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SIXTH REGULAR SESSION

OFFICIAL RECORD OF THE SIXTY-FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Neue Hofburg, Vienna,
on Wednesday, 19 September 1962, at 10.45 a.m.

President: Mr. BAFFOUR (Ghana)

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* GC(VI)/207.

The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(VI)/INF/56/Rev. 2.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ALLOCATION OF ITEMS FOR INITIAL DISCUSSION (GC(VI)/206)

1. The PRESIDENT proposed that the General Conference should accept the recommendations made by the General Committee on the agenda and the allocation of items for initial discussion.

2. The recommendations of the General Committee were accepted.

CLOSING DATE OF THE SESSION

3. The PRESIDENT announced that the General Committee had recommended that 26 September 1962 should be provisionally set as the closing date for the session.

4. The recommendation of the General Committee was accepted.

STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED NATIONS

5. The PRESIDENT welcomed Mr. Ralph Bunche, the representative of the United Nations, and invited him to address the Conference.

6. Mr. BUNCHE (Representative of the United Nations) said that it was a great pleasure for him to speak once again to the General Conference of an Agency in whose origins the United Nations had had such active interest. The United Nations had followed the development of the Agency's programmes and activities with keen appreciation and realized that the full success of its work depended heavily on world political affairs and, in particular, on the solution of the problems of disarmament and the discontinuance of nuclear tests. Nevertheless, earnest co-operation among States in the peaceful uses of atomic energy and in other areas of science was possible even now and could contribute to the improvement of the international situation.

7. In view of the technological and economic difficulties which had been encountered in the development of nuclear power, the Agency had moved in other directions, such as the training of scientists, the exchange of technical information, the encouragement of research and the establishment of health and safety regulations.

8. That change in the direction of its activities had not, however, diminished the scope for a co-operative relationship between the Agency and the United

Nations. On the contrary, co-operation had steadily increased in recent years. It might be recalled that some work on atomic questions had been undertaken before the birth of the Agency; the United Nations, in particular, had organized two conferences on the peaceful uses of atomic energy. In that connection he regretted that, despite the recommendation of the Scientific Advisory Committee in favour of holding a third conference of that kind, no such item had yet been placed on the agenda for the seventeenth session of the United Nations General Assembly. The United Nations was, however, organizing a conference on the application of science to underdeveloped areas which was to be held in Geneva early in 1963.

9. It could be noted with satisfaction that the Agency had successfully carried out numerous activities in close co-operation with other organizations of the United Nations family, thus avoiding any duplication or overlapping.

10. While it was true that the hopes of an imminent contribution of nuclear energy to the development of power-starved nations had been somewhat disappointed, some progress had nevertheless been achieved in that respect. It seemed probable that nuclear power might soon become economical in areas where grid systems already existed and where nuclear power plants could be employed as base load stations, as well as in areas where the cost of conventional fuel and hydroelectric power was high.

11. The past ten years had also witnessed a rapid development in conventional power technology and an increasing attention to new sources of energy. That had contributed to a climate of competition which had obliged the nuclear power industry to concern itself seriously with economics as well as physics. In view of the results already achieved, it could now be stated that nuclear power was destined to play an increasingly significant part in the world and, above all, that it would banish forever any fear of exhausting the world's energy-producing resources.

12. In power planning, all sources of energy must be considered simultaneously. Thus, the ultimate decision on the use of nuclear power was a matter of common concern for both the Agency and the United Nations. In that connection he welcomed the Director General's decision to include an expert on conventional power in the missions which the Agency was sending to developing countries. Co-operation was the rule between the Agency and the United Nations; although,

in the past, it could at times have been better, there were no differences between the two bodies concerning the evaluation of nuclear power in the context of power planning, and that co-operation was sure to grow ever closer as projects multiplied.

13. In view of the importance of the question of priorities, it was encouraging to note that the Director General and the Board were formulating a comprehensive long-term programme which coincided most appropriately with plans for the United Nations Development Decade. From the point of view of the United Nations, the question of nuclear power was the Agency's main concern, and its study should lead to a natural collaboration with the well-established United Nations work on natural resources and industrial development. The programme for the application of radioisotopes in developing nations was equally important. The Agency survey of the industrial application of radioisotopes formed a natural link with the United Nations industrial development programme, particularly the work of the new Industrial Development Centre. The Agency's programme was particularly strong in fellowships and training courses, both national and regional, and that was an area in which the United Nations was also making a great effort, especially to assist the newly independent countries. The United Nations looked forward to the further development of Agency programmes, and to ever closer ties between the two organizations. Indeed, their collaboration was increasing every year, as was shown by the recent appointment of the Agency as Executing Agency for the Special Fund agricultural project in Yugoslavia. It was expected that further studies on energy sources and power production would be carried out jointly by the Agency and the United Nations.

