



**INTERNATIONAL
ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

Distr.
GENERAL
GC(II)/OR.16
21 October 1958
ENGLISH

General Conference

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

OFFICIAL RECORD OF THE SIXTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Neue Hofburg, Vienna,
on Wednesday, 24 September 1958, at 10.45 a.m.

President: Mr. SUDJARWO (Indonesia)

CONTENTS

<u>Item of the agenda*</u>		<u>Paragraphs</u>
11	General debate and report of the Board of Governors for the year 1957-58	1 - 60
	- Statements by the delegates of France, Union of South Africa, Poland, Yugoslavia and Brazil	

* GC(II)/57.

N.B. The list of delegations attending the second regular session of
the General Conference was issued as document GC(II)/INF/17/Rev.3.

GENERAL DEBATE AND REPORT OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS FOR THE YEAR 1957-58
(GC(II)/39)

1. Mr. COUTURE (France) said that the French Government, which was represented on the Board of Governors, approved the Board's First Annual Report to the General Conference (GC(II)/39) and wished to express its appreciation of the work carried out by the Agency staff during what had proved to be a difficult initial period. The Agency's activities in the first year had been severely limited because the senior staff, and more particularly the principal technical personnel, had not taken up their duties until the first months of 1958. For that reason his Government attached great importance to the Agency's performance in 1959, the real test year which would show the Agency's probable contribution to international atomic co-operation.

2. The French delegation had participated in the preparation by the Board of the Programme and Budget for 1959^{1/}. It approved them, but was aware that the programme did not define sufficiently clearly the Agency's proper sphere of activity. The Agency had come into being during a delicate transitional stage in the development of atomic energy. Since 1954 the veil of secrecy surrounding the atom had begun to lift and the exchange of nuclear raw material had become freer and more general. International atomic co-operation had thus started before the inception of the Agency, and then had continued to develop independently of it. For instance, bilateral agreements, regional organizations and multilateral agreements, fruitful scientific meetings such as the First and Second United Nations International Conferences on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy (the first and second "Geneva Conferences"), and the activities of specialized agencies and other organs had all made significant contributions to international co-operation in which the Agency had not participated.

3. Thus the Agency had not yet begun to discharge what had at its inception seemed its most vital function - that of a broker of nuclear raw materials intended for exclusively peaceful purposes. In spite of offers made by several great powers to supply large quantities of uranium 235, natural uranium and

^{1/} GC(II)/36.

thorium, no request for such material had so far been received by the Agency. Nor had the Agency ever been invited by any party to a bilateral or multilateral agreement to extend to that agreement the application of safeguards to ensure the peaceful use of atomic energy, it had consequently been unable to exercise the supervisory powers defined in Article XII of its Statute.

4. Moreover, in the sphere of nuclear power stations proper the Agency's role would of necessity at the outset be a limited one, since not until several years had elapsed would the less-developed countries be able to make real use of the power reactors whose prototypes the atomically-developed countries were at present bringing into operation. Nevertheless the Agency should begin to encourage the less-advanced countries to prepare for the atomic era, as it was already successfully doing in the training of technicians and research workers. France had contributed to the 1958 training programme with an offer of some thirty places in its main universities and nuclear institutes, about a dozen of which were accompanied by fellowships, and had learnt with satisfaction that the number of requests for fellowships already exceeded the offers made during the Agency's first year. The French Government had consequently decided to make the same contribution to the 1959 as to the 1958 programme.

5. His Government also approved the technical assistance programme and the sending of expert missions to countries requesting assistance and advice for the introduction of radioisotope schemes or the inauguration of their own atomic programmes. France had been happy to participate in those activities by providing a French expert for the recent mission sent out to report on the possibility of establishing one or more regional training centres for Latin-American technicians.

6. The Agency had an important part to play in the exchange of information, by the translation and circulation of the world's main scientific publications and by the organization of conferences of experts limited in numbers and scope. The successful holding of such symposia would certainly enable some reduction to be made in the number of large-scale conferences, such as that just held at Geneva, the programme of which was clearly so extensive as to begin to reduce its effectiveness.

