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RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND NINETIETH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Conference Centre, Hotel Nacional-Rio, Rio de Janeiro, on Monday, 27 September 1976, at 3.15 p.m.

President: Mr. de CARVALHO (Brazil)

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** GC(XX)/573.

The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(XX)/INF/163/Rev.3.

THE RECORD

GENERAL DEBATE AND REPORT FOR 1975 (GC(XX)/565) (continued) [1]

1. Mr. SODNOM (Mongolia) welcomed, in the name of his delegation, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as an observer. He went on to say that the Agency's report was of great interest and to congratulate the Director General on his personal role in the Agency's activities, recalling his visit to Mongolia, which had greatly contributed to strengthening co-operation between Mongolia and the Agency.

2. Noting that the present session of the General Conference fitted into the context of international détente, which was opening up new prospects for co-operation between States, he emphasized the importance of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

3. The Mongolian delegation attached particular importance to détente and co-operation in Asia and was pleased that the conflicts on the Indo-Chinese peninsula had come to an end. Reduction of the risk of nuclear war, armaments limitation and disarmament were the grand objectives of the present. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) [2] had an important part to play in that connection, and he welcomed the recent ratification of NPT by Japan. However, NPT should be acceded to by all States possessing a nuclear industry, and he accordingly urged that further countries accede to it.

4. Pursuant to the safeguards agreements required in connection with NPT, the Agency was having to cope with increasingly wide activities in the area of inspections, where - the Mongolian delegation felt - further development and even greater effectiveness were necessary.

5. The Mongolian delegation approved of the study of regional nuclear fuel cycle centres.

6. His delegation attached great importance to the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on Underground Explosions for Peaceful Purposes (the PNE Treaty) and to the co-operation agreement between the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) and the Agency.

7. Mongolia recognized the value of the technical assistance provided by the Agency to the developing countries and was grateful for the assistance which it was beginning to receive.

8. The Mongolian Government attached great importance to the Agency's programmes concerned with nuclear safety and environmental protection and with applications of radioisotopes in agriculture and medicine.

9. It was pleased that the target for voluntary contributions had been increased to $6 million and would make its own modest contribution to the General Fund.

10. The Mongolian delegation was convinced that the present session of the General Conference would contribute greatly to closer co-operation between Member States.

11. Mr. NEMETS (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) noted that the present session fitted into the context of international détente, for which the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had recently opened up new prospects by reasserting the crucial importance of peaceful co-existence and of reducing the risk of nuclear war. It was in that connection that the Soviet Union had proposed the conclusion of a treaty for the complete and universal prohibition of nuclear weapons tests.

12. Emphasizing the importance of the PNE Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Franco-Soviet agreement on prevention of the accidental use of nuclear weapons, he said he was convinced that those legal instruments would contribute to the development of the Agency's scientific and technical activities.

13. Referring to Mr. Kosygin's message to the Conference [3], he stressed the importance of NPT in controlling the destructive potential of the atomic nucleus and the need, especially for the Agency, to go even further in that direction. He expressed satisfaction with the safeguards activities in connection with NPT which the Agency was performing, always with due regard for the national sovereignty of Member States. He supported the idea of a model agreement for countries not party to NPT and urged those countries to submit to safeguards all their activities and facilities connected with the use of fissionable materials which they received, including those in the field of fuel reprocessing.

14. The Ukrainian delegation considered that the Agency's activities in the field of technical assistance were on the whole satisfactory and announced the payment of a voluntary contribution of 80 000 roubles to the General Fund for 1977.

15. He was in favour of international action with regard to physical protection. He also approved of the study of regional nuclear fuel cycle centres; such centres, under Agency supervision, would make it possible to reduce the number of sites where nuclear waste was stored, and their establishment should be studied as a matter of urgency, for a growing number of countries were preparing to reprocess irradiated fuel themselves, with a consequent increase in the risk of proliferation.

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[1] GC(XX)/OR.189, paras 1-158.

[2] Reproduced in document INFCIRC/140.

[3] Reproduced in document GC(XX)/INF/166.

16. He was also in favour of the Agency's efforts to establish an international peaceful nuclear explosions service.

17. The intensification of contacts between the Agency and various regional organizations concerned with the peaceful uses of atomic energy (for example, CMEA) was mutually beneficial. In that connection he noted that in five years, the total nuclear capacity installed in the member countries of CMEA had increased by a factor of seven, and it would rise from 7500 MW to 30 000 MW between 1975 and 1980; furthermore, those countries were co-operating more and more closely in all their nuclear research and construction activities. He was pleased with the first results of the co-operation agreement concluded in 1975 with the Agency.

