
Sixty-eighth regular session

Committee of the Whole

Record of the First Meeting

Held at Headquarters, Vienna, on Monday, 16 September 2024, at 3.35 p.m.

Chair: Mr LODDING (Sweden)

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¹ GC(68)/21

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Abbreviations used in this record

2030 Agenda	Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
AU-PATTEC	Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PBC	Programme and Budget Committee
ReNuAL	Renovation of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIT	sterile insect technique
TC	technical cooperation
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
UN	United Nations
ZODIAC	Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action

– **Election of Vice-Chairs and organization of work**
(GC(68)/COM.5/1)

1. The CHAIR, having expressed appreciation for the confidence that the General Conference had placed in him, said that multilateralism and the UN system were going through a uniquely challenging period. However, he was convinced that the Agency would emerge even stronger.
2. He was similarly convinced that all those present were united in a shared aspiration to bolster the Agency's mission to promote atoms for peace and development. The decisions and resolutions considered by the Committee were intended to provide the Agency with the means it required, along with a clear and unified mandate with regard to each of its core activities. He therefore hoped that consensus could be reached in respect of all of the Committee's recommendations. Calling for a spirit of collaboration, cooperation, transparency and participation, he said that compromise would be required; the importance of the Agency's work made it worth going the extra mile.
3. He commended delegations on having done a great deal of preparatory work on the draft resolutions, of which a number had already been submitted in an advanced state of readiness. He had also been heartened by the support, constructiveness and professionalism that he had experienced during his own extensive informal bilateral consultations.
4. He recalled that the previous two regular sessions of the General Conference had seen unusually time-consuming negotiations that did not reflect the normal procedures of the Committee, whose work normally concluded according to its allocated timetable. The President of the General Conference had requested that the Committee report to him on all its business on Friday morning at the latest. Accordingly, he suggested that the Committee should aim to finish its work no later than Thursday, in order for him to be able to report to a plenary meeting of the General Conference on Friday. Consultations with many delegations had indicated that extending the Committee's work beyond what could be considered a reasonable duration might jeopardize chances of reaching a successful outcome.
5. He had been informed that, following group consultations, the Group of 77 and China and the Eastern Europe group had nominated Mr Karel Künzel of the Czech Republic and Ms Jo-Phie Tang of Singapore to serve as Vice-Chairs of the Committee.
6. He took it that the Committee, pursuant to Rule 46 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, wished to elect Mr Künzel and Ms Tang as Vice-Chairs of the Committee.
7. It was so agreed.
8. The CHAIR drew attention to document GC(68)/COM.5/1, which listed the agenda items referred to the Committee by the General Conference.
9. He proposed that, in accordance with standard procedure, the Committee take up the items contained therein, 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. Similarly in line with past practice, he proposed that he provide an interim report to the plenary on Thursday if the Committee had not completed its deliberations by that point. Lastly, 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.
10. It was so agreed.

9. The Agency's Financial Statements for 2023 (GC(68)/4)

11. 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(68)/4.

12. It was so decided.

10. The Agency's Budget Update for 2025 (GC(68)/5)

13. The CHAIR drew attention to draft resolutions “A. Regular Budget Appropriations for 2025”, “B. Technical Cooperation Fund Allocation for 2025”, and “C. Working Capital Fund for 2025”, contained in document GC(68)/5.

14. With regard to the draft resolution on Regular Budget appropriations for 2025, he said that the Agency's programme for the 2024–2025 biennium had been adopted by the Board of Governors and presented to the General Conference in 2023; the 2024 portion of the budget had been approved. Document GC(68)/5 contained the adjustments for 2025 — the second year of the biennium. The document for the Board containing the Secretariat's proposals had been issued at the beginning of the year. The PBC had recommended the budget figures in May 2024, a recommendation accepted by the Board in June 2024. Accordingly, the Board had recommended to the General Conference a Regular Budget for 2025 of €442.1 million, including a 2.2% price adjustment.

15. Turning to the draft resolution on the TCF for 2025, he noted that the General Conference, on the recommendation of the Board, was expected to set the target for voluntary contributions to that fund. In June 2024, the Board had recommended a target for voluntary contributions to the TCF for 2025 of €98 million.