7. The IAEA could accomplish useful work on the utilization, handling and standardization of radioisotopes; and the French Government had therefore favoured the establishment, on a modest scale at first, of an Agency laboratory. He was happy to announce that France intended to contribute to the equipment of the laboratory, in particular by supplying electronic apparatus.

8. Public health and safety was undoubtedly the field in which the Agency could most quickly come to play an important role by investigating, in agreement with the World Health Organization and the International Labour Office, problems of standards, regulations and the disposal of radioactive waste - more particularly since the recent discussions among experts at Geneva had shown that the main countries concerned were far from agreement on waste disposal. The Agency, in co-operation with laboratories in its Member States, could undertake a study of such problems immediately, for its own staff included a team of experts eminent in a number of different branches of science. That team was one of the Agency's most precious possessions, and only practical results would enable it to be preserved, still less enlarged. The French Government felt that the over-frequent meetings of the Board of Governors diverted the Agency's staff from their constructive activities. The Board had sometimes become too deeply involved in discussions about details during the hundred or so meetings that it had held since the previous autumn. Less extensive discussions, and shorter and more widely spaced meetings, were essential if the Board were to work with proper efficiency and retain representatives playing an active part in the atomic development of their own countries.

9. The importance of the role which the Agency's Statute conferred on the Board of Governors made it a component essential to the proper working of the Agency. He was most happy that the Board had finally decided to call upon a Scientific Advisory Committee composed of experts who were primarily responsible for the atomic programmes of their own countries and might, for the sake of good co-ordination, be those who sat on the Advisory Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. If the Agency's Scientific Advisory Committee met once or twice a year it could assist in establishing the programme and in defining duties in the fields shared with the specialized agencies and other United Nations bodies.

10. The problem of the relations of the youngest international organization with the older ones was extremely important. The French Government was happy to learn that agreements between the Agency and the principal specialized agencies concerned were soon to be concluded. Effective discharge of those agreements was indispensable but the geographical separation of the parties made it difficult. Therefore, wherever possible and reasonable, symposia or joint services, perhaps later even small joint laboratories, should be set up in Vienna by the Agency and the various specialized agencies. The Agency's primary responsibilities, conferred on it by its founders, in regard to the peaceful use of atomic energy should make Vienna, which had given it such a generous welcome, the international atomic capital.

11. The Agency's special responsibilities entitled it to a voice in all technical investigations connected with the peaceful uses of atomic energy, and especially those at present being carried out under United Nations auspices, such as the preparation of a third "Geneva Conference", the work of the Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, and preparation to control radioactivity throughout the world. It was admittedly often difficult to distinguish between the technical and political aspects of such matters, and hence it might be necessary to draw closer the links between the Agency and the United Nations.

12. France had participated at all stages of the Agency's establishment, and was deeply concerned that as soon as possible it should become a useful and reliable organization, in the hope of later becoming an indispensable instrument of international atomic co-operation. To that end the Agency should participate technically in all important atomic activities, even if the political aspect of some of its duties compelled changes in its operation, its Statute, or its relations with other international organizations.

13. Mr. SOLI (Union of South Africa) said that the primary purpose of the general debate was to review the progress of the Agency in its first year and to permit Member States, particularly those not represented on the Board, to publicize their views on the past and future activities of the Agency. The Report of the Board of Governors was in essence an account of the stewardship of the Agency's executive organ, and the South African delegation hoped that that Report and the

Programme and Budget for 1959 would be subjected to penetrating and constructive criticism, which would serve as a welcome guide to the Board in its deliberations and planning in 1959.

14. From the very nature of its composition the Board was not a homogeneous body, and differences were bound to arise; South Africa nevertheless believed that its members were broadly responsible for its decisions and should not hesitate to accept that responsibility. In that respect the Agency differed considerably from the specialized agencies, where executive responsibility was vested to a much larger extent in the Director General. His delegation therefore believed that all criticism should be addressed to the Board as a whole and to the Governments represented on it, rather than to the Director General.

15. Since the Union of South Africa was a member of the Board, it was more fitting that he should refrain from discussing and commenting on the principal documents submitted to the Conference by the Board. He intended instead to concentrate on certain general problems, to two of which he had endeavoured to call attention at the first session of the General Conference.

