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# GENERAL CONFERENCE



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### RECORD OF THE THREE HUNDRED AND TWENTIETH PLENARY MEETING

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on Thursday, 28 September 1989, at 3.10 p.m.

President: Mr. CHUNG (Republic of Korea)  
later: Ms. TALLAWY (Egypt)

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## GENERAL DEBATE AND ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1988 (GC(XXXIII)/873) (continued)

1. Mr. AL-SAEID (Kuwait) said that his Government was following with great interest the Agency's activities and efforts to widen the field of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It had accordingly contributed, jointly with the Agency, to the financing of technical co-operation projects in friendly countries. It was also co-operating with the Agency in the field of nuclear medicine - its Medicine Centre received many trainees sent by the Agency - and was participating actively in regional courses organized by the Agency in various regions of the world. Kuwait shared the concerns of other countries about two problems affecting the whole world, namely environment pollution due to the build-up of gases released into the atmosphere, and deforestation which were leading to a global warming of the atmosphere. He agreed with those who believed that the peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be expanded, but felt that such an expansion must be accompanied by adequate precautions to guard against the dangers of the release of radioactive substances, which concerned all States.

2. Israel's refusal to place its nuclear installations under international safeguards constituted a serious threat to the whole Middle East region and was of grave concern to his delegation. Israel, which had nuclear capabilities that could endanger peace and security in the whole world, ignored all the calls by the international community and all the General Conference resolutions requesting it to place its nuclear installations under Agency safeguards. Kuwait therefore urged Member States, particularly the major powers which were responsible for maintaining international peace and security, to put pressure on the Israeli Government to make it comply with the requests of the international community. The technical study on the modalities of application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East (GC(XXXIII)/887) did not contain anything new and he was surprised that, in paragraph 75(b) of that document, the name of Kuwait was associated with that of Israel. Kuwait, as was well known, had no nuclear activity and had no plans at present to use nuclear energy. Document GC(XXXIII)/887 should rather have focused on Israel, which was posing an increasingly serious threat to the Middle East region.

3. The participation of the State of Palestine in the Agency's activities as an observer should be regarded as a legitimate right. The Palestinian people had demonstrated their commitment to international law and their desire to participate in international meetings. It would therefore be just and equitable to give Palestine the right to participate, as an observer, in the Agency's scientific and technical meetings, as well as in meetings of the Board of Governors and sessions of the General Conference.

4. His delegation was very interested in the amendment of Article VI.A.2 of the Statute, since it considered the representation of the regions of Africa and the Middle East and South Asia in the Board of Governors to be inequitable and inadequate. He therefore appealed to Member States to devote the necessary attention to that matter, which had been under review for 13 years, in order to correct the existing imbalance.

5. Mr. AMOO-GOTTFRIED (Ghana) expressed satisfaction with the Agency's technical co-operation activities, to which Ghana had contributed by setting up a conference centre at the National Nuclear Research Institute and making it available to the Agency for regional courses. He was pleased that, despite the limitations imposed by a zero-growth budget, there had been a slight increase in resources for technical co-operation. Ghana appealed to those Member States which were in a position to do so to increase their contributions so as to ensure a genuine transfer of nuclear know-how to developing countries. For its part, Ghana undertook to pay a voluntary contribution of US \$6000. The low implementation rate for the technical co-operation programme in Africa (of the order of 30%) was alarming. His delegation urged the Agency to make every effort to speed up the placing of fellows and the supply of equipment needed for the implementation of projects. For their part, Member States should attempt to expedite the acceptance of Agency experts in order to ensure the success of such missions.

6. Ghana attached great importance to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for national development and was currently concentrating its efforts in the areas of agriculture and medicine. In the agricultural sector, its research activities covered irradiation of food and medical products, mutation breeding, insect control using the sterile insect technique, animal production and disease, biological nitrogen fixation, pesticide residues and tissue

culture combined with radiation-induced genetic mutation. In the field of medicine, nuclear techniques were used daily for diagnostic scanning. Ghana also attached great importance to radiation protection and regularly measured the monthly radiation doses received by all X-ray machine operators and other users of ionizing radiation. The Government was currently studying a radiation protection law and regulations which might be promulgated before the end of 1989. In that connection, his delegation thanked the Agency and the RAPAT mission for their help in drafting that legislation.

7. The delays associated with the amendment of Article VI.A.2 of the Statute were disturbing. Ghana supported that amendment, which would correct the under-representation of the regions of Africa and the Middle East and South Asia and enhance still further the Agency's efficiency. Mention should also be made of the debt problem, which hampered Ghana's ability to participate effectively in the Agency's work and undoubtedly accounted for the absence from the General Conference of many third-world countries.

8. Ghana appreciated the Agency's role in connection with the regional co-operation agreement for Africa. It hoped that negotiations would soon be concluded so that the necessary framework could be set up before the next session of the General Conference. That agreement would undoubtedly be of as much benefit to Africa as the analogous agreements were for Latin America and for Asia and the Pacific. On a different subject, his delegation condemned the apartheid régime of South Africa and trusted that the changing international climate would result in positive developments.

9. Public concern about the development of nuclear power could not be ignored. The risk of accidents was only too obvious if effective preventive measures were not adopted. It was also regrettable that State liability for nuclear damage resulting from transboundary pollution was not yet covered by an international treaty. At the previous session of the General Conference, a resolution adopted by consensus had stressed that it was essential to the development and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes to strengthen the liability regime for nuclear damage. Ghana was in favour of a ban on the movement of hazardous wastes from developed to developing countries and believed that it was up to exporting countries which had better infrastructures to monitor the enforcement of such a ban.

10. As a party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Ghana commended the Agency for its activities in the area of safeguards. It also welcomed the guidelines drawn up by the Agency on the underground disposal of high-level radioactive wastes.

11. It was up to each country to ensure that the world was rid of wastes and other substances that degraded the environment and threatened the quality of life. The world was a village whose inhabitants should all work together to make it habitable for themselves and for future generations. Ghana supported the Agency's relentless efforts to restore public confidence in nuclear power.

#### ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CONFERENCE

##### (c) REVIEW OF THE CONFERENCE'S WORKING PRACTICES (GC(XXXIII)/GEN/77) (resumed)

12. The PRESIDENT said that for its consideration of the present agenda item, the General Committee had had before it the report of the inter-sessional working group set up to review ways of streamlining the Conference's working practices (GC(XXXIII)/GEN/77).

13. The General Committee had expressed its appreciation of the excellent work done by the working group under the chairmanship of Ambassador Halim bin Ali (Malaysia), had endorsed the report and had decided to recommend that the General Conference adopt the working group's report and all of its recommendations, some of which had already been implemented successfully on a provisional basis. During discussion of the report, a suggestion had been made that the recommendations be reviewed after five years in the light of the experience gained in their implementation.

14. Thus, if there were no objections, he would take it that the General Conference wished to approve the working group's report and the recommendations which had been endorsed by the General Committee.

