for retention of the original wording of all paragraphs regarding the SLC, said that her delegation would continue consultations to try to address some of the concerns raised.
97. Seeing that there were no further comments, the CHAIR suggested that the Committee move to the next open paragraph.
98. The representative of ROMANIA, turning to paragraph 11, said that it was important to highlight the Director General's assessment in the SIR regarding safeguards conclusions for States with the original SQP. She proposed adding a paragraph 11 bis that read: "Notes that the Agency may no longer be able to draw a safeguards conclusion for States with the original SQP unless the States concerned respond positively to the repeated calls by the Director General to amend or rescind such SQPs", and inserting "Welcomes decisions taken by Member States to rescind or modify SQPs and" at the beginning of paragraph 12.
99. The representative of SAUDI ARABIA said that the current wording should be maintained, pending the outcome of the ongoing consultations.
100. The CHAIR said that delegations should continue consulting on the two paragraphs.
101. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, referring to paragraph 15, said that "as a whole" should be deleted.
102. The representatives of GERMANY, ITALY, JAPAN, NORWAY, the UNITED KINGDOM and the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA said that the consensus wording from 2022 should be retained.
103. The representative of FRANCE said that, since a CSA plus an additional protocol was generally understood as the standard for Agency safeguards, "as a whole" should be kept.
104. The representative of AUSTRALIA said that the original wording should be kept to preserve the complex balance among paragraph 15 and related paragraphs.
105. The CHAIR said that, according to the Secretariat, "as a whole" had been used since the approval of the additional protocol in 1997 and appeared in several Agency documents and glossaries. There was therefore a precedent for keeping the phrase. He invited the Committee to consider page 5 of the draft resolution.
106. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, turning to paragraph 20, proposed replacing "Invites" with "Encourages" and ending the paragraph with "aimed at enhancing transparency and accountability".
107. The representative of FRANCE, supported by the representatives of the UNITED KINGDOM and the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, said that the delicately negotiated wording of the paragraph should not be changed.
108. In the absence of further comments, the CHAIR suggested that the Committee move to the next open paragraph.
109. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, turning to paragraphs 24 and 25, proposed changing "Welcomes" to "Notes". His delegation was open to consultation on deleting paragraph 25 entirely.
110. The representative of SOUTH AFRICA, emphasizing that paragraph 25 was the product of protracted negotiations, said that the text was balanced and accommodated all interests and, therefore, should not be changed or deleted.

111. The representatives of ARGENTINA and BRAZIL said that paragraph 25 contained important clarifications on the SLC and should therefore be left unchanged.

112. The representative of EGYPT said that, although his delegation understood the rationale behind Iran's proposal, it was crucial not to change the paragraphs concerning the SLC, as they provided clear guidelines on the elaboration of that concept.

113. The representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, echoing the views expressed by the previous speakers, said that "Welcomes" should be kept in both paragraphs.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.