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on Wednesday, 19 September 1990, at 10.20 a.m.

President: Mr. VAJDA (Hungary)

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[*] GC(XXXIV)/914.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CONFERENCE

(a) ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ALLOCATION OF ITEMS FOR INITIAL DISCUSSION
(GC(XXXIV)/914, 932)

1. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee had recommended that the General Conference should include in its agenda all the items listed in document GC(XXXIV)/914 except item 22, entitled "Purchase of recreational facilities by the Agency on behalf of the Staff Association", and that it should also include the additional item proposed by the Board in document GC(XXXIV)/932. The General Committee further recommended that the items be allocated for initial discussion as indicated in document GC(XXXIV)/914 and that the additional item be initially discussed in the Committee of the Whole and that it be inserted between the existing items 11 and 12 of the provisional agenda contained in document GC(XXXIV)/914.

2. The General Committee also recommended, with reference to the additional item, that the time limit laid down in the last sentence of Rule 15 of the General Conference's Rules of Procedure be waived.

3. With regard to the order in which the items on the agenda should be discussed by the General Conference, the General Committee had received a request from the Israeli delegation, which was reproduced in document GC(XXXIV)/INF/286. The General Committee had decided to make no recommendation to the General Conference and he therefore proposed to keep the order of items as set out in document GC(XXXIV)/914, after inserting the additional item and renumbering the other items, on the understanding that circumstances and the efficient conduct of business might make changes necessary in the plenary meetings or the Committee of the Whole.

4. Mr. LAVIÑA (Philippines) said that item 22, entitled "Purchase of recreational facilities by the Agency on behalf of the Staff Association", had been proposed by his country and inscribed in the provisional agenda of the General Conference in total compliance with the Rules of Procedure. The inclusion of that item had been approved and recommended to the General Conference by the Board of Governors. The General Committee's recommendation to have the item deleted was therefore bewildering and shocking. His delegation vehemently opposed that recommendation. Whatever the motive of the

General Committee, the proposal was illegal and unprecedented. In the view of his delegation, it was a patent nullity.

5. If the General Conference, without pretext or justification, supported such an unlawful and unwarranted action, it would never be the same again. Among the international organizations of the United Nations system, it would stand out as an instrument of repression in the hands of some hidden powers or hidden delegations.

6. His delegation therefore protested strongly and vehemently against that illegal, insidious, unwarranted, and unprecedented action by the General Conference. The whole affair would only serve to whet the appetite of delegations to know more about the item. And perhaps there lay the real reason for the proposal to delete item 22.

7. The proposed decision would undoubtedly create a dangerous precedent in the General Conference. Under its Chairman, the General Committee was making history, and it was certain that the General Committee and its Chairman would go down in history for having taken such a decision. His delegation would not request a vote in order to give the General Committee full satisfaction of its historic aberration.

8. He requested that his statement be reproduced in full in the summary record of the meeting.

9. The PRESIDENT suggested that the General Conference accept the recommendations of the General Committee concerning the agenda for the session and his own proposal concerning the order of discussion of the items.

10. It was so agreed.

CLOSING DATE OF THE SESSION AND OPENING DATE OF THE NEXT SESSION
(GC(XXXIV)/914, annotation to item 4(b))

11. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee had authorized him to inform the General Conference that it recommended setting Friday, 21 September 1990, as the closing date of the thirty-fourth regular session and Monday, 16 September 1991, as the opening date of the thirty-fifth regular session, which would be held in Vienna.

12. The General Committee's recommendations were accepted.

REQUESTS FOR THE RESTORATION OF VOTING RIGHTS (GC(XXXIV)/INF/283, 289)

13. The PRESIDENT indicated that the General Committee had had before it requests by Bolivia and Peru that the last sentence of Article XIX.A of the Statute be invoked in order that they might be permitted to vote during the current session of the General Conference. The General Committee recommended that the General Conference accept the request made by Bolivia and refuse the request made by Peru.

14. The General Committee's recommendations were accepted.

GENERAL DEBATE AND ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1989 (GC(XXXIV)/915) (resumed)

15. Mr. ALP (Turkey) said that while welcoming the major economic and political developments in Central and Eastern Europe during the past year, his delegation could not overlook the fact that regional conflicts were continuing and new conflicts emerging. However, the changes in Europe were having a positive effect on disarmament negotiations and on attitudes to regional conflicts. There was greater reason than ever to hope for advances in the area of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, but continued attention must still be given to attempts at acquiring other kinds of weapons of mass destruction and to equally irresponsible transfers of technology by industrial countries for non-peaceful purposes. It was to be expected that the Agency's verification role within the framework of the safeguards system under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) would become more important in the nuclear disarmament process. There was accordingly reason to hope that the 1990s, during which the NPT would be under close scrutiny with a view to its possible prolongation, would see a drastic reduction in nuclear arsenals. Turkey was convinced of the importance of the principles underlying the NPT for the efforts towards global disarmament, which was possible only in the context of détente and international security, and hoped that opinion was shared by all countries without exception and would be acted upon. The universality of the NPT regime could increase, and that would improve the effectiveness of the safeguards system. So far, that system had functioned very efficiently despite financial constraints, but enhanced international co-operation was necessary to make it universal. It was to be hoped that discussions on the efficiency and the financing of safeguards would lead to practical and equitable results.

16. Nuclear power had an important role to play, at least until the development of alternative, renewable energy sources which had no negative impact on the environment and were able to meet a significant portion of the world's increasing energy and electricity needs. However, nuclear power programmes developed slowly, particularly in developing countries handicapped by numerous obstacles, such as the lack of financial resources and adequate nuclear infrastructures. Energy problems were further complicated by the consequences of dependence on oil for worldwide economic and political stability and by the impact of the use of fossil fuels on the global ecosystem. Unless significant steps were taken quickly, the world would be faced in the twenty-first century either with serious shortages or with greater risks associated with the use of harmful energy sources.

17. His delegation had taken note of the Director General's statement on the Agency's financial situation, since it was only by receiving adequate support itself that the Agency could help developing countries to cope with the challenges of economic and social development. He endorsed the recommendations made by the senior expert group on mechanisms to assist developing countries in the promotion and financing of nuclear power programmes. He also appreciated the role which the Agency could play in promoting, inter alia, closer co-operation with the World Bank in energy and power planning, project studies and finding partners to finance and implement feasibility studies for small and medium-size power reactors.

18. In a world which was increasingly concerned about atmospheric pollution and environmental deterioration, the safety of nuclear facilities was undoubtedly a prerequisite for eliminating the obstacles, real or imaginary, to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. States should therefore abandon their traditional reticence and work to strengthen international co-operation in order to maintain the highest possible levels of safety in nuclear facilities. Similarly, it was essential, in order to overcome justified public concerns, to support the Agency's efforts to improve the safety of the long-term disposal of nuclear waste. There could be no doubt that a vigorous safety policy was a duty for each country, not only towards its own nationals, but also towards the international community. In that context, the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Convention on Assistance

in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency, which Turkey had recently ratified, should be complemented by bilateral and regional agreements.

19. Turkey had always supported all activities aimed at promoting greater safety and greater public confidence in the use of nuclear energy. There was no moral or legal justification for continuing to operate power reactors which had dubious safety standards and for shirking international liabilities. The work of the open-ended Standing Committee on Liability for Nuclear Damage had been successful and his delegation fully supported it. It also attached great importance to international co-operation relating to the physical protection of nuclear materials and strongly supported the efforts made by the Agency to encourage countries which had not yet done so to accede to the relevant convention. It would like the Agency to play a co-ordinating role in that area.

20. In emphasizing the aforementioned areas, his delegation did not intend to overlook the importance of the assistance provided by the Agency to developing countries in areas such as dosimetry, agriculture, medicine and hydrology. Training and fellowships, in particular, were vital elements of the technical co-operation programme, since qualified personnel were essential for the improvement of the technological capability of developing countries planning to construct research reactors, to produce isotopes and to venture gradually into nuclear power production. The Agency should make every effort to step up its activities in that area with the support of all its Member States.

