

General Conference

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Plenary

Record of the Eleventh Meeting

Held at Headquarters, Vienna, on Friday, 20 September 2024, at 11.25 p.m.

President: Mr HAM Sang Wook (Republic of Korea)

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¹ GC(68)/21

Abbreviations used in this record

2030 Agenda	Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
PMO	Policy-Making Organ
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TC	technical cooperation
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
UN	United Nations

27. Report on contributions pledged to the Technical Cooperation Fund for 2025

(GC(68)/16/Rev.1)

1. The PRESIDENT said that document GC(68)/16/Rev.1 contained details of pledges of the TCF contributions for 2025 that governments had made to the Director General by 5 p.m. on 19 September 2024.
2. The number of Member States that had pledged was lower than the number at the same time the previous year. Since the document had been sent for printing, one more Member State had communicated its pledge: Argentina (€339 080). That brought the total amount pledged by the end of the sixty-eighth regular session of the General Conference to €37 874 849, representing pledges from 83 Member States and accounting for 38.65% of the TCF target for 2025. The 83 Member States that had pledged represented 47% of Member States.
3. The percentage of the TCF target pledged by the end of the sixty-eighth regular session was 0.9% lower than the previous year. He therefore urged all delegations that had not yet done so to make their 2025 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 2024 a draft TC programme and budget for 2025 based on the level of pledges received, and then to implement the approved programme without hindrance or uncertainty.
4. He said that the Conference would suspend its meeting and resume once the Committee of the Whole had concluded its consideration of all outstanding items. He proposed that the clock be stopped.
5. It was so decided.
6. The PRESIDENT encouraged all Member States to persevere in their efforts to achieve a consensus outcome.

The meeting was suspended at 11.30 p.m. and resumed at 2.20 a.m.

– Oral report by the Chair of the Committee of the Whole

7. Mr LODDING (Sweden), Chair of the Committee of the Whole, reported on the outcome of the Committee's deliberations on agenda items 13, 14 and 16.
8. Under item 13, "Nuclear and radiation safety", following intensive deliberations in the Committee, there had seemed to be broad consensus on the text of the draft resolution contained in GC(68)/COM.5/L.9/Rev.1, with the exception of paragraph 117. He commended the Committee members on having spared no effort in striving towards consensus.
9. Under item 14, "Nuclear security", the Committee recommended that the Conference adopt the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/L.8.
10. Under item 16, "Strengthening the Agency's activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications", the Committee recommended that the Conference adopt the draft resolutions set out in

document GC(68)/L.6. in the following way: A. Non-power nuclear applications; 1. General; 2. Support to the African Union's Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign; 3. Renovation of the Agency's Nuclear Applications Laboratories at Seibersdorf; 4. Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action (ZODIAC) Project; 5. Use of isotope hydrology for water resources management; 6. Development of the sterile insect technique package for the management of disease-transmitting mosquitoes; 7. Plan for producing potable water economically using small and medium-sized nuclear reactors; 8. Strengthening the support to Member States in food and agriculture; B. Nuclear Power Applications; C. Nuclear Knowledge Management.

11. Appreciative of the confidence shown by Member States in electing him as Chair, he thanked his able Vice-Chairs and all the coordinators of draft resolutions for their hard work. He also thanked the Committee members for their flexibility and cooperation, the Secretariat, notably the Secretary of the Committee, and his support team from the Swedish mission.

12. The PRESIDENT thanked the Chair for his report and for efficiently conducting the work of the Committee.

14. Nuclear Security (GC(68)/L.8)

13. The PRESIDENT, responding to a request for clarification from Mr SHAMIN (Russian Federation) said that paragraph 53 of the draft resolution called upon all Member States to continue to take appropriate steps, consistent with their national legislation and regulation, to prevent, detect and protect against insider threats at facilities using radioactive sources, and during transport, noting the potential need for international cooperation.

14. Mr SHAMIN (Russian Federation) said that his country's proposal had not been fully reflected in the text. In the Committee of the Whole, the Russian Federation had proposed that the word "need" should be deleted from the final phrase of paragraph 53, which should read "noting the potential for international cooperation". No Member State had expressed any objection in that regard in the Committee of the Whole. His country had therefore assumed that its amendment would be included in the text of the draft resolution currently under consideration, especially as the Chair of the Committee of the Whole had announced at the meeting that the draft resolution would be forwarded to the plenary as amended during the meeting.

15. Ms HOURNAU-POUËZAT (France) said that the text read out by the Russian representative had been agreed by the Committee of the Whole and forwarded to the Secretariat for inclusion in the draft resolution submitted to the General Conference.

16. The PRESIDENT said that the Secretariat had confirmed that the phrase should read "noting the potential for international cooperation".