14. He was glad to note that the Agency was engaging in practical research in its own Laboratory at Seibersdorf and collaborating actively in the work of the Oceanographic Institute at Monaco.

15. In concluding, he wished to offer a special word of appreciation to the new Director General. He recalled that the great success of the United Nations Second International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy had been very largely due to Mr. Eklund's brilliant and undefatigable efforts. He wished him the greatest success and assured him that he could count upon earnest

co-operation from the United Nations. The United Nations Secretariat had, indeed, already engaged in consultations with the Director General on ways in which the two organizations could give one another mutual support.

16. Recalling his own long experience as an international civil servant, he whole-heartedly endorsed the Director General's remarks on the need for respect for the concept of an international civil service. He knew that it was possible to have an international civil service whose staff were objective, fair-minded and unresponsive to any national interest; but he knew also that if the truly international character of the civil service was undermined in any international body, the deterioration and ultimate ruin of that body were certain.

17. Finally he wished to say that while the United Nations did not minimize the dangers of the international situation, it nevertheless considered that constructive action could be taken in many directions. There was no reason to despair of achieving that international climate of trust and calm in which alone the constructive activities of the Agency and like bodies could thrive. The Agency had a vital service to render to the world and he was confident that it would perform its task with increasing effectiveness. The United Nations had confidence in the Agency and in its future.

GENERAL DEBATE AND REPORT OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS FOR 1961-62
(GC(VI)/195, 204)

18. Mr. SOLE (South Africa) said he wished to emphasize once again the need to resist the undue intrusion of politics into the affairs of what should be a technical agency. That required constant vigilance and a gift for promoting conciliation and understanding, especially on the part of the Chairman of the Board of Governors. Notwithstanding the improvement in the atmosphere of the Board, a great deal still remained to be done with respect to the operation of the Secretariat, in order to ensure that scientific rather than political criteria received paramount consideration. Determined efforts were required to prevent the polarization of Secretariat attitudes around the rival American and Soviet sources of attraction. He was confident that the Director General would have the support of most delegates in anything he could do to counter that tendency and to resist the pressures on both himself and his

Secretariat. Article VII.F of the Statute required every Member State to respect the international character of the responsibilities of the Director General and the staff, and not to seek to influence them in the discharge of their duties. The Director General should set the pattern in that matter by not hesitating to make public, to the extent that might be necessary, any pressures that were brought to bear on him.

19. As to the streamlining of the Secretariat, he believed that its structure should be simplified and made more flexible, and that a more determined effort should be made to attract the best scientific minds; in other words, the Director General should aim at a smaller but better paid scientific staff. He was a firm believer in the need for controlled expansion of operational activities, but not of the Secretariat as such, for it was already too large. In particular, there must be an improvement in the quality of the scientific staff, on which the prestige of the Agency depended.

20. There was also a need to streamline the procedures of the General Conference in the interests of greater efficiency. The premises underlying the proposal put forward by his delegation[1/] (it concerned the introduction of biennial programming) had already been endorsed by the majority of the Board and by the Director General, and he hoped that the General Conference would also approve them.

21. His delegation was in broad agreement with the proposals and priorities made with regard to the long-term programme but, in view of the somewhat disheartening findings of the panel on nuclear power, wished to emphasize its view that the inability to advance in that respect as rapidly as had been hoped should not deflect the Agency from its work on nuclear power - the very reason for its existence. He wished to make that point because there had recently been some talk about the need to diversify the Agency's activities in order better to justify its expenditure. It had even been suggested that the Agency should become an international authority on conventional power. His delegation would not welcome any dilution of the Agency's nuclear power activities. It was precisely in that respect that the Agency's technical staff was singularly weak, so far having not a single nuclear engineer of

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1/ GC(VI)/INF/55.

international repute. He did not wish to see the Agency itself engaging in nuclear power operations, but it should have a valuable role as a nuclear power consultant.

22. As to financing - fundamental to any future planning - South Africa had for many years been arguing the need to improve the situation. The financial problems of the United Nations had clearly shown how crippling could be the effect of deliberately vague compromise formulae. The United Kingdom proposal to amend Article XIV of the Statute[2/] suggested not only abolishing the operational budget but also tying the Agency's system of assessment to the principles applied by the United Nations in apportioning what was described as its "regular budget". But the United Nations now had to decide afresh what constituted a regular budget in the light of the International Court's opinion on the subject of the expenses of the United Nations Emergency Force and the United Nations operation in the Congo. It would be unwise for the General Conference to recommend the adoption of a statutory amendment on such a complex issue before knowing what decision the General Assembly would take. He was therefore glad that the United Kingdom had decided not to press its amendment to a vote.