21. Within the framework of technical co-operation, Turkey was engaged in various important projects aimed at improving public health and environmental protection. The most recent projects included radioisotope and radiopharmaceutical production, sterilization of medical articles, environmental monitoring, and establishment of a cyclotron facility. In addition, since October 1989 Turkey had hosted six Agency seminars, workshops and interregional training courses in Izmir, Istanbul and Ankara.

22. In conclusion, he thanked the Department of Technical Co-operation and Member States which provided extrabudgetary contributions to finance additional fellowships, footnote-a/ projects, expert services and study tours. He recalled that his Government had pledged to pay the full amount of

its assessed share of the target to the Technical Assistance and Co-operation Fund (TACF) for 1991.

23. Mr. WILSON (Australia) said that, as a founding Member, Australia had always been a strong supporter of the Agency and its Statute. The Agency continued to play a central role, through its safeguards system, in the maintenance of international peace and security. It was also a major force in the provision of technical assistance to developing countries and had important responsibilities in the field of nuclear energy. His delegation was very satisfied with the Agency's various activities, as outlined in the Annual Report for 1989, and with the work done in 1990.

24. As a major exporter of uranium and a Party to the NPT, Australia attached the greatest importance to the Agency's safeguards system, which was the core of the arrangements established by the international community to verify that commitments to peaceful use were being honoured, and as such was also an indispensable factor in international nuclear trade and co-operation and in the development of nuclear power to meet the world's energy needs. The international community had derived many benefits from the security provided by the NPT and the safeguards system, and his delegation welcomed the fact that the Director General had been able to state each year that safeguarded nuclear material had remained in peaceful nuclear activities or had been otherwise adequately accounted for.

25. Despite the cost involved, the efficient and effective application of Agency safeguards served the interests of all Member States. The Agency's safeguards responsibilities were continuing to grow and, in view of budgetary constraints, there had to be maximum co-operation on the part of all Member States in many areas, but particularly in inspector designation, the updating of facility attachments and the negotiation of safeguards agreements, in order to control those costs. It was equally important that safeguards should continue to be financed on a reliable basis, in other words from the Regular Budget, and his delegation could not accept the use of cash surpluses for the purchase of essential safeguards equipment being regarded as a precedent.

26. Australia welcomed the conclusion of the safeguards agreements with Kiribati, Malta and Togo which the Board had approved the previous week, and urged all Parties to the NPT which had not yet done so to negotiate without delay the required agreements based on the model contained in document INFCIRC/153. In that context, his Government was very concerned that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which had become a Party to the Treaty five years previously, had not yet concluded the requisite safeguards agreement and urged it to do so as soon as possible.

27. Australia noted with satisfaction the quantitative and qualitative improvements to the safeguards system and believed that efforts to improve its efficiency and effectiveness should be continued. In view of the development of new types of facilities and progress in nuclear technology, the safeguards system must be able to evolve and adapt in order to remain credible. Accordingly, Australia strongly supported the Director General's efforts to develop safeguards approaches to deal with the increasing number of facilities and quantities of material subject to safeguards and to meet the challenges of new technologies. It also approved of the Director General's decision to ask the Standing Advisory Group on Safeguards Implementation to examine the possibilities for new or improved safeguards procedures. However, it was unlikely that any new safeguards approaches could be applied in the short or medium term and they could, therefore, not be looked to as a way of reducing the cost of safeguards in the short or medium term.

28. Agency safeguards and the NPT had greatly enhanced international security. The NPT, which had 142 Parties since the recent accession of Mozambique, was one of the most successful arms control treaties. Twenty-six countries had become Parties to the Treaty during the past decade and Australia urged countries which had not yet done so to accede to it as soon as possible, noting with concern that some countries which had major nuclear activities remained outside the NPT or were not implementing measures designed by the international community to guarantee the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

29. The Fourth NPT Review Conference had just ended in Geneva. It was disappointing that despite substantial agreement by the Parties on the majority of the questions before the Conference, it had not been possible to adopt a final document. However, positive trends had been clearly evident.

The discussions at the Conference had generally been constructive, reflecting the spirit prevailing in the international community. Some of the most important and tangible achievements of direct relevance to the Agency had been: common understanding on future priorities for peaceful nuclear co-operation, including in particular the needs of the least developed countries; specific proposals for strengthening the barriers against the further spread of nuclear weapons; proposals for dealing with situations where questions had been raised about a State's commitment to non-proliferation undertakings; suggestions for future Agency activities relating to fissionable material; and, perhaps most significantly, consensus on the need for nuclear suppliers to contribute fully to the non-proliferation goal by requiring in future that nuclear supply only take place when accompanied by a legally binding commitment to non-proliferation and the application of full-scope safeguards. The overwhelming majority of suppliers had already taken unilateral measures along those lines, and his delegation hoped that those few which had not yet done so would act without delay, in accordance with the recommendations made at the NPT Review Conference.

30. The Conference had provided a solid basis for a successful Conference in 1995, the prime purpose of which would be to extend the period of application of the Treaty either indefinitely or for an additional period or periods. A fundamental element of Australia's foreign policy was the search for ways of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Australia had attempted to strengthen non-proliferation in direct and practical ways, for example by defending the principle of application of full-scope safeguards as a condition for nuclear trade, and it would continue its efforts in that direction.

31. Australia's support for the Agency's technical co-operation programme enabled it to fulfil its obligation under the NPT to assist developing countries to benefit from the peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology. Australia intended to pay to the TACF for 1991 a contribution corresponding to its base rate of assessment. In addition to its contributions to the TACF, Australia paid considerable extrabudgetary contributions, inter alia, for the Regional Co-operative Agreement for Asia and the Pacific (RCA). That agreement, which had excellent results, was a

harmonious mechanism for regional co-operation and Australia would continue, within its budgetary limitations, to support and promote that important means of technology transfer.

32. During the past year, Australia had hosted Agency training courses on nuclear medicine and research reactor core conversion to low-enriched fuel, and a third course on improvement of radiation protection infrastructures was currently taking place. Australia had also provided places for 24 Agency fellows for on-the-job training in areas such as applications of tracers in industry, soil erosion and radiation processing techniques. Australian experts had undertaken some 40 expert missions in connection with Agency technical assistance projects, and Australia had provided a range of advance equipment. Much of that assistance was provided by the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organization (ANSTO), whose training centre gave high priority to the provision of training to participants from all countries.

33. The ANSTO had benefited from the improvement in arrangements for government funding of science and technology activities. Work had continued on the Synroc process for radioactive waste conditioning developed by Australia. In addition to the co-operation projects on Synroc implemented with establishments in Japan, Italy and the United Kingdom, new co-operation agreements had been concluded with counterpart establishments of ANSTO in China and the Republic of Korea. Organizations in the Soviet Union had also expressed interest in the subject. The results obtained continued to confirm the merits of Synroc as an alternative to the borosilicate glass process already used successfully. Nuclear co-operation between ANSTO and the Atomic Energy Research Institute of the Republic of Korea and Chiang Mai University in Thailand had been extended, reflecting the expansion of nuclear techniques in the Asia and Pacific region, the countries of which were relying increasingly on those techniques to stimulate their economic and social development in various fields. Australia would continue to assist its neighbours in developing those techniques in a safe and responsible manner.

34. Australia had been engaged for many years in research and development work in nuclear medicine and science. Its objective had always been to attain high safety levels; so far no incident had had adverse consequences on public

health. Australia naturally intended to continue to maintain that record. High standards of safety were essential for the acceptance of nuclear power by the international community and to ensure its credibility. Australia fully supported the Agency's safety activities, which were a necessary basis for guaranteeing a high uniform level of safety. It welcomed the Agency's programme aimed at developing safety standards for radioactive waste management operations, and noted with satisfaction the adoption of the Code of Practice on the International Transboundary Movement of Radioactive Waste. The Regulations for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Material were equally important particularly the development of regulatory provisions for the transport of plutonium by air.

