

## General Conference

THIRD REGULAR SESSION

### OFFICIAL RECORD OF THE THIRTY-SECOND PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Neue Hofburg, Vienna,  
on Monday, 28 September 1959, at 9.50 a.m.

President: Mr. FURUUCHI (Japan)

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\* GC(III)/88/Rev.2.

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N.B. The list of delegations attending the third regular session of the  
General Conference was issued as document GC(III)/INF/25/Rev.2.

GENERAL DEBATE AND REPORT OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS FOR THE YEAR 1958-59  
(GC(III)/73, 85, 89 and Add.1, 92) (continued)

1. Mr. SPANIDIS (Greece) congratulated the President on his election and thanked those delegates who, on the proposal of Sweden, had elected a representative of Greece as Vice-President of the General Conference. He noted further that the work and efficiency of the Board of Governors had led to notable progress in such matters as safeguards, technical assistance and health and safety and that two years after its establishment the Agency had already largely achieved its initial objectives.
2. During the past year Greece had received technical assistance from the Agency, including valuable expert advice on a number of projects. In the spring, very fruitful discussions had been held with the Greek authorities during the visit of the Director General and members of the Secretariat to Greece. The Agency had also sent its mobile laboratory to the Radioisotope School in Athens and many students had thus been able to acquire considerable practical experience on the spot. Greece had been one of the first countries to make use of the mobile laboratory and it was highly desirable that other Member States should have an opportunity of doing so.
3. It was encouraging to note that the Agency was considering the possibility of establishing regional centres for training in the use of radioisotopes and there was every reason to believe that it would carefully consider the proposals made on that subject in due course. Greece believed that the exchange of information and scientific data was extremely useful and had noted with satisfaction that the Agency was organizing numerous scientific and technical conferences and meetings. It earnestly hoped that a symposium on the use of radioisotopes in dating would be included in the 1960 programme and was prepared to make all the necessary arrangements for holding such a symposium in Athens. Greece also attached great importance to investigation of the prospects of using nuclear power in the less developed countries and hoped that a team of Agency experts could be appointed to carry out such an investigation in the near future.
4. In view of the nature of the Agency and its objectives, Greece believed, as did many small countries, that political considerations ought to play only

a minor part in the Agency's decisions. For its part, Greece had complete confidence in the future of an organization which was working exclusively in the cause of peace and in which millions of human beings placed their hopes of improving their living conditions and combatting poverty.

5. Mr. HUANG (Republic of China) said he was glad to note that, under the wise guidance of the Chairman of the Board of Governors and the Director General, the Agency had made notable progress on the lines recommended by the General Conference at its second session. In particular, much had been achieved in the provision of technical assistance, some fifty experts and three preliminary assistance missions having been sent out.

6. China had been happy to receive one of those missions, whose competence and wise advice on health physics and the economic and technical aspects of reactors had been much appreciated in Taiwan.

7. He then referred to what was being done in Taiwan to develop the peaceful uses of atomic energy. Hospitals, agricultural colleges and industrial firms were deeply interested in the uses of radioisotopes. The Taiwan National University Hospital was using a cobalt-60 unit of 1 000 curies for the treatment of cancer cases and iodine-131 for studying goitre. The results obtained had been reported at a meeting of the second United Nations International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy (the second Geneva conference). Tests were being made, with the aid of radiophosphorus, on the use of fertilizers in beet and sugar-cane growing, and experiments and research were also being carried out on mutations in rice, potatoes and the soya bean.

8. Electric power production had been increased by 20% in Taiwan during the past few years; it had now reached 340 kWh a head annually - a figure second only to Japan in the Far East. Since conventional power resources were limited, it was expected that they would have to be supplemented by nuclear power within ten years, and to that end the Taiwan Power Company had sent young engineers abroad to be trained in nuclear technology.