16. The most important condition for the Agency's success was that it should be primarily a technical body. Politics should be allowed the minimum possible influence both on the organization of the Secretariat and on the day-to-day working of the Board. If politics were permitted to get out of hand, the Agency could all too easily develop into a propaganda forum - yet another platform for the wasteful and time-consuming exposition of conflicting ideologies.

17. In that respect, as the controversies which had marked the opening of the General Conference had once more shown, there was room for much improvement in the conduct of Agency affairs. It was significant that not one of the major officers of the General Conference of a scientific agency should be a scientist; indeed, the number of scientists present was significantly smaller than at the first session. As a non-scientist and a diplomat he again pleaded earnestly that the Agency, and particularly its leading Members, should resist the temptation to play politics and instead emulate the pattern of scientific co-operation and goodwill established at the two "Geneva Conferences".

18. A corollary to the concept of the IAEA as an essentially technical agency was that it must command respect among the world's scientists and technical

experts. That respect was not easily earned. A valuable nucleus of scientific staff had been gathered together in the Agency's Secretariat, but that by itself was not enough. One of the conclusions drawn by many of those who had attended the second "Geneva Conference" was that there should be associated with the Agency in one way or another a small advisory body composed of atomic scientists of world renown in their respective fields. The Agency's prestige would be significantly raised thereby, and it was extremely gratifying that the Board had finally decided to set up such a body.

19. Of similar importance in that respect was the need to ensure that the scientists, technicians and consultants made available through the Agency to Member States were of the highest possible calibre. The usefulness of the Agency to Member States and the role it would play in the application of atomic energy to peaceful purposes would be measured to a large extent by the achievements of those experts. Member States who had offered the services of such experts would therefore have a special responsibility towards the Agency.

20. The Agency's prestige was a fundamental factor in the proper co-ordination of the activities of the various inter-governmental organizations, both regional and world-wide, concerned with the peaceful uses of atomic energy. Nothing would more detract from the effectiveness of a planned approach to the problems before the Agency than the emergence of a growing number of international organizations seeking to compete with one another in popular appeal, duplicating one another's functions, building up vested interests in one sphere or another, and in the process not only occasioning wasteful expenditure but also dissipating the world's insufficient resources of technological manpower.

21. The Agency's Secretariat was very much alive to that particular problem and had made commendable progress in the establishment of satisfactory relations with the Secretariats of the United Nations and the specialized agencies. That progress was, however, far from keeping pace with the dimensions of the problem. One of the major difficulties was not only the vested interests established in each international secretariat, but also the lamentable lack of co-ordination on the part of Member States, which so often spoke with one voice in Vienna, another in New York, a third at Geneva and a fourth in Paris.

22. Unless the problem of co-ordination were solved effectively and at an early date - the principal responsibility for which lay with the major Powers - the very future of the Agency would be at stake. Its role for some time to come would be very far removed from its original purpose of encouraging and facilitating the rapid development of nuclear power plants throughout the world. In the immediate future it would stand or fall by its ability to secure recognition as the international organ most effectively equipped to undertake responsibility for the co-ordination of international atomic energy activities for peaceful purposes, and as the most competent source of advice on health and safety standards. He did not belittle the long-range importance of the training programme and other forms of technical aid; but if the Agency failed to secure international recognition of its responsibilities for co-ordination and for the development of standards - for example because its authority and mandate were shared with or over-shadowed by bodies set up by the United Nations or other organizations - then it would become little more than an expensive and wasteful means of dispensing a limited amount of technical assistance and information about atomic energy to the under-developed countries.

23. That was a development which all present would deplore, but it would be foolish to ignore the incipient trends shown by lobby talks at Geneva and in the proposals submitted to the United Nations General Assembly for an expansion of the activities of the Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation. The South African Government was deeply concerned about those trends. It had confidence in the ability of the scientists in the Agency to measure up to the tasks assigned to them by the Statute, and would welcome constructive suggestions for improvements, but deplored the emergence of what might be termed 'a crisis of confidence' in the future of the Agency. It therefore made a particular appeal to the five atomic Powers to demonstrate by their activities, not only in Vienna but also in New York and Geneva, that they had faith in the ability of the Agency to surmount the difficulties which inevitably beset the early years of a new international organization.