35. At the invitation of the Australian Government, supported by the national mining industry, the Agency had in August organized a regional seminar for the media on nuclear energy, science and technology which had been attended by some 40 participants from Australia, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. That seminar had provided a useful opportunity for the nuclear industry to explain its activities and to deal with certain issues before a critical audience. A panel discussion on energy and the environment, which had included representatives of the environmental movement, had attracted considerable interest.

36. Australia was the world's largest coal exporter and also exported petroleum products, petroleum gas and liquefied natural gas. It also had a significant proportion of the world's economically recoverable reserves of uranium and was currently operating two uranium mines. As a reliable and responsible supplier of uranium, Australia helped to meet the energy requirements of countries which had opted for nuclear power. It shared the concern of the international community about the negative impact on the environment of certain human activities and fully supported the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development which was to be held in Brazil in 1992 to encourage governments to adopt strategies for the integration of economic and environmental decisions.

37. The achievement of sustainable development posed a range of complex challenges for the energy sector. Key objectives would be to manage resource

exploitation and use in such a way as to ensure that energy needs could be met without irreversible damage to the environment. The most important questions were climate change, protection of biodiversity and of life support systems and the development of non-polluting, renewable energy sources.

38. Australia continued its strong support of the Agency's activities to promote the peaceful and safe use of nuclear energy while strengthening the barriers against misuse, and it attached great importance to the Agency's unique role and its statutory functions. As it was essential that the Agency's resources should be used effectively, his delegation welcomed the idea of preparing a medium-term plan. The Agency was one of the most efficient and effective of United Nations organizations, to a large extent as a result of the Director General's leadership and the Secretariat's dedication, and his delegation wished to reaffirm its confidence in them.

39. In conclusion, he stressed the need to ensure that extraneous political issues or sectional demands did not compromise the Agency's ability to meet its responsibilities. It was for Member States to establish conditions in which the Agency and the Secretariat could operate with a unified purpose and maximum efficiency.

40. Mr. ALI (Malaysia), reaffirming his country's support for the Agency, said that the new and urgent issues mentioned by the Director General in his opening statement and the progress made in the implementation of earlier decisions of the General Conference pointed to an increase in activities which would inevitably put further strain on an already difficult budgetary situation. Under those circumstances, it was no longer realistic to expect the Agency to function effectively without additional funds. The time had come to review the policy of zero real growth of the budget so as to enable the Agency to meet the needs of its Member States - particularly those of the developing countries - and to discharge its responsibilities in the most effective and efficient way.

41. In that regard, his delegation wished to emphasize once again the importance it attached to technology transfer and staff training in the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in developing countries. To that end, Malaysia sought the fullest co-operation with both industrialized

and developing countries on a bilateral, regional or multilateral basis. The bilateral co-operation programmes with a number of countries in the Asia and Pacific region had been very successful, as had a regional co-operation programme under the RCA. Regional programmes fostered technical co-operation, a greater sharing of resources (including facilities, equipment and human resources) and of knowledge, as well as close contacts between scientists. They also facilitated technical co-operation among developing countries. It was therefore particularly satisfying to note that an agreement similar to the RCA had been concluded for Africa.

42. At the multilateral level, Malaysia received valuable assistance and support through the Agency's technical and co-operation programme. Recognizing the importance of that programme as a means of sharing knowledge and technology among developing countries, Malaysia had contributed to it by hosting courses and workshops, providing places for Agency trainees and supplying experts. Malaysia was thus firmly convinced of the value of co-operation among developing countries as a complement to co-operation between industrialized and developing countries. Malaysia stood ready to enter into co-operation activities with other developing countries in those areas in which it had the necessary expertise.

43. As a developing country, Malaysia naturally accorded prime importance to technical assistance and the Agency's other promotional activities. At the same time, however, it was not unmindful of the role played by the Agency's safeguards and its safety-related activities. Remaining firm in its conviction that international safeguards constituted an effective barrier to the proliferation of nuclear weapons and that their application served to promote international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, his delegation urged all non-nuclear-weapon States to submit all of their peaceful nuclear installations to safeguards. The extension of the safeguards regime would, of course, result in additional budgetary constraints in the context of zero real growth, and so he hoped that the working group on the financing of safeguards would succeed in finding a long-term solution which would take into account the expected growth in activities while ensuring that the balance between safeguards and promotional activities was maintained.

44. It was obvious that compliance with strict safety standards would enhance confidence in nuclear energy. In the light of the adverse psychological impact of the Chernobyl accident, it was crucial that governments and international organizations should make a concerted effort to strengthen the nuclear safety regime. Unfortunately, however, even the strictest safety standards could not fully eliminate the risk of nuclear accidents, and it was therefore essential that the international community should establish a mechanism to provide adequate compensation to the victims of such accidents. In that connection, the progress made by the working group and subsequently the Standing Committee on Liability for Nuclear Damage was encouraging. His delegation firmly believed that a comprehensive liability regime covering both civil liability and international State liability would constitute an appropriate legal framework which could restore the world's confidence in nuclear energy.

45. A further element in the public acceptance of nuclear energy was the question of radioactive wastes and their safe disposal. Despite the existence of suitable and effective technologies for the safe handling and disposal of radioactive wastes, public fears, whether real or subjective, could not be dispelled unless international standards were strictly adhered to. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the preparation of documents on safety standards for radioactive wastes which would make it possible to demonstrate more clearly that those wastes could be managed safely.

46. The uncontrolled disposal or dumping of radioactive waste should be prevented by all possible means. Prevention was better than cure, even though there had to date been no report of any such unauthorized dumping. In that context, the drawing up of the Code of Practice on the International Transboundary Movement of Radioactive Waste represented an important step forward in the establishment of an effective international instrument aimed at preventing the unauthorized storage of radioactive waste and at controlling the international transboundary movement of such waste. Malaysia therefore called upon all Member States to adopt the Code and to comply with the principles embodied in it.

47. The safe handling of radioactive sources was another area which warranted the most serious attention. The accidents at Goiânia in Brazil and

more recently in San Salvador had resulted in the death of several people, thus showing that accidents with fatal consequences could occur even though radiation technology was generally used in a safe manner. Only within an adequate radiation protection infrastructure was it possible to exercise effective controls designed to reduce the probability of radiological accidents. As developing countries strove to benefit from the use of nuclear techniques, they tended too often to overlook the importance of radiation protection, particularly when resources were limited. Malaysia fervently hoped that those countries would come to realize that they could not enjoy the full benefits of nuclear technology unless its safety was assured, in which connection the Agency had a vital informative role to play.

48. In conclusion, his delegation was deeply convinced that international co-operation in the field of nuclear energy, with the Agency playing a crucial role, provided an effective means of exploiting the vast potential offered by that technology for social and economic development.

49. Mr. KIENER (Switzerland) observed that nuclear energy was firmly situated among the challenges currently facing the world in the areas of politics, energy and the environment. The events in the Gulf served as a further indication of the need to diversify energy sources. The threat posed by the greenhouse effect to the entire world and the urgent need to avert it were widely acknowledged by the international community. Nuclear energy must continue to help in solving the fundamental problem of satisfying the increasing demand for energy while ensuring better protection for the biosphere. Confidence in atomic energy was therefore crucial - a fact which called into play one of the Agency's vital roles. It was clear from the Annual Report that the Agency was operating in that spirit, and in that connection his delegation particularly welcomed the efforts made by the Director General to highlight the positive contribution of nuclear energy to the solution of environmental problems.

50. The difficulties encountered in seeking a consensus on the budget for 1991 had illustrated the dilemma in which the Agency found itself, with increasing statutory tasks on the one hand and a resource ceiling on the other. The suggestions which had been advanced for overcoming that dilemma were unsatisfactory. The practices of waiving Financial Regulations and of

financing important programmes through extrabudgetary contributions were acceptable to his Government only as exceptional measures; for the future, solutions going to the root of the problem would have to be found.

