

General Conference

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Second special session

Plenary

Record of the Second Meeting

Held at Headquarters, Vienna, on Monday, 2 December 2019, at 2.05 p.m.

President: Ms DELGADO PERALTA (Mexico)

Later: Mr SIVAGURUNATHAN (Malaysia)

Later: Mr GIERVELD (Netherlands)

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¹ GC(SPL.2)/6.

Abbreviations used in this record

2030 Agenda	Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
ABACC	Brazilian–Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials
ARCAL	Co-operation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CSA	comprehensive safeguards agreement
DPRK	Democratic People’s Republic of Korea
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
G-77	Group of 77
INSSP	Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan
JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
LDCs	least developed countries
LEU	low enriched uranium
NPP	nuclear power plant
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
OPCW	Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PDI	person-day of inspection
PUI	Peaceful Uses Initiative
Quadripartite Agreement	Agreement between the Republic of Argentina, the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Application of Safeguards
ReNuAL	Renovation of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

Abbreviations used in this record (continued)

TC	technical cooperation
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UK	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
UN	United Nations
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USA	United States of America
WHO	World Health Organization
WMD	weapon of mass destruction

2. Arrangements for the Conference (GC(SPL.2)/1)

(a) Adoption of the agenda and allocation of items for initial discussion

1. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee had recommended that the agenda for the second special session should consist of all of the items listed in document GC(SPL.2)/1. With regard to the allocation of items for initial discussion, it had recommended that all items be taken up for discussion as indicated in document GC(SPL.2)/1. With regard to the order of items contained in document GC(SPL.2)/1, the General Committee had recommended that the order should be as set out in that document.

2. It was so decided.

(b) Closing date of the session

3. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee had recommended that the Conference should set Monday, 2 December 2019, as the closing date of the second special session.

4. It was so decided.

3. Examination of delegates' credentials (GC(SPL.2)/5)

5. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee had met earlier in the day as a credentials committee to examine the credentials of all delegates, as provided for in Rule 28 of the Rules of Procedure. After discussion, the Committee had recommended that the General Conference adopt the draft resolution set out in paragraph 8 of its report, contained in document GC(SPL.2)/5, with the reservations and positions expressed therein.

6. Mr HAMDY (Egypt) said that his country's acceptance of the report by the General Committee on its examination of the delegates' credentials submitted to the second special session of the General Conference by no means implied recognition of Israel's jurisdiction over the territories occupied since 1967, which included East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights and the Shebaa Farms. The borders of Israel were limited to those set out within the peace agreement between Israel and Egypt.

7. Ms AL-HADID (Jordan) said that her country's joining the consensus to accept the report by the General Committee on the delegates' credentials by no means implied recognition of Israel's jurisdiction over the territories occupied since 1967, which included East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. The borders of Israel were limited to those set out within the peace agreement between Israel and Jordan.

8. The PRESIDENT took it that, with the observations and reservations expressed, the Conference was prepared to adopt the draft resolution contained in paragraph 8 of document GC(SPL.2)/5.

9. It was so decided.

4. Approval of the appointment of the Director General (resumed)

10. Mr TANALINOV (Kazakhstan) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment as Director General and assured him of his country's support. Mr Grossi's extensive diplomatic experience in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament would ensure that, under his leadership, the Agency would further contribute to the global non-proliferation regime while promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy and making progress on the SDGs. Mr Grossi's intention to continue the late Director General Amano's policy of promoting the peaceful applications of nuclear technology was welcome.

11. He expressed the hope that the Agency would remain impartial, open and transparent in its work, providing equal conditions for the effective and non-politicized activities of all Member States. That was of particular importance in view of its role in ensuring unbiased monitoring and verification of the JCPOA.

12. The LEU Bank, recently launched in Kazakhstan with the aim of providing assurances to countries about the availability of nuclear fuel, was one of the most challenging and complex initiatives ever undertaken by the Agency. On his Government's behalf, he invited Mr Grossi to attend the official inauguration in Kazakhstan in 2020.

13. Kazakhstan had a proven track record in the area of non-proliferation, having closed the Semipalatinsk test site and eliminated the fourth largest nuclear arsenal in the world. As a responsible and active Member State with the world's second largest uranium reserves ensuring around 40% of global uranium exports, Kazakhstan deserved to be included in one of the Agency's regional groups. It hoped that, within the framework of the new management approach proposed by Mr Grossi, the Secretariat would be able to suggest some creative solutions for tackling that issue.

14. Mr DZHUSUPOV (Kyrgyzstan), warmly congratulating Mr Grossi on his appointment, expressed his country's support for the Agency in every aspect of its mission and its readiness to assist the new Director General in ensuring that the Agency could meet the growing challenges of the 21st century. He thanked Mr Feruță for his dedication and leadership as Acting Director General during a challenging period for the Agency.

15. Kyrgyzstan was closely cooperating with the Agency in updating its nuclear medicine and improving its radiotherapy capacities, ensuring radiation protection, upgrading its system for the monitoring and control of uranium legacy sites according to international safety standards and creating a cleaner environment throughout Central Asia.

16. Bearing in mind the Agency's crucial role with regard to nuclear safety and security, promoting nuclear non-proliferation and developing peaceful atomic energy, Kyrgyzstan was confident that, thanks to Mr Grossi's professional experience, the Agency would be able to help States meet the SDGs.

17. Prince Abdullah bin Khaled bin Sultan bin Abdulaziz AL-SAUD (Saudi Arabia) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment as Director General and thanked Mr Feruță for his stewardship of the Agency as Acting Director General. Saudi Arabia would continue to support the Agency in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy and pursuing nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Mr Grossi's extensive experience in those areas would undoubtedly stand him in good stead during his tenure.

18. Mr SIVAGURUNATHAN (Malaysia), congratulating Mr Grossi on his appointment, said that, with his wealth of experience and professionalism, he would undoubtedly continue to strengthen the Agency's mandate to promote safe, secure and peaceful nuclear technologies. Malaysia was confident that, under Mr Grossi's able leadership, the Agency would continue to play a vital role in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear technology. In discharging their duties for the benefit of the Agency and its Member States, Mr Grossi and his team could count on Malaysia's full support.

19. A member of the Agency since 1969, Malaysia had benefitted from its extensive participation in the TC programme and looked forward to enhancing its productive cooperation with the Agency.

20. Mr ULYANOV (Russian Federation) conveyed the personal congratulations of the President of the Russian Federation to Mr Grossi on his appointment to the crucial post of Director General. He wished Mr Grossi every success in addressing the challenging tasks ahead.

21. Mr Grossi's appointment bore testament to his outstanding professionalism, extensive experience and diplomatic talent. Under Mr Grossi's leadership, a balance would undoubtedly be struck between all of the Agency's statutory functions and the Agency would strengthen its role in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy and verifying Member States' compliance with their non-proliferation obligations.

22. It was of utmost importance that the Agency remain a professional, depoliticized forum for cooperation among Member States. The Russian Federation was confident that the new Director General would ensure the promotion of nuclear technologies with a view to achieving the SDGs and would uphold the Agency's motto, 'Atoms for Peace and Development'. Mr Grossi also had particular responsibility for ensuring an objective, technically justified and clear system of safeguards based on bilateral agreements between Member States and the Agency. The Russian Federation would continue to actively assist the Agency in tackling those challenges.

23. In view of the crucial importance of the Agency's role in implementing the JCPOA, the Russian Federation urged Mr Grossi to do his utmost under the Agency's mandate to stabilize the situation.

24. As the Russian Federation continued to provide assistance to the Agency through its financial contributions, specific projects and the provision of expertise, Mr Grossi could count on its full support.

Mr Sivagurunathan (Malaysia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

25. Mr FORTUNA BIATO (Brazil) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment. With his extensive professional experience in the nuclear field, Mr Grossi was an expert in the wide range of areas covered by the Agency. Brazil was confident that, coming from a G-77 country, he would act with independence, autonomy, transparency and creativity, and would tackle the numerous challenges facing the Agency in a discerning and balanced manner. He had a widely acknowledged professional background, full command over technical complexities, an awareness of political sensitivities and a steadfast determination to address critical issues relating to global peace and security. In recognition of his professional merits, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean had unanimously supported Mr Grossi's candidacy, and Brazil was proud that the Agency would have its first Director General from the region. It also welcomed Mr Grossi's innovative budgetary and administrative proposals, including initiatives to expand the financial scope of the Agency's operations.

26. Speaking in a personal capacity, he acknowledged Mr Grossi's active contribution to the joint efforts of Argentina and Brazil to strengthen ABACC, the bilateral system for nuclear material accounting and control, and hoped that the partnership would serve as an example for other regions. In recent years, he had benefitted personally from Mr Grossi's extensive knowledge and professional experience, always in a spirit of camaraderie. He assured Mr Grossi of Brazil's unwavering support.

27. Mr BHATIA (Singapore), congratulating Mr Grossi, said that the new Director General's experience in disarmament and non-proliferation and the many diplomatic skills he had honed over the course of three decades would be an asset to his leadership, in particular during the current challenging times.

28. The Agency should continue to support its Member States in tackling new challenges in the coming years, while maintaining its impartiality, integrity and professionalism. Singapore pledged its

full backing for Mr Grossi as the Agency and its Member States worked to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy in a safe and secure manner with a view to meeting the SDGs.

29. Thanking Mr Feruță for his stewardship of the Agency in recent months, during which he had discharged his duties with utmost professionalism, he wished him every success in his future endeavours.

30. Ms PALL (India) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment. India was confident that, under his leadership, the Secretariat would discharge its statutory mandate in an efficient, effective, transparent and impartial manner. The need for peaceful applications of nuclear energy for sustainable development would continue to grow, as would demand for the Agency's services. India expected the new Director General to place a greater focus on activities that brought tangible benefits to Member States, and looked forward to inclusive and regular interaction with him. He would, no doubt, ensure a balance was struck between the Agency's promotional and non-promotional activities. All of the Agency's activities were growing in relevance, while geopolitics and the evolving developmental priorities of Member States were placing new demands on the organization. India would cooperate in full with the Agency and the new Director General to achieve those goals.

31. In closing, she thanked Mr Feruță for his work as Acting Director General and congratulated the Chair of the Board and her team for their successful stewardship of a complex election process.

32. Mr SOLANO ORTIZ (Costa Rica), congratulating Mr Grossi, a diplomat with a long and distinguished career, welcomed the fact that he was the first representative from Latin America and the Caribbean to assume the post of Director General of the Agency. He wished him all the best in his new role, in which he would face the challenge of maintaining and fostering international cooperation for the peaceful use of nuclear energy, while ensuring disarmament and non-proliferation. It was expected that Mr Grossi would manage the Agency efficiently and commit fully to promoting multilingualism, among other things.

33. Thanking Mr Feruță for his dedication and contribution to the Agency over the years, and especially in recent months, he wished him every success in his future endeavours.

34. Ms ANDERSEN (Norway) congratulated Mr Grossi and assured him of her country's full support. Highly qualified for the position of Director General, Mr Grossi had publicly displayed his determination to lead the Agency efficiently and effectively in fulfilling its mandate.

