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GENERAL CONFERENCE

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EIGHTEENTH REGULAR SESSION: 16–20 SEPTEMBER 1974

RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Neue Hofburg, Vienna, on Monday, 16 September 1974, at 3.5 p.m.

Temporary President: Mr. BOSWELL (Australia)
President: Mr. MEDINA (Philippines)

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* A provisional version of this document was issued on 24 September 1974.

** GC(XVIII)/523.

THE RECORD

OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT declared the eighteenth regular session of the General Conference open.
2. In accordance with Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure he invited the delegates 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 welcomed those present, particularly Mr. Veselsky, Secretary of State in the Federal Chancellery of the Republic of Austria, and Mr. Gratz, Mayor of Vienna, who were honouring the opening meeting of the session with their presence.
4. Recalling the observations he had made at the end of the preceding session on the subject of energy resources, [1] he said that the events which had occurred since then had done nothing to weaken his impression that the Agency was the institution best fitted to make a substantial contribution to solving the numerous problems associated with energy. He hoped that the work of the present session would represent a step in that direction.

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT

5. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT invited nominations for the office of President of the Conference.
6. Mr. FUJIYAMA (Japan) nominated Mr. F. A. Medina, the delegate of the Philippines. He said that Mr. Medina was Chairman of the Philippines National Office for the Promotion of Sciences, and in that capacity was playing an important part in the nuclear energy field. Since 1958 he had been participating actively in the work of the Agency, and had held the important Secretariat post of Director of the Division of Technical Assistance. Since 1971 he had led the Philippine delegation to the annual session of the General Conference, and since the preceding September he had been representing his country on the Board of Governors.
7. Miss RAY (United States of America) and Mr. ANAK AGUNG (Indonesia) supported the nomination.
 - 8. Mr. Medina (Philippines) was elected President of the General Conference for its eighteenth regular session by acclamation.
 - Mr. Medina (Philippines) took the Chair.

[1] Summarized in document GC(XVII)/OR. 167, para. 38.

9. The PRESIDENT thanked all delegations for their support for his candidature and was highly appreciative of the honour which his election signified for his country.
10. After the moment of fear which the atom had brought about had passed, the Philippines had undertaken a programme for the utilization of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes which had enabled it to make considerable progress in that realm of technology.
11. He intended to do his best to direct the work of the General Conference, and requested all delegations to lend him their support in striving for the success of the session which had just opened.

APPOINTMENT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

12. The PRESIDENT proposed, in accordance with Rule 28 of the Rules of Procedure, that a Credentials Committee should be appointed consisting of the following nine Members: Belgium, Costa Rica, Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Arab Republic of Egypt, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America.
 - 13. The proposal was accepted.

ELECTION OF THE VICE-PRESIDENTS

14. The PRESIDENT recalled that, under Rule 34 of the Rules of Procedure, the Conference was required to elect its Vice-Presidents after the election of the Chairmen of the two Main Committees. He therefore proposed to suspend the plenary meeting for a short time to enable the two Committees to elect their Chairmen.
 - The meeting was suspended at 3.35 p. m. and resumed at 3.45 p. m.
15. The PRESIDENT invited nominations for the eight posts of Vice-President of the Conference.
16. Mr. NEUMANN (Czechoslovakia) nominated the delegates of Argentina, Canada, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Sudan and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.
17. Mr. PETRI (Sweden) seconded those nominations.
 - 18. The delegates of the Members nominated were elected to the eight Vice-Presidencies.

APPOINTMENT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE

19. The PRESIDENT recalled that under Rule 40 of the Rules of Procedure the Conference was required to elect four additional Members to the General Committee. He invited nominations.
20. Mr. BOSWELL (Australia) nominated the delegates of the Federal Republic of Germany,

Hungary, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

21. Mr. ALLOTEY (Ghana) seconded those nominations.

● 22. The delegates of the Members nominated were elected to the General Committee, which was thus duly appointed in compliance with Rule 40 of the Rules of Procedure.

APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE AGENCY (GC(XVIII)/521, 522)

23. Mr. HAN (Republic of Korea), speaking to document GC(XVIII)/522 on the application by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for membership of the Agency, recalled that, as he had said at a meeting of the Board of Governors in June, his Government was not opposed to that application. His position was based on a foreign policy statement dated 23 June 1973 in which the following principles had been laid down: the Republic of Korea would endeavour, by initiating a dialogue between South Korea and North Korea, to consolidate peace in the area and achieve reunification of the country; North Korea and South Korea should not interfere in each other's internal affairs; the Republic of Korea would not oppose the entry, together with its own entry, of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea into the United Nations and other international organizations if that would contribute to a relaxation of tension and an intensification of international co-operation. He expressed the hope that the admission of North Korea to the Agency would help bring about a dialogue and promote exchanges between South and North Korea, thereby hastening national reconciliation.

24. Mr. ANAK AGUNG (Indonesia) said he supported without reservation the application by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for membership of the Agency and hoped that country would also become a member of other international organizations.

25. Mr. HELLAL (Algeria) said he was convinced that the admission to membership of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would strengthen the principle of universality which should prevail in the Agency, the work of which would thereby gain in efficiency.

26. Mr. IRAOLAGOITIA (Argentina), Mr. ORTIZ-LOPEZ (Costa Rica) and Mr. ORLANDO RODRIGUEZ (Cuba) supported the application for membership for the same reasons.

27. Mr. ANINOIU (Romania) welcomed the application for membership of the Agency submitted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, a country attached to peace which, through its political initiative, had opened the way towards the normalization of relations between North Korea and South Korea and the realization of the legitimate aspiration of the Korean people to live in a unified State created through the efforts of the

entire nation, by peaceful means, without any interference from outside.

28. He called attention to the remarkable success of the Korean people in building up the country and the international prestige of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and considered that its admission to the Agency would be of great importance for the Agency itself and in strengthening the part the latter played in regard to the peaceful uses of atomic energy.

29. His delegation wished to emphasize that the admission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the Agency was in no way linked with the manoeuvres which aimed, by using the United Nations, at institutionalizing the division of Korea and preventing the dialogue which sought to achieve the peaceful reunification of North Korea and South Korea.

30. Mr. TAPE (United States of America) said that his delegation would not oppose the Conference's approval by consensus of the admission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the Agency. It hoped that that country's association with the Agency would contribute to stable and peaceful relations between the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and to the admission of both countries to the United Nations.

31. Mr. FUJIYAMA (Japan) said that his delegation, as it had already stated in June to the Board, welcomed the spirit of détente underlying the position of the Government of the Republic of Korea with respect to the application for admission by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

32. Mr. PLAKA (Albania) said he strongly supported the justified application for membership of the Agency by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, a sovereign State which had achieved significant success in the economic sphere and in science and scientific applications.

33. Mr. MOROKHOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) supported without reservation the applications for membership of the Agency by Mauritius (GC(XVIII)/521) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (GC(XVIII)/522). The latter had made considerable progress in all areas of economic development, including the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

34. Mr. TALABHAT (Thailand) said that he, too, was in favour of admitting the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the Agency. He had no doubt that that country would faithfully discharge its obligations under the Statute.

35. Mr. UNGERER (Federal Republic of Germany) said he was in favour of admitting the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the Agency. Its entry would help to increase the universality of the Agency, intensify international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and establish peaceful relations between North and South Korea. It was to be hoped that the

Democratic People's Republic of Korea would become a full member of the United Nations.

36. Mr. CHOWDHURY (Bangladesh) supported the two applications for membership of the Agency which were before the Conference.

37. The PRESIDENT took it that the Conference wished to adopt the draft resolution approving Mauritius for membership of the Agency contained in document GC(XVIII)/521.

● 38. It was so decided.

39. The PRESIDENT took it that the Conference also wished to adopt the draft resolution approving the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for membership contained in document GC(XVIII)/522.

● 40. It was so decided.

41. Mr. PAK (Observer from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea) expressed gratification at the admission of his country just approved by the General Conference. He recalled that his country was already a Member of specialized agencies of the United Nations and was participating in their work, moved by a desire to contribute to the cause of world peace and security. It would discharge its obligations under the Statute in the same spirit.

42. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea had made great progress in technology and science, especially in research relating to the peaceful uses of atomic energy. It now had a number of scientists who were actively engaged in developing applications of nuclear energy in the country. For example frequent use was made of radiation and radioisotopes in all fields, including industry and medicine. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea was determined to continue those activities in collaboration with the States Members of the Agency.