23. He appealed once more to all economically developed Member States to make pledges to the General Fund on a percentage basis in line with their percentage assessments for the regular budget, and hoped that those developed States which had supported the United Kingdom amendment would duly honour the principles they had espoused. He appealed to all developing States also to make at least a token contribution to the Fund.

24. The financial problem was of course crucial to the Agency's role as a purveyor of technical assistance, but greater discrimination was needed in the allocation of such assistance. The projects undertaken had in many instances had all too little impact on a country's development, and it might be necessary to have the results critically assessed by outside consultants.

25. The Agency should aim at acting as a catalyst in the establishment of direct links between atomic energy centres and institutions in the more advanced countries and newly burgeoning projects in the less developed countries.

2/ GC(VI)/205.

Such links of course implied direct bilateral aid rather than multilateral assistance, but the likelihood of political objections would be considerably less than in the case of direct aid from one Government to another. Furthermore, assistance of that nature was cheaper and easier to administer, and would probably be more effective in the long run than aid given by an international organization on a multilateral basis. The Seibersdorf Reactor Centre, for example, had opened its doors to Agency-sponsored students - a development which the Agency should pursue elsewhere.

26. With regard to the next conference on the peaceful utilization of atomic energy, he recalled the financial and other difficulties facing the United Nations; unless the latter took a decision in the near future, the General Conference should consider the possibility of the Agency itself organizing the conference and authorize the Board to provide accordingly in the 1964 budget. The Agency's more limited funds would clearly make it necessary to restrict the scope of the conference, but a smaller conference might achieve even more constructive results than an enormous one. The advice of the Scientific Advisory Committee would of course be essential, but if the conference was to be held in 1964, authorization should now be given to the Board and the Director General to proceed with the preparatory work - always on the assumption of course that the General Assembly did not at its seventeenth session decide to arrange the conference itself.

27. Safeguards were unlikely to be discussed in any detail during the current session; their future would no doubt depend largely on decisions due to be taken within a few months in Washington. For its part, South Africa had made a modest contribution to the system by arranging that sales of South African uranium to Japan should come under Agency safeguards.

28. The extensive series of nuclear tests that had taken place since the previous session had once again underlined the challenge to mankind which atomic energy represented. Delegates could best express their concern by stressing their confidence that the peaceful uses of nuclear energy would ultimately displace the construction and accumulation of atomic weapons as the primary objective of national and international policy.

29. Mr. ESCHAUZIER (Netherlands) considered that the different sectors of the proposed programme were well balanced and reflected a further consolidation of activities. As compared with 1962, the proposals for 1963 provided

for a modest, although not unimportant expansion. The Director General had indicated that, after a preparatory period, he would make suggestions concerning the future activities of the Agency. The Netherlands Government would give careful consideration to any such suggestions.

30. So far as the future was concerned, it was proposed to introduce long-term planning. While noting with approval the work that the Director General and the Board had already done in that respect - which moreover should be most vigorously pursued - the Netherlands delegation felt that the General Conference must not lose sight of the need for sound programming and budgeting in the shorter term; for practical reasons it might be well to introduce biennial budgeting as well as programming. In certain specialized agencies of the United Nations, e.g. the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) that system had proved of real value.

31. If the Conference wished to adopt biennial budgeting in addition to biennial programming, an amendment of the Statute would be necessary, but that should present no difficulties. A two-year cycle could be fitted into a long-term programme of, say, six years, in which case the General Conference would meet every other year. That offered certain advantages, particularly financial. His delegation would be willing to join with others in submitting a draft resolution on the whole series of questions, i.e. regular sessions of the General Conference every two years, biennial programming and biennial budgeting.

32. The amendment to the Statute proposed by the United Kingdom would, if accepted, provide a better basis for the operational activities than now existed and therefore had his full support.

33. Another amendment, relating to an increase in the number of seats on the Board in the interests of African Members of the Agency, had been approved at the preceding session but had not yet come into force[3/]. Should it not take effect before the elections to be held later in the session, two African States could be chosen during those elections and so take their rightful places on the Board as soon as the amendment did in fact become effective. There appeared to be no formal obstacle to that procedure; it was merely what common sense required.

3/ GC(V)/RES/92.

34. His Government had doubts as to the real need for an international centre for theoretical physics at present. However, even if those doubts were not shared by all delegations, was the Agency the obvious organization to found such a centre? His Government thought not, for the simple reason that, even though the theoretical aspects of nuclear physics might be a part of theoretical physics, the latter, taken as a whole, comprised a great deal more and went far beyond the province of the Agency. If a centre was wanted, the obvious body to start it was UNESCO, which was concerned with science in the broadest sense. The International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) could advise on the need for the centre and perhaps later assist UNESCO in establishing it.