51. With regard to resources, his Government stood by its commitment to the zero growth principle and held the view that rationalization and savings were still possible. In any case, that principle could only be reconsidered once an analysis had been made of the priorities of all the Agency's programmes. In that context, his delegation attached great importance to the preparation of a medium-term plan and welcomed the steps taken by the Secretariat to that end. The aim in drawing up that plan should be to evaluate the existing programmes and to identify priorities, bearing in mind the needs which the Agency would be expected to satisfy in the future. Particular care would be necessary to ensure that the Agency's activities were co-ordinated with those of other international organizations, to eliminate any duplication of effort and to dispense with any programme which a different organization would be better equipped to execute. It also appeared essential that a future medium-term plan should in no way impede the Agency's capacity to react in a flexible manner to new or unforeseen needs.

52. The Agency's safeguards activities, which remained vital to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, were one area in which the budgetary dilemma was being felt. It was of fundamental importance that the credibility of the safeguards system be maintained, and he wondered whether steps to rationalize safeguards implementation could not be taken without detriment to that credibility - particularly in the inspection of light-water reactors, for which a system of random inspections could perhaps be instituted.

53. During the Fourth NPT Review Conference, which had just ended in Geneva, a number of constructive recommendations had been made regarding, inter alia, the credibility and financing of safeguards, inspections, and the conditions of supply of nuclear materials and facilities. Some of those recommendations could usefully be taken up by the Agency. It was regrettable that a single delegation's insistence on matters unconnected with the peaceful use of nuclear energy should have prevented the adoption by consensus of a final document which would have reflected the results of the considerable efforts made by delegations throughout the Review Conference.

54. The past year could be described as a good one for nuclear safety. That result was attributable, on the one hand, to the efforts made by the nuclear industry and by plant operators and, on the other hand, to those made by the various supervisory bodies, and it was essential that all those involved should work together in a spirit of mutual respect for each other's functions. Safety was the responsibility of each State, whereas the Agency must play the pivotal role in the vital area of international co-operation. His delegation welcomed and approved the report on measures taken to strengthen international co-operation in matters relating to nuclear safety and radiological protection, the results of which were impressive.

55. The Agency's safety-related activities should be focused on the co-ordination of programmes, the exchange of information and the formulation of innovative recommendations for the benefit of Member States. At the same time, there was undoubtedly a growing need for safety-related services which the Agency must be in a position to supply to requesting Member States. Accordingly, his delegation could also approve the report's conclusions and the activities proposed.

56. The programme on the safety of old reactors was of great interest to his Government, which had just decided to provide financial support in the amount of 100 000 Swiss francs, as well as expert services for the same amount. Given the importance of the work envisaged, it would perhaps have been appropriate to include RBMK reactors. At all events, general information on the operation of nuclear facilities was becoming increasingly important, and he welcomed the recent joint decision by the Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD/NEA) and the Agency to apply, on a trial basis, a scale indicating the seriousness of nuclear events.

57. The situation of nuclear energy in Switzerland was characterized by two contradictory tendencies: on the one hand, a sceptical - even negative - attitude to nuclear energy on the part of a large section of the population, and on the other hand, a constant increase in energy requirements. The public scepticism was finding expression in the form of two popular initiatives against nuclear energy. The first called for a ten-year moratorium on licences to build any new plants. The second demanded the complete shutdown

of all existing nuclear power plants by the end of their service life at the latest. The outcome of that far-reaching expression of public opinion remained uncertain. The Government and the majority in the Swiss Parliament were in favour of keeping the nuclear option open and had called upon the population to reject the two initiatives. The main argument in favour of keeping nuclear power was the need to meet an ever-increasing demand for electricity. Nuclear power currently represented some 40% of total electricity production. Furthermore, in order to cover future needs, Switzerland had shares in the order of 2450 MW(nuclear) in France, the Swiss nuclear capacity being 3000 MW. It was also necessary to take into account the diversification of energy resources, environmental protection and the maintenance of a technological potential.

58. The Chernobyl accident had played a central role in the campaign against nuclear power in Switzerland. By systematically casting doubt on the reliability of nuclear safety, the opponents of nuclear power were quick to play on irrational fears. Their line of reasoning was always aimed at eliciting emotional reactions to which the supporters of nuclear power could respond only with rational arguments. The debate was therefore taking place at totally different levels. While advocating a new post-industrial society less greedy for resources, the anti-nuclear camp failed to take account of unavoidable needs with regard to economic growth, the environment and population increase. An abandonment of nuclear energy thus appeared as an inappropriate and timorous withdrawal on the part of a well-off, technically capable and politically stable country. Moratoriums, which were not unique to Switzerland, were myths which gave the illusion that time would change or resolve problems.

59. Given the nationwide criticism which nuclear energy was receiving, Switzerland accorded great importance to close international co-operation aimed at helping to restore public confidence in it and bringing about a less emotional approach. It went without saying that the Agency occupied a central role in that international co-operation, not only as a forum, but also as an agent, as was demonstrated by the Annual Report.

60. Mr. CSERVENY (Hungary), speaking on behalf of the new Hungarian Government, which was responsible to the freely elected Parliament, reaffirmed

the commitment of the Republic of Hungary to the Agency's Statute and to the strengthening of the Agency's vital role in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and promoting international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear technology.

61. The transition to a market economy and the process of democratization currently under way in Central and Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union were among the most promising events to have occurred in the world since the thirty-third session of the General Conference. Those developments would certainly have a positive impact on international economic co-operation in all fields, including peaceful nuclear energy.

62. The Hungarian Government was facing unprecedented challenges, since there was no ready-made path to follow in the transition from a command to a market economy. Any progress in the implementation of Hungary's economic policy would depend upon the crucial decision it had to take on its energy policy. As a result of the false economic policies of the preceding decades, the gross domestic product per unit of electrical energy was almost four times lower than in developed countries. In working out its new energy policy, his Government was concerned above all to assure essential energy supplies. The recent events in the Gulf and the suspension of oil deliveries due mainly to the production and transport problems facing the USSR, Hungary's traditional supplier, served to highlight the precarious nature of his country's energy situation. Hungary must, as a matter of urgency, put an end to its exclusive energy dependence and adopt measures to ensure greater energy efficiency and more rational use while bearing in mind considerations of health and the environment.

63. In view of its own energy situation, Hungary was particularly aware of the similar concerns voiced by the Member States of the European Community in attempting to formulate a common energy policy. Still, it was vital for Europe that that policy be designed and implemented in such a manner as to take due account of the transitory situation of the economies of Hungary and the other countries of Eastern and Central Europe. In that context, his Government highly valued the proposal to establish a European energy community now being discussed by the Commission of the European Communities (CEC) and by various non-Community countries. His Government was also studying a long-term

solution involving the further exploitation of national resources and raw materials. It remained aware, however, of the need for wide-ranging consultations among specialists and with the general public before taking a decision on the type of high-capacity basic power station needed by the country and on the timing of its construction. At the same time, given that Hungary's only nuclear power plant accounted for about half of the country's electricity production, he appealed to the understanding of those who demanded a non-nuclear Central Europe and the immediate abandonment by Hungary of its nuclear programme. The recent experience of certain Western European countries served as a warning against hasty decisions on such a serious matter.

64. Recalling that his country remained deeply committed to the NPT and to the reliability of the non-proliferation regime, he affirmed that Hungary's legislation would continue to ensure its full application, and that that would include the very important field of nuclear exports. Hungary urged all States which had not yet done so to become Parties to the NPT.

65. His delegation welcomed the keen interest which had been shown by all participants at the Fourth NPT Review Conference in the role played by the Agency in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Despite the failure to reach consensus on a final declaration, due to differences of opinion on a number of questions related to disarmament, a positive evaluation of the Agency's activities had emerged from the general debate and the report of the committees. With regard to the role and future activities of the Agency, a number of proposals, suggestions and expectations had been formulated on issues as important as strengthening of the safeguards system, improvement of the safeguards information policy, international co-operation on nuclear safety, and technical assistance and co-operation. Among the proposals particularly deserving of the open-minded attention of the Agency's Member States were those aimed at evaluating the experience acquired in 20 years of safeguards implementation or at studying the scope and modalities of special inspections in cases where the non-proliferation commitments of any State Party to the Treaty had come into question. His delegation was also in favour of increasing the transparency of the Safeguards Implementation Report, which would help to maintain, or even strengthen, confidence in the safeguards system.