17. As recommended by the Committee of the Whole, the draft resolution set out in document GC(68)/L.8 was adopted.

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

18. As recommended by the Committee of the Whole, the draft resolution set out in document GC(68)/L.6 was adopted.

13. Nuclear and radiation safety (GC(68)/COM.5/L.9/Rev.1)

19. The PRESIDENT recalled that the Chair of the Committee of the Whole had reported that the Committee had reached broad agreement on the text of the draft resolution set out in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.9/Rev.1 with the exception of one paragraph.

20. Ms MEAD (Australia), presenting the draft resolution contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.9/Rev.1, which her country had been coordinating with New Zealand, said that the text reflected the collaborative effort of a wide range of delegations. Work on the text had started in mid-August 2024, with over 90 separate proposals considered. Delegations had consistently approached the negotiations with flexibility, a commitment to solid technical outcomes and a shared sense of the value of the resolution.

21. Through the negotiations, agreement had been reached on new technical priorities for the Agency on artificial intelligence and emerging technologies, fusion and addressing denials of shipments. For the first time, a paragraph submitted by a small island developing State not represented in Vienna had been incorporated in the draft resolution. Important additions had been made to the text reflecting the priorities and activities of Member States, including new language on the ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy, the review processes of the conventions, peer review missions, commodities and consumer goods, regulatory infrastructure development projects and the Regulatory Cooperation Forum.

22. Having thanked all the co-sponsors for their backing, she said that the work mandated and supported by the draft resolution was important for all Member States and was critical to enhancing access to the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology.

23. Ms RAYOS NATIVIDAD (Secretary) said that the interpreting services would only be available until 2.45 a.m. After that, the meeting would proceed without interpreters and only in English. She thanked the delegates for their understanding.

24. Mr GÓMEZ OPORTO (Chile), noting that his country's position on gender equality and on the importance of transparent and inclusive discussions in the context of multilateral diplomacy was well known, proposed the deletion of the words "or balance" in paragraph 117 of the draft resolution. If Member States were encouraged to implement certain actions, it should be done on the basis of international commitments, for example, those concerning gender equality under the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. Moreover, his delegation wished to close a cycle that had begun the previous year in the framework of the sixty-seventh regular session of the General Conference. As reflected in the summary records of the Conference, a significant number of delegations had expressed their views on a procedure that had met with consensus but had been called into question because of the absence of inclusive discussions during the negotiation of a paragraph on gender equality in connection with the resolution on nuclear and radiation safety that year.

25. His delegation had presented its proposal on the very first day of the negotiation process led by Australia and had respected the deadlines established by the penholder. It had also mentioned its proposal during the open consultations and had participated in various bilateral consultations.

26. Mr ZABALGOITIA TREJO (Mexico) said that his country was grateful to the delegation of Chile for presenting a proposal that it considered to be paramount. Gender equality was an essential value for Mexican society and a principle shared by many societies in the Latin American and Caribbean region. For Mexico, pursuing a feminist foreign policy was the way to help ensure that men and women enjoyed equal rights and opportunities for their development. It was a matter of social justice.

27. At the same time, the differences in views among various delegations regarding gender equality were, unfortunately, insurmountable. Paragraph 117 of the draft resolution had been discussed for weeks, and those differences had only become more pronounced during the past week.

28. In view of the late hour and the need for the General Conference to complete its work, he moved closure of the debate under Rule 60 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference. He encouraged all Member States to support the motion so that the Conference could continue its work expeditiously.

29. The PRESIDENT recalled that, under Rule 60, permission to speak on the closure of the debate would be accorded only to two speakers opposing the closure, after which it should immediately be put to a vote.

30. Mr NAZIRI ASL (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his country wished to retain the current wording of the draft resolution and therefore opposed the motion.

31. Mr OTHMAN (Syrian Arab Republic), recalling the late stage at which wording had been agreed at the previous regular session of the General Conference, said that the resolution should remain the same as in 2023 and that discussions should continue during the intersessional period.

32. The PRESIDENT invited the General Conference to vote, by show of hands, on the motion for closure of debate put forward under Rule 60 by the representative of Mexico.

33. There were 65 votes in favour and 6 against, with 20 abstentions. The motion was carried.

34. The PRESIDENT asked whether the Conference wished to adopt the amendment proposed by the delegation of Chile.

35. Mr NAZIRI ASL (Islamic Republic of Iran) commended the dedication of the Chair of the Committee of the Whole and the able leadership of his Australian colleague, who had tried to present a text in an objective, impartial and fair manner that served the Agency's objectives and did not derogate from previously agreed resolutions. It was therefore regrettable that the text agreed in 2023 had been brought into question, which would have far-reaching consequences not because of the concept introduced, but because of the precedent it set in going against the will of Member States that continued to fulfil their obligations under the previous year's resolution.

36. If the proposed amendment was adopted, there would be two resolutions with two different concepts — one with gender equality or balance, as applicable, and one without gender balance. Legally speaking, Member States would have to decide which resolution should be implemented. The proposal would therefore further complicate the issue rather than serve the Agency's objectives.