9. The Nuclear Science Institute of the Tsing-Hua National University already possessed a well-equipped laboratory, the facilities of which included a 3 MeV van de Graaff accelerator and a 1 000 kW swimming-pool reactor which was expected to become critical at the beginning of 1960.

10. The Chinese authorities were also taking part in research organized on an international scale. A study on fall-out was being carried out jointly with the Health and Safety Laboratory of the United States Atomic Energy Commission and similar arrangements might perhaps be made with the Agency. An engineer from the Taiwan Power Company, who had been trained in the United States, had been lent to the Japanese Atomic Energy Commission and the Nuclear Science Institute of the Tsing-Hua National University was to take two young scientists from the Philippines for instruction in the working of its reactor. When the laboratory was fully equipped the Institute might perhaps arrange training courses for research workers from other countries.
11. Science and technology knew no frontiers and must not be the monopoly of anyone. China, a country with an ancient culture, was a newcomer in science, but in concert with other countries it would take all the necessary steps to expand the fruitful international co-operation which had been established under the auspices of the Agency.
12. Mr. FONTES (Portugal) referred to the friendship which had linked Japan and Portugal for many centuries and congratulated Mr. Furuuchi on his election as President of the General Conference.
13. Although the past year could still be regarded as a starting period, the Agency had already gone a long way towards achieving its initial objectives, in particular in the production of radioisotopes and their use in industry, agriculture, medicine and research and in the study of the technical and economic aspects of the production of nuclear power. In addition, the work undertaken on such matters as technical assistance, fellowships, research contracts, the publication of scientific and technical information manuals, the drafting of rules and recommendations and the organization of scientific conferences and symposia contributed effectively towards achieving the Agency's statutory objectives.
14. The Portuguese Nuclear Energy Commission had started building a nuclear research centre and had just completed a physics laboratory, the equipment of which included two particle accelerators - one a 2 million volt van de Graaff and the other a 600 000 volt Cockroft-Walton machine. Thanks to the valuable assistance of the United States, Portugal, within a few months, would have a 1 MW swimming-pool reactor running on 20% enriched uranium fuel elements.

The centre would also include a pilot plant for producing pure uranium metal, and a chemical and metallurgical laboratory. The auxiliary installations had already been completed. If everything went according to plan, the various installations at the centre should be in full operation during the second half of 1960, and Portugal's need for fellowships and specialized technical assistance would then be increased.

15. Prospecting for uranium ores - another activity which the Nuclear Energy Commission had been carrying on since its establishment - was practically finished in continental Portugal, but was to be continued in the Portuguese overseas provinces. Radioisotopes were being increasingly used in medicine, agriculture and industry.

16. After 1960, when the nuclear research centre would be completed, Portugal would be able to strengthen its scientific and technical ties with the Agency. Nuclear power generation was still being considered as a future need, but despite ever-increasing use of hydro-electric resources and the rapid growth of electricity consumption, Portugal did not, for the time being, need to build nuclear power stations.

17. Portugal had always given the Agency its sincere co-operation and would not fail in the future to associate itself with the Agency's continued endeavours to achieve its main objective, namely to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world.

18. Mr. SEVCHENKO (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) observed that in the period from 1 January 1958 to 30 June 1959 the Agency's activities had expanded. At first the Agency had dealt mainly with administrative matters and all its activities had been largely dominated by administrative considerations, but in 1958-59 the Board of Governors and the Agency had had to settle a number of questions directly concerned with operations: the Agency had given technical assistance to various countries, helped Japan to procure three tons of uranium, awarded 165 fellowships, selected 349 fellows, issued most successful publications, etc.

19. In the matter of technical assistance to the less developed countries, the Agency's operations were still inadequate. The use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes was developing so fast in several countries that if the Agency drew

on their experience, it would be perfectly capable of providing the less developed countries with considerable practical assistance in the use of radio-isotopes and radiation sources in industry, agriculture and medicine, and even assistance in the generation of electricity and industrial heating.