35. The Agency played a crucial role in disseminating the benefits of peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology, in particular by ensuring high nuclear safety and security standards. Moreover, effective Agency safeguards were essential for bolstering Member States' confidence in global nuclear non-proliferation. Under Mr Grossi's able leadership, the Agency would no doubt fulfil its mandate in the best possible manner. She wished him and the Agency all the best for the years to come.

36. Ms HULAN (Canada) said that it was a measure of the Agency's commitment that, following the tragic passing of Director General Amano, the Board, Secretariat and Member States had responded in a timely and effective manner that did justice to Mr Amano's memory. The transparent, professional and fair selection process that had led to the appointment of the new Director General was a credit to the accomplished leadership of Chair of the Board and her team. Canada thanked and congratulated all of the candidates for their engagement, which had made the election process truly competitive.

37. The previous four months had been a time of uncertainty, above all for the Agency's staff. She thanked Mr Feruță for his leadership as Acting Director General and wished him all the best in his future endeavours.

38. Canada attached great importance to ensuring that the Agency remained an innovative, well-managed, well-funded technical organization that delivered results. Such qualities were required in order for it to implement its functions pursuant to the NPT in an effective and credible manner. Compliance with safeguards obligations remained the fundamental basis upon which all countries could safely and securely benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and the Agency must continue to deliver on that promise.

39. In presenting his candidacy, Mr Grossi had emphasized several key objectives: maintaining a robust and innovative safeguards and verification regime, achieving gender equality and parity, furthering the role of nuclear energy in the fight against climate change and in achieving the SDGs, and bringing about greater effectiveness and efficiency in the Agency's operations through enhanced coordination. Canada strongly supported all of those objectives and looked forward to working with Mr Grossi to achieve them.

40. Congratulating the new Director General, she affirmed that the Agency made an irreplaceable contribution to international peace, security and development; the Member States would rely heavily on Mr Grossi's leadership in the months and years ahead. There were certainly challenges on the horizon, but Canada would offer its full commitment and support as Mr Grossi advanced the Agency's important work.

41. Mr GIERVELD (Netherlands) said that his country would support Mr Grossi in all of his endeavours as Director General and would continue to back the Agency under his leadership. He thanked Mr Feruță for his leadership as Acting Director General. He wished Mr Grossi all the best in his important position at the helm of the Agency and looked forward to working with him.

42. Ms WOLCOTT (United States of America) congratulated the new Director General on his appointment. Mr Grossi brought an exceptional degree of substantive knowledge and diplomatic leadership experience from his work in non-proliferation and disarmament, in particular in the nuclear field. He had served as Chair of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, President of the Diplomatic Conference on the Convention on Nuclear Safety and, most recently, President-designate for the 2020 NPT Review Conference. His high-level positions at the Agency and the OPCW had given him the management and leadership experience required to run a complex international organization.

43. The passing of Director General Amano had been a great loss to the Agency, but Mr Amano's commitment to Atoms for Peace and Development would live on through such projects as the PUI, the renovation of the nuclear applications laboratories at Seibersdorf and the LEU Bank. She thanked Mr Feruță for his work in leading the Agency through the difficult transition period and ensuring that its essential work was able to continue uninterrupted.

44. The USA looked forward to working with Mr Grossi as he elaborated and carried forward his vision for the Agency, and with the Secretariat and other Member States as they implemented that vision together. It reaffirmed its steadfast commitment to supporting the Agency's essential efforts to enlarge the contributions of nuclear energy and technology to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world, and to ensure that those contributions remained safe, secure and peaceful.

45. The USA welcomed the fact that Mr Grossi was the Agency's first Director General from Latin America, a region that had contributed a great deal to the organization and had a lot more to offer. The region's representation at the highest level was well-deserved.

46. Ms KUMLIN GRANIT (Sweden) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment as the first Latin American Director General of the Agency. In view of his experience, diplomatic talent and qualifications, Sweden was certain that he would manage the Agency in an excellent manner, promoting its statutory functions with independence and professionalism and serving with determination, commitment and dignity as he led the organization into the coming decade. Mr Grossi's tenure would

be defined by his ability to tackle the challenges facing the Agency and to make the most of the opportunities ahead. In that regard, his commitment to effectiveness, efficiency, transparency, gender equality and the SDGs was very reassuring. She assured Mr Grossi and the Agency of Sweden's unwavering support.

47. Speaking in her capacity as Chair of the Board of Governors, she said that she looked forward to close and constructive cooperation on all of the issues on the Board's agenda.

48. Well-functioning international cooperation was at the core of a rules-based international order founded on international law. Sweden looked forward to the efforts of the new Director General, the Board and the wider membership to ensure that the Agency continue to set a leading example in that regard. The Agency was their common responsibility.

49. In closing, she conveyed a personal message to Mr Grossi from Mr Blix, former Director General of the Agency, which read: "I send my warm congratulations to incoming Director General Rafael Grossi and to the Board of Governors. By upholding effectiveness and impartiality they will continue to make the Agency an asset for all".

50. Mr ALKAABI (United Arab Emirates) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment as Director General. Mr Grossi was a colleague, a friend and a renowned nuclear expert and the UAE was confident that, under his leadership, the Agency would continue to fulfil its statutory functions and provide Member States with all the necessary support to achieve Atoms for Peace and Development. He wished Mr Grossi success and assured him of his country's full support. He also thanked Mr Feruță for his dedication and professionalism during the transition period and wished him well in his future endeavours.

51. The UAE had made good progress in developing a peaceful nuclear energy programme in close cooperation with the Agency. That partnership had been instrumental in facilitating the provision of the necessary support and guidance and of a platform for the transfer of UAE experience to other Member States. His country valued such partnership and looked forward to further cooperation with the Agency, promoting the responsible use of nuclear technology and its applications.

52. Nuclear technology made a substantial contribution to sustainable development globally and in many sectors, including energy, health, agriculture and hydrology. The Agency played an important role in that regard, in particular through its TC programme, a valuable tool for many developing countries.

53. The strengthening of nuclear safety and security globally was a priority and the UAE looked forward to the Agency's continued contribution and focus in those areas. The Agency also had an important role to play in maintaining global peace and security through the effective implementation of the safeguards system. The Agency should continue to focus on strengthening safeguards implementation and to address non-compliance issues in a timely and satisfactory manner.

54. Ms MEBARKI (Algeria) congratulated Mr Grossi on his election following several rounds of voting and ample competition. His skills and extensive experience in the diplomatic field, in particular in the area of disarmament, would ensure his success and allow the Agency to fulfil its functions in the most effective and professional manner.

55. Algeria particularly welcomed the appointment of a representative from the Group of 77 and China, which reflected its importance as the largest group of countries within the Agency. One of Algeria's priorities was to benefit from the peaceful use of nuclear energy and it trusted that, under the leadership of Mr Grossi, the Agency would attach due importance to that goal.

56. Greater focus should be placed on technical cooperation, in particular human resource capacity building in developing countries. Nuclear safety and security were of particular importance as were safeguards, in view of their impact on the inalienable right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

57. Speaking in a personal capacity and in French, she welcomed the election of a long-standing friend and colleague whose professional skills and personal qualities would enable him to steer the Agency in the right direction. Member States must work together in close cooperation with the new Director General to ensure future success and stability. She wished Mr Grossi all the best and assured him that Algeria would work with him to ensure the fulfilment of his mission. His preliminary statement had already proven that the Agency had made the right choice in electing him. The Argentine musical interlude, so full of symbolism, was also a good sign of things to come.

58. In closing, speaking in Spanish, she expressed Algeria's faith in the commitment of the Agency's staff to promoting international peace and security under Mr Grossi's leadership.

59. Mr SHUMSKI (Belarus) congratulated the new Director General and expressed his country's confidence that, with his broad experience, Mr Grossi would ensure that the Agency fulfilled its statutory objective to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world. Mr Grossi could count on the support of Belarus as he worked to strengthen the Agency's credibility and effectiveness in conducting all of its statutory functions. He wished Mr Grossi every success as he took up his duties as Director General.

60. The Agency's work should be based on a mutual understanding of Member States' shared interest in ensuring the comprehensive, safe and secure use of nuclear technology. As the quality of its work would have an influence on trust in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the Agency should remain an objective, depoliticized, technical organization. The TC programme should be constantly improved through efforts to respond flexibly to the needs of Member States and reflect their sustainable development priorities, while also ensuring a clear, objective and technically sound safeguards mechanism that promoted international trust in the peaceful atom.

61. Mr CORTESE (Italy) reaffirmed his country's support for the Agency's crucial efforts to contribute to international peace and security by verifying and monitoring the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear material, and to foster sustainable development by promoting peaceful nuclear technologies and applications. Italy had full confidence in the Agency's professionalism, independence and impartiality in performing its role.

62. Against that backdrop, he congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment as the first Director General from the Latin American region and wished him every success in his new role. Given his competence, his extensive experience in non-proliferation and his unwavering dedication, the Agency would undoubtedly become even more effective, credible and transparent under Mr Grossi's leadership. Italy looked forward to working with him and continuing to support the Agency's efforts to promote safe and secure uses of nuclear technologies and non-proliferation.

63. Mr ZAFAR (Bangladesh) congratulated Mr Grossi and wished him a very successful tenure, while assuring him of Bangladesh's full support and cooperation.

64. He thanked Mr Feruță for his excellent leadership during the transition period and commended his immediate response to the request for a technical team of Agency and WHO experts to visit Bangladesh to assess the *Aedes* mosquito infestation that had caused an outbreak of dengue fever. He also thanked the Chair of the Board and congratulated her on concluding the election process in accordance with the Board's mandate.

65. Having enjoyed cooperation with the Agency since 1972, Bangladesh recognized the central role played by the Agency's work to promote the peaceful use of nuclear techniques and applications in line with its Atoms for Peace and Development motto. Bangladesh was confident that Mr Grossi's leadership and professionalism would not only infuse the Agency with new energy, but would also help the Agency to meet the expectations of its Member States by responding to challenges such as scarce

TC programme resources, climate change and human health, and by maintaining transparency and impartiality in its work. It could be hoped that, under Mr Grossi's leadership, the Agency would give due consideration to the specific needs of embarking countries, including Bangladesh and the LDCs, in relation to the peaceful use of nuclear technology to achieve certain SDGs. In closing, he reaffirmed his country's strong commitment to multilateralism and close cooperation with the Agency.

66. Mr HIKIHARA (Japan) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment; with his deep understanding and experience in the field of non-proliferation, there was no doubt that he would demonstrate excellent leadership in tackling the various issues facing the Agency. Japan had every confidence that the new Director General would further increase the Agency's credibility and transparency and lead the Agency in a professional manner, drawing on his many years of experience. He wished Mr Grossi every success in his new role and assured him of Japan's full support and cooperation. He also thanked Mr Feruță for his excellent leadership in a difficult period.