24. If the Agency was to succeed, however, the smaller as well as the major Powers must contribute their share. An opportunity to do so was provided by the projected pledging conference for the financing of the Agency's operational expenditure. The support given during the past year to the \$250,000 fellowship

fund had been disappointing, but it was perhaps not too much to expect that the smaller countries would be willing to make at least token contributions to the operational programme in the twelve months which would elapse before the third session began.

25. South Africa had endeavoured to do its share. It was among the eight countries that had contributed to the fellowship fund. It had offered to make consultants available in the field where its experience was probably unequalled anywhere, namely the prospecting, mining and extraction of source material. It was co-operating actively with the Commission for Technical Co-operation in Africa South of the Sahara, in encouraging the wider use and application of radioisotopes throughout that vast region. It had offered to make available to the Agency supplies of source and reactor material, and had indicated in its latest communication to the Director General what it expected to be a maximum price for its uranium 3^{08} concentrates, namely £3.10.0 or US \$9.80 per pound.

26. The Board had drafted the programme for 1959 without having before it the results of the second "Geneva Conference". It would be wise for the General Conference to authorize the Board to make changes of emphasis in the 1959 programme in the light of the conclusions to be drawn from the "Geneva Conference". For example, experience at Geneva had confirmed that the development of nuclear energy for power purposes on a considerable scale was still a long way off. On the other hand, Geneva had shown that there were numerous problems of co-ordination, particularly in relation to safety standards, where international action by a body such as the Agency was urgently needed.

27. Financial and technical resources were necessarily limited. That made it necessary to establish some system of priorities to ensure that Agency resources were applied where they could prove most beneficial. It was always a temptation for a new agency to spread its coverage over as wide a field as possible, in the belief that it would thereby gain a larger measure of international support; but such a belief was usually mistaken. The experience of certain other organizations provided a useful lesson. Good performance of a limited number of carefully-selected tasks would enhance the Agency's prestige and benefit the international community far more effectively than dissipation of the Agency's resources over a heterogeneous range of tasks, few of which could make any real impact on the problems immediately ahead.

28. In his opening address the President had called for patience and good will. Patience was required, because some time would inevitably elapse before the Agency could realize the brave hopes that attended its birth; good will, because without it the Agency could never become more than an empty husk. Mutual good will was especially important, for it bred confidence, and the question of confidence lay at the heart of the problems with which the Agency was confronted. It was the earnest hope of the South African delegation that the Agency would move forward from the second regular session of the General Conference with renewed confidence in itself and in the willingness of Member States to assume the responsibilities they had set themselves when they had brought the Agency into being.

29. Mr. BILLIG (Poland) said that, while the past year had seen a great surge forward in the use of nuclear energy throughout the world, for various reasons the atomic Powers were planning in terms of using their own resources, whereas the less-developed countries were planning in terms of assistance under bilateral agreements, there seemed little prospect of that situation changing in the near future.

30. Poland itself was receiving help, under a bilateral agreement, from the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union had provided it with a reactor and a cyclotron for research, assisted it in training specialists and had exchanged research results. The agreement with the Soviet Union signed in January 1958 would further promote the development of nuclear science and techniques in Poland; technical assistance was being obtained under it, for example, in uranium prospecting, mining and processing, the construction of new experimental reactors, and the building of a first atomic power station. But whereas equipment had previously been purchased from the Soviet Union, Poland was now endeavouring to build new reactors largely with its own resources, relying on the Soviet Union merely for technical help in the form of advice and documents, and certain materials and equipment not yet available in Poland. All that help was being provided without political or other strings of any kind.

31. Poland was also co-operating with the Democratic Republic of Germany, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia in the training of specialists, the organization of symposia, exchanges of information and so on. France, the United Kingdom

and the Scandinavian countries were taking young Polish scientific workers for periods of study; friendly relations were being maintained with India; and contacts had recently been established with specialists in the United States. Poland hoped to maintain relations with all the countries of the world. Its case might be regarded as typical.