20. The Byelorussian delegation considered that the Agency should speed up its operations and make unceasing efforts to achieve the main objective prescribed in its Statute, namely "to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world", above all in the economically less developed countries which had the greatest need to make use of the recent advances in nuclear science and engineering.

21. It was regrettable that international collaboration on atomic energy was artificially restricted because, for reasons which were well known, several countries, in particular the People's Republic of China, were not taking part in the Agency's work. Certain Western States had imposed on the Board of Governors, in violation of the Statute, an arbitrary decision to provide technical assistance to the supporters of Chiang Kai-Shek. The provision of such assistance to the politically bankrupt rulers of Taiwan could merely serve to complicate the Agency's work, since only the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China could represent China.

22. Discrimination had also been shown in the Board's unfair decision concerning the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU). The discriminatory nature of that decision was shown by the fact that the Board, after refusing to grant WFTU consultative status with the Agency, had granted consultative status to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions.

23. The Byelorussian delegation agreed with the criticisms which had been made regarding the defective methods of work which had been used for the Agency's operations in the recent past. It was stated in the Programme and Budget for 1960<sup>1/</sup> that "1960 should be a year of consolidation during which working procedures should be tested and refined ...." Consolidation and further refinement of tested methods of work was certainly useful and necessary, but 1960 should not be used for consolidating methods which were defective and discriminatory. It went without saying that if such methods were adopted,

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<sup>1/</sup> GC(III)/75, paragraph 14.

international co-operation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy would suffer gravely. Any further expansion of co-operation must be based on the principles of universal non-discrimination and peaceful co-existence of all States, whatever their social and economic structures.

24. Nothing could do more to promote the expansion of international co-operation than the conclusion of an agreement to prohibit nuclear weapons and eliminate them from national armaments.

25. Mention should be made of the considerable importance of the exchange of visits between the leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States of America, which would make it possible to end the cold war and prepare the way for improved international relations.

26. Nothing would contribute as effectively to the expansion of the Agency's activities as the complete and general disarmament proposed by Mr. Khrushchev, President of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union, in his speech to the General Assembly of the United Nations. Universal and complete disarmament and the prohibition of atomic weapons would greatly further the Agency's activities and enable it to perform its statutory functions, for it would be able to draw on large material and scientific resources and use them to increase material well-being.

27. He regretted that the Agency had so far remained completely silent on that question and that its programme of work made no reference to the part it should play in the campaign to ban atomic weapons. Nor had the Agency come out in favour of the cessation of atomic and thermonuclear weapons tests which all mankind was demanding in its anxiety over the growing threat of ionizing radiations and the disastrous consequences of a nuclear war.

28. Such indifference could not be justified by arguing that the Agency was required to deal with purely technical matters and not with political problems. That argument could not be taken into consideration for it was well known that on several questions, such as the admission of the Chiang Kai-Shek clique, South Korea and South Viet-Nam to membership of the Agency, and the refusal to grant WFTU consultative status, the Agency had taken discriminatory decisions dictated by purely political considerations.

29. Some people were trying to seal off the Agency's work on the peaceful uses of atomic energy from questions relating to nuclear disarmament and the prohibition of atomic and thermonuclear weapons tests. But the two matters could not be isolated from one another for, under Article III.B.1 of the Statute, were not the Agency's activities directly linked with United Nations activities relating to disarmament?

30. In view of these considerations, the Byelorussian delegation supported the Czechoslovak draft resolution (GC(III)/89 and Add.1) and urged the General Conference to adopt it unanimously.

31. He felt sure that the Agency would do everything it could to place all the great scientific and technical achievements and discoveries in nuclear energy at the service of peace, progress and the well-being of all nations.

32. Mr. CEDERWALL (Sweden) pointed out that at the second session of the General Conference the Swedish delegation had stressed the importance of an empirical approach to the development of the Agency's activities and of undertaking only tasks for which there was an actual need among Member States and which were not already being carried out by other bodies.<sup>2/</sup> That prudent approach was still required in order to get the best results from available resources.