67. The promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy was essential to achieving the SDGs in line with the Atoms for Peace and Development motto coined by late Director General Amano. Japan had co-chaired the IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology: Addressing Current and Emerging Development Challenges in 2018 and had been making financial contributions to various projects, including the PUI and ReNuAL. Furthermore, a private Japanese company had donated mass spectrometry equipment to the Seibersdorf laboratories. Japan would continue to make such contributions to the Agency.

68. Turning to nuclear non-proliferation, he said that his country called on Iran to cooperate fully with the Agency in accordance with its nuclear obligations. Japan would spare no effort in working with the Agency, which played an independent and central role in verifying and monitoring Iran's implementation of its commitments. Noting that the DPRK had recently launched two ballistic missiles, he expressed concern that the country continued to pose a serious challenge to the international community. It was necessary to achieve the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement of all of the DPRK's nuclear weapons, other WMDs, ballistic missiles and related programmes and facilities. Full use should be made of the Agency's expertise, knowledge and experience to address those issues.

69. Impartial and professional safeguards implementation was essential to maintaining the Agency's credibility. Japan continued to firmly support the Agency's efforts to increase efficiency and effectiveness and to ensure the universalization of the CSA and additional protocol.

70. Japan appreciated the support provided by the Agency in the aftermath of the accident at Fukushima Daiichi NPP. It had received 17 review missions and had been providing relevant information to the international community. It would continue to work closely with the Agency in that regard.

71. Ms SELLNER (Austria), speaking Spanish, said that her Government had welcomed Mr Grossi's close cooperation on bilateral and multilateral affairs as Ambassador of Argentina over the preceding six years and congratulated him warmly on his new appointment as Director General of the Agency.

72. The Agency's independence was of major importance for ensuring its credibility. As the host country, Austria was sure that Mr Grossi would make every effort to preserve that independence in fulfilling the Agency's mandate and assured him of the full support of the Austrian Government.

73. Switching to English, she said that Austria shared Mr Grossi's views on a number of key areas, especially with regard to disarmament and non-proliferation, and agreed that the Agency was of central importance to the international non-proliferation regime. Her country was looking forward to continuing successful cooperation with the Agency under Mr Grossi's leadership.

74. Mr Grossi was to be congratulated as the first Director General from a Latin American country. His decades-long engagement in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation, and specifically in the

work of the Agency, was impressive. Thanks to his profound technical expertise and diplomatic leadership, the Agency would be in the very best hands and would thrive under his guidance.

75. Speaking in French and Russian, she assured Mr Grossi of Austria's support for promoting multilingualism within the Agency and wished Mr Grossi every success. Lastly, reverting to English, she thanked the Chair of the Board for her diligent and highly professional leadership.

76. Ms MINDAOUDOU SOULEY (Niger) congratulated Mr Grossi on his election and wished him every success in his new role.

77. The Niger remained committed to national, regional and global peace and security and to the inalienable right of countries to use peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology to improve lives and contribute to sustainable development. In that connection, the Niger had taken all the measures recommended by the Agency to ensure the safe and secure use of nuclear techniques. Her country welcomed the excellent collaboration it had always enjoyed with the Agency and would endeavour to strengthen that partnership further.

78. Ms ROBERTON (New Zealand) warmly congratulated Mr Grossi and said that her country was delighted to welcome someone with such a depth of experience, and from the Latin America and Caribbean region, as Director General of the Agency. She also expressed her country's appreciation to Mr Feruță for his stewardship of the Agency over the preceding months.

79. The Agency provided a pillar of stability, integrity and professionalism that contributed substantially to international peace and security. Confident that Mr Grossi would provide the real leadership that the Agency required — and that Mr Grossi would continue to advance and protect Member States' shared interest in ensuring the use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes — she called on him to listen carefully to the views of all Member States, including those from the Pacific region that were not always able to attend meetings.

80. Mr Grossi's story about the clandestine nuclear plant in Patagonia had been particularly poignant. His conclusion that diplomacy was always the way forward showed that the Agency was in good hands. He would have New Zealand's full support.

81. Mr SADLEIR (Australia) said that his Government welcomed the appointment of Mr Grossi as Director General of the Agency. There had been an excellent field of candidates for the position and Australia thanked all those who had been nominated and had participated actively and constructively in the process.

82. Australia placed great importance on the Agency's work to promote the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear technology. The Agency was also a critical element of the international non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

83. He expressed his country's confidence in Mr Grossi's leadership and in the vision he had set out for the Agency, which had a well-earned reputation as an independent and impartial technical organization that the international community could trust in difficult times. Australia was assured that such a reputation would be protected and enhanced in the subsequent years.

84. Australia remained deeply committed to encouraging a results-based management approach within the Agency. Focusing on outcomes, and how they could be achieved together, was the surest way of responding efficiently and effectively to the current challenging international environment.

85. As a co-chair of the Group of Friends for Women in Nuclear, Australia applauded Mr Grossi's commitment to gender equality and diversity within the Agency. It looked forward to working closely and collaboratively with Mr Grossi in the future.

86. Mr BETANCOURT RUALES (Ecuador) said that his country welcomed the election of Mr Grossi as Director General of the Agency, which demonstrated Member States' recognition of the commitments made by Latin America through the Tlatelolco Treaty to forego all nuclear weapons and sign CSAs with the Agency.

87. Mr Grossi was an outstanding diplomat who had chosen to place his experience and knowledge at the service of all Member States. His successful career in the multilateral field would undoubtedly help him in the delicate task and challenges before him. Ecuador trusted in Mr Grossi's ability to lead the Agency, which played a central and strategic role in combating nuclear proliferation and verifying compliance by NPT States Parties with their obligations.

88. Mr STICKER (France) said that it was a day of pride for many: for Mr Grossi as he was appointed Director General after a strongly contested but dignified campaign; for Latin America as it saw one of its own heading the Agency for the first time; and for Member States upon electing such an accomplished diplomat and recognized expert in non-proliferation issues. The Agency was a strong, legitimate and relevant organization. That relevance was even more essential in the context of its safeguards work, which depended on the global dissemination of the benefits of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. He wished Mr Grossi all the best as he took on his new responsibilities and assured him of France's full support for his work in the interest of global peace and security, and for the benefit of humanity.

89. The occasion presented an opportunity to express high hopes for the future, in particular in relation to the Agency's staff. He expressed full confidence in Mr Grossi's capacities to unite those working for the Agency and ensure that every one of them felt a sense of responsibility in fulfilling its global mission.

90. Member States also had high hopes, as they observed Mr Grossi's readiness to take action. His imminent departure for the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP25) in Madrid bore witness to that, as he prepared to represent the Agency at the conference, and raise awareness of how nuclear energy could contribute to decarbonization and sustainable development.

91. There were, moreover, high hopes vis-à-vis how humanity could benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in such areas as health, protection of cultural heritage, agriculture and the environment. Member States were looking to Mr Grossi to develop the Agency's activities in those fields and ensure that it worked with other relevant international organizations and stakeholders in order to promote such important applications of nuclear energy.

92. Concluding in Spanish, he wished Mr Grossi all the best and expressed France's full support for his actions in favour of world peace and security and the well-being of humankind.

93. Ms ŽVOKELJ (Slovenia) warmly congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment as the new Director General and said that his election by acclamation bore clear testament to the unwavering support and confidence he enjoyed among Member States. Mr Grossi had rich experience in the field of non-proliferation, extensive diplomatic skills and strong political acumen, which would help him to steer the Agency with determination and responsibility through the challenges it faced.

94. With its fully fledged civil nuclear programme, Slovenia had always attached great importance to its relationship with the Agency. It therefore stood ready to work closely with the Director General in all of the Agency's main areas of activity, even when it was not a member of the Board of Governors, and to further strengthen its unique and essential contribution to global peace, security and development.

95. Slovenia expected Mr Grossi to continue the work begun by late Director General Amano to advance gender equality within the Agency. It was hoped that he would remain an active International Gender Champion and that, with the help of Member States, he would take up new commitments aimed

at achieving gender parity throughout the Secretariat and an even more systematic approach to gender mainstreaming in the Agency's work and programmes.

96. She commended Mr Feruță on his dedicated, professional and responsible leadership of the Agency over the preceding months and thanked him for his open and sincere cooperation with her delegation.

97. Mr DJUMALA (Indonesia) said that his Government sent its heartfelt congratulations to Mr Grossi on his appointment as Director General. Indonesia was convinced that, with Mr Grossi's extensive experience in nuclear issues and under his solid leadership, the Agency would continue to bolster its significant contribution to peace, health, and prosperity throughout the world. Indonesia appreciated Mr Feruță's contribution as Acting Director General and his dedication to keeping the Agency on track in a challenging global political situation.

98. Indonesia was committed to strengthening its collaboration with the Agency in the application of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, not only as a beneficiary of the TC programme, but also as a contributor to the PUI.

99. Reaffirming its position that responsibility for nuclear security rested entirely with each Member State and that nuclear security efforts must be pursued in a comprehensive manner, Indonesia fully supported the Secretariat's work to assist Member States in their efforts to ensure the security of nuclear and other radioactive material.

100. Indonesia was confident that, with his in-depth understanding of the needs and priorities of developing countries, Mr Grossi would fulfil his commitments and transform his vision into actions, by strengthening technical cooperation and broadening the scope for capacity building. Indonesia sincerely hoped that, under Mr Grossi's leadership, the Agency would prioritize ensuring a regional balance and the representation of under-represented Member States, at both professional and managerial levels in the Agency. Indonesia remained committed to supporting the work of the Agency.

101. Mr YOUSSEF (Egypt) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment as Director General. With his vast experience in peaceful uses of nuclear energy, non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, Mr Grossi would ably strike the required balance between managing Agency programmes and responding to Member States' needs, specifically regarding nuclear technology for development. Mr Grossi would undoubtedly do his utmost to achieve the Agency's objectives related to non-proliferation and the further strengthening of international peace and security. In particular, the Agency should continue to participate in future conferences on the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East and continue preparation of a regional agreement to rid the region of nuclear weapons.

102. He thanked Mr Feruță for his excellent efforts during the transitional period and extended best wishes to him for the future.

103. Egypt stood ready to cooperate with the Agency and to extend its full support to the new Director General in furtherance of the Agency's work.

Mr Gierveld (Netherlands), Vice-President, took the Chair.

104. Ms RAYOS NATIVIDAD (Philippines) said that her country sincerely appreciated Mr Feruță's remarkable work during his tenure as Acting Director General, in particular at an exceptional time for the Agency. He had rendered the international community an excellent service.

105. The Philippines extended its support for the appointment of Mr Grossi as Director General and warmly congratulated him. Her country looked forward to working with Mr Grossi in further deepening

positive engagement between the Philippines and the Agency, especially in enlarging the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

106. Mr Grossi had played a key role as President-designate of the 2020 NPT Review Conference. He could count on the full support of the Philippines as he helped ensure that the Agency maintained a central role in further strengthening nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

107. The Philippines was proud that an esteemed person from a fellow developing country would be at the helm of such an important organization. Her country would continue to assist in further enhancing the TC programme with a view to ensuring that it met the needs of developing Member States.