35. His delegation thoroughly approved the Agency's work in connection with technical assistance, exchange and training, and scientific research; the Netherlands Government had offered three Type-II fellowships for 1962 to enable Agency-sponsored candidates to study in the Netherlands and hoped to act as host in September 1963 to a symposium on exponential and critical experiments.

36. On the subject of nuclear power, the establishment of a nuclear power station was under consideration in the Netherlands, and a decision regarding the final design for one of limited size was expected shortly. The Agency's studies on nuclear power costing had been realistic and had clearly shown the effect of radioactive waste disposal on aggregate costs. At least for the time being, the Agency should not undertake studies connected with the development of new types of reactors but concentrate on the further development of existing types which might be, or had actually proved to be, economic.

37. He expressed the hope that during the present session all parties would make a sincere effort to achieve the best possible results under prevailing circumstances, to the greater benefit of the Agency and of the peoples which looked to it for help.

38. Sir Roger MAKINS (United Kingdom) said he would restrict his remarks to the consideration of two of the most important items on the agenda, namely, long-term planning and the proposed United Kingdom amendment to Article XIV of the Statute.

39. The Agency's long-term programme was to come into operation during the United Nations Development Decade, which aimed at creating conditions in which

the national incomes of developing countries would be increasing by 5% a year by 1970; it would allow the Agency to play its proper role in helping its Member States to attain that objective, in co-ordination with the other organizations of the United Nations.

40. Planning experience in the United Kingdom and elsewhere had shown that it was often necessary to alter plans to meet changing circumstances or cope with new situations. Flexibility was particularly important in the plans of an organization like the Agency, which was dealing with a new technology.

41. The Agency's programme would naturally have to cover the three main aspects of its work: regulatory activities; conferences and the distribution of information; the provision of technical assistance. While much of the ground work for the regulatory codes had already been done, they would need to be reviewed and supplemented at fairly regular intervals. A long-term programme of scientific meetings would help to avoid having too many meetings in any one year, and each subject would receive attention in a sequence and on a scale depending on the progress made with it. Revisions of the regulatory codes and issues of the admirable review series could be timed in relation to the relevant scientific meeting. Priorities and objectives in the provision of technical assistance should be closely related to the needs and wishes of Member States, and geared moreover to their national plans; the reports of the various missions sent to such countries contained valuable information on that point.

42. To use its limited resources to the best advantage the Agency should concentrate - as the ad hoc group on co-ordination set up by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) had recommended - on those areas where the need for action was especially great and the opportunities for achieving results particularly promising. The drafters of the plan must of course apply a critical judgement of their own to what the Member States proposed.

43. He could quite understand that many Member States wanted to have their own nuclear power programmes as soon as possible. However, United Kingdom experience showed that a nuclear power programme required a really massive effort. The capital cost of the first ten civil nuclear power stations in the United Kingdom would be over £500 million. In 1961, the United Kingdom

Atomic Energy Authority had devoted some £25 million to all forms of reactor development and employed some 1750 fully qualified scientists and engineers. That would no doubt help to establish nuclear power on a sound economic basis in the United Kingdom and provide experience that would also be profitable to many other Member States. While, in certain cases, special circumstances in a less developed country might make nuclear power an economic proposition in the fairly near future, it was none the less true that in general the Agency - following the report submitted by the Board[4/] - should concentrate on helping Member States to prepare the way for atomic energy by, for example, undertaking economic assessments, advising on problems of safety and training the necessary staff.

44. On the other hand, the Agency could immediately help almost every developing Member State in applying radioisotope techniques in medicine, agriculture and industry; the survey of savings resulting from the use of radioisotopes in industry should provide valuable information. The Director General had suggested that the Agency should particularly encourage the use of radioisotopes during the United Nations Development Decade. The United Nations and the specialized agencies might well have to concentrate on solving the urgent problems of food and health facing many Member States, and those States might feel that the Agency should avoid making unduly heavy demands on the limited resources that would be available for the Development Decade.

45. However, although some of the specialized agencies had a legitimate interest in certain branches of nuclear energy, the particular responsibilities of the Agency ought to be recognized and effective co-ordination assured. The declaration just made by the representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations was particularly reassuring in that regard.

46. On the subject of the United Kingdom contribution to the work of the Agency, he recalled that, in addition to its financial contributions, the United Kingdom had during the preceding year provided the services of experts without charge for short technical assistance missions and paid their travelling expenses. The same would be done in 1963. Twelve places for Agency fellows had been offered at the radioisotope laboratory at Wantage and six more would soon be offered. It had also decided to offer Agency fellows facilities for studying the experience acquired in the construction, commissioning and building

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4/ GC(VI)/195.

of Bradwell nuclear power station. Of 813 papers presented at Agency scientific meetings in 1961, 94 had come from the United Kingdom.