18. With a view to rapid technical and scientific development, his country was paying particular attention to studies relating to nuclear physics and the applications of atomic energy. Thus, Ukrainian scientists were engaged in research on the properties of the atomic nucleus and the mechanisms of nuclear reactions. For that purpose, the Ukraine possessed a number of facilities to which the largest isochronous cyclotron in Europe had been added during the current year.

19. A large proportion of that research was concerned with the development of nuclear power generation, which would be the main component in the 7-8% expansion foreseen for electricity production. There was also intense activity connected with the design and construction of nuclear power plants, the total installed capacity of which would increase at an annual rate of 12-15%.

20. To ensure the development of nuclear power generation and to permit the utilization of nuclear power by the national economy, studies of numerous questions were being conducted with a view to improving the efficiency, security and safety of power plants: radiation-induced damage, reactor thermodynamics, automatic control of power plants, etc.

21. Other studies were concerned with the use of nuclear heat in the metallurgical and chemical industries. Much attention was being paid to the development of new types of reactor and to work on thermonuclear fusion.

22. Ukrainian scientists were using various types of radiation sources in physics, chemistry, biology and geology.

23. The Nuclear Research Institute of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences had developed a range of radiation devices which were being used in industry and agriculture. Nuclear techniques were also being applied more and more in medicine, for both diagnostic and therapeutic purposes.

24. He proposed that collaboration with the Agency in the field of information exchange be intensified. His country was preparing proposals for new research contracts and for new study visits by scientists from developing countries.

25. He welcomed the increase in the exchanges between the Ukraine and the Agency within the framework of the International Nuclear Information System (INIS), whose output in tape form would soon be used directly in the Ukraine. In that context, he stressed the assistance which the Agency was giving his country in connection with the establishment of an automated data retrieval system.

26. The Ukrainian delegation welcomed the decision of the General Conference to invite the PLO to attend its sessions as an observer.

27. Mr. KHAN (Pakistan) welcomed the Conference's decision on the membership of Nicaragua and its decision to invite the PLO to attend sessions in the capacity of observer.

28. Nuclear energy was at a critical point in its history. Certain politicians, scientists and other persons with mixed motives had for some time been raising four major controversial issues on which the Agency had to take a stand: (a) the role of nuclear energy in meeting the future needs of the world; (b) the safety and environmental impact of nuclear facilities; (c) the economics and financing of nuclear power plants; and (d) non-proliferation and world security.

29. Pakistan believed that nuclear power, in spite of the difficulties associated with it, offered the only real answer to the expanding energy needs of the world, at least during the next 20 years. For developing countries short of fossil fuels and unable to afford the high price of oil, the only way to ensure continued economic development was to turn to nuclear energy. The industrialized countries should, in their own interest and in the interest of the world as a whole, conserve their reserves of oil and other fuels and share their technical knowledge with the countries short of energy sources so as to solve the energy problem on a world-wide basis. Pakistan fully endorsed the efforts being made by the Agency to promote the generation and utilization of nuclear energy. Studies carried out by the Agency had demonstrated the advantages of nuclear power. Furthermore, it was arranging for the training of the personnel required in the generation of nuclear power by organizing courses with the help of the United States of America, France and the Federal Republic of Germany. Other forms of energy, such as solar and geothermal energy, might also be covered in the Agency's work, but Pakistan believed that the Agency should not dissipate its resources but rather co-operate in such matters with organizations like the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA).

30. The Agency had a responsibility, on one hand, to contribute to environmental protection by promoting technical progress and, on the other, to allay fears and combat the prejudices of pressure groups in different countries which were

opposed to nuclear power, even though its development was essential to economic life. The Agency was to be commended on its efforts, and his country would like to see its programme in those areas expanded.

31. The financing of nuclear power plants was one of the main problems for developing countries. Over the past few years, unit capital costs had risen by a factor of six and the competitive size of plants had increased. No doubt some costs could be kept down, and the Agency - with that end in view - had initiated several cost analysis studies. The Agency should attach at least as much importance to that problem as to safeguards, so that the developing countries might experience the benefits as well as the disadvantages of nuclear power.