108. As a member of the Group of Friends for Women in Nuclear, the Philippines was a firm advocate of gender mainstreaming in the Agency, including increased representation of women in managerial posts, and welcomed Mr Grossi's support in that endeavour.

109. Ms BORAK (Germany) said that her Government — and she personally — warmly congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment and welcomed him as the first Director General of the Agency from Latin America. His impressive career testified to his great experience and expertise, not only as a diplomat, but also in the areas of non-proliferation, nuclear safety and security, and the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear technology. One example of that was his past commitment to the International Framework for Nuclear Energy Cooperation. Germany was convinced that Mr Grossi would lead the Agency in its complex tasks with technical expertise, diplomatic skill and impartiality.

110. As a permanent member of the Board of Governors and one of the major financial contributors, Germany was a long-standing and strong supporter of the Agency. It looked forward to strengthening its cooperation with the Secretariat and Member States, especially in such areas as safeguards and nuclear technology, including the whole fuel cycle. Germany stood ready to support Mr Grossi in fulfilling the Agency's mandate to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of nuclear energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world.

111. Germany was very pleased to note Mr Grossi's intentions regarding gender mainstreaming, enhanced effectiveness and efficiency in the Agency's work, and increased transparency between the Secretariat, the Board and Member States.

112. She wished Mr Grossi all the best in his new position at the helm of the Agency. His proven resolve combined with the necessary composure would provide the Secretariat with excellent guidance.

113. Ms KRUGER (Namibia) congratulated Mr Grossi — a renowned career diplomat and professional with vast experience in the fields of non-proliferation and disarmament — on his election as the new Director General. Namibia was confident that Mr Grossi's extensive experience and able leadership would guide the Agency to greater heights, while it would uphold its core mandate of seeking to step up the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world. She wished Mr Grossi success throughout his tenure and assured him of Namibia's continued support and cooperation. She also thanked Mr Feruță for his hard work, leadership and dedication to the Agency's work over the preceding months.

114. As nuclear science and technology remained a key contributor to the socioeconomic development of States, Namibia called on the Agency to continue assisting developing Member States to enhance their use of nuclear science and technology in food security, human health, sustainable energy development and water resources management, among other areas.

115. The TC programme was also of paramount importance to those States: it enabled them to build capacities as they strove to achieve the SDGs. If the desired results were to be attained, TCF resources needed to be sufficient, assured and predictable.

116. Through partnership and cooperation with the Agency, Namibia had managed to address some of its socioeconomic problems in the areas of human health, food safety and security, agriculture, energy planning and water resources management. It looked forward to continued and strengthened cooperation in the furtherance of the Agency's motto of Atoms for Peace and Development.

117. Ms VICTORIA-KRUSE (Dominican Republic) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment and expressed her Government's satisfaction at having someone from the Latin America and the Caribbean region as Director General of such an important organization. Mr Grossi's vast experience and proven commitment to the Agency's work and mandate, along with his personal and diplomatic skills, made him the most qualified person to lead the Agency.

118. Under Mr Grossi's able leadership, the Agency would undoubtedly further strengthen its role in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for the benefit of humanity. In particular he should continue focusing efforts on accelerating and increasing the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity, international cooperation aimed at global disarmament and the Agency's role in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

119. She offered Mr Grossi her country's full support in fulfilling his mandate, expressing the hope that they could work together in promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy under the Agency's motto.

120. She thanked Mr Feruță for his service to the Agency over the preceding years, and as Acting Director General over recent months. She also thanked the Chair of the Board for her excellent work during the election process.

121. Mr DE ALMEIDA RIBEIRO (Portugal) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment as Director General, especially welcoming the fact that he would be the first Latin American and Ibero-American to head the Agency. Portugal was confident that, under Mr Grossi's leadership, the Agency would maintain its independence, credibility and impartiality. Mr Grossi could count on the continued support of Portugal, a founding member of the Agency. He wished him every success in the fulfilment of his duties.

122. Ms AL-HADID (Jordan) congratulated Mr Grossi on becoming the first Director General of the Agency from the Latin America and the Caribbean region. Jordan would support Mr Grossi in his endeavours and continue strengthening its cooperation with the Agency. There was no doubt that he would perform his duties with distinction and success.

123. The appointment of a new Director General came at a time when all stakeholders needed to work together to control nuclear proliferation, encourage the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and strengthen the TC programme to help Member States achieve the SDGs. Jordan was fully confident that Mr Grossi's vast experience would help him to further strengthen the Agency, thus contributing to fulfilling its mandate, achieving its desired goals and meeting the aspirations of its Member States.

124. During his election campaign, Mr Grossi had emphasized his commitment to strengthening the disarmament and non-proliferation regimes and limiting the use of nuclear energy to peaceful applications. He had also underlined the importance of the TC programme as the main vehicle for promoting and supporting research on nuclear energy and its applications for peaceful purposes worldwide. Looking forward to those areas being priorities, Jordan would work hand in hand with Mr Grossi to achieve those goals.

125. She congratulated the Chair of the Board for her professional and impartial conduct of the election process.

126. Mr FLORENSA PALAU (Spain) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment in the knowledge that the Agency would be in good hands. Mr Grossi could count on Spain's support as he took the reins at a difficult time and in the context of growing challenges to international peace and development.

Building upon the solid foundations laid by Mr Amano, Mr Grossi would definitely give a renewed impetus to the Agency.

127. He expressed satisfaction that Mr Grossi's first international visit would be to the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP25), chaired by Chile and hosted by Spain. Climate change was a major challenge facing the international community, it was therefore very beneficial to highlight the role that peaceful uses of nuclear energy could play in mitigating its effects. COP25 was also a good example of collaboration among countries in the Group of Friends of Spanish, such as Chile and Spain. In that connection, Spain welcomed the first Director General of the Agency from a Spanish-speaking country. In the framework of multilingualism, protecting the Spanish language at the United Nations was a priority of his country. Spain was sure that Mr Grossi would display particular sensitivity to that issue.

128. The international community was also facing growing challenges in the field of nuclear proliferation. Although Mr Grossi would no longer be presiding over the 2020 NPT Review Conference, Spain was certain that his vast experience and profound knowledge in that field, together with his diplomatic skills, would help the Agency to respond to those challenges in an appropriate manner.

129. Mr TALPAI (Hungary) congratulated Mr Grossi on his election as Director General — the first from Latin America, and specifically from Argentina, a country with an extensive nuclear industry and great experience in the field of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Hungary was confident that Mr Grossi's knowledge and three-decade-long experience in the field of non-proliferation would equip him to be a successful leader of the Agency.

130. Hungary was looking forward to working together with Mr Grossi: the multifaceted cooperation between the Agency and Hungary was sure to be further enhanced during Mr Grossi's tenure. He assured the new Director General of Hungary's full support and wished him every success in his new position.

131. Mr MARAFI (Kuwait) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment as Director General: there was no doubt that his vast experience would greatly assist him in steering the Agency in a professional, impartial and able manner. Kuwait was committed to working together with Mr Grossi and other Member States to achieve shared goals.

132. Taking the opportunity to extend his country's condolences following the death of Mr Amano, he conveyed sincere thanks to Mr Feruță for his excellent work during his tenure as Acting Director General.

133. Kuwait fully supported the pioneering role of the Agency and its effective contribution to capacity building, with a view to attaining sustainable development and responding to economic, financial and food crises. The Agency also had a role to play in enhancing nuclear safety and security and in applying safeguards in Member States.

134. Mr SABBAGH (Syrian Arab Republic) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment as Director General, confident that his diplomatic experience and professional knowledge qualified him to lead the work of the Agency efficiently, address the challenges currently faced and seize future opportunities. He also thanked Mr Feruță for the efforts he had made while Acting Director General.

135. In his introductory statement, Mr Grossi had mentioned the importance of strengthening dialogue with all Member States to ensure effective and satisfactory solutions were found to issues relating to the Agency's work. Open and transparent dialogue among Member States, together with respect for all points of views, was the only way to resolve issues within the Agency. Syria looked forward to Mr Grossi playing an active and effective role in building confidence between Member States and preventing the politicization of the Agency's work.

136. Syria would support Mr Grossi in the fulfilment of his duties at the helm of the Agency. It looked forward to him improving the effectiveness of the Agency's work while maintaining a balance between its various programmes and activities. Particular account should be taken of the TC programme, which promoted sustainability in developing countries and strengthened implementation of the SDGs. He wished Mr Grossi every success in his endeavours.

137. Mr SHOJA'AADIN (Yemen) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment as Director General. His election demonstrated Member States' confidence in his professionalism and impartiality, and in his vast experience in Agency affairs, and specifically in disarmament and non-proliferation. He wished Mr Grossi every success in achieving the Agency's objectives and assured him of Yemen's full support.

138. He expressed the hope that the Agency's TC programme would be a priority, in support of the least developed and developing countries, including Yemen, in the peaceful uses of nuclear applications in many areas, including PACT, in such a way as to help them achieve the SDGs.

139. Lastly, he extended Yemen's gratitude to Mr Feruță for his efforts during his tenure as Acting Director General.

140. Ms BATTUNGALAG (Mongolia) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment and assured him of Mongolia's full support and cooperation. Her country was confident that Mr Grossi's leadership would further strengthen the Agency with a view to achieving the shared goal of a peaceful and prosperous world. Inclusive, impartial and effective leadership would be crucial to meet growing contemporary challenges.

141. Mongolia had consistently supported peaceful uses of nuclear energy and, as a Board member, would continue contributing to the Agency's efforts to enhance the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in the interest of socioeconomic development. Recognizing the Agency's key role in promoting peaceful uses in various sectors that would help to meet Member States' development needs, Mongolia was convinced that its own cooperation with the Agency would grow further during Mr Grossi's term of office.

142. She commended the Chair of the Board on her able leadership and outstanding efforts during the selection process, and thanked Mr Feruță for his dedication and professionalism.

143. Mr GHARIB ABADI (Islamic Republic of Iran), having conveyed his country's congratulations to Mr Grossi, said that Iran was confident that Mr Grossi, with his professional experience and expertise, would lead the Agency with its best interests at heart. He also commended Mr Feruță on his dedicated service as Acting Director General.

144. Mr Amano — whose efforts and legacy would live on in the history of the Agency — had diligently applied the motto of Atoms for Peace and Development and played a crucial role in the conclusion and preservation of the JCPOA. Previous leaders of the Agency had striven to demonstrate the inextricable link between the Agency's purpose and the objectives enshrined in the NPT; realizing the three pillars of the NPT in a balanced, non-discriminatory and professional manner had been their ultimate goal. Mr Grossi had the necessary stature and skills to build on such an invaluable legacy.

145. It was impossible to overstate the Agency's importance to Iran. As a developing country with a considerable nuclear programme and activities, Iran had always looked to the Agency when building capacities based on its needs and priorities. The peaceful use of nuclear energy should not be hampered by coercive measures taken unlawfully, or made conditional on unjustified prerequisites set unilaterally by other countries. At the same time, monitoring and verification in Iran in light of UN Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) was high on the Agency's agenda.