47. Referring to the proposed United Kingdom amendment to the Statute, he said it was usually considered an essential condition of effective planning that the authors of the plan should know approximately what funds would be available to carry it out. With the Agency, that was unfortunately not true at the moment. The Operational Budget was financed largely by the voluntary contributions of Member States. Those had fallen consistently short of the targets set annually by the Board and the Conference.

48. The facts, although well known, were worth repeating. In 1959, only $1.2 million had been contributed against a target of $1.5 million. In 1960, the target had remained at $1.5 million, but voluntary contributions had fallen to $1 million. In 1961 the target had gone up to $1.8 million but contributions had not exceeded the 1959 level. In 1962 the target had been increased to $2 million but, despite a strong appeal from the General Conference the preceding year[5], only 17 out of 77 Member States had paid their full share, and contributions had risen by only $100 000. It was sad that so much time was spent in preparing a programme and budget that was most unlikely to be carried out in full.

49. When the Statute had been adopted in 1956, it had been thought that the Operational Budget would reflect the financial side of the Agency's work as a broker in the supply of nuclear equipment and fissionable materials. However, its activities had not developed in that way, while the technical assistance work had developed to an extent which doubtless no one had foreseen. There was reason to rejoice in that, but it also meant that the relevant provisions of the Statute, adopted with quite a different aim in mind, should be reconsidered.

50. The United Kingdom had therefore introduced an amendment to the Statute with a view to establishing a single budget, to be financed by the assessed contributions of Member States.

51. In taking that initiative, the United Kingdom felt to some extent responsible for the existing state of affairs. For in 1956 it had pressed, for reasons which seemed good at the time, for separate regular and operational budgets.

5/ GC(V)/RES/101.

52. He believed that an amendment on the lines proposed would, if adopted, enable the Agency to undertake effective long-term planning and to develop the work which had been so well begun despite the many difficulties caused by uncertain and inadequate funds.

53. Three main arguments had been advanced against the amendment. The first was that expenditure would get out of hand. It certainly could. But to judge by the record of the past six years, the Agency had on the whole shown a keen sense of responsibility in applying the provisions of the Statute under the various rules of procedure relating to finance. It seemed, moreover, that if the whole programme were financed from assessed contributions, Member States would be still more likely to weigh carefully the value of the programme against the cost.

54. Secondly, it had been suggested that the amendment would impose a severe burden on the less developed Member States which received technical assistance. He did not think that was really true. To begin with, the scale of contributions was already weighted according to the Member's ability to pay and there were special reductions in the case of countries with a low per capita income. Indeed, if the proposed amendment had been in force in 1962, each of the Member States entitled to receive technical assistance under the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance (EPTA) would on average have had to pay an extra $3000, but on the other hand would have received $17 000 more in technical assistance from the Agency. It might, however, be possible to arrange for the less developed countries to pay part of their contribution to a single budget in their own currencies.

55. Thirdly, it had been said that finance by assessed contributions would be contrary to the principles of technical assistance. It was certainly true that the main technical assistance programmes of the United Nations were financed by voluntary contributions. It was good that the Agency should draw upon those sources and it should continue to do so. That did not mean, however, that the Agency should have its own voluntary fund, as was the case at the moment; that was certainly not the usual practice in other agencies. The Agency should manage its affairs in the way that was best for its own interests and those of Member States.

56. His delegation therefore considered that the proposed change was in the immediate and the long-term interests of the Agency. Although a large number of delegations were, in principle, in favour of the change, there were a number of doubts and hesitations. He therefore proposed that the General Conference have a "second reading debate" right away, on the general merits of the proposal, and that the Board examine in detail the amendment and any other relevant suggestion and report its conclusions to the next session of the General Conference. He intended to introduce a draft resolution to that effect.

57. The United Kingdom did not at all underestimate the importance of other aspects of the Agency's work to which he had not specifically referred. He had chosen to speak on items on the agenda which appeared to be of greatest importance for the Agency's future. He was confident that constructive effort on the part of all Member States would enable the Agency to play its proper part in the United Nations Development Decade.

58. Mr. KAKAR (Afghanistan) stated that Afghanistan had already begun to take action on its decision to embark on the development of atomic energy for peaceful purposes. He appreciated the assistance which the Agency had given but hoped for even more. For example, the equipment which Afghanistan had received to set up its nuclear physics laboratory was inadequate and more was badly needed. Equipment to a value of $30 000 was soon to be delivered by the Agency under the 1961-62 EPTA programme, and the Agency had recently indicated that it would also be able, under its regular programme for 1963, to supply the additional equipment requested. The advice of the nuclear physics expert provided had been extremely valuable; the expert's mission had now been extended and it was hoped that his help would be available for some years.