43. In purely industrial terms, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was carrying out a six-year plan, one of the main purposes of which was to achieve mechanization, semi-automation and automation in all branches of industry. The following plan would have as its purpose a considerable increase in the production of ferrous and non-ferrous metals, coal, electricity, cement, fertilizers and grains. Thus, the country was developing an economy which would enable it to meet all requirements.

44. In conclusion he wished to make it clear that there could be no question of linking the entry of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea into the Agency with the entry of the two Koreas into the United Nations. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea wanted to become a member of technical institutions for reasons of international co-operation, but it reaffirmed that it was impossible for the two Koreas to enter the United Nations, which was a political organization, since that would amount to official recognition of the existence of two Koreas. Only after a reunifica-

tion, or at least a confederation, could Korea become a member of the United Nations. For its part, the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in order to achieve that goal, was endeavouring to institute co-operation and interchanges in numerous areas with the Republic of Korea.

STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

45. The DIRECTOR GENERAL congratulated the President on his election and thanked the delegates for their continued confidence in him.

46. Since the last session of the General Conference the world had seen what could happen when supply problems arose with man's principal energy resources. That had brought home to all concerned how much modern life depended on the availability of energy, and had shown how sensitive the world's economy was to fluctuations in the cost of energy.

47. The objections raised against nuclear power were mainly concerned with the safety of nuclear power systems, the handling and storage of radioactive waste, the risk of unauthorized use of fissionable material and the proliferation of nuclear weapons. It had to be emphasized from the outset, however, that nuclear power, for the time being, was the only available means of meeting the world's increasing energy demands.

48. Even if there was some decline in oil prices, electricity from nuclear power would still be cheaper in nearly all cases than that derived from coal, oil and other thermal sources. The threshold point at which electricity from nuclear power became cheaper than that from oil-fired plants now lay between 100 and 200 MW. It was not surprising, therefore, that the industrial countries were experiencing a spate of orders for nuclear power plants which made prices more competitive. The drop in the competitive threshold size obviously made nuclear power economically attractive to a much broader range of developing countries and, consequently, nuclear power was likely to account for more than half of the capacity additions in about 40 developing countries during the next decade, 1980 to 1990.

49. Expansion of nuclear power would call for increased international efforts with regard to safety, and the plans submitted to the Board for the development of safety standards over the next three years would mark a major step forward. It was necessary to keep under continuing review the environmental impact of nuclear power production. The importance of the evaluations made by the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR), particularly in regard to long-term genetic effects of radiation, was due in part to the fact that UNSCEAR was a completely independent body - and one to which the Agency would continue to give its support.

50. While public fears about plant safety were likely to diminish with time and experience, problems regarding the disposal and management of

radioactive wastes would require additional efforts for their solution. In March 1974 the Secretariat had established a standing international working group on high-level and alpha-bearing wastes to provide a full exchange of information on management practices and technological developments and to give guidance on the Agency's own programme. Advice on the main directions and priorities in the entire field of waste management and storage technology would be sought from a senior advisory group meeting at the end of the year.

51. In fulfilment of the mandate assigned to the Agency in 1972 by the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (the London Convention)[2], the Board of Governors had approved a provisional definition of wastes unsuitable for ocean dumping and of procedures to be followed for the ocean disposal of low-level wastes.

52. One of the problems encountered by the developing countries was to obtain comprehensive and impartial guidance, particularly at the early stages of a programme. To meet that need the Agency would expand its advisory services in power planning and project implementation. The problem of ensuring that developing countries could obtain sound and impartial advice on their energy programmes was part of the broader question of responsibility at the international level for energy matters. One could not fail to be concerned at the proliferation of energy studies, energy projects and even proposals for new international machinery.

53. In approving the six-year programme before the Conference[3], the Board had recognized that the Agency must have certain competences, for instance in the areas of economic analysis and environmental studies, which would enable it to provide its Members with an overall view of the energy situation. He therefore asked Members to pass on to the Agency the experience acquired by their electric power authorities and utilities.

54. Another problem in many developing countries was the lack of industrial experience and infrastructure to build, operate and maintain nuclear plants. The Agency would provide assistance to those countries with the co-operation of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the industrialized Members.