146. Iran was an important partner of the Agency. Thus far in 2019, more than 688 inspections amounting to 1376 PDIs had been conducted in Iran. Maintaining constructive working relations

between Iran and the Agency was vital, and the Agency should operate impartially, professionally and independently, free from any hidden political agendas. There could be no doubt that the viability of the NPT's three pillars, and the Agency's credibility, largely depended upon adherence to those principles.

147. Ms OKEKE (Nigeria) congratulated Mr Grossi and expressed her country's confidence in his abilities, his vast experience in non-proliferation and disarmament matters, and his leadership capacity. Noting his impressive plans for the Agency's work, she assured Mr Grossi of Nigeria's full support and cooperation and wished him a successful term of office.

148. She thanked Mr Feruță for his professionalism and dedication as Acting Director General at a difficult time, wishing him the best for the future. She also paid tribute to Mr Amano, under whose leadership the Atoms for Peace and Development motto had been coined, which had greatly enhanced the Agency's work, including in relation to the SDGs. She commended the Chair of the Board on her leadership of the selection process.

149. The series of international meetings already scheduled in 2020 signified that the coming years would be important for the Agency's work in nuclear safety and security and in non-proliferation. Nigeria urged the Director General to lead the Agency's participation robustly and effectively, with a view to making all the related measures and frameworks more useful for the international community.

150. The TC programme for 2020–2021, recently adopted by the Board, demonstrated the increasing importance that developing countries, such as Nigeria, attached to the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies. As future demand for TC activities could even increase further, Nigeria supported every effort to make TC funding sufficient, assured and predictable. It would also support the Director General in his efforts to strengthen resource mobilization, including from non-traditional sources and extrabudgetary funding. While Nigeria welcomed the progress made thanks to PUI funding, it was time to find creative means of enlarging the common pool of resources available to support the Agency's activities in line with Article II of its Statute. Nigeria would support the Director General in his quest for innovative ways to do so, including public–private partnerships.

151. Mr MEZGHANI (Tunisia), having congratulated Mr Grossi, said that Tunisia was confident that his leadership and wide experience would enable the Agency to consolidate its activities. He reiterated Tunisia's full support for Mr Grossi and underlined its readiness to further step up its cooperation with the Agency.

152. Tunisia took note of Mr Grossi's vision of the Agency's mission in an ever-shifting international context: preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, maintaining the highest safety and security standards, and responding to Member States' growing TC needs in relation to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Emphasizing Tunisia's support for gender equality and a fair geographic distribution as guiding principles for international organizations, and the Agency in particular, he expressed the hope that Mr Grossi would effectively put those principles into practice.

153. Ms NAVARRETE PINTO (Chile) thanked Mr Feruță for his highly dedicated and professional service to the Agency, in particular as Acting Director General, and wished him success for the future. She also commended the Chair of the Board on having concluded the selection process within the agreed time frame.

154. She conveyed her heartfelt congratulations to Mr Grossi, wishing him every success and assuring him of her country's support during his term of office. There was no doubt that he would apply the vast experience, expertise and wisdom gained over his distinguished career in order to enrich the Agency's work. Her country appreciated Mr Grossi's broad vision of the nuclear field, as reflected in the NSG, which he had chaired and where he had demonstrated his understanding of the various participants' perspectives. His ability to seek consensus and find pragmatic solutions through dialogue had been seen

during the nuclear security conference and the negotiations leading to the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety.

155. As Mr Grossi came from an NWFZ, under his leadership the Agency would no doubt continue to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, placing due emphasis on its TC programme. Additionally, the Agency would no doubt continue to monitor the international context, professionally and impartially discharging its functions to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and strengthen the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, in particular in relation to safeguards. Chile agreed with Mr Grossi that gender equality was important for harnessing the best talent so as to attain excellence in the nuclear field.

156. In closing, she said that she looked forward to seeing Mr Grossi at the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP25) in Madrid under Chile's presidency.

157. Ms SRISWASDI (Thailand) congratulated Mr Grossi and, assuring him of her country's full cooperation, wished him every success. The Chair of the Board and her team, and the Secretariat, were to be commended on the transparency and efficiency of the selection process; the other well qualified candidates who had participated also merited praise. She thanked Mr Feruță for having steadily and professionally led the Agency at a challenging time, and wished him the best for the future.

158. Her country valued the professionalism and integrity with which the Agency implemented its mandate and the Atoms for Peace and Development approach established under Mr Amano, to whom Thailand paid tribute. Her country looked forward to working with Mr Grossi and his team to promote the common interests of all Member States, and to further strengthening Thailand–Agency cooperation and the ASEAN–IAEA partnership.

159. Mr ROLDÁN BARILLAS (Guatemala) welcomed the fact that the Director General of the Agency would, for the first time, be from Latin America. The region would continue to argue, as it always had, that nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the comprehensive elimination of nuclear weapons were indispensable to international peace and security.

160. Promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy was a universal obligation on the Member States, and all countries had a right to such peaceful uses. It was Guatemala's policy to strive for a world where the need to specify that nuclear energy was for peaceful uses alone would be a thing of the past.

161. Earlier in 2019, Latin America had marked the 50th anniversary of the Tlatelolco Treaty's entry into force, and it was currently celebrating the appointment of a Latin American Director General. Under Mr Grossi's leadership, the Agency would pursue its important work to promote and strengthen international cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and nuclear safety and security.

162. Mr ANDERSON MACHADO (Peru) congratulated Mr Grossi and wished him — the first Latin American Director General of the Agency — every success. Peru was confident that, thanks to his professional skills and his wide experience in nuclear energy matters, Mr Grossi would continue to prioritize cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, thus contributing to international peace, security and well-being, and achievement of the SDGs. Mr Grossi could count on Peru's full support in promoting the necessary changes for the Agency to continue working with and assisting Member States to make more effective use of nuclear energy.

163. He commended Mr Feruță on his dedication to the Agency's work, and paid tribute to the important legacy of Mr Amano, who had demonstrated leadership, commitment and impartiality, in particular when the Agency had found it particularly challenging to foster the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Lastly, he commended the Chair of the Board on her leadership of the selection process.

164. Mr HALL (United Kingdom), conveying his country's warm congratulations, said that the UK was looking forward to working with Mr Grossi — as he was personally. He commended the Chair of the Board on having stewarded the selection process with impeccable diplomacy and tact.

165. Mr Grossi had precisely the right skills and experience to lead the Agency, and had served in a number of roles, in the Secretariat, as permanent representative of a Member State and as a governor on the Board. Thanks to his long track record on non-proliferation issues and his proven ability to bring different sides together to work towards a common goal, he was confident that Mr Grossi would be an excellent Director General.

166. The UK set great store by the Agency's wide-ranging work, from safeguards to the TC programme, all of which contributed to delivering the objectives of the NPT. Convinced of the central role of diversity, his country wanted the Agency to be an efficient and effective organization that was able to deliver those results. It was very reassuring that Mr Grossi had put those issues at the centre of his term of office.

167. Mr WANG Qun (China) conveyed congratulations to Mr Grossi on his appointment, wishing him success in all his endeavours. Mr Grossi possessed rich diplomatic experience and outstanding leadership skills. China hoped that he would continue in the fine tradition of Mr ElBaradei and Mr Amano by upholding the principles of objectivity, neutrality, impartiality and professionalism, uniting all Member States, actively leading the Agency's Secretariat to enable it to cope with all the challenges, promoting the Agency's activities in a balanced manner, and comprehensively discharging the statutory functions. China would continue to support the Agency by working closely with Mr Grossi, the Secretariat and other Member States.

168. He thanked Mr Feruță for his stewardship during the transitional period; under his leadership the Secretariat had discharged its duties in an objective, impartial and balanced manner. He wished him well for the future.

169. The world was experiencing a historic period of profound change. With important responsibility regarding the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the prevention of nuclear proliferation, the Agency played a leading role in maintaining world peace and promoting global development. It was to be hoped that the Agency would continue to uphold professionalism, objectivity and impartiality, and to play a constructive part in resolving the most significant nuclear issues. Moreover, China expected the Agency to lend strong support to States' peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology, and to contribute to socioeconomic development that took climate change into account and assisted with the achievement of the SDGs.

170. Mr SUVEDI (Nepal) congratulated Mr Grossi and assured him of his country's full support and cooperation. Mr Grossi's long experience and profound expertise were certain to make him an effective leader of the Agency. Paying tribute to Mr Amano, he also conveyed Nepal's appreciation of Mr Feruță's effective guidance of the Agency at a critical time and wished him the best for the future.

171. Science and technology should be used to create equal and fair development opportunities for all, and was a firm backer of complete and general disarmament, including nuclear weapons. Nepal therefore regarded all aspects of the Agency's work — promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear technology, safety and security, and safeguards — as equally valuable. Those convictions and its unflinching faith in multilateralism formed the cornerstone of Nepal's involvement with the Agency.

172. Nepal had been a beneficiary of the Agency's TC programme since 2012. That programme was not an end in itself, but rather an effective tool for the development of human and technological capabilities. Gender mainstreaming and equitable geographical distribution were important guiding

principles when it came to selecting members of staff for international organizations. He called upon everyone to continue striving to render the decision-making process within the Agency more inclusive.

173. Mr FARHANE (Morocco) congratulated Mr Grossi and welcomed his appointment. His country was convinced that Mr Grossi's leadership ability, diplomatic skill, and rich and varied multilateral experience would help to make the Agency's work a success, and he assured him of Morocco's full support and complete cooperation under his leadership.

174. He thanked the Chair of the Board for her fine stewardship of the selection process, and commended Mr Feruță on his tireless work for the Agency in the interim, wishing him success in the future.

175. On the eve of the 2020s, the current special session of the General Conference was an opportunity to reflect on new nuclear energy and non-proliferation issues, as well as new challenges facing the Agency. Those included developing, to an unprecedented extent, nuclear energy and its applications for peaceful purposes within the context of achieving the SDGs, and honouring in full the international community's commitment to the Agency's objectives as set out in Article II of its Statute.

176. The Agency's success would depend on its ability to continue working efficiently, with the spirit of compromise as its roadmap, efforts to strengthen the international nuclear safety and security regime as its strategy, and nuclear energy and technology for peaceful purposes as its central contribution to peace and development.

177. Mr SHIN Chae-hyun (Republic of Korea) extended warm congratulations to Mr Grossi. The Republic of Korea had every confidence that his skilful leadership would enable the Agency to build on its accomplishments and confront growing challenges. His country — the 6th largest nuclear energy producer and 11th largest contributor to the Agency's Regular Budget, and a long-standing voluntary contributor to various projects — would continue to support the Agency's mandate under Mr Grossi's leadership and enhance cooperation with the Agency.

178. With regard to safeguards, the Agency would no doubt retain its high degree of credibility owing to its professionalism, impartiality and independence; the Secretariat's sustained efforts to enhance its readiness to play an essential role in verifying the DPRK's nuclear programme, when called upon, was also to be commended. As Mr Grossi had mentioned in his statement earlier that day, nuclear safety played a fundamental role in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and the Agency bore crucial responsibility for protecting the general public worldwide. The Agency should continue to play a central role in setting clear safety standards and encouraging all Member States to put in place effective safety measures.