32. Pakistan's position on the question of non-proliferation and world security was very clear: it believed in the exclusively peaceful utilization of atomic energy. That being so, it had placed all its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards and even agreed to the upgrading of existing safeguards wherever necessary. Also, it was an advocate of the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the region to which it belonged.

33. Pakistan considered that the line drawn in NPT between the five nuclear-weapon States and the non-nuclear-weapon States would have to be maintained if proliferation was to be checked. It therefore attached great importance to Agency safeguards and had great faith in the Agency's ability in that field. His country deplored the "event of May 1974" as a serious setback for non-proliferation and a great disservice to all developing countries; it provided the advanced countries with a ready pretext for withholding peaceful nuclear technology from developing countries. In that connection, a number of countries which exported nuclear equipment and technology had established in London a "club" whose deliberations were surrounded by secrecy and which issued arbitrary guidelines. No doubt the countries in question had a moral responsibility to ensure that their exports did not contribute to proliferation, but their activities were causing serious misgivings in the developing countries. No attempt should be made to change the Agency's safeguards system without the full participation of all Member States. The meetings of the "London Club" might well give rise to misunderstandings between the advanced and the developing countries; certainly they were not serving the cause of peace and non-proliferation. He accordingly reiterated the proposal which had been made by Pakistan the year before to the effect that supplier and recipient States should act in concert to evolve a code of conduct establishing an equitable sharing of responsibilities and obligations in relation to all existing and future nuclear technologies.

34. Poverty was as potentially dangerous for world peace as proliferation, and both needed to be combated. The countries of the Third World were striving to create a new world order, based on justice and the fair sharing of the world's resources. The Agency could help them by providing technical assistance. However, only $6 million had been allocated for Agency technical assistance activities and more than 50% of requests had to be turned down for lack of resources; on the other hand, the budget for Agency safeguards was increasing steadily. In his country's opinion, the two activities in question were equally important and should therefore be given equal budgetary treatment.

35. Pakistan supported the Agency's study of regional fuel cycle centres. In that connection, the Agency should act as a broker for the supply of fuel - in accordance with Article IX of the Statute, which had too long been neglected. He accordingly proposed that the Agency undertake a study of how fuel supplies for projects under Agency safeguards could be assured, in order that dependence on bilateral supply agreements might be lessened.

36. Pakistan was one of the poorest countries in the world as regards indigenous fuel resources; it therefore had no alternative but to turn to nuclear energy. It had enjoyed the assistance of the Agency in preparing a long-range planning study which formed the basis of its nuclear power programme. The master plan envisaged the construction of 24 nuclear power plants by the year 2000, by which time two thirds of the country's electricity needs would be met through nuclear power generation. A start had already been made on establishing the necessary infrastructure, ancillary plants and manpower training centres and on prospecting for and mining nuclear materials, including uranium. A reprocessing plant, to be built with the co-operation of France under a comprehensive trilateral safeguards agreement, was an essential element in the plan.

37. Over the past year, Pakistan's nuclear programme had progressed satisfactorily: an availability factor of 85% had been achieved at the Karachi nuclear power plant; the adjacent training centre was nearing completion; the country's sixth nuclear medicine centre - at Larkana - would be completed in 1977; work on the construction of a third nuclear agriculture centre had just started; uranium exploration, begun with the help of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), had been accelerated; and new deposits of zirconium and other nuclear minerals had been discovered.

38. Mr. PEIOS (Greece) said he would like to comment briefly on some of the points which had been raised by the Director General in his opening statement [4] and which concerned the Agency's activities, the international scene and various problems currently affecting the Agency.

39. Under its Statute, the Agency was required to seek to enlarge the contribution of atomic

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[4] GC(XX)/OR.184, paras 24-62.

energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world and to ensure, so far as it was able, that the assistance provided by it was not used in such a way as to further any military purpose. His country, while sharing the Director General's view that a proper balance should be sought between the Agency's promotional and regulatory activities, nevertheless felt that the need to make the peaceful uses of nuclear energy available to more countries should not be overlooked in the course of efforts to achieve such a balance. In view of the current situation with regard to conventional fuels and of the growing interest in nuclear energy, it also agreed with the Director General as to the growing importance of the Agency's dual role. It was particularly interested in the technical assistance activities and regretted that they were being hampered by lack of funds. It hoped that much good would come of the review of the procedures for the provision of technical assistance.

40. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that the work of the present session would help to further international co-operation in the field of the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy.

41. Mr. HABASHI (Sudan) said that the Agency's achievements during the 20 years of its existence spoke for themselves and that the Director General, in his opening statement, had brilliantly surveyed the strategy which the Agency had adopted, the problems it was facing and the answers found, and its plans for assisting Member States.

42. For the Agency to discharge its mission successfully, more than good wishes would be needed. He therefore proposed to comment on some of the points made by the Director General.

43. In the first place, the increase in membership since 1957 had not been accompanied by a corresponding increase in the membership of the Board of Governors; the developing countries in general, and those of Africa in particular, were grossly under-represented in that body and also in the committees of the General Conference. His Government accordingly urged that an equitable distribution of seats be established. It was not that the developing countries were seeking prestige, nor were they playing politics; what they wanted was to play an effective part in the work of the Agency.

44. With regard to the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage [5] and to NPT, he supported the Director General's call to Member States to accede to the Convention and his appeal to those countries which had not yet become signatories of NPT to reconsider their position.

45. Sudan associated itself with all countries which had condemned the recently concluded contract for the supply of nuclear reactors to South Africa. The South African Government was practising a policy of racial discrimination, it did not represent the majority of the South African people, and its policy of apartheid was a threat to world peace; hence, it was violating the principles enshrined in the Statute and was not entitled to be a Member of the Agency, which was seeking to promote peace, health and security throughout the world.

46. The Director General had indicated that, for the Agency to be able to help its Member States, it needed an adequate knowledge of conventional and emerging alternative sources of power. Sudan was wholly in favour of expanding the terms of reference of the Agency so as to make it an international energy organization.

47. His country was grateful to the Agency for the technical assistance which it had received, but at the same time it deplored the meagreness of the resources allocated to that type of activity. Voluntary contributions to the General Fund, the only source of financing for technical assistance, had grown from $1.5 million in 1959 to $5.5 million in 1976; in terms of purchasing power the increase was very small, and the resources had to be spread over more and more activities. It was his country's contention that the Regular Budget should be the main source of financing for technical assistance and that at least 30% of the Regular Budget total should be allocated to it; voluntary contributions would then become merely a supplementary source of financing. As pointed out by the Governor from the Philippines in a recent Board meeting, modern fighter-planes cost $14-16 million each - more than three times the amount placed at the Agency's disposal for its work in promoting world peace and security. He appealed to all Member States to increase their contributions to the General Fund, both in cash and in kind. Furthermore, the Agency should endeavour to keep down technical assistance costs by sub-contracting as much work as possible to institutes or semi-official bodies; he awaited with interest the Director General's report on efforts in that direction.

48. In conclusion, he welcomed Nicaragua to membership of the Agency and the observer representing the PLO. It was to be hoped that the Agency would soon be able to welcome the legitimate representatives of Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa.

49. Mr. SIRRY (Egypt) said that the twenty years of the Agency's existence had been marked by many important achievements in all fields of activity related to nuclear technology and its peaceful applications, and there had been a resulting expansion and consolidation of nuclear programmes in many countries throughout the world. The need for nuclear fuel and fuel cycle services was consequently increasing, posing new problems for the future, especially in reprocessing and waste management.

50. The Agency should therefore plan and direct its activities in such a way as to meet the existing

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[5] The text of the Convention is reproduced in Legal Series No. 4 (STI/PUB/430).

and foreseeable requirements of the developing countries; in that respect, the programme for 1977-82 was completely satisfactory.

51. The Egyptian delegation deplored the continuous, uncontrolled expansion of the Agency's regulatory functions at the expense of its promotional activities. Although it naturally supported safeguards and their universal application, his delegation believed that they should be applied only to significant quantities of nuclear materials and to large nuclear installations.

52. To meet the future demand for uranium, the Agency should find some means of financing large-scale exploration in developing countries and promote regional co-operation to that end.

53. The Egyptian delegation believed that the study of regional nuclear fuel cycle centres should also cover the first phase of the fuel cycle.

54. The Agency's technical assistance activities were not receiving the support and encouragement they deserved. Financing from voluntary contributions was not a satisfactory arrangement; it would be better to finance the provision of technical assistance from the Regular Budget. Nevertheless, his country had decided to make a voluntary contribution for 1977 which, like the one for 1976, would exceed the amount corresponding to its base rate of assessment.