59. Afghanistan hoped to set up radioisotope research laboratories for work in agriculture, medicine, industry, and so forth. Thanks to the Agency expert, a medical radioisotope project - supported by some eminent doctors - already existed. It might be necessary to ask the Agency for additional equipment for the laboratories in question and, if so, he hoped the Agency would be able to grant the request.

60. The radiocaesium equipment requested from the Agency for use in diagnosis and treatment would be of immense service since some doctors had been trained abroad in its use. He therefore hoped the Agency could supply it soon.

61. Representatives of Afghanistan had participated in Agency conferences, symposia and courses in various countries, e.g. the regional training course held in Athens on the medical application of radioisotopes. His country hoped to send representatives to the course, in Turkey, on the agricultural applications of radioisotopes, and to participate in other similar meetings. Afghanistan would be glad to act as host to some such Agency meeting.

62. He was glad that four Agency fellowships had been awarded to Afghan candidates under the 1962 programme.

63. He hoped to see fulfilled the hopes of the non-aligned countries for a treaty on nuclear disarmament and the banning of nuclear tests so that, under the Agency's guidance, atomic energy would in future be used solely for peaceful purposes.

64. Mr. McKNIGHT (Australia) said he would refer to only two questions: the importance of the Agency's regulatory functions and the need to curtail meetings of the General Conference.

65. His delegation had said at the fourth regular session that the Agency should take steps to facilitate the free movement of nuclear materials, from raw materials such as uranium oxide concentrates to carefully packed fissionable materials. As atomic energy developed and more and more reactors came into operation, ever-growing numbers of fuel elements - new or irradiated - were being transported over the world's trade routes. But their movement was hindered in many ways.

66. In view of its geographical position, Australia was particularly interested in seeing the Agency draw up an international convention to regulate, and thereby encourage, world trade in nuclear materials. Australia had a choice of four sea routes linking it with Europe. Along each of them were the ports of several countries, all Members of the Agency and all, as matters now stood, enforcing their own regulations, conditions or criteria regarding the use of ports by ships transporting nuclear materials. That problem was being encountered more and more frequently by many Member States.

67. All Member States were committed, under Article II of the Statute, "to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world". They should therefore, by common agreement,

establish regulations to govern the transport of nuclear materials. His Government noted with satisfaction that the Agency planned to organize a diplomatic conference on the subject in 1963. It would take an active part in the conference, and hoped that the outcome would be a convention that could be quickly ratified by all Member States.

68. Pending the adoption and ratification of that convention, which would represent a great step forward, he appealed to Member States to view with sympathy the problems of their fellow Members in connection with transport - and also in connection with civil liability for nuclear damage, about which little had yet been done to standardize regulations.

69. He must next refer to the need for the General Conference to impose certain limitations on itself in the interests of economy and efficiency. As many delegations had repeatedly pointed out, the peaceful uses of atomic energy had not followed the lines expected when the Agency had been set up. In particular, reactors had not assumed the role in the production of power expected of them. Many countries had, like Australia, set up atomic energy commissions so as to provide, as part of the national administration, scientists who could advise on the desirability of introducing nuclear power, then expected to come into widespread use within four or five years. To make use of the skills in question in the meantime, several countries had begun research on reactor technology - research which had brought to light many more difficulties than had been foreseen eight or ten years previously; on the whole, the power programme had dropped behind. Australia had made some progress in the technology of materials, but still had a lot to do before the high-temperature gas-cooled reactor could be thought of as entirely satisfactory.

70. As a result of those holdups, the use of resources - especially financial - had to be very carefully considered, nationally and internationally. The coming year's study on Agency long-term planning would corroborate the validity of the suggestion he was going to put forward.

71. It was all the more necessary, when resources were limited, to cut down on administrative expenditure. That had always been a fundamental principle in the Agency, but he nevertheless feared that its administrative machinery was unduly heavy. At the fourth regular session the delegate from the

Netherlands had suggested that the Conference meet only every second year[6/], a suggestion that had been taken up again by the Governor from Pakistan during the June meetings of the Board. While the Statute might legally preclude such a decision, it nevertheless appeared possible for the Conference to curtail its meetings to the greatest extent compatible with adequate discussion. He in no way wished to paralyse debate in the Conference, but was convinced that it would now be possible to reduce the length of General Conference sessions, every second year, to one week.