15. It was so decided.

16. The PRESIDENT also assumed that the elections to the Board of Governors could take place on the basis of the recommendations made by the

working group, meaning that a ballot would be necessary only for those areas where there was no agreed list of candidates.

17. It was so decided.

REQUEST FOR THE RESTORATION OF VOTING RIGHTS (GC(XXXIII)/INF/277)

18. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee recommended that the General Conference should not accede to the request made by Niger that the last sentence of Article XIX.A of the Statute be invoked in order that Niger might be permitted to vote during the current session of the General Conference.

19. Ms. DIAROUMEYE (Niger) appealed to the General Conference to reconsider the request made by her country. Of the States which were to lose their voting rights at the current session, Niger was the one with the lowest level of arrears, and the non-payment of its contribution was not the result of unwillingness, negligence or forgetfulness. Niger was in the process of taking the necessary steps to pay its arrears. Circumstances were such that the Agency had not yet received the outstanding funds, but it would do so in the very near future. For those reasons, her delegation hoped that the General Conference would not follow the General Committee's recommendation.

20. Mr. MBODJ (Senegal), Mr. HAMZA (Côte d'Ivoire) and Mr. OGADA (Kenya) supported the appeal made by the delegate of Niger, believing the failure to pay in that particular case, was due to conditions beyond that country's control.

21. Mr. MGBOKWERE (Nigeria) recalled that his country was a member of the General Committee and it was therefore difficult for him to oppose a decision taken by that Committee. However, as Chairman of the African group, he wished to highlight the financial problems facing many African countries which had not even been able to send representatives to the current session. He urged the General Conference to reconsider Niger's request, bearing in mind the economic situation of the African countries. He would also ask the President to inform the General Conference briefly of what had taken place in the General Committee.

22. Mr. KABBAJ (Morocco), Mr. NDJOKO (Zaire), Mr. RAMTANI (Algeria) and Mr. MELAGA (Cameroon), considering that, like many African countries, Niger

was faced with circumstances beyond its control, and taking into account the pledge of payment made by the delegate of that country, supported the request made by Niger for the restoration of its voting rights.

23. The PRESIDENT, in response to the request made by the representative of Nigeria, reported that the General Committee had studied the wording of Article XIX.A, of the Statute and had decided that the reasons put forward by Niger in support of its request were insufficient to justify its failure to comply with its statutory commitments.

24. Mr. BADRAN (Jordan), Mr. AMMAR (Tunisia), Mr. AL-KITAL (Iraq), Mr. SAETI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) and Mr. SILANGWA (Zambia) associated themselves with previous speakers who had supported Niger's request.

25. The PRESIDENT said that he was impressed by the support received by Niger and asked whether any delegations had different views.

26. Mr. SMITH (United Kingdom) said that he was not taking the floor in order to express an opposing view, but to make a few comments before a decision was taken. It was very rare for a country in arrears with the payment of its contributions to request to be allowed to keep its voting rights, presumably because such requests were generally rejected on the grounds that they were not justified by circumstances beyond the control of the Member State concerned.

27. Although it was obviously necessary to adhere to the principles laid down in the Statute, a new element had arisen of which the General Committee had not been aware when it had considered the matter. The delegate of Niger had clearly stated that her country intended to pay its arrears in the very near future. It was very likely that if the General Committee had been informed of that fact it would have decided differently. In view of that new fact, he felt that the request submitted by Niger should be accepted.

28. The PRESIDENT, noting that all speakers were in favour of restoring Niger's voting rights, took it that the General Conference wished to accede to Niger's request, since that country had pledged to pay its arrears in the very near future.

29. It was so decided.

## GENERAL DEBATE AND ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1988 (GC(XXXIII)/873) (resumed)

30. Mr. BADRAN (Jordan) said that the thirty-third regular session of the General Conference was taking place in a climate of international détente which had begun four years previously and gave reason for hope and optimism. In that new era, in which the international community was determined to face up to the dangers threatening the whole of humanity, it might be possible to solve many problems through international efforts linking developing and industrialized countries.

31. The first of those problems was to find out how energy could be obtained at a reasonable cost so that countries, particularly poor countries, could continue their economic development. It now seemed clear, especially since the World Energy Conference held in Montreal, that world energy demand could be expected to double over the next 30 years and that electricity demand would double within 15 years. It was therefore necessary to increase the use of nuclear power and the transfer of nuclear technology to developing countries, since new energy sources, although important, would not in the foreseeable future be able to cope with the considerable increase in energy demand which would accompany the world's population growth and economic growth. The new climate of confidence prevailing in international relations might very well extend to the nuclear sector and encourage nuclear technology producers, including manufacturers of small reactors, to take an interest in developing countries; it might also encourage international financial institutions to conduct equitable negotiations in order to resolve the financing problems which posed considerable obstacles to the progress of developing countries in the use of nuclear energy.

32. Comparison of the environmental impact of fossil fuels and that of nuclear power had led Jordan to the conclusion that the only way of protecting the environment was to develop nuclear power on a large scale to replace traditional energy sources and thereby to prevent discharges of harmful gases into the atmosphere, while also taking other new clean energy sources into account. At present, if they were to cope with their increased energy needs, developing countries had no other alternative but to burn more fossil fuels, thereby considerably adding to atmospheric pollution. It was impossible to imagine the scale and nature of the potential damage to the environment that

would result if developing countries were not allowed to acquire nuclear technology more quickly, especially since those countries had high population growth rates and a per capita energy consumption which was less than 7% of that in industrialized countries, but which would inevitably increase.

33. It was therefore important to consider new ways of finding a common solution to that problem. His delegation proposed that assistance should be provided for the development of regional nuclear power systems; that industrialized countries should, in accordance with appropriate technical and financial arrangements, construct nuclear power plants in developing countries in order to help those countries meet their energy needs; that an international system of incentives should be established to facilitate the transition from traditional systems to nuclear systems; that efforts should be stepped up to solve the political, economic and technical problems associated with nuclear technology and that an open-ended working group should be set up to discuss the problems of funding with international financial institutions.

34. Alongside the development of nuclear power, there should be a strengthening of existing radiation protection systems, constant attention should be given to nuclear safety and security, and international codes of practice should be established, particularly in the areas of radioactive waste management and disposal. Furthermore, it was important to expand the international safeguards system; to strengthen measures to avoid the horizontal and vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons; to develop new models with inherent safety characteristics; to prepare, under the Agency's supervision, codes of practice and an international agreement defining the liability of producers in terms of nuclear safety and security; and to continue international efforts to reach an agreement between the major powers on the limitation of nuclear weapons and, in the long term, the elimination of those weapons. All those measures would make it possible to establish an international nuclear culture which would promote public acceptance of nuclear power. His delegation welcomed the Agency's efforts in that area and, in particular, its public information policy.