55. Egypt was building its first nuclear power plant, which would have an installed capacity of some 600 MW(e) and was to go into service in 1982. It would be the first of a series of nuclear power plants which, by the end of the century, would represent a total capacity of 5000-6000 MW(e), equivalent to nearly 50% of the country's installed electricity generating capacity at that time. A new organization had been created to assume sole responsibility for the planning and implementation of Egypt's nuclear programme.

56. Uranium prospecting and exploitation were continuing, and industrial concerns based in the Federal Republic of Germany, the United States, France and the United Kingdom had been invited to participate in development work.

57. Another important project in Egypt's nuclear programme was the establishment of a radiation technology centre, which would have a cobalt-60 source, supplied by Canada, and an electron accelerator, obtained through UNDP.

58. One of the most interesting applications of nuclear technology, and one to which Egypt attached special importance, was the use of nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes (PNEs) in mining and civil engineering projects.

59. In that connection one of the major projects contemplated by Egypt for generating electricity to supply Egypt's needs as of 1985 was the solar hydroelectric scheme of Qattara in the Western Desert. The feasibility study of the project which was now being undertaken would try to establish also whether the use of peaceful nuclear explosives and techniques would provide for substantial savings when carrying out the project as compared to the use of conventional methods. Egypt was keeping in close contact on that matter with the Agency, which had sent a fact-finding mission to Egypt for the study of the project.

60. In conclusion, he welcomed the admission of Nicaragua to membership of the Agency and the admission of the PLO as an observer.

61. Mr. ERIKSEN (Norway), explaining his country's situation with regard to energy resources, said that Norway would not suffer an energy shortage for some time: at present, hydro power was providing most of its electricity, and its hydro-power reserves would enable it to meet increasing demand during the next few years. However, those reserves would have to be used sparingly, in accordance with - among other things - plans already adopted for the protection of nature. His country was therefore going to try to curb the growth of demand while it considered the alternative possibilities offered by fossil-fuelled and nuclear power plants. At the same time, the important oil and natural gas deposits discovered in the North Sea would, within a few years, enable Norway to become an energy-exporting country. Norway was thus in a position to examine carefully all the pros and cons of nuclear power before taking a decision, and that was what the Norwegian Government had been doing for about a year.

62. It had established an ad hoc committee of 21 experts representing a variety of disciplines. The committee had to prepare a study of all safety aspects of nuclear power plants, for comparison from the point of view of safety and environmental protection with power plants which burned oil or gas. On the basis of that study, his Government would be able to decide whether Norway should build nuclear power plants during the next decade.

63. The Agency's assistance would certainly be of great value to the committee in its work. Nuclear technology was among those technologies whose obvious advantages were associated with risks which gave rise to public distrust. In the course of the preceding decade, the risks associated with nuclear power plants had frequently been assessed; the "Rasmussen study", carried out in the United States, was an excellent example of such assessments. Much less attention had been paid, however, to the question of the public acceptance of those risks, and the Agency had an important part to play in that connection.

64. In collaboration with IIASA, the Agency was carrying out a study concerning assessment of the risks of energy systems generally with a view to determining how societies reacted to the new technologies and how those reactions and their causes could influence decisions. Norway was very interested in that study and would provide experts to assist in it. The Agency was also co-operating with IIASA and the World Health

Organization (WHO) in a comparative methodological study of energy options on the basis of which it would be possible to assess nuclear energy in relation to other forms of energy.

65. Norway hoped that INIS would be further improved, so as to permit document retrieval on a wider international basis.

66. His country attached great importance to the Agency's quality assurance work and to its activities under the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (the London Convention) [6]. The Agency had already prepared provisional definitions and recommendations relating to the disposal of radioactive wastes into the sea, and his Government, which was opposed in principle to such disposal, hoped that they would soon be revised. Permission to dump low-activity wastes in the sea under the London Convention should in no case be regarded as encouraging such dumping. International supervision and control of dumping operations were in any event essential.