72. It was clear that the Agency programme was becoming stabilized and that new items requiring decisions were less numerous than during the Agency's first years. It was worth noting, in that connection, that the first four Boards had held 100, 70, 56 and 48 meetings, respectively; the fifth Board had met only 28 times. Thus it should not be impossible for the General Conference also to assist in reducing administrative expenditure by shortening its sessions. A first step in that direction had already been taken, as it had been decided to fix Wednesday, 26 September 1962, as the provisional closing date for the present session. The suggestion therefore was that the General Conference meet for two weeks one year and only one week the following year, and that what might be called the "long" sessions and the "short" sessions should continue to alternate. If, as he greatly hoped, biennial programmes were introduced, the Agency's programme would have to be examined only every two years and it would be quite easy to agree that the general debate should take place only once in two years. The "short" sessions would handle statutory business such as the adoption of resolutions on appropriations, examination of the Board's report, the election of Board Members, and so on, although obviously they would also have to deal with a few important matters. A similar practice had been followed by other international organizations which, after meeting frequently at the outset, had decided to hold their general conferences every two years and have biannual meetings of their executive bodies.

73. He did not wish to put forward a formal proposal, but merely a suggestion which, he hoped, would be given serious consideration by all Member States during the following two years.

6/ GC(IV)/OR.39, para. 68.

74. Mr. ERRERA (Belgium) expressed his Government's satisfaction with the Agency's part in the voluntary transfer by Belgium, to the Congo, of the uranium contained in the TRICO reactor of Lovanium University in Leopoldville. The Agency's co-operation had made it possible to make a gift to the Congo of the uranium in the TRICO reactor that Belgium had purchased from the United States in 1958, and conclude an agreement for the supply of additional uranium by the United States and an agreement between the Agency and the Congo relating to Agency assistance in connection with the TRICO research reactor.

75. Belgium had also been glad to welcome to Brussels the special session of the Diplomatic Conference on Maritime Law, held under the joint auspices of the Agency and the Belgian Government, which had resulted in the adoption of a draft convention on liability of operators of nuclear ships.

76. In general, the Agency's regulatory and legal work had the full attention and support of the Belgian Government, which considered that atomic programmes could be properly developed in Member States only after carefully thought-out legislation to govern atomic activities on sea and land had been established. Belgium was working on a reactor for ship propulsion called VULCAIN - a water-pressurized reactor incorporating the principle of variable moderation, based on changes in the neutron spectrum obtained by varying the moderating properties of a mixture of heavy and light water.

77. On 16 May 1962, the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority and a Belgian research and development syndicate had signed an agreement at Brussels providing for the execution, over a period of several years, of a joint programme to determine whether the VULCAIN system was economically viable. The programme was in three parts: the first related exclusively to the theoretical and experimental study of the neutronics of the reactor; the second was concerned with the technological study of certain parts of the reactor and the nuclear installation, and the relevant tests; the third part would consist of power tests on a VULCAIN-type core in an existing installation, to determine its operating characteristics and performance. If the project proved to be economic, the reactor could be used to equip 20 megawatt land-based nuclear power plants, and in that form it would be particularly useful to developing countries whose need for small and medium power nuclear generators had often been demonstrated by the Agency.

78. As to the Agency's scientific work, it was, of course, difficult to define its exact field of activity in advance, but it seemed that, given its Statute and staff, the Agency should be able to help in promoting the natural sciences connected with atomic energy. The Agency should have priority in the study of international scientific questions relating to the nuclear sector, all duplication being carefully avoided.

79. In his opinion, the Agency, in collaboration with the other competent organizations of the United Nations family, could be an innovator in the teaching of nuclear science. Since the problem of training was becoming increasingly acute and there was a lack of teachers, the Agency should promote and encourage instruction in nuclear techniques by audio-visual methods. The films to be shown in educational establishments or transmitted by television would be produced with the assistance of the most eminent scientists for each subject and of university professors and secondary school teachers, who should compare their views and decide what subjects and concepts were essential for training future leaders in nuclear work. Such films would be particularly valuable to developing countries, which would no longer be absolutely obliged to send their nationals abroad to study certain subjects; the subjects in question could be taught in their own countries, in their own languages and at the same scientific level as in the western countries. Furthermore, industries which gave their staff vocational training could use some parts of the films, and they could be shown at evening classes for young people with scientific and technical aptitudes who had been deprived of a formal education by economic or other circumstances. The use of extracts from such films in ordinary television programmes would serve to arouse interest in a scientific career.

80. Those might be bold suggestions, but they certainly deserved consideration at a time when strictly traditional methods were no longer able to meet constantly increasing needs.

81. Mr. HUMBERT (Switzerland) observed that during the past year, under the enlightened leadership of its Director General, the Agency had completed a varied programme, in which Switzerland had participated insofar as its resources allowed. Although its main activities had been somewhat different from those originally envisaged, the Agency had done constructive work in atomic energy - a field in which international collaboration had proved necessary - and

Switzerland had benefited from that work in many ways. Nevertheless, co-ordination with the programmes of other organizations could be improved, especially in view of the tremendous tasks that remained to be accomplished (particularly in the provision of assistance to developing countries); having regard to the shortage of funds and personnel, administrative staff should be reduced to a minimum.