32. In its plans and programmes the Agency must not fail to bear in mind the needs of its Member States and the special conditions obtaining in each of them. While doing everything it could to help Member States to carry out their programmes, however, it must not squander its energy on things that were not strictly necessary at the moment. The proposal to establish a Division of Safeguards was a case in point. The problem of safeguards and controls required for its solution a wider framework of international co-operation than the Agency by itself could provide; if the Agency were to try to tackle that problem, it might simply make the task more difficult - beside harming its work as a whole - by giving the impression that it wished to impose its own control. Moreover, since no requests had yet been made for fissionable and source materials, the establishment of a Division of Safeguards seemed premature.

33. There were four fields in which it was generally considered that the Agency might now usefully expand its activities. The first was the provision of assistance for training specialists, and organizing the exchange and dissemination of scientific and technical information. There, the range of the Agency's usefulness was practically unlimited, but a few of the most important forms its assistance could take might be mentioned.

34. The Agency could arrange fellowships. Poland had, in the past year, sent about a hundred scientists to the USSR to study, thirty to Czechoslovakia, and twenty to the German Democratic Republic; it had also sent various scientific workers to France, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Norway, Switzerland and Austria. But that was not sufficient, and Poland was glad to know that it was to be granted a number of fellowships through the Agency.

35. The Agency could itself arrange specialized courses and symposia for scientific and technical personnel, or it could arrange for personnel from Member States to attend such courses at national or international scientific institutions.

36. It could also promote the exchange of scientific and technical information - the collection of material for use by Member States. Exchanges of information on national legislation relating to the peaceful uses of atomic energy, and on economic problems were also required, and a glossary of scientific and technical terminology would be increasingly needed as time went on.

37. Lastly, the Agency could convene conferences - both of a purely scientific nature and on special economic, technical and other problems of an international character. The "Geneva Conferences" had shown how immensely valuable the exchange of nuclear knowledge could be. Conferences on specific, narrowly defined subjects were certainly essential: no doubt more general ones would be valuable as well. A number of conferences were already planned, but still more were needed: for example, on methods of planning the development of nuclear energy in particular countries, and on the various types of reactor considered from an economic point of view. Poland itself would be particularly interested in a conference on radiation chemistry. Not only was the holding of such conferences in different countries technically valuable, but it would also help international co-operation in general. His country would be very glad to have one held in its territory.

38. The second field in which the Agency's activities might expand was the protection of health and life from harmful radiations. It was to be hoped that, as a result of certain current developments, nuclear test explosions might be halted. But even if they were, the increasing use of nuclear energy would bring with it further radiation dangers, and effective protection from them would only be possible if preventive work, and the necessary research connected with it, were started at once. Various United Nations bodies were already engaged in such work; their efforts should be speeded up, and made more practical and concrete. They should also be properly co-ordinated: none of those bodies dealt with the problem as a whole.

39. Incidentally, development of the utilization of nuclear energy was being held up by continuing difficulty in purchasing certain basic equipment and research apparatus, particularly in connexion with health measures.

40. The third field in which the Agency might expand its activities was that of relations with other international organizations. Their co-operation was most urgently needed in connexion with the problem of international standards,

and that of international and national legislation. In addition, the Agency might organize and co-ordinate certain types of research which entailed mass observation of different areas and conditions, with a view to establishing the uniform methods of study necessary for obtaining comparable results.

41. The fourth field of expansion was assistance to the under-developed countries. The development of nuclear technology was, though some might dispute it, the best way of raising certain under-developed countries, such as India, to the level of the West. A certain amount had been done towards performing that essential task of the Agency - various countries had made specialists available - but it was necessary to go further. The Agency ought to prepare a long-range programme of assistance to the under-developed countries, adapted to their needs. The preparation of such a programme should be one of its primary tasks in the coming year.

42. It was essential that the Agency should employ scientific methods and the most up-to-date scientific knowledge and techniques available. It should use the services of the foremost atomic scientists, who should exert a greater influence upon its work than they had hitherto. The Agency should not, of course, engage in pure research but, while maintaining its own staff of specialists, it should set up machinery for enlisting additional assistance from the world's leading scientists. It should also promote close co-operation between the various research institutes and utilization of the results of that co-operation for purposes it had at heart. The Agency's success would very largely depend on how far it managed to convince countries that it was competent to do its work.