67. Referring to safeguards, he commended the Agency on the work it had done. The development of nuclear energy was making safeguards more and more necessary, especially in relation to public opinion. The safeguards system would have to be adapted to changing circumstances and in the light of technological progress if nuclear proliferation was to be prevented and public confidence gained. In spite of its many qualities, the Agency's safeguards system was not perfect and its geographical coverage was insufficient. The Norwegian delegation therefore fully endorsed the Director General's proposals for improving the system and his request that Member States submit plans of their nuclear installations to the Agency as quickly as possible in order to facilitate inspections. Also, his country supported the continuation of work on safeguards instrumentation systems and the establishment of a limited number of field offices. Norway urged those countries which had not yet acceded to NPT to do so and emphasized the importance of concluding with the Agency as soon as possible the safeguards agreements provided for in NPT. Norway, whose NPT safeguards agreement with the Agency had entered into force in March 1972, could only commend the Agency on the way its safeguards had caused only slight interference with the operation of Norwegian installations.

68. Norway supported the Agency's study of regional nuclear fuel cycle centres. It believed that such centres would further the cause of non-proliferation by reducing the number of facilities to be safeguarded and the number of transport operations and - because of their international character - by rendering diversion more difficult. The Nordic countries were already studying the possibility of creating such a centre. Having co-operated with other countries in the nuclear field for some 25 years, his country recognized the advantages of such co-operation, but it should be borne in mind that success depended very much on the support given by the host country.

69. In conclusion, referring to the question of PNEs, he said his country was firmly convinced that the world community should halt the proliferation of nuclear weapons; moreover, it doubted whether PNEs offered many practical advantages in the short run. However, it recognized that under the terms of NPT the parties to it had the right to benefit from what advantages there were. His country was concerned, above all, about the needs of third States, which should have the right to participate in PNE surveillance procedures even if the PNEs in question caused them only slight inconvenience.

70. Mr. POISSON (Niger) said that his country, which had become a Member of the Agency as soon as possible after gaining independence, had at once given its total support to the peaceful ideals enshrined in the Agency's objectives.

71. With time, the possibility of using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes had come to be generally accepted. As the violent opposition of ecologists had shown, however, some people still had misgivings. And yet nuclear energy was a necessity. It could and should be an instrument for progress and peace from which many developing countries might benefit in their efforts to catch up. His country's wish in accepting the Agency's objectives had been to demonstrate its intention of sharing in general progress, as manifested in the peaceful utilization of the atom, and taking part in the improvement of relations between peoples in the strengthening of peace and in economic development.

72. Following several years of drought, Niger now saw chances of an economic revival. To that end, it would employ a variety of technologies, including the utilization of nuclear energy. Over and above the uranium ore deposits which had been proven and were being exploited, however, Niger placed great hopes in solar energy.

73. The prospects for a nuclear energy programme in his country were gradually taking form, despite the relatively meagre resources available. Niger was interested in all nuclear energy applications, including those in agriculture, human and animal health, plant selection, soil fertility, plant nutrition, pest control and food preservation. In the medical field, it hoped to benefit considerably from the knowledge amassed in the more advanced countries.

74. The report of the Board of Governors for 1975 gave an impressive picture of the spread of the Agency's work throughout the world. His country wanted to see greater resources placed at the Agency's disposal, so that countries engaged in the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy might receive more help. Despite the Agency's co-operation with both advanced and developing

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[6] The text of the Convention is reproduced in document INFCIRC/205.

countries, there were still two areas of concern - waste management and the application of international safeguards at facilities using fissionable materials.

75. In the case of waste management, there was a need for strict regulations and for even more stringent control of their application. Research should be intensified and the Agency should be enabled to maintain a closer watch on waste management operations and waste storage centres.

76. As to safeguards, while all Governments which had signed NPT and many other Governments had urged very strongly that the Agency apply its safeguards more strictly and be more watchful, certain countries benefiting from transfers of technology - assured of impunity - were pursuing an increasingly disquieting policy.

77. South Africa was one such country; with its ability to master nuclear technology it was causing anxiety to all Africans. As it was driven increasingly on to the defensive in protecting the privileges which it imagined to be essential for its survival, South Africa represented a threat not only to the 20 million Africans deprived of their basic rights but also to the other peoples of Africa. What kind of nuclear peace was possible in southern Africa, where day by day privileged minorities, incapable of taking a fresh look at those whom they had always held in subjection, were perfecting their mastery of nuclear power so as to make it the weapon of their own survival? In such a situation, conflict was inevitable, and all the purveyors of technology and all those in charge of safeguards, together with other Pontius Pilates, would bear an extremely heavy responsibility vis-à-vis Africa.