179. Lastly, he thanked Mr Feruță for his leadership and dedicated service as Acting Director General.

180. Mr KHAN (Pakistan) congratulated Mr Grossi, whose rich and extensive experience of nuclear issues and knowledge, wisdom and exceptional skills in international diplomacy and consensus-building would be assets in steering the Agency's work. Expressing thanks to Mr Feruță for having served as Acting Director General, he commended all Member States of the Agency, the Board and the Secretariat on having successfully concluded the appointment process.

181. Pakistan assured Mr Grossi, and the Member States, of its full support as they worked together to fulfil the Agency's mandate, with a focus on developing countries. A balanced approach had to be taken in pursuit of the three pillars, with sufficient emphasis on technical cooperation for the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology. The representation of developing countries in the Agency needed improving, including at senior levels. Moreover, Agency safeguards must be effectively, independently and impartially implemented, in accordance with the relevant safeguards agreements. Furthermore, the

challenges facing the Agency at a time of rapid change and volatility had be dealt with by means of a consultative and collaborative approach.

182. In closing, he announced that the Pakistan Institute of Engineering and Applied Sciences was being designated a Collaborating Centre the same week as the special session.

183. Mr HUSSEN (Iraq) thanked Mr Feruță and wished him every future success. He also thanked the Chair of the Board for having so skilfully managed the selection process. He congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment as Director General, confident that his experience would bring new ideas to further develop the Agency. Mr Grossi and the Secretariat could rely on Iraq's full support in achieving the objectives for which the Agency had been established. The presence of so many Member States at the special session of the General Conference reflected the importance they accorded to the appointment of a new Director General and the global role played by the Agency.

184. Mr Grossi would no doubt be fully aware of Iraq's knowledge and experience of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, in particular in the period before the 1981 attack on its nuclear reactor, which had been capable of meeting all domestic needs. Iraq was looking forward to cooperating with the Agency in all areas, especially nuclear safety and security, including at the third International Conference on Nuclear Security: Sustaining and Strengthening Efforts in 2020.

185. Iraq would also continue to work with the Agency to strengthen its ability to implement the resolution on safeguards in the Middle East and contribute to the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East.

186. The TC programme was of utmost importance as was providing the necessary budgetary allocations to carry out activities under footnote-a/ projects. Moreover, measures needed to be taken to ensure equitable geographic distribution and gender mainstreaming among Agency staff.

187. Switching to Spanish, he reiterated his congratulations and wished Mr Grossi every success, saying that there could be no doubt as to his abilities.

188. Mr BAKHET (Sudan) congratulated Mr Grossi and wished him a successful term of office, conveying his country's readiness to support him and cooperate with the Agency. Mr Grossi's skills and experience would undoubtedly enable him to oversee numerous achievements and successes in exploiting the atom for peace and development. He also thanked Mr Feruță for his distinguished interim leadership of the Agency.

189. The Agency played an important role in addressing Member States' concerns, especially those of developing countries and LDCs, in relation to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Under Mr Grossi's leadership of the Agency, the Sudan looked forward to greater cooperation on a variety of TC projects, activities and nuclear applications aimed at addressing development challenges, as the country was embarking on a new era of political stability and undergoing an important phase of reconstruction, striving to promote cooperation with the international community. The Sudan was looking forward to more TC projects, training sessions and capacity building activities, along with expanded nuclear applications and uses in different fields — health, agriculture, food security, water and environmental protection — that would contribute to achievement of the SDGs and help to achieve the required level of socioeconomic development.

190. Ms MELI DAUDEY (Malta) conveyed her country's and her own sincere congratulations to Mr Grossi; his experience would be a great asset to the Agency and he could count on Malta's full support. The Agency was a vital institution in the global disarmament and non-proliferation architecture, and her country would continue cooperating on various matters of mutual concern, including treaty compliance and technical cooperation.

191. She paid tribute to Mr Amano and thanked Mr Feruță for having served as Acting Director General, and the Secretariat for its diligence and professionalism.

192. Over the previous year, the Agency had continued to play a vital role, fulfilling its technical mandate, pursuing verification activities, helping to steer the international community towards achieving the SDGs, and striving to ensure the peaceful use of nuclear technology in various sectors, while enhancing nuclear safety and security. As increasing international strain was being placed on the non-proliferation and disarmament architecture, Malta called on all States to find common ground for a better security environment based on multilateral cooperation. Her country was grateful to the Agency for its continued support of various national projects under Malta's CPF; taken together, they testified to the holistic approach of the Agency's TC programme in promoting Atoms for Peace and Development.

193. Mr PAPIKYAN (Armenia) congratulated Mr Grossi and wished him every success. Assuring him of its full support, he said that Armenia looked forward to pursuing their fruitful cooperation.

194. The Prime Minister of Armenia, Mr Pashinyan, had sent Mr Grossi a congratulatory message, expressing his conviction that Mr Grossi's rich professional experience and organizational skill would contribute to enhancing the Agency's role as an important pillar in the global security architecture. In the letter the Prime Minister added that Armenia greatly valued its long partnership with the Agency and would do its best to contribute to the achievement of the Agency's goals; Armenia assured Mr Grossi and the Agency of its full support.

195. Mr D'HOOP (Belgium) thanked Mr Feruță for having performed the indispensable task of managing the Agency at a crucial time. The Chair of the Board was also to be commended on her highly effective management of that body.

196. He congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment and wished him every success. Belgium was confident that Mr Grossi, with whom it had enjoyed an excellent relationship for several years, would be a rigorous and skilful leader of the Agency, building on the successes of the past while implementing the necessary changes to make the Agency as effective as possible. Mr Grossi would no doubt step up dialogue, on the basis of transparency, between the Secretariat, the Board and all Member States during his term of office, and could count on Belgium's full support.

197. Among the significant challenges, nuclear safety needed to be brought up to and maintained at the highest standard, and nuclear security needed to be attainable by all Member States. An effective verification regime was rooted in a safeguards agreement together with an additional protocol. The Agency's budgetary resources needed to be used and managed responsibly and in agreement with the Board and the Member States; the nuclear sector's expansion entailed reflecting on how to maintain the budget at a sustainable level. The Agency's management needed to be effective, transparent and open, and the question of gender was particularly important. Recruitment and promotion processes needed to promote gender equality, and the Agency must treat sexist behaviour by members of staff as unacceptable.

198. Concluding with a few words in Spanish, he expressed fond hopes that Mr Grossi and his team would be able to overcome all the international challenges that would confront the Agency in the future.

199. Ms ORINA (Kenya) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment as Director General. His selection for that important role, entailing great responsibilities, testified to the trust bestowed on him by the Agency's membership. With his vast experience, there was no doubt that he would steer the Agency to greater heights. She wished him a fruitful term of office, assuring him of her country's full support.

200. She thanked the Chair of the Board for having professionally steered the selection process, and Mr Feruță for his dedication and success as Acting Director General, wishing him success in his future endeavours. She also paid tribute to Mr Amano's major contribution to the Agency under the motto Atoms for Peace and Development.

201. As its priorities remained those identified in the CPF for 2017–2022, Kenya desired a strong partnership with the Agency in the applications of nuclear science and technology in various areas. Her country reiterated the importance of the TC programme in achieving its priorities and in promoting sustainable development. Underlining the importance of capacity building, gender mainstreaming and inclusivity, Kenya looked forward to receiving the Agency's support in developing skilled human resources in the applications of nuclear science and technology.

202. The Agency's ongoing efforts to discharge its mandate were appreciated, but mobilizing resources, including from non-traditional partners, was of paramount importance for priority activities, including the financing of footnote-a/ projects. It was important to ensure that the TCF remained sufficient, assured and predictable.

203. Mr YULDASHEV (Uzbekistan) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment and wished him every success in his role. He conveyed a message from President Mirziyoyev of Uzbekistan, stating that Mr Grossi's great professionalism, knowledge and wide practical experience would serve to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime and to expand international cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. His country highly appreciated the current fruitful cooperation between the Agency and Uzbekistan, in particular because Uzbekistan had recently embarked upon its activities in the nuclear energy sector.

204. His country was convinced that, with Mr Grossi's support, the partnership with the Agency in implementing joint projects and programmes would help to further integrate Uzbekistan into global processes relating to non-proliferation and peaceful uses.

Ms Delgado Peralta (Mexico), President, resumed the Chair.

205. Mr BUGAJSKI (Poland), paying tribute to the achievements of Mr Amano, congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment and conveyed his country's full support for the Agency and the new Director General. He thanked the Chair of the Board for her skilful stewardship of the selection process and Mr Feruță for having served as Acting Director General.

206. Poland was highly satisfied with its cooperation with the Agency, attached considerable importance to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and recognized the great value of the TC programme. It was confident that Mr Grossi would do his utmost to further facilitate and promote increased safety and security, and to support the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies.

207. Poland stood ready to play a constructive role to reach consensus on the final documents of two extremely important events to be held in 2020 — the third International Conference on Nuclear Security and the NPT Review Conference. As chair of Main Committee II at the latter event, Poland would strive to highlight the Agency's key role in non-proliferation, in particular regarding the importance of the safeguards system, part of that committee's remit. There was every hope that, under its new Director General, the Agency would play an even more prominent role in the global security architecture and the UN system.

208. Mr COULIDIATI (Burkina Faso), commending all the candidates on their sterling participation in the process of selecting the Director General, warmly congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment and wished him every success at the helm of the Agency. Under his leadership, the Agency was certain to continue operating independently, impartially and professionally, catering to all Member States' interests in a spirit of transparency, equality and non-discrimination. He assured Mr Grossi of Burkina Faso's support, in the expectation that the Agency would better perform its vital role of researching and promoting peaceful nuclear applications for international security and socioeconomic development.

209. Welcoming the projects in the 2020–2021 TC programme cycle, he reiterated that Burkina Faso always discharged its obligations to the Agency, stood ready to host Agency events in the country and was proud to share its experts and its success stories in order to contribute to the missions of the Agency, other countries in its region, and all Member States.

210. As Acting Director General during a particularly difficult period, Mr Feruță had displayed the necessary personal and professional qualities, and merited sincere thanks — he wished him the best in his future endeavours.

211. Mr CHACÓN ESCAMILLO (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), congratulating Mr Grossi, said that it was an honour that a representative of another Latin American nation would be leading the Agency; being the first Director General from that region would also be very challenging, and Mr Grossi could count on Venezuela's support. His leadership and innovative ideas would ensure that the Agency would continue to contribute to international peace and prosperity by promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Particularly beneficial were efforts to stimulate the transfer of nuclear science and technology to developing countries and to strengthen technical cooperation.

212. The Agency's work was essential to maintaining international stability and peace. While the challenges were numerous, Venezuela had confidence in the Agency's objectivity, professionalism and impartiality in confronting all those challenges and achieving results for all parties. At a time when the multilateral framework was under severe threat and the United Nations was confronting a new arms race, Mr Grossi's leadership, expertise and multilateralist convictions would enable him to play a leading role in disarmament, non-proliferation and peace.