16. Lastly, in connection with the draft resolution on the Working Capital Fund for 2025, he said that the Board had recommended that the level of that fund remain at €15 210 000.

17. Noting that there were no requests to take the floor, he took it that that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt draft resolution A contained in document GC(68)/5, entitled “Regular Budget Appropriations for 2025”.

18. It was so decided.

19. The CHAIR also took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt draft resolution B contained in document GC(68)/5, entitled “Technical Cooperation Fund Allocation for 2025”.

20. It was so decided.

21. The CHAIR further took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt draft resolution C contained in document GC(68)/5, entitled “Working Capital Fund for 2025”.

22. It was so decided.

11. Amendment to Article XIV.A of the Statute (GC(68)/6; GC(68)/COM.5/L.14)

23. The CHAIR, having drawn attention to document GC(68)/6, said that document GC(68)/COM.5/L.14 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-eighth regular session.

24. 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(68)/COM.5/L.14.

25. It was so decided.

12. Scale of assessment of Member States' contributions towards the Regular Budget for 2025 (GC(68)/12)

26. 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(68)/12.

27. It was so decided.

15. Strengthening of the Agency's technical cooperation activities (GC(68)/INF/7 and Supplement; GC(68)/COM.5/L.2 and L.11)

28. The CHAIR drew attention to the Technical Cooperation Report for 2023, contained in document GC(68)/INF/7, and to its supplement. The Committee also had before it a draft resolution on strengthening the Agency's TC activities, contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.11, and a draft resolution on PACT, contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.2.

29. The representative of ALGERIA, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, thanked the sponsors of the draft resolutions, the Secretariat and Member States for their constructive contributions throughout the consultation process.

30. Introducing the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.11, said that the text contained technical updates and some adjustments to improve consistency. The few substantive changes concerned the evolving context of the Agency's TC activities.

31. The representative of the PHILIPPINES, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and introducing the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.2, said that the changes to the draft resolution principally took the form of technical updates.

32. The CHAIR said that he understood that the two draft resolutions had been the subject of intensive consultations among Member States and appeared to enjoy broad support. Noting that there were no

requests to take the floor, he took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.11.

33. It was so decided.

34. The CHAIR also took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.2.

35. It was so decided.

16. Strengthening the Agency's activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications

(GC(68)/10; GC(68)/INF/4; GC(68)/COM.5/L.3, L.4, L.5, L.6, L.7, L.8, L.10, L.12 and L.13)

36. The CHAIR drew attention to a report by the Director General on strengthening the Agency's activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications, contained in document GC(68)/10, and to the Nuclear Technology Review 2024, contained in document GC(68)/INF/4. The Committee also had before it a number of documents containing draft resolutions on strengthening the Agency's activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications, including support for AU-PATTEC (contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.3); development of the SIT package for the management of disease-transmitting mosquitoes (GC(68)/COM.5/L.4); the ReNuAL project (GC(68)/COM.5/L.5); the ZODIAC project (GC(68)/COM.5/L.6); isotope hydrology (GC(68)/COM.5/L.7); the production of potable water using small and medium sized nuclear reactors (GC(68)/COM.5/L.8); non-power nuclear applications in general (GC(68)/COM.5/L.12); nuclear power applications and nuclear knowledge management (GC(68)/COM.5/L.10); and strengthening support to Member States in food and agriculture (GC(68)/COM.5/L.13).

37. The representative of BURKINA FASO, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and introducing the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.3 ("A. Non-power nuclear applications. 2. Support to the African Union's Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign (AU-PATTEC)"), said that the text contained updates provided by the Secretariat and arising out of Member States' discussions, and one new operative paragraph.

38. The CHAIR said that he understood that the draft resolution had been the subject of intensive consultations among Member States and appeared to enjoy broad support. Noting that there were no requests to take the floor, he took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.3.

39. It was so decided.

40. The representative of BURKINA FASO, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and introducing the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.4 ("A. Non-power nuclear applications. 6. Development of the sterile insect technique package for the management of disease transmitting mosquitoes"), said that the text included editorial updates and revised numbers.