78. His delegation recognized that no criteria of a political nature applied in the field of Agency safeguards; it should not, however, be impossible to treat requests from dubious applicants with circumspection. In the absence of a precise ruling, the Agency's prerogatives might be so interpreted as to delay a decision or to make it contingent on the consent of the sovereign assembly of Member States.

79. Lastly, his delegation greatly appreciated the fact, discernible from the Board's annual report, that real international co-operation was being established through the Agency. By virtue of its constant efforts in the field of training and the technical assistance which it was providing in various forms, the Agency had become - in accordance with the spirit of its Statute - a leading centre where people could meet in their search for peace.

80. Mr. ALLOTEY (Ghana) welcomed the representative from Nicaragua and the observer of the PLO.

81. The Director General, in his excellent statement, had reviewed the Agency's activities to date. The greater international recognition of the Agency resulted from its ability to respond promptly to new situations, thanks to the Director General and the Board of Governors.

82. His delegation supported on the whole the objectives set out in the programme for 1977-82, and its comments would therefore be confined to a few matters of immediate relevance for the developing countries. In that connection, it noted with satisfaction that the programme had been drawn up to reflect priorities established by the developing countries. The main thrust of Ghana's current programme was directed towards reactivation, with the help of the Soviet Union, of the nuclear reactor project. The reactor was to be used for research and training in nuclear science and technology and for radioisotope production. The experience gained through the project would subsequently enable Ghana to undertake more ambitious activities, particularly in the field of nuclear power. Ghana was also carrying out lively research relating to radioisotope applications in medicine, agriculture, pest control, hydrology and uranium prospecting. In that context, the scientific meetings held during the current session of the Conference had been most interesting, particularly those on food preservation by irradiation. The accounts given of the efficacy of the technique were most encouraging, as was the information given by the Director General concerning the FAO/WHO/IAEA meeting of experts which had recommended that five irradiated foodstuffs be accepted for consumption unconditionally.

83. Ghana wished to record its appreciation for the assistance which it had already received, both through the Agency and under bilaterial agreements with, for instance, the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany and the Soviet Union.

84. With regard to the International Centre for Theoretical Physics at Trieste, he stressed the importance of its activities, which were enabling African scientists to break out of the isolation in which they sometimes had to work. The Swedish Government's generous contribution to the Centre was greatly appreciated by his delegation.

85. The developing countries set great store by the technical assistance activities envisaged in the Agency's programme. Accordingly, his delegation felt bound to put forward two proposals designed to achieve a significant increase in the net flow of resources to the developing countries. Firstly, as his delegation had stated on previous occasions, the Agency's technical assistance programme should be financed from the Regular Budget instead of on the basis of voluntary contributions. Secondly, the cost of safeguards activities should be borne by the countries in which safeguards were applied. Admittedly, a recommendation had been made to freeze the contributions of developing countries to the safeguards budget at present levels, but that was merely a half-measure.

86. As to the principles governing the Agency's work, his delegation supported the Director General's view that promotional activities and regulatory activities were inseparable.

87. In conclusion, he was in complete agreement with the Nigerian delegate's forceful statement on the question of South Africa [7], which was not entitled to hold the seat on the Board of Governors allocated to Africa under Article VI.A.1 of the Statute. If the present situation persisted, the development of nuclear technology was bound to be retarded throughout the African continent. As to the trilateral agreement between South Africa, the Agency and France, his delegation deplored the part being played by France, a country of which one would not have expected that it would help a ruthless and racist régime. It was to be feared that the "harmless" nuclear technology being supplied to South Africa might be diverted to other ends.

88. Mr. DANILO PECCI (Paraguay) expressed his Government's gratitude for the technical, scientific, technological and economic assistance which the Brazilian National Nuclear Energy Commission - and especially the Atomic Energy Institute in São Paulo - had been providing under a bilateral agreement concluded in 1961. His country was likewise grateful to the Argentine Republic for the help received in such fields as the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy, basic and applied research, and health protection.

89. In its nuclear policy, Paraguay was concentrating on agricultural research, health problems, the training of personnel in various fields of application (chemistry, physics, geology, medicine) and prospecting for radioactive materials. A nuclear studies centre, to be operated with the help of the São Paulo Atomic Energy Institute, was being established as part of the development programme of Paraguay's National Atomic Energy Commission.