33. The Swedish delegation was glad to note that the Agency had, in general, lived by that rule during the past year, and that the draft programme for 1960 was, by and large, a sensible one, paying heed to current realities rather than past expectations. The proposed budget reflected a stabilization of the Agency's work. As the Secretariat gradually became more experienced, the Board of Governors should be able to concentrate most of its attention on the drafting of general directives. He would therefore confine himself to mentioning a few of the spheres in which the Agency could prove its usefulness.

34. The first was the drafting of guiding principles, regulations and conventions relating to legal problems and to health and safety techniques. For example, the work being done on the transport of fuel elements and on civil liability promised to be of value to all Member States. Another subject to be

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<sup>2/</sup> GC(II)/OR.17, paragraph 20.

considered in that light was the nuclear propulsion of ships. In such matters, joint action was important to facilitate development of the peaceful uses of atomic energy. In other matters, such as the disposal of radioactive waste and reactor safety, the drafting of rules should prevent the establishment of bad practices and maintain the good safety record which was happily being built up in the nuclear industry.

35. A second sphere was that of advice and assistance to less developed countries. Although that work was primarily of benefit to a particular category of Member States, the Swedish delegation gladly supported it. Use of atomic energy was not, however, an end in itself and the need for it could be judged only by considering the totality of economic and human resources in a particular area, together with the total funds available for technical assistance. Close co-ordination with other agencies and institutions, which the Agency's participation in the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance would ensure, was therefore very important. Within that framework the Agency's advisory missions and experts would be of value whether or not their activities resulted in spectacular projects. A candid exchange of information on the cost of nuclear power was of great value to all Members.

36. A further type of activity was the organizing of conferences and symposia on clearly defined scientific and technical subjects. The Swedish experts who had attended such meetings arranged by the Agency were well satisfied with the choice of subjects and the assistance provided by the Secretariat. However, even there an element of caution was necessary and one must not assume that an atomic expert could spend his whole career running from one conference to another.

37. As an indication of its support for the Agency's work the Swedish Government had made a voluntary contribution of \$15 000 to the operational budget for 1959. A contribution of the same amount had already been proposed by the Swedish authorities for 1960.

38. The Swedish Government would judge each new proposal on its merits, the criteria being its usefulness either to all Member States or to the less developed countries. The more the Agency's deliberations could be concentrated on such issues and the less political considerations were allowed to influence them, the more rapid the success of the Agency would be.

39. Mr. HASANI (Iraq) said that the Board's annual report to the General Conference (GC(III)/73) showed how much the Agency's work had done to foster technical research and economic development in Member States.

40. Iraq, conscious of the constructive contribution that tracer techniques could make towards the development of medicine, industry and agriculture, had initiated a long-term programme to meet the requirements of research into tracer techniques and their application. That programme covered specialist training in basic and applied nuclear science, the establishment of a training and research centre, the installation of a research reactor and expansion of the existing medical radioisotope centre.

41. Since the Agency's principal objective was to foster the use of atomic energy for the benefit of mankind and not for its extermination, it was most regrettable that one of its Member States was at present preparing to make a nuclear weapon test. Iraq therefore appealed to all Members to support the call of Morocco for the cessation of nuclear weapon tests.<sup>B/</sup>

42. Iraq was among those States who considered that the provisions for the representation of Africa and the Middle Eastern area needed revision. It was discussing the issue with the countries concerned, and a joint draft resolution on the subject would be submitted in due course.

43. Mr. BJERGE (Denmark) said that, after an initial period in which the Agency had necessarily had to devote much effort to organizing its work, it could now devote its efforts to activities directly related to its noble aims.

44. Denmark owed its thanks to the Agency for granting fellowships to some of its nationals. Also through the Agency's help, one of France's experts in non-ferrous metallurgy had made an analysis of the Danish educational and research facility needs in that respect and Denmark had also received expert assistance from the United States in connexion with non-ferrous metallurgy.