41. The CHAIR said that he understood that the draft resolution had been the subject of intensive consultations among Member States and appeared to enjoy broad support. Noting that there were no requests to take the floor, he took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.4.

42. It was so decided.

43. The representative of SOUTH AFRICA, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and introducing the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.5 (“A. Non-power nuclear applications. 3. Renovation of the Agency’s Nuclear Applications Laboratories at Seibersdorf”), said that the text had been updated to reflect the advanced stage and impending completion of the ReNuAL project.

44. The CHAIR said that he understood that the draft resolution had been the subject of intensive consultations among Member States and appeared to enjoy broad support. Noting that there were no requests to take the floor, he took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.5.

45. It was so decided.

46. The representative of SOUTH AFRICA, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and introducing the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.6 (“A. Non-power nuclear applications. 4. Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action (ZODIAC) Project”) said that the text included technical updates and one new preambular paragraph.

47. The CHAIR said that he understood that the draft resolution had been the subject of intensive consultations among Member States and appeared to enjoy broad support. Noting that there were no requests to take the floor, he took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.6.

48. It was so decided.

49. The representative of COLOMBIA, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and introducing the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.7 (“A. Non-power nuclear applications. 5. Use of isotope hydrology for water resources management”), said that the draft resolution highlighted the Agency’s isotope hydrology programme and provided for improved assessments and a strengthened IAEA Isotope Hydrology Laboratory.

50. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION requested more time to consider the draft resolution.

51. The CHAIR suggested that consultations should continue.

52. He invited the Committee to consider the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.8.

53. The representative of MOROCCO, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and introducing the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.8 (“A. Non-power nuclear applications. 7. Plan for producing potable water economically using small and medium-sized nuclear reactors”) said that the text contained technical updates and some streamlined wording.

54. The CHAIR said that he understood that the draft resolution had been the subject of intensive consultations among Member States and appeared to enjoy broad support. Noting that there were no requests to take the floor, he took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.8.

55. It was so decided.

56. The representative of INDIA, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and introducing the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.12 (“A. Non-power nuclear applications. 1. General”), said that technical updates and adjustments had been made for consistency.

57. The CHAIR said that he understood that the draft resolution had been the subject of intensive consultations among Member States and appeared to enjoy broad support. Noting that there were no requests to take the floor, he took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.12.

58. It was so decided.

59. The representative of FRANCE, introducing the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.10 (“B. Nuclear power applications” and “C. Nuclear knowledge management”), said that all points of view expressed during the extensive consultations and several open-ended working group meetings had been taken into account. Substantial alterations had been made as well as technical and editorial changes, and she thanked Member States for their constructive efforts. The draft resolution was currently sponsored by Argentina, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Iceland, India, Japan, Kazakhstan, the Republic of Korea, Namibia, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

60. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN said that paragraph (l) of section B.1. and paragraph 19 of section C required further discussion, for which his delegation stood ready.

61. The representative of PAKISTAN said that paragraph 19 of section C required more attention; there was a need to work together to improve the wording.

62. The CHAIR suggested that consultations should continue.

63. The representative of FRANCE said that the paragraphs in question had been the subject of extensive discussions and asked the delegations of Iran and Pakistan to propose amendments or make more specific comments, as they would be of interest to the entire Committee.

64. The CHAIR suggested that the Committee continue with its agenda and return to the issue after a break.

65. He invited the Committee to consider the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.13.

66. The representative of INDONESIA, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and introducing the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.13 (“A. Non-power nuclear applications. 8. Strengthening the support to Member States in food and agriculture”), said that the text contained factual and technical updates.

67. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION said that her delegation had a number of editorial proposals.

68. The CHAIR suggested that the Russian delegation consult with the drafters.

17. Strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of Agency safeguards

(GC(68)/9; GC(68)/COM.5/L.1)

69. 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(68)/9, and a draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.1.

70. The representative of AUSTRIA, speaking on behalf of the European Union, introduced the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.1 and said that Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Iceland, the Republic of Korea and Norway wished to be added to the list of sponsors. Noting that only technical updates had been made, she said that the absence of written comments suggested that that approach enjoyed wide support. She thanked Member States for their constructive spirit during the two rounds of open-ended consultations.