35. Despite the favourable international climate, certain regions of the world remained exposed to pressure and threats which endangered peace. The Middle East and Africa were at the top of the list of those regions. The

Middle East, which for more than 40 years had not known peace, lived continuously under the Israeli threat, while South Africa endangered the whole African continent. It was more necessary than ever that Israel should submit its nuclear facilities to international safeguards in accordance with the resolutions adopted by the Security Council, the United Nations General Assembly and the General Conference, that it should accede to NPT and that it should undertake not to threaten the peaceful installations of neighbouring States. Such initiatives would be perfectly fitting in the present climate of mutual understanding at the international level and would enable a nuclear-weapon-free zone to be established eventually in the Middle East. His delegation therefore urged the international community to make every effort to induce Israel and South Africa to change their policies on that issue.

36. His delegation supported the State of Palestine's perfectly legitimate request to participate as an observer in the scientific and other meetings of the Agency.

37. It was important to amend Article VI.A.2 of the Agency's Statute in order to permit better representation of developing States, particularly of the regions of the Middle East and South Asia and Africa. The counter-proposals which, in an attempt to perpetuate the inequitable representation of those two regions, were turning the question into a complex international problem would not help to improve the working climate and spirit of co-operation between Member States.

38. His delegation welcomed the considerable efforts undertaken by the Agency in its provision of technical assistance to developing countries. He noted that during the last few years, the methods used for providing that assistance had developed considerably and improved noticeably, and that the requests submitted were being dealt with more rapidly. He commended the Department of Technical Co-operation on those results and hoped that efforts would continue to integrate the assistance provided with national programmes aimed at achieving a transfer of technology within a given time. Jordan also welcomed the Agency's emphasis on regional projects, the supply of expert and consultant services and the holding of regional seminars. However, in order for those activities to develop, the Agency should abandon the principle of zero growth in the budget which it had applied for several years and which

prevented it from providing full assistance to developing countries in acquiring nuclear technology.

39. His delegation approved the reappointment of Mr. Hans Blix for a further term of office and was grateful to him for the way in which he had guided the Agency's work. It also approved the Agency's Annual Report for 1988.

40. In conclusion, he stressed that the future of the international community would depend increasingly on co-operation between peoples and between States and that nuclear power was at the top of the list of activities in which there should be genuine co-operation based on confidence in the future of mankind.

Ms. Tallawy (Egypt) took the Chair.

41. Mr. JAMAL (Qatar) said that, in the more than 25 years of its existence, the Agency had never failed in its principal mission, which was to seek to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world. That was without doubt a far from easy task and a heavy responsibility in the face of expansionist and aggressive policies pursued by certain members of the international community on the strength of the military use of atomic energy. It would seem that some States had still not learned the lessons of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. However, there were some early signs that gave grounds for optimism. Thus, the recent rapprochement between the United States and the Soviet Union would undoubtedly contribute to strengthening international peace and security, and would also affect the safeguards system, which played an essential role in promoting nuclear non-proliferation throughout the world, in particular in regions where conflicts were in danger of breaking out at any moment. Furthermore, the fact that the Secretariat had once again been able to conclude that the nuclear material under Agency safeguards in 1988 had remained in peaceful nuclear activities, the results achieved by the Agency in connection with liability for nuclear damage, the adoption by the General Conference of the Joint Protocol linking the Vienna and Paris Conventions on civil liability, and the adoption by the General Conference of a resolution requesting the Board to establish an open-ended working group to study all aspects of nuclear liability were all positive elements which should be welcomed.

42. In spite of all the Agency had done to preserve nuclear safety throughout the world and to ensure that nuclear energy was used exclusively for peaceful purposes, there remained a dangerous obstacle to the successful performance of its noble mission, namely the continued development of the nuclear capabilities of Israel and South Africa and the resulting threat to the security of the Middle East and the African continent. States everywhere in the world, including Europe, recognized that their security was closely linked to that of the Middle East, for various political, geographical and economic reasons. However, by obstinately refusing to accede to NPT and to place its facilities under Agency safeguards, Israel was posing a threat to that region. Its intention to produce and possess nuclear weapons was nothing new or fortuitous. Indeed, for 20 years Israeli leaders had been pursuing a systematic policy of attempting to monopolize the nuclear option for their own exclusive benefit while denying it to the other States in the region, even if doing so made it necessary to resort to force and violence, as Israel had done in 1981 by destroying an Iraqi reactor. That operation had been intended, on the one hand, to show that Israel was capable of striking at any target, Arab or non-Arab, near to or far from its border, and on the other hand, most importantly, to warn advanced countries against supplying nuclear technology to Arab countries, even if it was intended for exclusively peaceful uses. In that connection, he recalled that Israel and South Africa were co-operating in the military uses of nuclear energy and that their efforts had reached a stage where they constituted a very serious danger for the whole of the African continent. It was regrettable that the States which had supplied the racist régimes of Tel Aviv and Pretoria with the nuclear equipment and technical know-how were advanced States which called for democracy, peace and respect for human rights. Those States should henceforth assume a great moral responsibility and exert pressure upon the Israeli and South African régimes to force them to meet the Agency's demands by acceding to NPT and placing all their nuclear installations under safeguards.

43. The fact that, in 1988, the world's total installed nuclear capacity had increased, that nuclear power stations had provided more than 17% of world electricity output, and that there had been 429 nuclear power plants in operation, clearly demonstrated the importance of the peaceful nuclear

option. However, that growth was accompanied by negative aspects, one of which in particular affected developing countries, namely the dumping of nuclear wastes.

44. The disposal of radioactive wastes had become one of the main problems facing countries which used nuclear energy to generate electricity, and in order to solve that problem, those countries used processes which were very harmful to the environment. All countries had a responsibility to future generations, and they should act without delay before the territories of Third-World countries were transformed into dumping grounds for radioactive wastes and their atmosphere was polluted by harmful radioactive substances. Concerted efforts should be made to safeguard present and future generations from the hazards which the wastes presented. The Agency's role should be to make the peoples of the developing countries aware of the risks to which they were being exposed.

45. In conclusion, he reaffirmed that Qatar would continue to support the Agency's efforts to attain its objectives of peace and progress.

46. Mr. PRZEDBORSKI (Costa Rica) said that, thanks to the support provided by the Agency, his country had continued its programmes in hydrology, radiation protection, applied nuclear physics and nuclear medicine, and they were starting to produce results which would have positive effects for the population. However, Costa Rica wished to expand those activities, as it was convinced that the peaceful use of nuclear energy could contribute considerably to improving its population's standard of living.

47. Moreover, his Government was concerned at the fact that the country's hydroelectric reserves, although considerable, would be used up by the year 2015, if present electricity consumption trends continued. Consequently, it wondered whether Costa Rica should not take up the nuclear option in the near future, given that the other option, the large-scale use of fossil fuels, seemed less promising in view of the scarcity of those resources and of the consequences for the environment. Choosing nuclear power would force Costa Rica to make the relevant decisions soon, as it would have to start providing itself with all the necessary resources, manpower and technical infrastructure.