43. The Agency would not be able to perform its exalted task, unless the world were relieved from the threat of an atomic war - unless the preparations for such a war were discontinued, test explosions were halted and the use of atomic weapons were prohibited; unless, indeed, there were general disarmament, and the resources thus freed were devoted to the assistance of the under-developed countries. It was to be hoped that the United Nations General Assembly was making headway in that direction.

44. Mr. NAKIĆENOVIC (Yugoslavia) stated that the work of the Agency had developed under special conditions during the first year of the Agency's

existence. During that period the Board of Governors, the Director General and the Secretariat had done much to implement the recommendations of the first session of the General Conference. Bearing in mind the results achieved by the Agency so far, as well as the fact that initial steps in all fields of international co-operation were always accompanied by difficulties, the Yugoslav delegation wished to emphasize that it endorsed the Board's First Annual Report.

45. By continuing to promote international co-operation in various ways within its competence, the Agency would help to establish harmony in international relations in general. Conversely, improvement in international relations, for example through the discontinuation of nuclear test explosions of which there was now some likelihood, would open up wider prospects for the Agency's work.

46. The promotion of scientific research and the application of scientific achievements in the field of the peaceful uses of atomic energy constituted the basic task of the Agency. The Agency could implement its tasks only on the basis of developing scientific co-operation. Consequently one of its main objectives should be the co-ordination of nuclear research throughout the world, particularly in the field of fusion. Though such co-ordination might hardly be practicable at present, sooner or later it must form part of the Agency's programme. By undertaking it the Agency would improve conditions for the peaceful use of atomic energy throughout the world, and particularly for assistance to under-developed countries - one of the chief objects for which it had been set up. He was confident that the Board and the Director General would keep that ultimate aim constantly before them in their everyday activities.

47. The Agency was to be congratulated on its work in connection with assistance to under-developed countries, the training of technical and scientific personnel, and the granting and organization of technical assistance, as well as in the steps it had taken towards making itself a centre for the exchange of information and the study of questions of international importance.

48. It should not, of course, stop there, but should prepare to perform all its statutory functions, taking existing needs into account. New staff should be recruited and activities should expand gradually, pari passu with the growth

of those needs, as expressed in requests from the Member States. In that way the Agency would become a true intermediary between the developed and the under-developed countries. The major part of its resources should be devoted primarily to promoting co-operation between the two groups, and to securing assistance for the under-developed countries in the fields where their need was greatest. Since the developed countries had immense resources available, it was reasonable to hope that the assistance given would be very varied, and adapted to the individual requirements of countries in need of such assistance.

49. As regards the programme of work of the Agency, it might be wise to reconsider the whole question of building an Agency laboratory; such a project would be very costly, and various Member States and international organizations already had laboratories which might be able to serve the Agency's purposes.

50. Yugoslavia would gladly place its own institutes and laboratories at the Agency's disposal, and the facilities they could provide were continually improving. More and more work was being done on the application of nuclear energy in industry, agriculture, medicine and biology; on uranium prospecting and mining; and on reactors and reactor techniques. A zero-power reactor had already been built by Yugoslav scientists, and a 6.5-10 MW research reactor had, under an agreement with the USSR, almost been completed. Yugoslav scientists had also constructed a 2 Mev Van de Graaf generator and a 16-20 Mev cyclotron. Special attention was being given to extending the uses of nuclear energy, to training the personnel required in industry, medicine and agriculture, and to improving protection against radiation. As a result, Yugoslavia was becoming able to play an increasingly large part in the Agency's activities. The Yugoslav Government had expressed its readiness to receive a number of fellowship holders in its institutes and laboratories, and was prepared to place certain electronic equipment at the disposal of Member States which needed it. In addition, the International Summer Seminar of Physicists, which had been meeting regularly in Yugoslavia for some years, could be used by the Agency, if it wished, as a forum for scientists.

51. To conclude, despite the fact that the work the Agency had done during the period under review had been constructive, there were a number of problems which required further study. Therefore it was imperative that, in extending its

activities in the future, the Agency should, on the one hand, take into account the concrete needs of its members, and on the other hand, co-operate with the United Nations and its specialized agencies. An increasingly constructive and close relationship between the Agency and those organizations, which should make itself felt in the Agency's day-to-day work, could not but assist the Agency to carry out its mission.