66. Welcoming the large proportion of the Director General's opening statement which had been devoted to issues of nuclear safety, he associated himself with the proposals on that matter put forward by Italy on behalf of the European Community and commended the Agency on its activities in that very important field. Hungarian specialists had learnt valuable lessons both from the Agency's pre-INSARR (Integrated Safety Assessment of Research Reactors) mission to Budapest to examine the renovated research reactor prior to its return to service and from the first ASSET (Assessment of Safety-Significant Events Team) training seminar to have been organized in Hungary.

67. Hungary also had great hopes for the trial application of the International Nuclear Event Scale, which should help to provide proper information to the public on nuclear accidents and incidents and, in so doing, to increase its level of awareness and confidence with regard to major issues such as safety, waste disposal, environmental impact, costs and so on. In that context, the overview which would be provided by the 1991 conference on nuclear safety would be extremely interesting.

68. As a country which favoured co-operation at the sub-regional level, Hungary was ready to participate, within the framework of the "Pentagonal", in the co-operation effort being made in the nuclear field. Negotiations were currently under way with a view to reaching a consensus on the rapid exchange of information in the event of a nuclear accident and on scientific and technical co-operation in the field of nuclear safety. It was to be hoped that the "Pentagonal" countries would make a valuable contribution to supplementing the NUSS guides and codes for the next generation of reactors with inherent and enhanced safety characteristics.

69. His Government would be following closely the major project recently launched by the Agency on the safety of older reactors, which should serve as an excellent means of strengthening the effectiveness of all ongoing relevant national, bilateral or multilateral programmes. The four reactors of the Hungarian nuclear power plant belonged to the second generation of WWER reactors. They had been designed in accordance with safety principles meeting the internationally accepted requirements in force in the early 1980s. The safety systems and confinement ensured the protection of the operating personnel and prevented radioactive releases into the environment, even in the

event of a design-basis accident. Nevertheless, continuous efforts were being made to enhance the safety of the plant, bearing in mind the most recent results of research and development programmes and the lessons drawn from international operating experience.

70. In view of the importance of the legal aspects of the use of nuclear energy, his delegation considered that the international conventions drawn up with the assistance of the Agency had made a major contribution to enhancing international co-operation in that field. It continued to be interested in the work of the Standing Committee on Liability for Nuclear Damage and was ready to participate actively in the review and updating of the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage, to which end the drafting committee should commence work as soon as possible.

71. The Director General's report on the Agency's technical co-operation activities in 1989 showed that the additional measures taken by the Agency had led to an increase in the effectiveness and efficiency of technical assistance. The evaluation of various aspects of technical co-operation helped to improve the quality of programme implementation. The evaluation of the Agency's technical co-operation with Hungary during the period 1976-89, which was also mentioned in the Agency's 1990 Yearbook, demonstrated that his country had succeeded in making good use of the assistance provided by the Agency and showed that even a small country could be very effective in transferring nuclear information and technology between the most advanced and the developing countries.

72. He noted with satisfaction that the funds available for the Agency's technical assistance had further increased, as had his own country's contribution, both in kind and in cash. His Government had decided to pledge to the TACF for 1991 a voluntary contribution in local currency equivalent to US \$102 900 in accordance with its share of the target.

73. In conclusion, his delegation reaffirmed its confidence in the Agency's ability to meet the challenges that lay ahead of it, and, in that connection, paid homage to the activities of the Secretariat and to the competence of the Director General.

74. Msgr. SQUICCIARINI (Holy See) said that the Annual Report for 1989 was an impressive document which well reflected the objectives laid down in Article II of the Agency's Statute, namely "to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world".

75. The delegation of the Holy See noted with satisfaction the work carried out by the Agency and its Member States in one of the Agency's main areas of activity, nuclear safety, and in particular radiation protection. In the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the Agency's main task was to promote and support all activities related to safety and environmental protection. As a general rule, in every sphere of science and technology and their use for the benefit of all, the highest standards of safety should always be observed in the interests of mankind and the natural environment. Experience had shown that safety and protection played an important, indeed essential, role in the conservation of the environment. Nature, understood as a creation of God for the benefit of man, was not meant to be exploited irresponsibly, but rather to be cultivated wisely: taken advantage of and at the same time protected and preserved for the good of everyone, including future generations. In his message delivered on World Peace Day, Pope John Paul II had made reference to that idea when he had said: "a new ecological awareness is beginning to emerge, which rather than being downplayed ought to be encouraged to develop into concrete programmes and initiatives". For example, in satisfying the present demand for energy and in searching for new sources of energy to replace non-renewable ones, efforts should be made to find solutions which promoted and ensured safety, enhanced the welfare of humanity and provided a healthy environment in which to live.

76. However, safety and environmental protection could and should also be seen in much wider terms. The political events and major economic changes which the world had recently witnessed in Europe and elsewhere seemed to reflect not only détente between the major powers, but also a trend towards broader international co-operation in many areas. Optimistically speaking, all those changes provided new perspectives and a real possibility for international co-operation on a scale which few had even dreamt of several years earlier. The Agency's activities during the past 33 years could serve

as a model to illustrate the functioning of such broad international co-operation. International, regional and interregional organizations should be strengthened in order to build up existing channels and to open up new ones to promote mutual assistance and partnership.

77. On 25 June, addressing a group of representatives of the United Nations and other institutions, Pope John Paul II had spoken of "channels for effective communication and dialogue within the international community". He had also said: "Today, at a time of rapidly changing geopolitical realities, this task remains essential to the development of that new solidarity among nations and peoples, based upon an unstinting respect for the dignity and fundamental rights of the human person, which can provide the moral foundations and sure guarantee of a just and lasting peace in our world".

78. Once the doors were open, all the benefits of co-operation were to be had. Indeed, the recent political and economic developments could be the great chance for international organizations such as the Agency and the United Nations to work together for the welfare of humanity. By sharing experiences and exchanging information, nations engaged in peaceful competition could promote safety and environmental protection in nuclear-related areas. There was reason to hope that such a genuine partnership and co-operation on a global scale would also help to solve many other problems which had created anxiety and mistrust among peoples. Although that scenario might appear overoptimistic, the Holy See supported and encouraged all efforts in that direction.

79. Mr. VILAIN XIII (Belgium) said that his country naturally shared the views on various aspects of the Agency's activities expressed the previous day by the Italian delegation on behalf of the European Community and its Member States.

80. Following the Fourth NPT Review Conference, and in view of the very serious events which had been taking place since the beginning of August in the Middle East, Belgium believed that it was more essential than ever to maintain and, if necessary, to reinforce the Agency's safeguards capabilities. The Agency should be able to guarantee that nuclear activities placed under safeguards were directed exclusively towards the declared peaceful purposes and not towards the manufacture of explosive devices.

81. It was not enough to obtain political declarations of intention from the States concerned, it was necessary also to verify those intentions, and it was not without reason that the Statute prescribed that the Agency's activities should be accompanied by specific checks on the peaceful use of the materials and services provided. It was equally not without reason that Article III of the NPT provided for the application of safeguards to all nuclear source or special fissionable material in the territory of non-nuclear-weapon States in order to verify the fulfilment of the political obligations assumed by those States through their accession to the NPT. Lastly, it was not out of a spirit of domination that countries supplying nuclear materials and equipment required verification by the Agency of their use for peaceful purposes and not for the manufacture of explosive devices.