71. The representative of the SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC proposed that paragraph (l) be amended to replace the word “Stressing” with “Recalling”, given the optional, non-binding nature of the model additional protocol.

72. The representative of AUSTRIA said that such a substantial change could upset the balance of the entire text and would, accordingly, be difficult to accept.

73. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION said that while consultations had indeed previously taken place concerning technical updates to the text, it was still permitted to discuss the draft resolution within the Committee. Her delegation supported the amendment proposed by Syria, which merited consideration.

74. The CHAIR said that consultations should continue in order to find consensus.

The meeting was suspended at 5 p.m. and resumed at 5.30 p.m.

16. Strengthening the Agency’s activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications (resumed)

(GC(68)/10; GC(68)/INF/4; GC(68)/COM.5/L.3, L.4, L.5, L.6, L.7, L.8, L.10, L.12 and L.13)

75. The CHAIR recalled that the representative of France had requested that reservations concerning document GC(68)/COM.5/L.10 be discussed by the Committee.

76. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN said that — in paragraph (l) of section B.1 and paragraph 19 of section C — the framework of what the Secretariat was being requested to promote should be clear. Moreover, with regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women, national particularities, including national laws and policies, must be borne in mind, as recognized in the UN General Assembly resolution cited in paragraph 19. Such realities must be reflected in the text of the draft resolution.

77. The representative of FRANCE said that specific proposals for amendments would help to move the discussion forward.

78. The representative of MEXICO said that it was frustrating to continue debating gender equality, in particular given the experience of the previous session of the General Conference. Furthermore, it did not make sense to use national laws and policies as an argument, as every country had its own national specificities. Appealing for common sense and calling for a prompt decision, he warned against turning the spirit of Vienna into a constraint.

79. The CHAIR said that while discussions should not be excessively long, consensus should be striven for.

80. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN proposed adding the wording “, while recognizing national circumstances and national laws,” in paragraph (l) of section B.1, before the word “stressing”. He proposed that the same wording be added to paragraph 19 of part C, following “(A/RES/70/1)”.

81. The representative of CHILE said that national laws were already mentioned in the UN General Assembly resolution cited in the draft resolution; adding a reference to national laws would, therefore, amount to a repetition. He also asked whether Iran would be amenable to omitting the reference to the UN General Assembly resolution, if a reference to national laws was included in the draft resolution.

82. The representative of CANADA said that the current wording was preferable and had been carefully negotiated. Additional caveats had already been added to the paragraphs in question to allay Iran’s concerns; further repetition, therefore, was unnecessary. Moreover, paragraph 19 concerned matters that were the Secretariat’s prerogative and that had no bearing on national laws.

83. The representative of COSTA RICA, supported by the representatives of EL SALVADOR, the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, the PHILIPPINES, ITALY, SOUTH AFRICA, URUGUAY, the KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS, AUSTRIA, FINLAND, BELGIUM, DENMARK, AUSTRALIA and SWEDEN, said that he did not support additional caveats.

84. The representative of COLOMBIA said that he was unable to support the proposed amendment. The question of national laws would apply to any draft resolution on any topic and did not need to be highlighted, especially given the reference in paragraph (l) to the 2030 Agenda.

85. The representative of SWITZERLAND said that, in relation to nuclear knowledge management, the Secretariat did not possess a mandate to do anything in the Member States; there was, therefore, no need to mention national laws. He said that the current wording should be retained.

86. The representative of IRELAND said that the wording on gender equality — embodied in SDG 5 — represented an aspiration for the international community. He did not support the proposed amendments.

87. The representative of NEW ZEALAND, supported by the representative of the UNITED KINGDOM, said that the current wording already represented a compromise and that no further changes were acceptable.

88. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN said that his proposed amendment was based on the text of the UN General Assembly resolution, which contained many caveats. His delegation was prepared to consider specific proposals in order to find a solution.

89. The CHAIR asked whether the delegation of France was amenable to further discussions in order to make progress.

90. The representative of FRANCE said that although the general sentiments were quite clear, a further round of informal negotiations would be held.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.