213. He commended Mr Feruță on his work as Acting Director General, and the Chair of the Board on having accomplished the difficult task of stewarding the selection process.

214. Ms SÁNCHEZ LORENZO (Cuba) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment and, wishing him every success, reiterated her country's full support for him in his new role, for which his experience in the nuclear and diplomatic fields fully qualified him. His appointment, as the first Director General from Latin America, was a source of pride and represented an opportunity not only for the region but also for all developing countries. It marked a milestone in the relationship between Latin America and the Agency. Cuba hoped that under Mr Grossi's leadership TC activities would be stepped up, with a view to achieving the SDGs.

215. Cooperation with the Agency had brought benefits in the areas of health and tackling climate change. Restating its support for the TC programme and its overall commitment to the Agency and the mission to promote Atoms for Peace and Development, Cuba hoped that the resources dedicated to the TC programme would better reflect the needs of developing countries, i.e. a majority of Member States. Latin America and the Caribbean received a lower level of cooperation, despite a high project implementation rate of over 90%.

216. Currently holding the presidency of ARCAL, Cuba was committed to continuing efforts to strengthen active cooperation in the region, together with the Agency.

217. Lastly, she paid tribute to Mr Feruță for his service to the Agency.

218. Mr ŠUKOVIĆ (Montenegro) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment. Thanks to his vast experience in non-proliferation and his proven diplomatic skills, there was no doubt that the Agency would successfully navigate increasingly complex challenges. Wishing him ample success as Director General, he expressed Montenegro's unwavering support for the Agency — which was indispensable for global peace, security and development — and looked forward to even more dynamic cooperation with the dedicated staff of the Agency.

219. The Agency delivered on both technical and political levels, and recent events had again demonstrated that the Agency's laboratories were an indispensable component of its structure and a prerequisite for its independent and objective monitoring and reporting. Strengthening the Agency's physical infrastructure and its expertise was essential for it to continue delivering results based on the utmost respect of the principles of professionalism, transparency and impartiality. In that connection, Montenegro was announcing financial support for the landmark ReNuAL project, one of Mr Amano's many legacies. Montenegro had primarily been a recipient of Agency technical support, yet all countries should also contribute within their capacities to global efforts to strengthen peace and security. His country was proud, therefore, to join 40 other countries that had been supporting ReNuAL.

220. Mr LAGGNER (Switzerland) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment and wished him a successful term of office. Throughout his long and distinguished career, Mr Grossi had demonstrated profound knowledge of the issues falling within the Agency's remit, as well as diplomatic skill and leadership; Switzerland was confident that his energy and dedication would serve the Agency well. His country had previously worked very closely together with Mr Grossi on a wide range of issues and looked forward to continuing that excellent cooperation in his new role.

221. In addition to pursuing strong engagement in a number of substantive areas, Switzerland would continue to attach particular importance to management and governance issues and it looked forward to enhanced dialogue between the new Director General and Member States. Mr Grossi could also count on his country's full support in addressing sensitive non-proliferation challenges, and Switzerland was confident that he would firmly defend the Agency's independence and impartiality.

222. He thanked Mr Feruță for his exemplary service as Acting Director General, and the Chair of the Board for her efficient and transparent conduct of the selection process.

223. Mr AL JABRI (Oman) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment as Director General and wished him every success, pledging Oman's full support for the Agency's activities. Oman was confident that under his leadership the Agency would continue to provide all Member States with its services in a professional, transparent and non-discriminatory manner, in particular with regard to enhancing nuclear and radiation safety and strengthening safeguards, in line with the agreements concluded with Member States and other international organizations. The Agency would also continue, no doubt, to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology in all areas of socioeconomic, scientific and technological development, further build national capacities in developing countries and guarantee the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes to enable those countries to achieve their development goals.

224. Ms GAUTO VÁZQUEZ (Paraguay) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment, a result that Paraguay had actively supported from the outset. Wishing him every success, she assured him of her country's full backing throughout his term of office. Paraguay was proud to have, for the first time, a Director General from the Latin American and Caribbean Group. Mr Grossi would exercise strong leadership, rooted in his wealth of diplomatic experience and technical expertise, which would enable the Agency to boost its capacities relating to safety, physical protection and safeguards. He would also be able to address the challenges facing the Agency, and implement the necessary changes for the benefit of the Member States and the Agency itself.

225. Paraguay was confident that the TC programme for Latin America would be strengthened. The region had been the first in the world to declare itself free of nuclear weapons, and was home to two countries with the world's first bilateral agency for nuclear material accounting and mutual verification, hallmarks that demonstrated the region's dedication to peace.

226. Mr NUSBAUM (Israel) thanked Mr Feruță for having led the Agency successfully and unwaveringly during the interim period, and paid tribute to Mr Amano.

227. Warmly congratulating Mr Grossi on his appointment, he expressed his country's confidence that his leadership, remarkable skills and experience would enable the Agency to confront the various challenges facing it. Those included the application of safeguards against the misuse of nuclear technologies and nuclear material, strengthening nuclear safety and security and their implementation, and promoting technical cooperation to develop nuclear applications for the benefit of humankind.

228. Mr OJEDA VIGLIONE (Uruguay), noting that that current session of the General Conference was all the more special for his country and region as the Agency would be led by a Director General from Latin America for the first time, expressed his country's and his own sincere congratulations to Mr Grossi. His appointment was a source of great pride: for the first time the Agency's Director General would be from the world's first NWFZ.

229. Having repeatedly defended States' inalienable right to make peaceful use of nuclear energy, Uruguay fully appreciated the responsibility shouldered by any Director General of the Agency. It had total confidence in Mr Grossi — who had the required training, experience and qualities for that role — and offered him its full support and commitment for a successful term of office.

230. The selection process, which had been impartial, professional and objective, should be a source of pride to the Agency. Uruguay paid tribute to the Chair of the Board for her excellent work throughout, and commended the Agency, its staff and the candidates. His country hoped that the efforts of Mr Grossi, and all members of the Agency, would enable the contribution of nuclear energy to peace, health and prosperity to be harnessed.

231. Ms RWAKAZINA (Rwanda), congratulating Mr Grossi on his appointment, said that with his wealth of professional experience in non-proliferation and disarmament and his diplomatic career he was certain to lead the Agency to even greater heights during his term of office.

232. She thanked the Agency for providing Rwanda with the expertise to establish, maintain and review its INSSP during the mission to the country taking place from 2 to 6 December 2019. The mission would help to identify and consolidate her country's nuclear security needs, with the necessary improvements and an improved framework for coordinating and implementing nuclear security activities conducted by Rwanda, the Agency and other partners.

233. Greatly appreciative of the Agency's partnership and support with regard to using nuclear science and technology for realizing her country's national development vision, Rwanda had every confidence that the partnership would be further strengthened under Mr Grossi's leadership.

234. Mr HANNEY (Ireland), congratulating Mr Grossi on his appointment, offered him Ireland's full support and reiterated its unwavering backing for the Agency and its staff in discharging its important mandate. Mr Grossi occupied a challenging role at the head of one of the most important international organizations, playing a key role in global non-proliferation.

235. In the words of Pope Francis, a compatriot of Mr Grossi, peace and international stability were incompatible with attempts to build upon the fear of mutual destruction or the threat of total annihilation; they could be achieved only on the basis of a global ethic of solidarity and cooperation in the service of a future shaped by interdependence and shared responsibility in the whole human family. The Pope had added that there was a need to break down the climate of distrust that risked leading to a dismantling of the international arms control framework.

236. An erosion of multilateralism was under way, which was all the more serious in the light of the growth of new forms of military technology. Such an approach seemed highly incongruous in the contemporary context of interconnectedness; it represented a situation that urgently called for the attention and commitment of all leaders.

237. He thanked Mr Feruță for having steered the organization so well as Acting Director General, and the Chair of the Board for having managed the selection process so effectively and efficiently.

238. Ms EBRAHIMKHEL (Afghanistan) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment, which marked the beginning of a new era of enhanced technical cooperation and excellence in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Mr Feruță was also to be commended on his work as Acting Director General, as was the highly professional and dedicated Secretariat.

239. Worldwide agreement and consensus and effective Member State cooperation with the Agency were essential with regard to the safe and secure use of nuclear energy for global sustainable development. Afghanistan benefited from the Agency's TC programme in many priority areas. In the area of health, the establishment of a radiology diagnostic centre and a radiotherapy centre were very important projects in her country; however, despite best efforts, Afghanistan still did not possess a nuclear medicine centre, and thousands of people travelled abroad for cancer treatment each year. She expressed hopes that, with the Agency's support, that problem could soon be overcome and the first centre established.

240. She thanked the Agency for its support and called on the other Member States, and Mr Grossi, to pay special attention to Afghanistan and to continue supporting its efforts in capacity building and training for scientists.

241. Mr ALMANSOURI (Qatar) congratulated Mr Grossi and assured him of his country's full cooperation and support. Mr Grossi's skills and vast experience in nuclear policy and multilateral relations would undoubtedly enable him to lead the Agency professionally and objectively, with a view to achieving the goals of promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including the transfer of technology and achievement of the SDGs.

242. Lastly, he noted that, as Acting Director General, Mr Feruță had steered the affairs of the Agency with great professionalism and skill.

243. Ms MASRI (Brunei Darussalam) congratulated Mr Grossi and warmly welcomed his appointment as Director General. His wealth of experience in nuclear energy and in diplomacy would make him an able leader of the Agency, and her country would continue to work closely with the Agency and to support its endeavours.

244. She paid tribute to Mr Amano, whose dedication to the Agency and to the peaceful uses of nuclear technology and whose contributions towards achieving the Agency's mandate would be fondly remembered, along with his legacy of Atoms for Peace and Development. In addition, the Chair of the Board and her team were to be commended on their organization of the selection process, as was Mr Feruță on his contribution as Acting Director General.

245. Mr LE (Viet Nam) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment. Viet Nam was convinced that Mr Grossi's professionalism and experience of disarmament and nuclear issues would help to further consolidate the Agency's role in relation to peaceful nuclear applications. Paying tribute to Mr Amano, he also thanked Mr Feruță for having served as Acting Director General in a professional and effective manner.

246. Viet Nam and the Agency had been productively implementing projects together within the Agency's TC programme to provide solutions for challenges facing his country. He expressed his country's deep gratitude to the Agency for its assistance and support over the years and wished Mr Grossi every success. Viet Nam looked forward to cooperating with him and the Agency in their endeavour to attain the SDGs.

247. Mr MOLEKANE (South Africa) commended the Chair of the Board on her exemplary, inclusive and transparent leadership of the process to select the next Director General, and thanked Mr Feruță, whose integrity and professionalism as Acting Director General had ensured that the Agency's work had continued smoothly. He wished him the best for the future.

248. He also congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment and hoped that he would steer the Agency with integrity and professionalism and without fear or favour. Mr Grossi could count on South Africa's support.