82. It was also necessary that all nuclear material that ought to be safeguarded should in fact be declared to the Agency. In the event of doubt, appropriate measures to help restore confidence should be taken by the Agency and the State concerned within the framework of the safeguards agreement between them. Belgium attached great importance to the recommendation put forward at the Fourth NPT Review Conference that the Agency should not hesitate to make full use of its rights, including that of carrying out special inspections. His delegation would be grateful to the Director General if he would make known his considered opinion regarding the application of special inspections to corroborate certain information made available to the Agency, both in the case of States Party to the NPT and States not Party to the NPT but having facilities under safeguards. The possibility of such interventions would trouble only those that might intend to divert some of their nuclear activities from the officially declared uses.

83. While it was regrettable that certain States had still not acceded to the NPT, it was just as alarming that others which were Parties had not yet concluded the safeguards agreement with the Agency required under Article III. Failure to do so could cast doubt upon the real political commitment of those States, particularly when they had major nuclear facilities, as was the case for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which had signed the NPT in 1985. His delegation therefore urged that country to conclude a safeguards agreement with the Agency without further delay.

84. There had been a great deal of discussion during the Fourth NPT Review Conference of the need to apply full-scope safeguards. For Belgium, the ultimate goal remained the application of such safeguards to all civil nuclear facilities in all States, whether or not they were Parties to the NPT and whether or not they had nuclear weapons. Belgium would be ready to require the application of full-scope safeguards as a condition for the export of nuclear materials and equipment if all exporter States did the same. It therefore urged those States, whether or not they were Parties to the NPT, to take a joint decision to that effect.

85. Alongside safeguards, which were essential for the further development of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, it was also necessary to continue to ensure universal compliance with the strictest regulations governing the safety of nuclear reactors and facilities and the protection of workers and the public against ionizing radiation. Environmental conservation having become one of the major international concerns, it was essential to prove to the public and the politicians that nuclear power could help meet a substantial proportion of the world's energy requirements, without impairing the environment, public health or the energy independence of States. It was in that spirit that his delegation supported the activities carried out or planned by the Agency with regard to the drafting of codes of practice (NUSS programme), recommendations or guidelines, and to the publication of comparative information on nuclear energy and other energy sources. It was important to have reliable information on the risks to human health and the environment caused by the whole cycle of the world energy system, particularly in view of the 1992 Conference on Environment and Development. That concern was also reflected in the proposal by the Member States of the European Community to organize a conference on nuclear safety in 1991.

86. All the parties concerned, constructors, operators, States and international organizations had a role to play in the major challenge posed by the safety of nuclear facilities, but the final responsibility must always remain with the operator and the State. The Agency's role could only be one which complemented bilateral or multilateral initiatives. It was therefore necessary to realize that the safe operation of nuclear facilities, particularly power plants, called for lengthy and complex studies carried out

by many experts acting on behalf of their employers and consequently conferring responsibility for their judgements and recommendations upon their employers.

87. It was in relation to that fundamental responsibility that the Agency's responsibility in organizing expert missions should be seen. Despite the high qualities of the experts participating in them and given the very short time available, those missions had limited goals and could not be compared with thorough studies providing a complete analysis of the safety of a facility. While recognizing the usefulness of such missions, his delegation encouraged the Agency to weigh carefully the degree of responsibility it was able to take in that area, where its credibility was at stake, and there was a risk of provoking hasty reactions from a highly sensitive but not very well-informed public. The Agency had a key role to play as a source of information and expertise and as a means for promoting all forms of co-operation. However, it did not have the necessary financial and human resources to assume the leading role, particularly with regard to site selection or the design and backfitting of nuclear facilities.

88. Where international co-operation was concerned, Belgium attached particular importance to the substantial co-operation which was being established to guarantee nuclear safety in the whole of Europe and was therefore participating in that activity; it particularly appreciated the effective co-operative links with the Polish Government in that area.

89. Safety reviews of Belgian reactors were conducted every ten years. Major modifications had been decided and carried out to ensure that their operation was based on the latest criteria applied to new nuclear power plants. Those modifications had been made within a reasonable time and at an acceptable cost. In order to improve the training of operating personnel, two centres equipped with simulators had been set up in 1989 at Doel and Tihange.

90. In the area of radiation protection, the Belgian Government had decided to construct a remote radiation monitoring network. Covering the whole national territory, that equipment should make it possible to estimate any exposure of the public to contamination and to take swift counter-measures in the event of a serious nuclear accident.

91. The problem of the disposal of radioactive waste was being considered with the greatest attention by the Belgian authorities, which had launched a major investment programme for a completely new waste processing and conditioning infrastructure to be set up on the Belgoprocess site at Mol and a decommissioning programme for facilities which had already been shut down or would be in the near future. Also, a committee of Belgian and foreign experts had given a favourable opinion on the choice of Boom clay for burying high-level wastes.

92. The importance of nuclear energy for Belgium was illustrated by the fact that the production of its seven power reactors had increased in 1989 to 39 000 million kilowatt-hours or 61% of total electricity production. The use of nuclear fuel, which did not pollute the environment, had saved Belgium 21 000 or 13 000 million Belgian francs (US \$650 or 400 million) in foreign exchanges, depending on whether the cost of imported fuel oil or of coal was considered.

93. In conclusion, he reaffirmed the importance Belgium attached to the essential role played by the Agency, its confidence in the Agency and the Director General, and lastly its readiness to continue to co-operate actively in achieving common objectives.

94. Mr. BROOKS (New Zealand) said that the Agency played a vital role in the non-proliferation regime. As the Director General had recently indicated, the Agency had the largest on-site inspection system in the world. It was designed to provide vital reassurance that safeguarded nuclear material was not being diverted for use in nuclear explosive devices. New Zealand welcomed the Agency's statement that it had not detected any diversion of safeguarded nuclear material or misuse of safeguarded facilities in 1989. Maximum reassurance was, of course, provided by States' adherence to the major legally binding arms control agreements governing non-proliferation and the associated verification mechanisms. New Zealand was a Party to the NPT and to the Treaty of Rarotonga. The latter established a South Pacific nuclear free zone and provided for the application of full-scope safeguards to all source and special fissionable material used in all peaceful nuclear activities of Parties to the Treaty.

95. Nevertheless, the Fourth NPT Review Conference had shown that improvements in the non-proliferation regime were still possible. New Zealand, which had participated in that Conference, regretted that there had been no consensus on a final document. Committees II and III had reviewed in detail the application of the articles which had particular relevance to the Agency's activities, and it was unfortunate that it had not been possible to include their recommendation in a final document.

96. However, the problems which had been discussed at the Fourth NPT Review Conference remained, and it would be necessary to examine carefully the recommendations on which there had been consensus in order to see how they could be implemented. For instance, some 50 countries had still not met their safeguards obligations under the NPT. New Zealand noted with interest that the safeguards agreement between a South Pacific country and the Agency had recently been approved by the Board of Governors. It would continue to encourage the few countries in the South Pacific region which had not yet concluded such an agreement to do so. However, those countries did not have significant nuclear activities. It was much more important that countries with significant nuclear activities should conclude full-scope safeguards agreements with the Agency. There were also the so-called threshold States which remained outside the NPT regime. Inevitably, the intentions of those States which refused to accept safeguards on all their peaceful nuclear activities were a source of concern, and the Agency deserved full and unanimous support in its negotiation of safeguards agreements with such key States.

97. The Fourth NPT Review Conference had also discussed the means open to the Agency in the event of doubts about an NPT Party's commitment to non-proliferation objectives. Attention had been drawn to the special inspections provided for under paragraphs 73 and 75 of document INFCIRC/153. His delegation believed that such inspections could help to restore confidence in cases where serious questions concerning compliance with commitments arose, and it would like the Agency to prepare a report on that subject.

98. Consistent with its dual role of encouraging peace and improving living conditions, the Agency also established guidelines for the safe use of nuclear technology and provided technical assistance to those countries which

requested it. It should be congratulated on its valuable role in strengthening the safety standards of the nuclear industry through the work of the International Nuclear Safety Advisory Group (INSAG) and by updating the Regulations for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Material.