48. Costa Rica deplored the situation of the Inter-American Nuclear Energy Commission (IANEC) of the Organization of American States. That body had been compelled to suspend its activities for budgetary reasons, even though all were aware of the need to share the progress made by each country in Latin America. The IANEC had been the organization which embodied that will. Costa Rica sincerely supported IANEC and hoped that, through its co-ordinating activity, it might be possible to combine efforts in areas where nuclear techniques could help solve the development problems of the countries in the region.

49. Costa Rica took part in and supported the ARCAL programme, which contributed to progress in the areas of common interest to the participating countries. A very important event in that context had been the Fifth Planning and Technical Co-ordination Meeting of the ARCAL programme, held in Costa Rica. That meeting had made it possible to analyse projects, government priorities and the position of participating countries on the international scene, and had examined formulas for international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the financing strategies required for projects under that programme.

50. The National Atomic Energy Commission had intensified and diversified its activities, and six new technical assistance projects had been proposed to the Agency. The steps taken to enable Costa Rica to participate in the regional project on non-destructive testing in Latin America had also been successful.

51. Costa Rica wished to emphasize that sustainable development must necessarily include the prevention of accidents with consequences for the environment, the controlled disposal of wastes and the prevention of contamination. It recommended that the Agency support the Permanent South Pacific Commission's proposal to establish a regional centre for monitoring and evaluating the radioactive contamination of the sea.

52. His Government approved of the initiatives taken during the year in connection with the Agency's technical co-operation, in particular those relating to fellowships and training courses. Countries which, like Costa Rica, had focused their nuclear development on medicine and agriculture needed

to train specialists who could combine efforts to carry out national projects successfully. Meanwhile, both the Agency and the countries concerned could strengthen the technical co-operation programme.

53. The great responsibility which the Agency's national counterparts in each country bore for the proper implementation of the programme could not go unmentioned. However, the Agency could also speed up formalities, especially where fellowships and training were concerned, for example in the selection and placement of candidates. His Government encouraged the Agency to make more use of training centres in the region for its courses. Furthermore, it urged the Agency to investigate the possibility of intensifying technical co-operation with developing countries, especially in the area of training and fellowships, firstly by upgrading interregional courses in the light of the common interests of different regions, and secondly by adapting the level and characteristics of regional courses to the interests and specific needs of the region concerned. That would give the Agency the assurance that it was responding to the particular needs of each region and give governments the assurance that their specialists were receiving training commensurate with the available resources, and would thus enhance the contribution of technical assistance projects towards economic and social development.

54. His delegation wished to take the opportunity of expressing its satisfaction to all the staff of the Department of Technical Co-operation, who had, throughout 1989, shown themselves eager to co-operate with the permanent missions in Vienna.

55. His delegation approved the Agency's Annual Report for 1988 and commended and sincerely thanked the Agency's staff for the work they had done. At the same time, it hoped that the Agency would not waste its energy, time and resources or compromise its prestige by taking up problems of a political nature which could be discussed and, if necessary, resolved in other forums. It reaffirmed its support for the universality of the Agency and continued to feel that it was harmful and extremely negative for all to treat any State in a discriminatory fashion.

56. In conclusion, his delegation reaffirmed its faith in the important role of the Agency, which effectively contributed to the well-being of peoples through the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

57. Mr. PABON (Venezuela) expressed satisfaction with the activities carried out by the Agency in 1988, which once again had confirmed the Agency's vital importance in the current international context. Its contribution to reducing the technological imbalance between developing and industrialized countries was of great importance for peace. Many of the world's serious economic and political problems stemmed from that technological imbalance, which brought with it poverty, hunger and bad health care and education. That was why international co-operation and technical assistance were valuable, in particular the assistance provided by the Agency in the peaceful applications of nuclear energy, which was an effective instrument for raising people's standard of living. His Government had always urged that technical co-operation should enjoy broader support, should be allocated more resources and, in fact, should be considered the Agency's principal activity.

58. Venezuela's support for the Agency's work had always been firm and resolute, especially since it had benefited from valuable technical assistance services aimed at accelerating its development in the area of nuclear technology applications. That was profitable not only from the economic but also from the social point of view. Venezuela could state with satisfaction that it applied nuclear techniques successfully. It implemented, with the Agency's help, programmes in the fields of dosimetric calibration, nuclear analytical chemistry and use of isotopic methods for improving agricultural production, soil fertility, animal nutrition and the diagnosis of animal diseases. It had also benefited from regional technical assistance programmes which had enabled it to gain experience in radiation protection, dosimetric calibration and other areas of the peaceful applications of nuclear energy, and to implement programmes related to those areas.

59. Venezuela had been one of the countries that had supported the establishment of the ARGAL programme, which had become an excellent instrument of co-operation for all the Latin American region. His delegation therefore wished to take the opportunity of reiterating its Government's support for the activities conducted under that programme, commending the Agency for the way in which it had carried out those co-operation activities, and urging it to make every effort to ensure that the programme received the required financing. It would also be desirable for countries outside the region to

increase the financial contribution which they had so far been making to regional co-operation in Latin America, for which his delegation heartily thanked them.

60. Since Venezuela had natural resources such as oil and hydroelectric power, it did not for the moment need to resort to nuclear energy. Thus, Venezuela's nuclear policy had always been oriented towards the peaceful applications of nuclear energy, with special emphasis on teaching, training and research. It had nevertheless not been uninterested in research and efforts at the international level to increase the efficiency, safety and reliability of power reactors. Indeed, it was paying close attention to fusion experiments and to research into new energy sources.

61. Venezuela shared the concerns raised by the "greenhouse effect". It already had an environmental protection policy which was being implemented by the Ministry for the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources. Under a decree issued by the Executive, the electrical utilities had to allocate a substantial percentage of their net profits to protecting the environment. Venezuela supported the activities which were being carried out in that area by the international organizations, and it kept abreast of the results of comparative studies on the effects of the different energy sources on the natural environment and on health; however, such results were useful only to the extent that purely scientific criteria were applied and economic interests which might favour one energy source over others were totally excluded.

62. Conservation of the environment required that the problem of contamination be dealt with in a global way and that the necessary corrective measures be applied. It was undeniably the progress made by industrial societies that hitherto had caused the most damage to the environment. However, that same industrial development had also permitted those societies finally to free themselves from hunger and to satisfy their basic needs. That truth was not always taken into consideration. Certain Third-World countries had a nascent industry for the production of plastics, refrigerants and aerosols. The industrialized countries consumed 84% of the world's output of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), the potential of which for destroying the ozone layer was internationally recognized, but they were now asking those Third-World countries, in the name of environmental protection, to stop using CFCs

in their production. It was unacceptable so unfairly to deny developing countries their legitimate right to pursue industrialization and to seek economic independence. Furthermore, the resources which were currently accessible to man went far beyond those offered by the simple natural order. Given the research instruments and innovation capabilities which science and technology now offered, in the field of energy and in others, it could be asserted that pursuing human development was possible at an acceptable cost and risk. Science and technology could supply man with practical solutions for environmentally sound development.