249. As technical cooperation remained one of South Africa's top priorities, it trusted that Mr Grossi would continue Mr Amano's legacy in ensuring that developing countries continued to reap benefits from the Agency's TC activities in a balanced and fair manner. Similarly, the Agency's verification activities were essential as they directly contributed to international peace and security. His country fully supported the Agency's efforts to strengthen and improve its work in that regard, in line with its mandate.

250. As a co-chair of the Friends of ReNuAL, South Africa highlighted the impact of ReNuAL and ReNuAL+ on Agency members and asked for the new Director General's support as the project prepared to enter the enhancement phase.

251. Mr DONDUA (Georgia) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment and reaffirmed his country's readiness to engage in open and constructive cooperation.

252. Georgia highly valued the whole range of Agency activities and supported all measures to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the Agency's safeguards system, an essential part of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. His country attached great importance to the TC programme and its aim to further improve nuclear and radiation safety and security. As nuclear safety was a global issue, requiring multilateral cooperation and support, Georgia would continue to work with the Agency on the aim of achieving lasting international peace for current and future generations.

253. He thanked the Chair of the Board and her team for their excellent, transparent and steady stewardship of the Board during the difficult selection process, and commended Mr Feruță on his dedication as Acting Director General, wishing him every future success.

254. Ms RODRÍGUEZ VEGA (Panama) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment as Director General, the first from Latin America. Panama was proud to have a representative from that region at the helm of an organization of such importance for peace and development. She assured him of Panama's full support and cooperation and wished him a successful term of office.

255. She expressed appreciation of the energetic and dedicated leadership of Mr Feruță in the interim period, and commended the Chair of the Board on having stewarded the selection process transparently and professionally.

256. Ms RODRIGUES COELHO (Angola) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment. Angola was confident that his experience, expertise and personal qualities would enable him to lead the Agency positively, inclusively, impartially and professionally. Reiterating her country's commitment to the Agency, she assured Mr Grossi of its full support and cooperation and, speaking in English, wished him every success. Reverting to Portuguese, she also thanked Mr Feruță on Angola's behalf for his service as Acting Director General.

257. Angola attached great importance to the principles of the Agency's Statute in relation to preventing nuclear proliferation and expanding the contribution of nuclear energy to world peace, security and development, among other things by promoting the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and ensuring effective technical cooperation with Member States. Furthermore, the TC programme was an

important tool for developing countries — it needed to be expanded and made more effective and efficient if it was to meet the current and future challenges facing the Agency and its Member States.

258. Mr KUKK (Estonia) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment and wished him great success. Estonia attached the utmost importance to the Agency's work and, as a current Board member, looked forward to pursuing constructive and close cooperation between the Agency and Estonia.

259. The Chair of the Board and her team were also to be commended on their excellent work in having successfully guided the Board through the selection process in such an efficient and timely manner.

260. Mr NYARKO (Ghana) conveyed his country's congratulations to Mr Grossi on his appointment and assured him of its full support and cooperation. Mr Grossi's experience and knowledge stood him in good stead to successfully lead the Agency, and Ghana was optimistic about the future, looking forward to increased opportunities in areas such as technical cooperation and the effective use of nuclear science and technology for national development. Under Mr Grossi's able leadership, the Agency would continue to meet any challenges that may confront it and to help its Member States, in particular developing countries, to build their capacities and ensure that their people benefitted from the transfer of technology.

261. He thanked the Chair of the Board for having ably led the process of selecting the new Director General, and also thanked Mr Feruță for his skilful administration of the Agency's affairs over the preceding challenging months, wishing him every future success.

262. Mr RECINOS TREJO (El Salvador) congratulated Mr Grossi on his appointment and welcomed the fact that, for the first time in the Agency's history, the Director General would be from the Latin American and Caribbean region. El Salvador was confident that, under Mr Grossi's leadership, the Agency would strengthen its promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and in particular its TC programme and its contribution to achieving the SDGs.

263. He also commended Mr Feruță on his dedication, efforts and contribution during his six years at the Agency and on his management as Acting Director General.

264. Ms SIRISENA (Sri Lanka) congratulated Mr Grossi, whose appointment reflected the Member States' confidence in his ability to steer the Agency to greater heights. Assuring him of her country's steadfast support, she wished him well in discharging the Agency's mandate. Firmly committed to complying with its international commitments and Agency requirements and recommendations relating to nuclear safety, security and safeguards, Sri Lanka supported the Agency's mission and stood ready to assist Mr Grossi in ensuring that the organization was prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

265. The Chair of the Board was to be commended on her excellent stewardship of the selection process at a challenging time for the Agency. Lastly, she thanked Mr Feruță for having skilfully managed the Agency as Acting Director General.

266. Mr KORCHO (Ethiopia) congratulated Mr Grossi and expressed his country's conviction that his able leadership and diplomatic experience would aid the Agency's invaluable work to achieve Atoms for Peace and Development. He also thanked Mr Feruță for having adeptly led the Agency during a difficult period.

267. Ethiopia had signed and implemented an additional protocol and a small quantities protocol. Under the TC programme, it was working closely with the Agency and, over the previous couple of decades, had reaped benefits in the areas of medicine, agriculture and industry. Ethiopia looked forward to further strengthening its excellent relationship with the Agency under Mr Grossi and pledged its full support and cooperation throughout his term of office.

268. Mr STAVROU (Cyprus) congratulated Mr Grossi and said that his country very much welcomed the fact that a Latin American would be leading the Agency for the first time. Mr Grossi's experience representing his country at the Agency, his role as President of the 2020 NPT Review Conference, and his previous work at the Agency would undoubtedly stand him good stead to succeed as Director General. Cyprus very much looked forward to working with him in order to fulfil the Agency's goals, in particular the Atoms for Peace and Development motto introduced by Mr Amano. Assuring him of Cyprus's full support, he wished him every success in his very important and challenging role.

269. He thanked the Chair of the Board and her team for their transparency and efficiency during the complex selection process. He thanked Mr Feruță for his dedication and steady leadership as Acting Director General and wished him every success for the future.

270. Ms GARCÍA MORALES (Honduras) congratulated Mr Grossi, whose leadership would be vital to the Agency's pursuit of its activities, and conveyed her country's pride that the Agency would for the first time be led by a Latin American, who could raise the profile of the region and the Agency's work alike.

271. She reiterated the importance of nuclear energy and technology to development and achievement of the SDGs, to which her country was committed. It would continue working resolutely to disseminate the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in order to expand and diversify the TC programme, alongside safety and safeguards, so that every application was for the sake of development and for the benefit of humankind. Welcoming Mr Grossi's express dedication to strengthening the TC programme — a tool enabling Member States to use nuclear technology to put their priorities into practice — she reiterated Honduras's commitment to backing strategic alliances in promoting nuclear energy, as joining forces would both achieve better results and ensure sustainability.

272. Ms BUENROSTRO MASSIEU (Mexico), noting that all present were aware of current challenges and opportunities, and also of Mr Grossi's character and skills, said that the previous statements had demonstrated the importance of the Agency's leadership at such a time. Looking back, it was time for leadership that embodied the vision of the Agency as — to paraphrase President Eisenhower — a means to place nuclear energy at the service of human aspirations, to dismantle nuclear arsenals, and to provide a space for dialogue to move away from fear and towards peace. Looking forward, it was time for leadership that faced up to the challenges and harnessed the opportunities of rapid technological change in the nuclear field, that recognized the obstacles and proposed solutions to achieve the 2030 Agenda, and that made a contribution to urgently tackling climate change.

273. The Agency's peaceful mission had already been put to the test and it had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Mexico was confident that Mr Grossi would steer the Agency with independence and conviction, forging a path of peace amid polarization and the questioning of multilateralism.

274. For the first time in its history, the Agency would have a leader from Latin America, a region that had decided to declare itself free of nuclear weapons and to direct nuclear science and technology towards human development.

275. She pledged Mexico's full support to the Director General and wished him a successful term of office, during which the Agency could fulfil its mission in a way that was results oriented, effective, efficient and transparent. She added that Mexico supported his planned actions related to gender equality. Mr Grossi's whole life — his long journey from Patagonia to Vienna, crossing paths with the Nobel Peace Prize laureate and great Mexican diplomat Alfonso García Robles — had been preparing him for that position. Her country welcomed the fact that he had been sworn in as Director General at a session led by Mexico and with a Spanish-speaking flavour. Mexico had full confidence in him, mindful of his commitment, his experience and his awareness that millions of people were hoping for concrete results that would transform their lives; her country supported him in that endeavour.

276. Mr GARRIBBA (Euratom) extended his organization's congratulations — and his own — to Mr Grossi and wished him every success in his new role. The Agency and Euratom enjoyed long-standing and wide-ranging cooperation, and Euratom had already had several opportunities to work with Mr Grossi throughout his distinguished diplomatic career of many years. Looking forward to pursuing cooperation to address future challenges, he assured Mr Grossi of its full support as he discharged the Agency's vital international mission. Lastly, he expressed appreciation of Mr Feruță's competent stewardship of the Agency during a difficult period.

277. Ms MACEIRAS (ABACC) extended her organization's warmest congratulations to Mr Grossi on his appointment and, on ABACC's and her own behalf, wished him success. ABACC would be delighted to receive a visit from Mr Grossi whenever his schedule permitted.

278. ABACC had been established under a bilateral agreement between Argentina and Brazil, testifying to the mission of making exclusively peaceful use of nuclear energy. The Agency, ABACC, Argentina and Brazil had also signed the Quadripartite Agreement on safeguards, which, among other things, stated that both the Agency and ABACC had to reach their own independent safeguards conclusions in the two countries, while setting out mechanisms for the agencies to collaborate in order to avoid duplication of efforts, to the extent possible, and make safeguards in both countries more efficient.

279. In ABACC's 27-year existence, coordination and cooperation between the two agencies had been successful, active and robust and had achieved tangible results. With both countries expanding their nuclear plans, ABACC was confident that, under Mr Grossi's leadership, dialogue between the Agency and ABACC would not just continue in a spirit of trust, but would be strengthened and become even more innovative.

280. Ms BUENROSTRO MASSIEU (Mexico) commended the President on having successfully concluded the second special session of the General Conference, which had reflected the spirit of Vienna and the continued commitment to multilateralism. She thanked the Vice-Presidents and the other members of the General Committee, and the staff of the Secretariat for their outstanding professionalism. Addressing Mr Grossi, she expressed the hope that the special session of the General Conference would mark the start of a fruitful period for the Agency, for the international community and for him personally.

281. The PRESIDENT thanked all delegates for their participation and cooperation and, on behalf of the General Conference, thanked them for the words of gratitude that they had addressed to her. It had been a great privilege to be at the Agency, which was an impressive testament to the potential of multilateralism for international peace and well-being. She thanked the Acting Director General, Ms Hayward, and the capable and committed staff of the Secretariat, the translators and interpreters, and the staff from Conference Services and General Services for their valuable work to facilitate the session. On behalf of the General Conference, she thanked the Austrian authorities and city of Vienna for their hospitality.

282. In accordance with Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, she invited the delegates to observe one minute of silence dedicated to prayer or meditation.

All present rose and stood in silence for one minute.

283. The PRESIDENT declared the second special session of the General Conference closed.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.