99. The recently adopted Code of Practice on the International Transboundary Movement of Radioactive Waste had been drawn up following fears over the dumping of nuclear waste. It was essential to guard against the possibility of such practices. New Zealand was a party to a comprehensive regime to ban the dumping of radioactive wastes in the South Pacific, and both the Treaty of Rarotonga and the Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region contained important provisions preventing, as far as legally possible, the dumping of radioactive wastes in the region.

100. The use of nuclear energy carried with it the heavy responsibility of ensuring that the strictest safety standards were applied. New Zealand was fortunate in having sufficient energy resources without needing to use nuclear power. However, questions about the safe application of nuclear energy transcended national boundaries, and the world had had dramatic evidence of the risks involved in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It was therefore essential to observe strict principles to ensure that nuclear technology was used with the maximum safety for the public and the environment. The Agency was carrying out remarkable work in the area of nuclear safety and radiation protection and his country was pleased to be associated with that work. There was a marked trend toward greater international co-operation in the application of stringent guidelines and mechanisms for nuclear safety.

101. The Agency should also be commended for its comprehensive technical assistance programme, which had grown steadily during the past few years. In 1989, there had been more than 1000 ongoing projects involving over 2000 technical experts. More than 2000 people had received training under the fellowship programme. New Zealand continued to provide places for Agency fellows and its experts had contributed to the development of non-power applications of nuclear technology, especially in the areas of agriculture and medicine. All those activities gave rise to hopes for better living conditions.

102. More than 400 power reactors were currently in operation worldwide, generating as much electricity as the whole world had produced from all sources in 1955. There were more than 300 research reactors of all types. Pandora's box was open and technology could not be disinvented. The challenge currently facing the world was to use and control that technology in a responsible manner. One vital mechanism had already been put in place: the International Atomic Energy Agency. It was essential to work together to ensure that it retained its enviable record of achievement.

103. Ms. TALLAWY (Egypt) said that the scientific and technological progress achieved during the last two decades had had a major effect on the international political changes taking place at present, and the thirty-fourth session of the General Conference was opening in a favourable world climate. The rapprochement between East and West gave rise to hope and optimism, but it must be realized that world security did not stop at the boundaries of Europe and that it was affected by events elsewhere, such as those in the Gulf. Her delegation therefore hoped that the same political will would reach other geographical regions, particularly those which had been ridden with armed conflicts for a long time. The question of world peace and security must be considered as an indissoluble whole. The current international upheavals were having major repercussions. Thus, a spirit of co-operation and mutual understanding was tending to replace the policy of confrontation and war and attempts were being made to use science and technology to build a better world rather than to accumulate weapons and other instruments of destruction. The peaceful uses of nuclear techniques were an important means of tackling the problem of development and the nuclear option should be available to all. The Agency should therefore be given increased responsibility and freed from the financial and administrative constraints which were hampering its smooth functioning.

104. While it was regrettable that the Fourth NPT Review Conference had not been able to agree on a final document, the positive aspects should not be overlooked. There had been an increase in the number of observers, the presence of Chinese and French observers being of particular interest. Furthermore, it had been possible to agree on extremely important ideas and formulas and to reach an understanding for the first time on questions such as

safeguards, peaceful uses and regional disarmament. Despite the lack of a final declaration, her country, which was convinced of the need to prevent proliferation, to strengthen safeguards and to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, would work together with other interested delegations in following up those issues in various specialized international forums.

105. The NPT was a key element in nuclear disarmament and the safeguards system was an essential tool for the maintenance and strengthening of international peace and security. Her delegation therefore believed that all States should accede to the NPT, particularly those situated in areas of armed conflict. She urged South Africa and Israel to respond favourably to the calls by the international community to accede to the NPT and to place all their nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards. She recalled the Cairo Declaration of 1964 advocating a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa and the Egyptian initiative of 1974 to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The Director General had noted in his opening statement that there was an increasing awareness of the need to conclude arms limitation agreements in the Middle East and to define specific modalities for the application of safeguards in that region in order to build up confidence. Her delegation supported those remarks and urged the Director General to continue his efforts to apply full-scope safeguards to all nuclear facilities in the Middle East.

106. During the past year, activities in the African continent had been stepped up and a regional co-operation agreement (AFRA) had been signed. Egypt had had the honour of hosting the first AFRA meeting in Cairo, which had been opened by the Director General and had gathered together participants from Tunisia, Algeria, Nigeria, Madagascar and Cameroon who had agreed on various areas of co-operation. Egypt had taken that regional co-operation initiative because it believed in the importance of South-South co-operation and the need to promote technical co-operation between developing countries and to endow each region with independent capabilities on the principle of collective self-sufficiency, thereby facilitating regional co-operation and thus international co-operation. Her delegation therefore urged all donor States and all international financial institutions to support AFRA, and it thanked the Agency and those responsible in the Department of Technical Co-operation for their commendable efforts in achieving those results.

107. Although Egypt had decided to review its nuclear power programme after the Chernobyl accident, it still considered the nuclear option to be one of the main ways of meeting its growing electricity needs. It was therefore continuing the preparation of its nuclear power programme by carrying out various activities. It continued to follow the studies being carried out on the experience acquired by various countries in reactor operation and nuclear safety and was providing training in different areas to technical personnel who would be needed to run Egypt's nuclear power programme. It was also developing its industrial potential in order to increase its share in the fabrication of nuclear fuel and the manufacture of parts and components for conventional and nuclear power plants. It was also interested in new models for small or medium-size power reactors, since they fitted in better with the development of nuclear power and its market, were better adapted to developing countries and were more economical.

108. Egypt attached great importance to uranium prospecting activities in its territory, particularly in the desert areas in the East, and to the preparation of sites for the production of source materials and nuclear fuel fabrication. It hoped that the Agency would provide developing countries with increased assistance in exploiting their uranium deposits so that those countries could determine what underground source materials they had and be trained in extraction and fabrication techniques. In addition, Egypt devoted special efforts to the development of its nuclear facilities. It had improved its first research reactor and was about to put a second one into operation. It had also improved and developed isotope production plants and would shortly begin commissioning tests for a radioactive waste processing facility and an electron accelerator to be used for industrial applications, sterilization of medical supplies and the irradiation of food products.

109. Egypt attached great importance to regulatory activities in the area of nuclear and radiation safety, particularly the concept of a "safety culture", to the establishment of a radiation protection network, and to the preparation of emergency plans.

110. It was preparing to start using nuclear techniques in the life sciences and agriculture. The Egyptian Ministry of Agriculture was carefully monitoring the progress of the New World screwworm in North Africa, had taken

all the necessary steps to protect Egypt from that pest, and was currently preparing a training programme for the use of nuclear techniques to control it.

111. Her delegation appreciated the activities carried out in previous years by the Agency in the area of nuclear safety. It particularly welcomed the preparation of a Code of Practice on the International Transboundary Movement of Radioactive Waste and the work on international liability for nuclear damage. It hoped that the Agency would work unstintingly to strengthen and support those activities, which were of capital importance since they helped to dispel fears created by the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It also believed that the Agency's efforts to inform the public about the problems associated with those uses were essential and should receive additional financial support.

112. Like any other advanced technology, nuclear technology provided new prospects for humanity. All States should therefore make constructive use of it, employing it not to destroy civilization, but to promote its development.

113. Mr. ETTINGER (Israel) expressed regret at an item singling out his country again appearing on the Conference's agenda. As his delegation would be unable to take part in the discussion and ensuing vote on that matter, he would have to take it up during the general debate. He was thus obliged to depart from a constructive discussion on technical and scientific matters and devote part of his statement to political issues forced upon the General Conference.

114. During the past few years, it had become increasingly evident that there was no economically viable way to eliminate, or even significantly reduce, the carbon dioxide emissions associated with the burning of fossil fuels. Even at the present levels of coal, oil and gas consumption, the increase in carbon dioxide concentrations threatened to raise the temperature of the atmosphere, with disastrous, irreparable and, in part, unpredictable consequences. Increased electricity production in developing countries, while essential for raising their standard of living to levels comparable with those in the developed world, would accelerate and aggravate that process.

