



International Atomic Energy Agency

# General Conference

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Ninth regular session

## OFFICIAL RECORD OF THE NINETY-FIRST PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Tokyo Prince Hotel, Tokyo,  
on Tuesday, 21 September 1965, at 12 noon

Temporary President: Mr. ESCHAUZIER (Netherlands)

President: Mr. ASAKAI (Japan)

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\* GC(IX)/295.

The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(IX)/INF/82/Rev.2.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT declared open the ninth regular session of the General Conference.

2. In accordance with Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure, he invited the Conference to observe one minute of silence dedicated to prayer or meditation.

All present rose and stood in silence for one minute.

3. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT wished first to express to the Japanese Government the Conference's appreciation of the offer which had made it possible for the ninth regular session to be held in Tokyo. The excellent arrangements made for the opening meeting were a happy augury for a smooth and successful session.

4. It was a great privilege for him to welcome, in the name of the Conference, Mr. Eisaku Sato, Prime Minister of Japan, and Mr. Shokichi Uehara, Minister of State and Chairman of the Japan Atomic Energy Commission, as well as the many other distinguished Japanese officials who were present. He would warmly thank them all, together with other Government officials concerned, for the steps taken to facilitate the work of the Conference.

5. He recalled that the previous day had been the ninth anniversary of the opening of the Conference on the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the largest international conference that up to that time had ever met. The year before that the first United Nations International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy had shown the world how great were the opportunities and benefits that the peaceful uses of atomic energy could bestow. The Statute Conference had offered means of bringing those benefits within the reach of nearly all countries.

6. In the intervening decade, the useful as well as the destructive potential of applied nuclear science had vastly increased. Nuclear power had emerged from a long period of trial and experiment and was competing vigorously in the world energy market. The Agency too had overcome its initial difficulties, and its responsibilities were broadening. Its first task had been to adapt its role to political and technical realities that had not been foreseen when the Statute was drafted - for instance, the unexpectedly high cost of the first nuclear power plants, the consequent

slowing down of nuclear energy programmes and the wide spectrum of political opinion in the Board of Governors. Despite those handicaps the Agency had, in its early years, laid solid foundations for much of its work. Apart from arranging a useful series of scientific meetings, it had devised a dynamic programme to foster the use of radioisotopes and had pioneered a programme of international support for research. The classical methods of technical assistance of the United Nations family had been adapted to the needs of atomic energy and a unique project in the United Nations family had been completed when the Agency Laboratory came into operation in 1960.

7. Despite that useful work the Agency had, in its first years, still been a long way from fulfilling the hopes embodied in its Statute. Then, around 1961 or 1962, the picture had begun to change. The vast investments that had been made to develop nuclear power had begun to bear fruit. A growing optimism had come fully to light at the third International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy in 1964 when, moreover, prospects had emerged for using nuclear energy to produce fresh water from the sea. The technical progress achieved had been accompanied by, and perhaps linked to, an emerging consensus between the major Powers about the work the Agency should do and the way it should do it. That consensus was perhaps one of the most heartening recent events in international co-operation. It was particularly apparent in the Board of Governors, which was gradually becoming an effective executive body, completing its business quickly and smoothly.

8. It could not be repeated too often that given such broad agreement among its Members, the Agency became an exceedingly effective instrument of international co-operation. It could be hoped that the Agency would be called upon increasingly to give technical support to programmes that were agreed upon in other forums, and he believed the extent to which that would happen would largely depend on the degree to which it concentrated on building up its own highly specialized and technical competence. All delegations were aware that the world lived in the shadow of an overwhelming nuclear threat and that it was more than ever indispensable to help maintain the bridges of understanding between nations. It was not the least important aspect of atomic energy that it had provided a strong impetus to joint international action. Indeed the authors of the Statute had envisaged the Agency as a means of co-operation between nations in the very field that caused the most profound concern - atomic energy. The Agency's history

showed that such co-operation was best achieved when it went quietly about its proper technical tasks. It was in that way that it could best help to meet the hopes expressed by the United Nations in designating 1965 as International Co-operation Year.

9. The fact that 1965 was also already halfway through the United Nations Development Decade lent added urgency to the increasingly important role which the Agency was clearly destined to play in the industrial advance of Asia and other developing regions as a result of the imminent spread of nuclear power to developing countries and the related prospect of nuclear desalting.

10. It was in the nature of progress that each step forward opened fresh opportunities and presented new problems. The need to increase the Agency's help to developing countries made it even more important to obtain adequate financial resources for the Agency's various assistance programmes. The advance of nuclear technology posed the vast international problem of how to speed up the exchange and handling of scientific information. And the spread of nuclear power and radioisotope techniques would involve the need for more trained technologists and would raise grave problems of waste management and health and safety control. Apart from its important work in developing a widely accepted system of safeguards to ensure that its assistance was used only for peaceful purposes, the Agency had already done creditable, if not spectacular, preparatory work in all those areas and he was confident that the present session, held at a time when the opportunities before the Agency were widening and in a country which had made spectacular progress resulting in a high degree of industrial and scientific development, would make the Agency an even more effective instrument for promoting the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world.