55. The problem of financing nuclear power had been aggravated sharply by the increase in oil prices. Under its Statute the Agency could not serve as a financing institution but it was using its good offices with other bodies. He had been encouraged by the much more positive attitude taken recently by IBRD towards the financing of nuclear power plants.

56. Nuclear power plants with capacities below 400 MW were not yet commercially available. One

of the purposes of the Market Survey for Nuclear Power in the Developing Countries[4] had been to show manufacturers the scope of the demand that they were not yet catering for. In some industrial countries there was renewed interest in smaller nuclear power plants for merchant ship propulsion and it was conceivable that those two factors might in time converge.

57. During the year the Agency had served for the first time as a channel for the supply of fuel for power reactors and fuel services to two Members. The demand for enrichment services was also rapidly increasing and in June a major supplier had had to temporarily suspend the conclusion of new contracts. The situation with regard to reprocessing capacity also indicated that much work would have to be done on the detailed planning of the entire fuel cycle before it could be claimed that nuclear power was successfully integrated into the world's energy supply. The establishment, as an international undertaking, of a reprocessing plant, preferably also combined with a nuclear fuel fabrication unit, might go a long way towards reaching that goal. The advantages of such an undertaking with regard to safeguards, physical protection and waste disposal were obvious.

58. The Scientific Advisory Committee, which had met at the end of the previous week, had approved, in principle, a proposal to hold a major international conference in 1977 on the prospects for nuclear energy. The main object of the conference would be to provide government officials and utilities with the type of information they would need to cope with the massive expansion of nuclear capacity.

59. Thirty-six of the 80 non-nuclear-weapon States which were party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)[5] had not yet completed the negotiation of the safeguards agreements it required and, in most cases, the time limit set for that by Article III.4 had elapsed. The Secretariat was ready to help those States to fulfil their obligations without delay so that they might attend the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (the NPT Review Conference) in May 1975 with their legal requirements fully discharged.

60. The prospects for NPT had not improved during the year and, if the Review Conference was to mark the forward movement of NPT and not its stagnation, it was essential that the major industrial Powers, both nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States, should reaffirm, by deed as well as by word, the importance they attached to NPT. However, there had also been some positive developments in the application of safeguards. It had to be remembered that the Agency's safeguards system represented the first application of international controls, and the experience acquired should be of immense value in establishing such controls in other fields in the future.

[2] Reproduced in document INFCIRC/205.

[3] GC(XVIII)/526 and Mod.1.

[4] See document GC(XVII)/506.

[5] Reproduced in document INFCIRC/140.

61. In July, the Governments of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America had each announced that they would inform the Agency promptly and continuously of their anticipated exports and imports of nuclear material.[6] Further, a number of major exporting States had informed him of decisions they had taken to apply a minimum standard of conduct in the implementation of Article III.2 of NPT, and to require the application of the Agency's safeguards in non-nuclear-weapon States in respect of items covered by that provision of NPT and supplied by them to such States.[7]

62. The Agency's Safeguards Analytical Laboratory would begin operations the following year, performing analyses for safeguards purposes in parallel with laboratories under contract to the Agency in Member States. Clearly the national systems required under NPT would become more and more important as Governments felt the need for strict internal accounting and control of nuclear materials and appreciated the growing problem of protecting plant and materials against sabotage and theft. The Agency was already assisting Members to build up their system of accountancy and control and had issued appropriate guidelines.

63. While arrangements for physical protection were primarily a national or, perhaps, regional responsibility, the Agency could provide guidance on protection during international transport of nuclear material, and the time might now be ripe to explore the prospects for international agreement on minimum standards for physical security.

64. After the Agency's agreement with States Members of the European Atomic Energy Community[8] had come into force, safeguards either of the NPT or non-NPT type would be in application in a great majority of the nuclear facilities of the non-nuclear-weapon States. To carry out that responsibility effectively, the Agency had to be assured that the resources available would continue to be adequate. He hoped that the compromise reached in regard to safeguards financing would serve as an assurance to Members that the inevitable and desirable growth of safeguards responsibilities would not be in any way detrimental to other Agency activities.

65. Four safeguards agreements outside the scope of NPT had been concluded during the year and it might now be appropriate to define more precisely the technical scope and procedures for the non-NPT system[9] which had not been changed since 1968.

[6] See document INFCIRC/207.

[7] See documents INFCIRC/209 and Addendum 1 and 2.