52. His Government would continue to give the Agency every assistance that lay within its power, in order to help it fulfil its mission in the most constructive manner for the benefit of all the nations of the world.

53. Mr. CUNHA (Brazil) observed that the regular annual session of the General Conference appeared to have two main purposes: to exchange views on the progress of the Agency's work under its Statute, and to exchange information on the development of each Member's national nuclear energy programme. Since the Director General had already made a statement^{2/} on the first year of the Agency's life and the First Annual Report of the Board of Governors was before the Conference, he need not himself review the work done by the Agency; he would merely thank the Board of Governors, the Director General and the Secretariat for their outstanding performance in guiding the Agency through its first and probably most difficult year, and give a short account of the progress of the Brazilian atomic energy programme in that year.

54. In his Government's view an atomic energy programme was a statement of the action required to promote the economic exploitation and development for civilian purposes of sources of atomic energy, within the limits set by the available human, financial and material resources and by national and international law. It had three main objectives. The first was to create and expand the technical staff needed at all levels of the programme; it could be attained by training, which in turn called for research reactors and other training equipment and for appropriate budgetary provision. The second objective was to ensure a steady supply of source and fissionable materials, from either domestic or foreign sources, according to the availability of raw materials, processing facilities, financial resources and foreign exchange.

^{2/} GC(II)/OR.14, paragraphs 32 - 50.

The third objective was to plan and carry out a programme of investment in nuclear power plant, with domestic industry participating to the greatest possible extent, and with due regard to the nation's conventional power resources, the economics of the potential water-power resources, and the availability of fossil fuels.

55. The Brazilian programme proposed to approach the first objective by developing national training and teaching facilities and by taking advantage of fellowships abroad. A large swimming-pool research reactor which had been in operation at São Paulo since September 1957 had enabled Brazilian technicians to study and solve a number of instrumentation, safety and operating problems; it had also begun to produce radioisotopes, which were already helping the development of industrial, agricultural, medical and biological research. The application of radiations to agricultural research and food-preserving might play an important part in improving the standard of life in less-developed areas of Brazil. Three further research reactors were being ordered for training purposes in the Universities of Rio de Janeiro and Belo Horizonte and the Technical Institute of São José dos Campos, and the use of existing training equipment was being intensified.

56. Under a decision of the Board of Governors taken on a proposal of the Governor from Brazil, supported by the Governors from Argentina and Guatemala, the Director General had appointed a working group to survey the Latin-American countries and determine the need for one or more regional training centres; the report of that mission was now before the General Conference for its information^{3/}. The working group's observations and conclusions indicated the part that the Agency could play in promoting the use of atomic energy in Latin America even before any centres were established. The information it had gathered would help the Agency to assess the kind and scale of the assistance needed by each country visited, and to use the facilities locally available in the more developed countries of the region.

57. With regard to the second objective, under the Brazilian programme nuclear fuels would both be imported as initial or reprocessed charges and fabricated at home from natural uranium and thorium. The programme also included a pilot

^{3/} GC(II)/INF/19.

plant for the study of uranium enrichment by the centrifugation process.

58. The Brazilian power reactor programme, aiming at the third objective, was still in its preliminary stages. The National Nuclear Energy Board of Italy had kindly invited two observers for the Brazilian Government to follow the final stages of the consideration of the international tenders called for by the Italian Government for the construction of a large nuclear power project in Southern Italy; that experience would be of great value to the Brazilian Nuclear Energy Commission in initiating its power programme. Brazil was consulting the Agency with a view to enlisting its co-operation in placing the specific projects of the Brazilian programme on a sound technical and economic footing and in providing an expert mission to carry out fact-finding studies, and was also asking it to assist in a thorough assessment of Brazil's needs in connexion with radioisotopes.

59. Brazil had confidence both in its own efforts and in any assistance it might receive from the Agency. The spirit of understanding and co-operation that had guided the Agency since its inception was an earnest of the increasingly important part the Agency would play in promoting the world-wide use of nuclear energy for peace, health and good will among men.

60. The PRESIDENT reminded delegates that a mobile radioisotope laboratory presented by the United States would be handed over to the Agency at the conclusion of the meeting in a ceremony which all delegates were invited to attend.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.