11. He then called upon the Prime Minister of Japan who had graciously consented to address the Conference.

12. Mr. SATO (Prime Minister of Japan) said that it was a great honour to say a few words of greeting at the opening meeting of the ninth regular session of the General Conference. On behalf of the Government and the people of Japan, he wished to extend a warm and hearty welcome to the delegates of all Member States, and to representatives of the United Nations and other international organizations.

13. Two years previously he had had occasion to attend the seventh session of the General Conference in Vienna and had been deeply impressed by the dedicated efforts of delegates and of the Agency's Secretariat, all clearly motivated by the common ideal of promoting the peaceful uses of atomic energy.

14. The Prime Minister, the Government and the people of Japan had, accordingly, been extremely pleased when the General Conference unanimously accepted the Japanese Government's invitation to hold its ninth session in Tokyo. He wished to express his gratitude for the goodwill and the spirit of co-operation shown by Member States, as well as by the Director General and his staff, in making the Tokyo Conference a reality.

15. That the Agency should have decided to hold its General Conference in an Asian country was ample proof of the fact that the peaceful uses of atomic energy were no longer the exclusive preserve of certain advanced countries, but had become a matter of common interest to the world at large. In recent years the world had witnessed a remarkable spate of progress in science and technology in general, but research and development had been particularly rapid in atomic energy. The uses of atomic energy, for power generation and desalting of sea water, in isotope applications, and so on, were becoming ever more numerous in areas as widely varied as industry, agriculture and medical science. The Agency's determination to use the tremendous potentialities of atomic energy for peaceful purposes only, as a contribution to welfare and prosperity throughout the world rather than for the destruction of mankind, was a source of great hope.

16. In that connection he thought it fitting to pay tribute to the wisdom and foresight of Dwight Eisenhower, former President of the United States, who as long ago as 1953 had made the famous "atoms for peace" proposal out of which the Agency had evolved.

17. Ever since 1957 Japan had been unstinting in its efforts to help the Agency perform its proper functions of promoting the peaceful uses of atomic energy and of preventing the diversion of nuclear materials for military purposes. He now took the opportunity to reassure the Conference of the Japanese Government's firm intention to do its best, in co-operation with the Agency, to contribute to research and development work on the peaceful uses of atomic energy in the developing States of the world, particularly those of Asia.

18. In closing he expressed the hope that the Conference would have useful discussions on the topics before it and that its meetings would be brought to a successful conclusion. At the same time he hoped that participants from abroad would be able to see for themselves what Japan was accomplishing in the peaceful uses of atomic energy, and that they would take home with them a host of pleasant memories of their stay in Japan.

#### ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT

19. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT invited nominations for the office of President.

20. Mr. VEJYANT-RANGSRISHT (Thailand) said he had great pleasure in proposing Mr. Asakai (Japan), whose long and distinguished career as a diplomat made him especially fitted to direct and guide the work of the session.

21. Sir Philip BAXTER (Australia) seconded, and Mr. BILLIG (Poland) supported, the nomination.

22. Mr. Asakai (Japan) was elected President of the General Conference for its ninth regular session by acclamation.

Mr. Asakai (Japan) took the Chair.

23. The PRESIDENT thanked the Conference for the great honour it had paid to the Government and people of Japan in electing him President for the ninth session.

24. He had been given a great responsibility to discharge and wished to assure delegates that he would do everything in his power to merit their confidence and trust. It would not be an easy task to preside over the deliberations of a Conference responsible for promoting the peaceful uses of atomic energy, particularly since the discipline was still so young and growing so fast.

25. He had for many years taken a keen interest in the prospects which the advent of nuclear power had opened up to mankind. Many had feared earlier that the world would run short of conventional sources of energy. Those fears had now been left behind and there was no reason why the problem of adequate power supplies should be a cause for concern in the future.

26. The delegate from the Netherlands had referred to that development earlier in the meeting and had given a very useful account of the genesis of the Agency and the steady growth of its activities during the preceding eight years. He personally wished to say how grateful he was for that account and, at the same time, to express to the Netherlands delegate the gratitude of the whole Conference for his able conduct of the opening proceedings.

27. In a perfect world, nuclear power and the enormous advantages resulting from man's discovery of how to utilize the energy at the heart of matter ought to represent only a positive contribution to man's age-old struggle for a better life. Unfortunately, as the people of Japan knew only too well, mankind's use of nuclear power could be a scourge as well as a blessing.

28. No one would deny that it was the duty of men of good will everywhere to do all they could to prevent atomic energy from being used for destructive purposes ever again. Although that was the clear duty of delegates to the Conference as individuals, he wished to suggest that it was hardly the task of the present Conference. The aim in the days immediately ahead should be to take decisions that would enable the Agency to pursue its statutory task of contributing to the increased use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes - steadily and with growing intensity, but within the means that were at present available for the purpose. In so doing it might also be able to take some steps to prepare for the day, which would surely come, when greatly increased means would be available for the work the Agency had been set up to perform.

29. The fact that the present session of the General Conference was being held in an Asian country, where the entire people and Government were united in the belief that atomic energy should be used only for peaceful purposes, might well be a good omen for its success as a further milestone in the Agency's endeavour "to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world". He was sure that he could count on the full co-operation of all delegates in making the session a success.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.