37. Although his delegation would not stand in the way of the adoption of the draft resolution, it would continue to distance itself from references to gender equality in such texts. Iran could no longer accept any concept that did not correspond to the legal or national circumstances of Member States and recalled paragraph 59 of UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/70/1, recognizing the existence of different national circumstances and priorities and cultural diversity. It was unfortunate that the

amendment proposed by the delegation of Chile did not take into account that fundamental concept. Iran would not block consensus but would implement the resolution on the basis of its national priorities and circumstances.

38. The PRESIDENT asked again whether the Conference wished to adopt the amendment proposed by the delegation of Chile.

39. It was so decided.

40. As recommended by the Committee of the Whole, the draft resolution set out in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.9/Rev.1, as amended, was adopted.

41. The PRESIDENT said that all the items referred to the Committee of the Whole had now been acted upon. He thanked delegates for their cooperation and again expressed his sincere appreciation to the Chair of the Committee of the Whole for his skilful guidance of the Committee's deliberations, as well as to the Vice-Chairs.

– **Closing of the session**

42. 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 1 Vice-President, 1 Prime Cabinet Secretary and 55 ministers. During the general debate, 144 speakers had taken the floor. A total of 97 side events had taken place.

43. Ms MANGKLATANAKUL (Thailand) expressed her country's sincere appreciation to the President for his exemplary and effective leadership and to the Vice-Presidents, the Chair of the Committee of the Whole, the Vice-Chairs and all the coordinators of the General Conference resolutions for their hard work and dedication. Furthermore, she thanked the Director General and the Secretariat, for their tireless efforts to ensure the success of the sixty-eighth regular session of the General Conference. The successful outcome of the session was a testament to the collective resolve and commitment of Member States to multilateral cooperation, embodied in the consensual Vienna spirit, as they worked together to address global challenges. Thailand would continue to engage actively as a newly elected Board member.

44. Ms GIL (Colombia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group congratulated the President on his excellent leadership and thanked the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Committee of the Whole, as well as the Secretariat for its invaluable organizational support.

45. All ten of the draft resolutions initiated by the Group had been tabled and considered by the Committee in a timely and smooth manner. Their co-sponsorship by many countries and adoption by the Conference showed Member States' commitment and good spirit of cooperation.

46. In closing, she thanked her team, the Task Force Coordinator, penholders, delegations and the office of the Group for their hard work and devotion.

47. Mr DANCS (Hungary), speaking on behalf of the European Union, expressed sincere thanks to the President for his able and skilful stewardship of the General Conference and to his team for their great cooperation before and during the Conference. The European Union also expressed appreciation to the Chair of the Committee of the Whole and thanked the Secretariat for supporting the Conference.

48. The session had resulted in tangible outcomes in various areas of the Agency's mandate and had reaffirmed the collective support for the work carried out by the Director General and his staff. As sponsors of two important General Conference resolutions, the European Union and its Member States remained strongly committed to strengthening the Agency's safeguards system and global nuclear security and would continue their efforts to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women in all Agency activities.

49. In conclusion, the European Union thanked all delegations that had worked for the successful outcome of the General Conference.

50. Mr ZABALGOITIA TREJO (Mexico) congratulated the President on having successfully completed his mission and on having led the Conference through a very complex situation. The adoption by consensus of all Conference resolutions and decisions was no small feat given the current circumstances. Mexico also thanked all delegations, the Secretariat and the Director General for their support.

51. Mr MOFADAL EL NOUR (Sudan) commended the President and his team for their stewardship of the General Conference and his colleagues in the Committee of the Whole for their tireless efforts related to the resolutions that had just been adopted.

52. The Conference had been fortunate to have stopped the clock so that it could conclude its business within the specified time frame. However, Member States should recall the plight of millions of people who were unable to stop the clock on the MDGs and the SDGs and who would continue to be crushed by poverty, misery, conflict, deprivation, disease, ignorance and oppression.

53. Mr MARTINSEN (Argentina) commended the work of the President, the Director General and his team, the PMOs, the Chair of the Committee of the Whole and the coordinators of regional groups. He also commended the delegations of Australia and New Zealand for their transparency, efficiency, professionalism and ability to understand the technical issues that were within the purview of the Agency and to reflect those issues in the resolution they had coordinated.

54. The PRESIDENT, acknowledging the delegations' kind words, said that it was an honour and a privilege, for himself and his country, to serve as President of the General Conference. He was grateful to participants for their cooperation, assistance and constructive spirit. He expressed his sincere appreciation to the Chair of the Committee of the Whole for his skill in guiding the Committee's deliberations. His professionalism and diplomacy had greatly contributed to the successful work of the Conference.

55. 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, security staff and SEC-PMO — for their valuable support. He further thanked the Austrian authorities and the city of Vienna for their hospitality.

56. 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.

57. The PRESIDENT declared the sixty-eighth regular session of the General Conference closed.

The meeting rose at 3.20 a.m.