82. The Swiss delegation had noted with satisfaction that the administrative staff was to be reduced, and that it was proposed to draw up long-term programmes which should make some rationalization possible. As the programmes included in the Operational Budget were already partly financed from EPTA funds (insofar as they related to technical assistance to developing countries), it seemed desirable that funds allocated for such assistance should be centralized and that the financing of technical assistance should be entirely taken over by EPTA. Once that co-ordination existed the Swiss delegation would be willing to consider the extent to which its contribution to EPTA could be adjusted to the new situation. It considered, moreover, that Operational Budget activities unrelated to technical assistance should be financed by Member States in the same way as the Regular Budget.

83. With a view to devoting the major part of the Agency's resources to the peaceful uses of atomic energy, the Swiss delegation would welcome a substantial reduction of expenditure in respect of the General Conference and the Board. If, for instance, some restriction could be imposed on political discussions - which in fact were merely a repetition of opinions expressed in the United Nations - it would certainly be possible to reduce the length of the meetings of those two bodies and the expenses incurred. Another step in the same direction would be to give the Director General wider powers. For the Board's agenda clearly showed that a large part of that body's time was spent on matters which could easily be settled by the Secretariat on the basis of general directives. In addition to being costly and wasting valuable time, the complication of comparatively simple questions by administrative formalities discouraged those who ought to have recourse to the Agency's services, with the result that full advantage was not taken of what it had to offer. He hoped that the Board would study that problem and expedite the Agency's work by delegating part of its responsibilities.

84. Next he wished to comment briefly on the Agency's activities during the past year and on the proposed programme for 1963.

85. By granting fellowships and organizing courses and symposia, the Agency had enabled a considerable number of research workers and technicians to widen their knowledge of various branches of atomic science. The Swiss delegation was glad to be able to say that many Swiss nationals had benefited from those activities. It suggested, however, that in order to keep a better check on the value of the fellowship programmes, the Agency should continue to follow the careers of fellows engaged in long-term studies and obtain reports on them when appropriate.

86. All research workers in theoretical physics were very interested in the efforts that were being made to establish an international centre for nuclear physics, and Swiss scientists had welcomed the Agency's decision to organize a summer course. The favourable comments of those taking part showed that the course had achieved its purpose, but other experiments of that kind seemed necessary before more far-reaching decisions were taken.

87. The Agency had also organized a number of symposia, and the Swiss delegation hoped the Secretariat would continue to collaborate with scientific bodies in order to avoid holding meetings on the same subject at too short an interval. With regard to the uses of atomic energy in general, the Agency had addressed and would certainly continue to address inquiries to Member States. Replies often took a considerable time to complete, and such questionnaires should be as few as possible.

88. The construction, on an international basis, of power reactors for demonstration purposes had been suggested with a view to accelerating the development of peaceful uses of atomic energy. The Swiss delegation agreed with the Director General that the Agency should not undertake such projects; their execution raised many problems, particularly for small countries like Switzerland which had limited manpower and financial resources and consequently could not collaborate actively.

89. He expressed his satisfaction with the Agency's work on radioisotopes, particularly that done at the Seibersdorf Laboratory, which was giving excellent assistance to developing countries - a matter in which Switzerland was specially interested.

90. In short, the Swiss Government had no doubts about the usefulness of the Agency and was grateful for its collaboration during the past year. To the best of its ability Switzerland would continue to work with the competent organs of the Agency. He was awaiting his Government's instructions concerning Switzerland's voluntary contribution to the General Fund for 1963 and would revert to that question later.

91. Mr. BOONWAAT (Burma) said he did not intend to make a detailed criticism of the Board's report but assured the General Conference that his Government and the Institute of Applied Research of the Union of Burma had always followed the Agency's activities with great interest - particularly those relating to the uses of radioisotopes in agriculture and medicine.

92. He recalled the importance for Burma of the production and export of rice, on which depended the development and industrialization of the country and the improvement of the standard of living of its inhabitants; rice was, moreover, a basic food for the constantly increasing population of Asia. An improvement in rice-growing, through the use of more economical and efficient methods, would mark the advent of a new era, not only for millions of Burmese farmers, but also for all the under-nourished populations of neighbouring countries. Those millions of human beings obviously took little interest in highly refined or spectacular methods, but they were impatiently awaiting the day when the use of radioisotopes would make fertilizers more efficient, improve the quality of the seed and increase crop yields. He therefore expressed the hope that the Agency's efforts to improve the lot of under-nourished peoples would be crowned with success.

93. He thanked the Agency and its Member States for the technical assistance given to Burma in the form of expert services, equipment and fellowships.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.