63. He welcomed the fact that the group of experts entrusted with elaborating a code of practice for transactions involving nuclear waste had begun its work. Measures taken at the national level were insufficient, and international agreements should be concluded to prevent the dumping of nuclear waste and other toxic wastes in developing countries. He hoped that the group of experts would be able to present a draft code which could be accepted by Member States to the Board of Governors the following year.

64. His delegation was also pleased with the activities carried out by the Agency in co-operation with FAO and WHO in the area of food irradiation, and in particular with the results of the International Conference on the Acceptance, Control of, and Trade in Irradiated Food.

65. With regard to the open-ended working group established to study all aspects of civil liability for nuclear damage, his delegation felt that its work on international liability for damage caused by nuclear activities should be directed towards elaborating a convention on State liability.

66. Venezuela attached great importance to technical co-operation and noted with satisfaction that the implementation rate had increased in 1988 in comparison with 1987, although it was still too low. That was no doubt due in part to a certain slowness on the part of the countries receiving assistance, but also to bureaucratic obstacles. His delegation therefore urged the Secretariat to consider the possibility of revising its administrative procedures so as to eliminate everything that hindered a more satisfactory utilization of the available resources.

67. His delegation regarded as extremely positive the change in the provisions relating to equipment purchases whereby the maximum authorized amount for purchases for which the competent committee did not need to give its approval had been raised to US \$40 000. That would facilitate equipment purchases, a very important component of technical assistance programmes. In addition, he hoped that the development of preparatory assistance would lead to the Agency rejecting fewer proposals.

68. Mr. FORTUNE (New Zealand) said that his country, as a founder Member of the Agency, was satisfied that it had met its principal challenge of accelerating and enlarging the peaceful uses of nuclear energy while ensuring that the processes developed were not used to further any military purpose. With its activities, the Agency had made a significant contribution to the maintenance of international security. From the outset, it had emphasized environmental protection, but there remained much more to be done. The threat of pollution caused universal concern. The potential risks of radioactive materials and nuclear waste disposal remained in existence. Recent accidents in non-military nuclear facilities had served to reinforce global concerns which could not be ignored. Nuclear power now accounted for 17% of total world electricity production and was expected to increase. It was vital that the nuclear industry should apply the most rigorous safety standards and that all by-products should be disposed of in an environmentally sound and safe manner. The credibility of nuclear technology and the contribution that its peaceful use could make demanded proper regulation.

69. The Agency's task of verifying compliance with NPT was one of its prime objectives. The safeguards functions established under NPT and the Agency's Statute were an essential part of the wider nuclear non-proliferation regime. Preparations for the fourth NPT Review Conference, which was to take place in 1990, were well advanced. That conference would again place NPT and the safeguards regime deriving from it under the international spotlight.

70. New Zealand was disappointed and concerned that some 50 non-nuclear-weapon States parties to NPT had not yet concluded safeguards agreements pursuant to the Treaty. Many of those States had no nuclear activities, and therefore posed no urgent problem. However, several of them did operate nuclear facilities of significance for safeguards. New Zealand appealed to

those countries to comply with the terms of NPT and to conclude safeguards agreements with the Agency. Such action was essential to maintain the effectiveness of the non-proliferation regime and to dispel suspicions which could be aroused by non-compliance with the verification aspects of the Treaty.

71. New Zealand believed that all peaceful nuclear installations in all States should be brought under the Agency's control, and was pleased to note in that context that all five nuclear-weapon States had now concluded voluntary-offer safeguards arrangements of varying scope with the Agency. He hoped that those States would further extend the scope of those arrangements, during the NPT review, so as both to contribute towards limiting the production of material for nuclear weapons and to boost confidence in the non-proliferation regime. The NPT was the most successful and most widely supported arms control treaty yet concluded in the nuclear age. It represented a dynamic balance of obligations and commitments. For its future success, it was important that commitments made by parties were seen to be met. His country welcomed the progress made by the superpowers in the area of disarmament and arms control, with the conclusion of the INF agreement and the continuation of strategic arms negotiations. It also welcomed the progress in conventional arms talks. Those achievements, and the prospect of further progress on arms control and disarmament, helped to provide a sound basis both for the NPT Review Conference and for the extension conference in 1995.

72. However, there was still much to be done, and not only by the nuclear-weapon States. States with significant fuel cycle activities which remained outside the non-proliferation regime were undermining its future credibility. New Zealand called on the threshold States to place their facilities under Agency safeguards and to give a legally binding commitment to renounce the nuclear option. In the view of the New Zealand Government, an ambiguous nuclear policy undermined regional and global security.

73. The Agency had additional safeguards responsibilities beyond those of its Statute and NPT. Under the Treaty of Rarotonga, which had established the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone, the Agency had assumed additional safeguards functions. Under that Treaty, the parties were required to conclude a safeguards agreement with the Agency. In scope and effect, those agreements should be equivalent to an NPT safeguards agreement. The Treaty of Rarotonga,

which had entered into force in December 1986, was an important South Pacific regional initiative which augmented the global non-proliferation regime. It supplemented NPT and also extended the non-proliferation concept in the region further by excluding the stationing of nuclear explosive devices on the territories of the States Parties. New Zealand was pleased to note that in the previous year a further two members of the South Pacific Forum, the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea, had ratified the Treaty, bringing the number of States Parties to eleven.

74. If the Agency was to carry out its safeguards mission, it must have adequate resources and be efficiently managed. As more sophisticated nuclear facilities and larger reprocessing plants came on stream, the Agency's ability to carry out its role would be further strained. All Member States had a strong interest in exploring ways to assist the Agency in carrying out its duties, whether through improved and streamlined procedures or by other efficiency gains.

75. The NPT offered a basis for co-operation between States on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It was of course necessary to balance the non-proliferation objectives of the Treaty with the right of States to use nuclear technology. The Agency and its Members could make an important and valuable contribution in that area.

76. The use of nuclear energy as a source of electricity carried with it the responsibility of ensuring that the highest safety standards were observed. As had been seen, the consequences of a nuclear disaster were an international problem. The Agency was to be congratulated for further strengthening safety standards through the work of the International Nuclear Safety Advisory Group (INSAG) and for updating the Agency's Regulations for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Materials.

77. Satisfactory progress had also been made in co-operation with the World Meteorological Organization on the use of the Global Telecommunication System for the rapid transmission of data for the purposes of the Early Notification Convention. His country was pleased to be associated with those arrangements.

78. New Zealand and the other countries of the South Pacific were extremely conscious of the fragility of the marine environment. They were particularly

concerned that the vast reaches of the Pacific should not be used as dumping grounds for nuclear waste. Under the Treaty of Rarotonga and the Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region, those countries had undertaken not to dump nuclear wastes and, as far as possible, to prevent others from doing so in the region.