[8] Reproduced in document INFCIRC/193.

[9] The system set forth in document INFCIRC/66/Rev. 2.

66. The Agency was ready to provide to any non-nuclear-weapon State the services for the peaceful uses of nuclear explosions referred to in Article V of NPT. The Board had just considered the detailed procedures by which the Agency would deal with requests for such services and the fourth of a series of technical meetings on that subject was planned for January 1975. Member States had so far shown only very limited interest in that field and countries able to arrange nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes would be performing a useful service if they were to provide the Agency with an evaluation of the present status and early prospects of that technology.

67. The hopes which had attended the signing of NPT in the late 1960s had not yet been realized and of the 80 non-nuclear-weapon States that were party to it, only 44 had concluded safeguards agreements with the Agency. Moreover, the barrier to proliferation had been breached, and he could only repeat that a more widespread acceptance of NPT would depend in the first place on the determination of the depositary Governments. While Article VI was not a direct concern of the Agency, he felt sure that parties and prospective parties would support him in urging the depositaries to renew their efforts to ensure the implementation of that Article.

68. The enhanced economic prospects for nuclear power in the developing countries would have a profound effect on both content and scope of the Agency's technical assistance activities. Members had responded to the appeals made to them and it appeared that in 1974 the target for voluntary contributions of \$3 million for that year would be exceeded for the first time. For 1975, the Board had recommended a target of \$4.5 million.[10]

69. Hitherto, the contributions of enriched uranium had been limited and he urged all Member States in a position to do so, to consider making donations of specific quantities of enriched material in the present period of currency instability.

70. The Agency's participation in UNDP continued to grow. Four years previously, 35% of the Agency's technical assistance resources had come from UNDP and in 1973 the figure had reached 42%. In the technical assistance context he wished to take the opportunity to pay tribute to the work of Mr. Goswami, Deputy Director General for Technical Assistance and Publications, who would shortly be retiring and who had discharged his duties with the utmost competence and dedication.

71. It was quite probable that the need for Agency assistance in detailed feasibility studies of nuclear plants would increase and it was possible that the Agency would eventually develop a standardized model approach for performing such studies.

72. The International Nuclear Information System (INIS) was a unique achievement of the Agency, and was serving as an example for other organizations,

[10] GC(XVIII)/526, para. 30.

for example the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), which, with the help of the Agency, was setting up an information system on agricultural sciences.

73. The work of the Department of Research and Isotopes covered a very wide area. On the one hand, it was concerned with advanced research on problems of great long-term importance, for instance the co-ordination of research and the exchange of information on controlled thermo-nuclear fusion, on which the Agency was holding a major conference in Tokyo in November. At the other end of the spectrum the Department was concerned with the practical applications of radiation and radioisotopes. For a considerable number of Members nuclear power and other major technological applications would remain out of reach for many years to come despite continuing development. For those States the services offered in fields such as nuclear medicine and the application of nuclear techniques in agriculture and hydrology were of special interest and represented the main benefit they could obtain at the present time from their membership of the Agency. The Joint FAO/IAEA Division of Atomic Energy in Food and Agriculture, which belonged to that Department, was using nuclear techniques to help breed higher-yielding varieties of food crops, increase livestock production and make better use of fertilizers at a time when the world's food reserves had sunk to one month's supplies and when there had been a sharp increase in the cost of the energy needed for producing fertilizers in developing countries.

74. Food preservation by radiation was making a good deal of progress and many national clearances had been given. However, only three international clearances had been issued, namely for wheat, wheat products and potatoes, and they had been approved on a provisional basis only by the competent inter-agency committee in 1970. A meeting to reconsider the matter had been scheduled for 1974 but had now been postponed until the following year. Obviously the final decision would be of cardinal importance to the whole future of food irradiation and he hoped that other agencies in the United Nations family, and especially the World Health Organization (WHO), would join the Agency in pressing forward for an early decision.

75. The increase in the total budget from \$29,273 million in 1974 to \$35,476 million in 1975[11] represented programme increases in essentially three fields: technical assistance, nuclear safety and environmental protection, and nuclear power. Those increases were intended primarily, therefore, to respond to the needs of the developing countries. There was also an increase in the safeguards development programme which it was hoped would lead in time to savings in manpower by increased use of instrumentation. All other programmes had either been kept at practically the same level as 1974 or, in some cases, cut back.