45. He would like to comment on three aspects of the Agency's work. First, the establishment and administration of safeguards was one of the statutory functions of the Agency, and the Board of Governors was making real progress in the matter; its endeavours enjoyed the Danish Government's full support. There would be a long and difficult way to go before security against diversion

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3/ GC(III)/OR.30, paragraph 39.

of fissionable material was obtained. That security, however, was of such vital interest to all States that the problems ought to be solved in an undogmatic way. Denmark depended for uranium entirely on delivery from outside, and found it a little difficult fully to understand some countries' anxieties about the application of safeguards. It had never regarded its bilateral agreements as contrary to the concept of sovereignty, and would welcome the establishment of any reasonable control system on a wider basis.

46. The whole matter was, of course, closely bound up with the question of the future position of the Agency as a supplier of fissionable materials. The uncertainty in that respect need not delay action, however. In his Government's view, it was not impossible to envisage a future system by which nuclear materials would be bought in the open market but subjected by mutual consent to Agency safeguards.

47. Secondly, the Danish Government wholeheartedly supported the Agency's technical assistance activities. Very few countries were really advanced with regard to atomic energy, and nearly all countries might have good reason for recourse to Agency assistance.

48. A third aspect of the Agency's activities was its work on legal problems concerning reactor safety, transport of radioactive matter, waste disposal, civil liability and other problems of world-wide interest. Denmark, a small country surrounded by shallow sea, was necessarily directly concerned in that side of the Agency's work. It would also be keenly interested in studies of the legal aspects of the nuclear propulsion of shipping.

49. In regard to the Agency's structure, a question touched on by other speakers in the debate, he thought it better not to formulate strict rules but rather to hope for the growth of a tradition which struck a suitable balance between the functions of the Director General and Secretariat and those of the Board. The smaller countries would not find it at all easy to sit on the Board if it met too often, and would find it difficult to send their leading authorities on atomic energy as Governors or advisers. Yet the Agency's organs must keep in touch with the technical and scientific efforts of Member States.

50. As the Agency's activities became based on a steadily developing tradition, they should to a corresponding degree cease to reflect the political difficulties which now dominated the world, thereby enabling the Agency to devote all its efforts to the aims set out in its Statute.

51. The PRESIDENT noted that the list of speakers in the general debate was exhausted. However, the Conference had still to decide the procedure for discussion of the draft resolution presented during the general debate by the Czechoslovak delegation (GC(III)/89 and Add.1). Under normal procedure -- as for instance that followed by the General Assembly of the United Nations -- a draft resolution introduced during the general debate should be referred to the General Committee, which, under Rule 42 of the Rules of Procedure, would have to determine the item of the agenda under which that draft resolution could be considered or whether the inclusion of a new item was necessary, and submit an appropriate recommendation to the General Conference in plenary meeting. The intention to follow that normal practice with respect to any questions arising in the general debate was also borne out by the annotation to item 10 of the provisional agenda<sup>4/</sup>.

52. There seemed, however, to be a practical reason for adopting a simplified procedure in the present instance, without creating in any sense a precedent. Since the Conference had little time in which to finish its work, it might conveniently dispense with scrutiny by the General Committee and examine the draft resolution and the amendment to it (GC(III)/92) directly in plenary meeting.

53. He therefore proposed that the texts be examined at the next plenary meeting.

54. It was so decided.

#### OPENING DATE OF THE FOURTH REGULAR SESSION

55. The PRESIDENT reported that the General Committee had recommended that Tuesday, 20 September 1960, be fixed as the opening date of the fourth regular session of the General Conference.

56. The recommendation of the General Committee was adopted.

#### TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF THE PRIME MINISTER OF CEYLON

57. The PRESIDENT invited delegates to observe one minute's silence in memory of Mr. Bandaranaike, Prime Minister of Ceylon, who had died in tragic circumstances.

58. All present stood in silence for one minute.

The meeting rose at 11.5 a.m.