79. New Zealand was firmly convinced of the need for a stronger international regime against the dumping of radioactive waste and for a code of conduct governing all disposal activities. Accordingly, it was pleased to note that the Agency was continuing to emphasize waste management issues and that an International Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee was providing advice on that subject. It also welcomed the establishment of a technical group of experts to consider the basic principles of a code of practice for international radioactive waste transactions, which would be aimed at preventing illegal transactions and dumping operations including radioactive wastes.

80. The Agency had an impressive record as a centre for the exchange of information on nuclear technology, safety and radioisotope applications. New Zealand, like all Member States, was a beneficiary of those services. Agency fellowship holders had trained in New Zealand, and New Zealand experts had assisted with training courses and seminars in Asia and the Pacific, where the Regional Co-operation Agreement played a very useful role. New Zealand experts also contributed to technical projects in various areas. During the year, New Zealand had continued its close involvement with the work of the International Consultative Group on Food Irradiation and it would carry on participating in the work of that group.

81. Over the next 12 months, the members of the international community would be focusing their attention very closely on the operation of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, including the Agency's safeguards responsibilities. New Zealand would continue to give full support to the Agency's work in that area. It was essential that as the peaceful uses of nuclear energy were developed and extended, a sound and viable international safeguards regime should remain firmly in place.

Mr. Chung (Republic of Korea) took the Chair.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS (GC(XXXIII)/898)

82. The PRESIDENT recalled that the General Conference had decided earlier during the present meeting to modify the procedure for elections to the Board of Governors and to hold a secret ballot only for those areas for which there was no agreed list of candidates[\*].

83. The elective places on the Board which were to be filled were indicated in document GC(XXXIII)/898. Paragraph 2 of the document gave the number of Member States which must be elected for each geographical area so as to ensure that the Board would be constituted in accordance with Article VI.A of the Statute. Paragraph 4 listed the twenty-four Member States which had been either designated by the Board of Governors in June to serve on the Board in accordance with Article VI.A.1 of the Statute or elected by the General Conference in 1988 in accordance with Article VI.A.2 of the Statute, and which would therefore serve on the Board in 1989-90.

84. As the Member States of the areas Latin America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe and the Far East had agreed on their candidates, a secret ballot was unnecessary in their case and Rule 79 of the Rules of Procedure could be suspended.

85. The PRESIDENT asked the General Conference whether it wished to elect Chile and Venezuela to the two seats for Latin America.

86. Chile and Venezuela were duly elected.

87. The PRESIDENT asked the General Conference whether it wished to elect Belgium and Italy to the two seats for Western Europe.

88. Belgium and Italy were duly elected.

89. The PRESIDENT asked the General Conference whether it wished to elect Czechoslovakia and Poland to the two seats for Eastern Europe.

90. Czechoslovakia and Poland were duly elected.

91. The PRESIDENT asked the General Conference whether it wished to elect the Philippines to the seat for the Far East.

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[\*] See paras 16 and 17 above.

92. The Philippines were duly elected.

93. The PRESIDENT said that four seats remained to be filled for which there was no agreement on the candidates, namely two seats for Africa, one for the Middle East and South Asia, and one for the Middle East and South Asia or South East Asia and the Pacific or the Far East (the so-called "floating seat"), which would on the present occasion go to the Middle East and South Asia area.

94. A vote was taken by secret ballot to elect four members to the Board of Governors.

95. At the invitation of the President, a member of the Finnish delegation and a member of the Hungarian delegation acted as tellers.

96. The PRESIDENT, noting that the counting of votes would take some time, suggested that the general debate be resumed meanwhile.

GENERAL DEBATE AND ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1988 (GC(XXXIII)/873) (resumed)

97. Mr. SILANGWA (Zambia), emphasizing once again his country's interest in the peaceful applications of nuclear energy, assured the Agency of his full support in carrying out its statutory tasks. Zambia thanked the Agency for the assistance it gave developing countries by strengthening their nuclear infrastructure, promoting training, and providing consultant's services.

98. The technical co-operation programme, from which Zambia had benefited in various ways, continued to play an important role in the social and economic development of Member States. All the projects implemented in Zambia were continuing to make progress. The expert services received in 1989 had made it possible to strengthen radiological protection and to make more effective use of the installations at the national nuclear analytical laboratory. The Agency had also helped Zambia to set up a plant tissue culture laboratory which was important for agricultural research. The infrastructure set up with the Agency's help had also enabled Zambia to participate in the Agency's regional activities and to host several seminars and training courses. Inadequate or non-existent nuclear instrumentation maintenance capacity continued to be a major setback in the implementation of

projects in Africa. The two courses held in Lusaka had therefore been particularly useful.

99. Zambia continued to participate in the Agency's regional projects for Africa and supported the initiatives by African Member States and the Agency Secretariat to establish an African regional co-operation agreement for research, development and training. It hoped that the Board of Governors would give favourable consideration to that question. The setting-up of a regional network for nuclear instrumentation would also be a positive step.

100. His delegation had taken note of the excellent report on technical co-operation activities in 1988, in which the Agency had attempted to define more clearly the contribution of nuclear programmes to the development of Member States, and in particular to sustainable socio-economic development. Those initiatives contributed greatly to the effective use of the Agency's resources, and the Agency's evaluation missions had an important role to play in that connection.

101. For all those reasons, Zambia urged the Board of Governors to find a permanent solution for the financing of technical assistance. It supported the proposals aiming to ensure reliable and predictable resources, as reflected in resolution GC(XXV)/RES/388. Zambia had pledged its full contribution to the Technical Assistance and Co-operation Fund for 1990. Its commitment to the Fund was demonstrated by the timely manner in which it had paid its voluntary contribution in past years.

102. In connection with the amendment of Article VI.A.2 of the Statute, his delegation maintained that the statutory principle of equitable geographical representation should be applied to the areas of Africa and the Middle East and South Asia. His delegation was disappointed that the Board had not made more progress on that issue, and reiterated that the issue of amending Article VI.A.2 was separate from that of revising Article VI as a whole.

103. Zambia noted the action taken by the Director General pursuant to resolution GC(XXXII)/RES/490 on the dumping of nuclear wastes, namely the establishment of a representative working group of experts, and hoped that it would soon complete its work.

104. International co-operation on the sharing of safety-related information should be strengthened. It was essential that the suppliers of nuclear technology and the industrially advanced countries should provide developing countries with up-to-date information on the safety of nuclear installations. Zambia welcomed the initiatives which the Agency was continuing to take to assist Member States in training, and thus to help them derive greater benefit from the International Nuclear Information System (INIS).

105. It was encouraging to note that the Agency's safeguards programme was continuing to be implemented efficiently and that again during 1988 all nuclear material under safeguards had been duly accounted for. The quality of inspections had been maintained in spite of the reduction in the number of on-site inspections. The Agency was also continuing its work on training personnel from Member States in the Department of Safeguards.