[11] Ibid., THE CONSOLIDATED BUDGET.

76. During the year two committees had reviewed, respectively, the structure and function of the Department of Safeguards and Inspection and the activities and supporting role of the Laboratory. It had been planned to make a study of the desirability or otherwise of a greater degree of organizational separation of the Agency's promotional and regulatory activities, but that would now be deferred pending the important development in the Agency's regulatory work which had just been approved by the Board in formulating the Agency's nuclear safety programme.

77. He again wished to pay tribute to the Government of Austria and the City of Vienna for their unfailing assistance and generosity as hosts, both in regard to the permanent Headquarters and in providing additional facilities for the laboratories at Seibersdorf. The new building was expected to be ready for occupancy towards the end of 1978 and it was already beginning to form part of the Vienna skyline. It was not too early to point out that the costs of moving to the new building would not be negligible and that operational costs were likely to be substantially higher than at present.

78. The Agency had begun its first joint project with the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis and had also received its first substantial financial assistance from the United Nations Environment Fund, notably for expanding the work of the International Laboratory of Marine Radioactivity in Monaco to include the study of certain non-radioactive pollutants.

79. In conclusion, he wished to welcome the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Mauritius to membership of the Agency.

STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

80. Mr. WINSPEARE GUICCIARDI (Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva) noted that, during the current year, both the United Nations and the Agency had been involved in the preparation of the Review Conference of the Parties to NPT, which was to take place in May 1975. At that Conference, the Agency would be reporting on all its safeguards activities - an example of international controls accepted by sovereign States - and on its role in fostering international collaboration in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. If, as seemed likely, the Agency's role was strengthened as a result of the Review Conference, fresh impetus would be given to the pursuit of its central objective, which was "to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world".

81. At the present difficult juncture in world economic affairs, peace, health and prosperity had become immediate necessities. Seldom in the history of the United Nations system had there been a greater need for real creativeness in the approach to international economic and social relations. The United Nations had sought to meet the challenge by laying the foundations for a new international

economic order and adopting a programme of action as a complement to the International Development Strategy.

82. The implications for the Agency were far-reaching; it was being offered fresh opportunities to make a constructive contribution to the common efforts of the United Nations system. By way of example, he pointed out that nuclear power had become a practical economic prospect for an increasing number of developing countries. It was evident that many of those countries would require special assistance. They would also need help in resolving complex problems relating to feasibility studies for nuclear power plants, capital financing, the training of specialized personnel and the formulation of laws and regulations - to mention but a few aspects of the question. With that in mind, the United Nations could not but commend the Agency's intention to strengthen its capacity to respond to the changing situation. As for the immediate future, it was gratifying to see the Agency expanding its efforts to determine the scope of the potential market for nuclear power in developing countries.

83. At the same time, it was hardly surprising that the projected growth of nuclear power programmes had sharpened the controversy about the impact of nuclear technology on the environment. It deserved to be better known, however, that the Agency, with firm determination, had always striven to ensure that the utilization of atomic energy for peaceful purposes and as an aid to development did not, at any stage, harm man or his environment. In its expanding nuclear safety

and environmental protection activities, the Agency was receiving support not only from its Member States but also from the United Nations Environment Programme. Furthermore, the Agency was preparing itself to meet a growing number of requests for nuclear plant siting and safety missions. In fact, far from harming the environment, many of the projects in which the Agency was involved were designed to improve it.

84. Also of interest to the United Nations were the programmes which the Agency and FAO were carrying out jointly in applying nuclear science and technology to increase world food production. In view of the imminence of the United Nations World Food Conference it was appropriate that the General Conference should review and, where necessary, strengthen those programmes. In that context, he wished to make particular reference to the research programme relating to the use of nitrogen fertilizers, which had recently assumed considerable importance owing to increases in energy costs.

85. In conclusion, he expressed his gratification at the close co-operation which had become established between the United Nations and the Agency. It was based, of course, on the special relations arising out of Article III of the Statute and on the relationship agreement between the two organizations.[12] At the same time, it was due in large measure to the exceptional qualities of Mr. Eklund, to whom he wished to pay a warm tribute on behalf of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

● The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.

[12] Reproduced in document INFCIRC/11.