90. Lastly, a safeguards agreement between his country and the Agency was in the course of being negotiated.

91. Miss LIM (Malaysia), thanking the Brazilian Government for its hospitality, recalled that Brazil was the country from which had been taken the original seeds of Hevea which was now the main natural resource of Malaysia.

92. She fully agreed with the Director General that countries possessing a large nuclear industry should join the NPT system. The recent ratification of NPT by Japan was encouraging and, in spite of a certain note of pessimism in the Director General's statement, she considered that universal adherence to NPT was one means of ensuring world peace and security.

93. The increasing number of nuclear power plants would inevitably call for expansion of the Agency's safeguards activities. In that connection, she noted that the cost of those activities had grown by 26.3% during the past year, while the target for voluntary contributions in 1977 represented an increase of only 9%. The Malaysian delegation attached great importance to the establishment of the Standing Advisory Group on Safeguards Implementation (SAGSI), which had the task of redefining responsibilities in the field of safeguards and introducing a fuller system of reporting on safeguards implementation. She welcomed the Board's decision to freeze developing countries' contributions to the Agency's safeguards expenditure at the 1976 level until 1980 and hoped that a more equitable system of safeguards financing would be arrived at in the meantime, in accordance with the recommendation of the NPT Review Conference [8].

94. The proposed establishment of a data bank covering all forms of energy would enable Member States to base their power policies on more reliable and comprehensive information. The total nuclear capacity installed by the year 2000 would affect the demand for nuclear fuel cycle services. Therefore, the Malaysian delegation entirely approved of the assistance for uranium prospecting provided by the Agency to its Member States and also of the study of regional nuclear fuel cycle centres.

95. Turning to the question which was probably of the greatest importance to developing Member States, technical assistance, she recalled that her delegation had already drawn attention to its concern at the lack of balance between the expenditures for technical assistance and those for safeguards. The mode of financing technical assistance was in need of revision; the fact that technical assistance depended essentially on voluntary contributions made it impossible to prepare and implement sound technical assistance programmes, even in the short term. In the Regular Budget, the funds allotted to technical assistance amounted to $1 867 000 as against $7 951 000 for safeguards activities. Apart from that lack of balance, it should be borne in mind that most of the former sum would be absorbed by salaries and administrative expenses. The target for voluntary contributions in 1977 - $6 million - was very modest considering that in 1976, for example, it had not been possible to meet 60% of the requests for equipment and experts' services owing to lack of funds. For that reason the Malaysian delegation supported the proposal to create a special reserve fund for technical assistance, and it looked forward with great interest to the results of the review of the procedures for the provision of technical assistance, which were to be presented at the next session of the General Conference.

96. Malaysia, like the majority of developing countries, was far from being able to enter the age of nuclear power; for the moment, it was striving to create a scientific and technical infrastructure. The Agency programmes of immediate interest in that respect were: technical assistance and training, food and agriculture, nuclear power and reactors, life sciences and physical sciences.

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[7] See document GC(XX)/OR.186, paras 84 to 88.

[8] Held at Geneva from 5 to 30 May 1975.

However, those programmes were very modest, and it would be necessary to make adequate provision for meeting the needs of the large group of developing countries in the same situation as Malaysia.

97. Her country was very grateful to the Agency for the assistance which it had provided in the form of a research reactor and of nuclear medicine supplies worth $30 000.

98. The Malaysian delegation welcomed the observer of the PLO and the representative from Nicaragua. In addition, it hoped that a means would be found of meeting the wish of developing countries to be represented more equitably in the various organs of the Agency, so that they might make a greater contribution to its activities.

CLOSING DATE OF THE SESSION AND OPENING DATE OF THE NEXT SESSION

99. The PRESIDENT recalled that, under Rule 8 of the Rules of Procedure, the Conference had to fix the closing date of the session, on the recommendation of the General Committee.

100. The General Committee had considered the matter and had authorized him to recommend on its behalf that 28 September 1976 be fixed as the closing date.

101. The Committee's recommendation was accepted.

102. The PRESIDENT informed the Conference that the General Committee had recommended fixing Monday, 26 September 1977 as the opening date of the twenty-first regular session, which would be held in Vienna in accordance with Rule 7 of the Rules of Procedure.

103. The Committee's recommendation was accepted.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.