106. With regard to the nuclear capabilities of South Africa, his delegation was disappointed that, despite the many efforts made by the Director General to persuade South Africa to submit all of its nuclear installations to Agency safeguards, and despite the many pressures exerted to force that country to abide by resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly, South Africa had done no more than make promises. The Pretoria régime continued to maintain a militarized political climate which was a grave danger to peace not only in southern Africa, but also in the world as a whole. The international community should not relax in the face of apparent change, but on the contrary should increase its pressure on South Africa for it to abandon its apartheid policy and to submit all of its nuclear installations to Agency safeguards. The Zambian delegation was deeply concerned by the alliance between South Africa and Israel, aimed at developing their nuclear military capabilities and destabilizing southern Africa and the Middle East. It fully shared the concerns of countries of the Middle East at the nuclear capability of Israel and its aggressive military activities, which were endangering peace in that region.

107. Mr. NETHSINGHE (Sri Lanka), himself a former Agency staff member, said that one of the Agency's main assets was its staff, which any national or international organization might envy. Every effort should be made to deal with the problems of zero-budgetary growth, expanding programmes and unduly

heavy workloads in certain sections, so as not to erode the Agency's morale and hence efficiency.

108. His country did not have any major nuclear facilities; it had no power or research reactors and was not planning to build any in the near future. So far, its activities had focused on applications in the areas of agriculture, medicine, industry and hydrology. The Atomic Energy Authority provided the necessary support through various channels: teaching and training programmes in nuclear sciences, radiation protection and monitoring services, services for the repair and maintenance of nuclear electronic equipment and nuclear analytical services. All those activities would not have been possible without the Agency's technical co-operation programme, the Regional Co-operative Agreement (RCA) and its research contract programme.

109. In the area of agriculture, significant contributions had been made in developing superior varieties of rice and mung bean, establishing better soil, water and fertilizer management practices, enhancing biological fixation of atmospheric nitrogen by plants, and improving animal production and health. In the medical sector, greater use was being made of in vitro radioimmunoassay methods and in vivo nuclear imaging techniques for diagnostic purposes and improved techniques had been introduced for radiation therapy of cancer patients. Radioimmunoassay techniques had also successfully been applied in the mass screening of donor blood for hepatitis B.

110. In the industrial field, nuclear techniques were widely used for non-destructive testing, both in the public and private sector. The Atomic Energy Authority was establishing the necessary capability to provide non-destructive testing services to firms which were too small or which did not need to establish their own capability for such activities. Research and development work was continuing on radiation vulcanization of natural rubber latex, following the successful demonstration of that process in Indonesia, Malaysia and Japan under the RCA/UNDP/IAEA Industrial Applications Project. The private sector was establishing a commercial irradiation facility for the sterilization of surgical rubber gloves made locally and, in the public sector, the National Paper Corporation had decided to install a nucleonic control system to improve quality paper production in one of its factories. In the area of hydrology, methods using radioactive tracers and environmental

isotopes had been used successfully to solve practical problems related to the exploration of groundwater resources and seepage from irrigation canals and water reservoirs. Studies on the fallout of caesium-137 had been successfully carried out in order to solve the twin problems of soil erosion and siltation. Unfortunately, the current disturbances in Sri Lanka had hampered the progressive development of the country's activities relating to nuclear energy and its applications, particularly in the areas of agriculture and hydrology where field work was important.

111. It was essential to increase the production of primary energy from all sources in order even to maintain, let alone improve the quality of life for a growing world population. National productivity could only be improved and increased by using scientific and technological applications, including nuclear techniques, at the level of local infrastructures. All the country's human resources had therefore to be made productive, so as to bridge the gap between the privileged and the underprivileged and to reduce, if not eliminate, the conflicts in Sri Lanka.

112. The problem of public acceptance of nuclear power which, understandably, had taken a turn for the worse after the accidents at Three Mile Island and Chernobyl now seemed to have improved, judging from the increase in the number of nuclear power plants which had been constructed or were under construction in the world. That change must be attributed to the effective response by the Agency, whose programmes had done much to improve public opinion of nuclear power, including the programmes to promote the development of safer nuclear power plants, both in terms of construction and operation, the programmes related to radiation protection and environmental safety and to radioactive waste management and disposal, and the Conventions on Early Notification, on Emergency Assistance, and on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials. The proposed convention on civil liability would strengthen public confidence still further.

113. Sri Lanka was not planning to launch a nuclear power programme in the immediate future. However, if an economically viable small- or medium-sized nuclear power plant were developed, that goal might be brought nearer. The country was largely dependent on hydroelectric power, but its economically exploitable sources of such power were fast dwindling. In order to meet its

future energy needs, Sri Lanka would have no option but to depend more on fossil fuels and new or renewable sources of energy. Nevertheless, it encouraged countries which were ready and prepared to do so to use nuclear power in order to help reduce the greenhouse effect and to preserve the dwindling fossil fuel resources for those who were not in a position to embark on a nuclear power programme.

114. The recent reports in the media about India's plan to construct two power plants in the southern part of its territory, very near to Sri Lanka, had given rise to exaggerated fears among the general public about the consequences for Sri Lanka should any accident occur at those power plants. While recognizing that, in view of the safety precautions taken in the construction and operation of new-generation power plants, such an accident was extremely improbable, Sri Lanka was taking steps to allay public concern and intended to accede, in the near future, to the Conventions on Early Notification, on Emergency Assistance and on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. It also hoped that the convention on civil liability which was currently being prepared would soon be finalized, since it would help to improve public acceptance of nuclear power. His country was proposing to establish a national environmental radiation monitoring programme and to participate in the activities of the IAEA/WHO global environmental radiation monitoring network and the Agency's regional technical co-operation programme on marine radioactivity.

115. As a matter of high priority, Sri Lanka was planning to update its regulations governing the use of nuclear energy and to strengthen its infrastructure for implementing those regulations, particularly with regard to licensing, radiation protection of workers and the public, as well as radioactive waste disposal.

116. Sri Lanka was planning to embark upon an accelerated programme on the commercial application of radiation techniques for the vulcanization of natural rubber latex, food preservation and the sterilization of medical supplies. His delegation hoped that, under the RCA programme, it would also be possible to consider the feasibility of transboundary transmission of electrical power, transboundary monitoring of environmental radioactivity and activation analysis of geological and other samples in research reactors located in countries of the region.

117. In order to meet its objectives, his country urgently needed to develop its human resources. Despite the difficulties at home, young Sri Lankan scientists and technicians were working with dedication and showing innovative capabilities. Sri Lanka would seek all possible assistance from the Agency and other sources in order to train its scientists in the various areas of nuclear science and technology which it considered necessary for the implementation of its programme.

118. In conclusion, he said that his country supported the resolution aimed at enlarging the Board of Governors.

119. Mr. OMAR (Afghanistan) said that his country, which had been an active Member of the Agency for more than 30 years, appreciated all the activities undertaken by that unique international organization to promote international co-operation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy, to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to guarantee future energy supplies. Apart from constituting a bulwark for world peace, those activities, together with the Non-Proliferation Treaty and safeguards, had created an atmosphere of confidence among Member States and had raised the hopes of nations. The experience gained by the Agency in dealing with a nuclear accident had been valuable and had helped it to provide useful assistance.

120. The applications of nuclear energy were essential for the development of all countries and substantial efforts should therefore be made in that area by all members of the international community. The Agency, for its part, was responsible for taking steps to ensure that nuclear energy was used properly. Afghanistan believed that effective nuclear safety and radiation protection could only really be guaranteed if all countries, collectively and individually, took account of the measures taken.

121. The Agency's efforts in the area of the applications of nuclear energy were very laudable, particularly those under its successful technical co-operation programme, which provided considerable support to developing countries. Although it did not have modern nuclear techniques, Afghanistan was aware that the peaceful use of nuclear energy was necessary in order to solve the problems of economic and social development. Despite having decreased during the last few years, the assistance provided by the Agency in the areas of medicine, agriculture, scientific research and training of

national personnel was still very important and valuable. Frequent use was made of the many equipment items which had been provided by the Agency and which were the only ones Afghanistan possessed. It was to be hoped that that support would again be increased in order to help Afghanistan, which had been seriously affected by the war imposed from outside, to cope with the most pressing needs in its reconstruction process.

122. The applications of nuclear energy in agriculture and food played a very important role in the development process. Afghanistan therefore attached great value to the FAO/IAEA co-operation programme, from which it thought it could benefit still more.

123. Regional co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, particularly between neighbouring countries, was very useful and constituted an important aspect of mutual assistance. It was to be hoped that nuclear technology would always be used for peaceful purposes in the region to which Afghanistan belonged. His delegation continued to support the idea of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, with the voluntary participation of Member States.

124. He also welcomed the substantial progress made in the field of disarmament and the world-wide reduction of nuclear weapons. He strongly supported the statement relating to total disarmament issued during the last summit meeting of non-aligned countries in Belgrade.

125. The successful work carried out by the Agency during the past year, the excellent climate which existed between the Member States of that prestigious international organization and their willingness to co-operate gave grounds for satisfaction. In conclusion, Afghanistan was grateful for the assistance received and reaffirmed its support for the Agency's activities.

126. Mr. BOBAK (Trade Unions International of Workers in Energy - TUIWE), after warmly thanking the Agency for having given him the opportunity to attend the thirty-third session of the General Conference as an observer, said that the documents submitted to that session, the proposals and opinions expressed there, and the decisions which would be taken, were of great interest to the TUIWE and the trade union movement as a whole.

127. In April 1989, for the first time, heads of trade union organizations of countries having nuclear power plants and representatives of international trade unions had had the pleasure of meeting the officials and experts of the Agency in Vienna. That consultative trade union/IAEA meeting had shown that the development of nuclear energy created many social and economic problems which could only be solved by co-operation between trade unions and governments on the one hand, and trade unions and the Agency on the other. In his view, the General Conference should take the results of that meeting into account in its work.

128. Nuclear power involved special technologies which differed from all others and for which absolute safety was above all essential. For that reason, and in view of the present degree of its internationalization, nuclear power demanded highly developed and open co-operation between all countries in the world. Such co-operation would help to promote and assure the balanced development of electricity industries so as to meet the needs of mankind in the late twentieth century and to provide the essential conditions, particularly in countries of the Third World, for implementing suitable programmes to meet their pressing national requirements.

129. Although international nuclear safety standards were very strict, participants in the consultative meeting had urged the Agency to strengthen the practice of monitoring and control of civil nuclear activities in all countries. In the majority of cases where co-operation had been established between the management of a nuclear undertaking and the trade union or unions, there had been a steady improvement in the personnel's living and working conditions. However, many problems remained, particularly with regard to the economic and social position of workers. Those problems had a significant effect on the human factor and could have a direct and serious adverse impact on the operation of a nuclear power plant or have serious consequences in emergency situations during an accident.

130. The TUIWE was currently preparing for its second statutory conference, which was to take place in November 1990 in Paris and would be attended by trade unionists from the energy sector of the majority of the world's countries. The present and the future, energy requirements and options, and the safety of work in the nuclear field would be considered in detail. He was

sure that the Agency would also pay attention to those issues and be represented at that conference. The TUIWE, whose main objective was to defend the interests of workers and their trade union organizations, was firmly convinced that a spirit of understanding would prevail between it and the Agency to the mutual advantage of both parties.

#### APPOINTMENT OF THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR

131. The PRESIDENT recalled that the Agency's present External Auditor had been appointed in 1981 by the General Conference at its twenty-fifth session. Having been extended three times, his term of office expired at the end of the year. The General Conference therefore had to appoint an External Auditor for 1990 and 1991. In the light of consultations which had taken place, he proposed that the General Conference appoint the Auditor General of Canada as the Agency's External Auditor for 1990-91.

132. The President's proposal was accepted.

133. Mr. SHENSTONE (Canada) thanked the General Conference for the honour which it had done his country by entrusting the auditing of the Agency's accounts to Canada's Auditor General and said that, like his predecessor, the Auditor General of Kenya, Canada's Auditor General would carry out his tasks to the best of his ability.

134. The PRESIDENT thanked the Auditor General of Kenya for the skill with which he had carried out the duties entrusted to him by the General Conference.

The meeting was suspended at 6.20 p.m and resumed at 6.30 p.m.

#### ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS (GC(XXXIII)/898) (resumed)

135. The PRESIDENT informed the General Conference of the results of the voting.

136. The results of the election of two Members from the area of Africa was as follows:

<u>Abstentions:</u>	16
<u>Valid votes:</u>	164
<u>Required majority:</u>	42

Votes obtained:

Nigeria	60
Tunisia	61
Zaire	21
Zambia	22

137. Having obtained the required majority, Nigeria and Tunisia were elected to the Board.

138. The result of the election of one Member from the area of the Middle East and South Asia was as follows:

<u>Abstentions:</u>	3
<u>Valid votes:</u>	87
<u>Required majority:</u>	44
<u>Votes obtained:</u>	
Islamic Republic of Iran	30
Iraq	1
Saudi Arabia	55
Syrian Arab Republic	1

139. Having obtained the required majority, Saudi Arabia was elected to the Board.

140. The result of the election of one Member from the area of the Middle East and South Asia or of South East Asia and the Pacific or of the Far East (the so-called "floating seat") was as follows:

<u>Abstentions:</u>	9
<u>Valid votes:</u>	79
<u>Required majority:</u>	40
<u>Votes obtained:</u>	
Bangladesh	1
Indonesia	1
Islamic Republic of Iran	2
Iraq	57

Jordan	1
Lebanon	1
Philippines	1
Saudi Arabia	1
Syrian Arab Republic	14

141. Having obtained the required majority, Iraq was elected to the Board.

The meeting rose at 6.35 p.m.