115. The General Conference needed no convincing that nuclear power was the only technologically and economically sound alternative for producing electricity. Yet world public opinion was extremely wary of any significant

development of nuclear applications. Even the educated public and the media seemed much more impressed by the hazards associated with radioactivity than by the greenhouse effect, a more serious but still theoretical and unfamiliar problem. The Agency should be commended for its tireless efforts to dispel those misconceptions and prejudices. The excellent specialist conferences on reactor safety and on accident prevention and management, as well as the growing list of titles in the Safety Series and other publications, could serve as a basis for the ongoing campaign to achieve public acceptance (or rather, awareness) of the merits of nuclear power. It was hard to imagine any progress in that difficult task without the groundwork done by the Agency.

116. Attempts to make nuclear power more acceptable to the public should not be limited to educational measures; technical improvements and new inherently safe reactor designs would play an important role in regaining the trust of government decision-makers and the public. Those smaller and more economical units, of simpler design and easier to operate and maintain, were better adapted to the needs of relatively small but rapidly growing power grids.

117. The smaller reactors were also particularly suited for another important application, the large-scale desalination of sea water. In many countries, particularly in the Middle East, the shortage of water was fast becoming a critical problem, aggravated by increasing pollution and contamination of water supplies. According to recent estimates, by the end of the millenium the world would be in need of an additional 20 million cubic metres of potable water per day, half of it in Mediterranean countries. Since state-of-the-art technologies for desalination required 6-10 kilowatt-hours of energy per cubic metre, the desalination of 20 million cubic metres of water per day would demand the production of at least an additional 5000-8000 MW(e). Water distribution costs and other economic considerations limited the maximum capacity of a desalination plant to less than 500 000 cubic metres per day, with a power consumption of 100-150 MW(e). There was thus a need for relatively small electricity-generating units, especially if they were to be used exclusively for desalination. His country had acquired substantial expertise and experience in that area, including the invention and development of two of the most advanced desalination techniques: low-temperature multi-effect distillation and low-temperature vapour compression. Israeli experts had performed studies on the use of nuclear power for desalination, and the

conventional desalination plant at Ashdod had been operated commercially as a full-scale simulation of a dual-purpose nuclear plant. His country was prepared to make its expertise and know-how available to the Agency.

118. The licensing of nuclear facilities in general and of nuclear power plants in particular was a crucial element in ensuring their safety and in protecting the public and the environment from radiological hazards during normal operation and from the consequences of accidents. However, excessive and superfluous safety regulations could increase costs to unacceptable levels. The preparation and review of safety analysis reports, an essential part of the licensing process, should be done with the greatest care. Increased efforts to share the knowledge and experience acquired in many countries could prove very useful when regulations and standards were discussed. Such sharing would also be extremely useful to smaller and less experienced countries which lacked both skills and know-how in that area. It might therefore be useful to prepare and disseminate, under the auspices of the Agency, one or more sets of standardized guidelines and criteria for safety analysis reports and other licensing procedures. Those recommendations would become even more important with the advent of new reactor designs which might present previously unrecognized failure modes and hazards.

119. With regard to his country's so-called nuclear capability and threat, an issue which he regretted having to address once again, one of the underlying characteristics of the debate was that it in no way took account of the actual climate and perilous circumstances which prevailed in the Middle East. The atmosphere of peace, tranquility and stability which reigned at the international level had unfortunately not reached the Persian Gulf or the Middle East as a whole. The aggression and actions perpetrated recently in the Persian Gulf by Mr. Saddam Hussein, especially his statements openly threatening Israel with destruction, were disquieting not only for Israel but also to other States in the region and should serve as a warning to the entire international community. The real situation was perfectly clear: Israel, for its part, had never threatened the existence of any country. On the other hand, it faced a real, immediate and openly declared threat from Iraq.

120. Item 7 of the General Conference's agenda and the draft resolution contained in document GC(XXXIV)/935 had nothing to do with the Agency's

mandate. That text singled his country out only to misinterpret its policy, make false accusations and camouflage the real issues, threats and dangers facing the Middle East. Israel reaffirmed the need to approach in a constructive and positive spirit the promotion of the idea of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and urged delegates to relegate the issue to its proper forum - the United Nations General Assembly or the Conference on Disarmament - and thereby to remove a repetitive political issue from the agenda of the Agency which was a technical organization.

121. Such an attitude would be in line with the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the group of experts on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. It would also conform with the views expressed by the Director General at the Board's June meetings, namely that the IAEA was not a disarmament agency, nor could it engage in negotiations on a non-proliferation treaty or on nuclear-weapon-free zones[*]. Israel believed that the Agency had almost exhausted all the means of helping the cause of nuclear-weapon-free zones which came within its mandate, consisting in the suggestion of various solutions for the application of safeguards. A constructive debate on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone and on confidence-building measures in the Middle East could only be held between the States of that region. Such a debate would have to take into consideration the studies conducted by the Agency and the United Nations. His country's policy, expressed on several occasions, had been reiterated in the letter from the Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Director General dated 29 January 1990 which was reproduced in document GC(XXXIV)/926.

122. In his report on the issue to the previous session of the General Conference (document GC(XXXIII)/886), the Director General had said that he had nothing to add to his previous report of 19 September 1988 (GC(XXXII)/849), in which he had stated that:

"Statements in the General Conference last year made it clear that the term nuclear capabilities as used in resolution GC(XXXI)/RES/470 was intended to mean nuclear weapon capabilities. The Secretariat of the IAEA has not concerned itself with studies of nuclear weapon capabilities in any Member State;"

[*] GOV/OR.732, para. 87.

Indeed, the Agency had never debated the question of any State's nuclear capability. His country considered that the issue of full-scope safeguards could be settled satisfactorily only within the framework of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. An appeal to his country alone to accept full-scope safeguards would be singling it out. Several of the many States which were not Parties to the NPT and were not subject to full-scope safeguards had proven scientific and technical capabilities. They were somehow immune to such appeals and at the same time they presumed to sit in judgement on Israel. However, Article III.A.5 of the Statute stipulated that safeguards would be applied at the request of the State concerned. The voluntary nature of the acceptance of safeguards was also recognized in the technical study contained in document GC(XXXIII)/887 and entitled "Modalities of Application of Agency Safeguards in the Middle East".

123. The alarming information that Iraq was pursuing activities aimed at acquiring a nuclear weapon capability, against its obligations under the NPT, was now widely known. There was thus an urgent need to attain stability and security in the troubled region of the Middle East. Israel considered that direct negotiations and mutual reassurances were the only constructive way of creating a measure of confidence among the States of that region. Regrettably, there had so far been no sign or attempt reflecting a constructive attitude towards reaching agreement on the basis of principles which had demonstrated their effectiveness and were common practice in settling regional disputes. Instead, the same accusations against his country were being repeated and criteria different from those generally prevalent were being applied to it.

124. The General Conference should decide to drop such a futile and potentially damaging debate and stay within the framework of its Statute. The Agency should be allowed to concentrate on its statutory obligations and responsibilities instead of being diverted from its proper functions. It was well known that the Agency faced urgent fundamental problems. It was in the interest of all Member States that the Agency should not be distracted from its activities relating to essential matters. His delegation therefore urged all responsible delegations to reject the draft resolution in document GC(XXXIV)/935.

125. Mr. CACCIA DOMINIONI (Commission of the European Communities - CEC) said that the Single European Market would not be complete as of 31 December 1992 unless energy markets were opened up. Energy often accounted for a substantial proportion of production costs, and if those markets were kept separate, the competitive position of many Community industries would be threatened. The Community had therefore recently adopted a directive for a Community procedure regarding the transparency of gas and electricity prices to the final industrial consumer, which was a first important step towards transparency in the markets concerned. Another directive aimed at facilitating the transmission of electricity through the major grids was also expected within a few weeks.

126. At the initiative of the CEC, a conference on energy in the next century had been held in Brussels in May as part of the step-by-step approach which was to lead to new energy policy guidelines. Among the concerns expressed at the conference, the security of supply had been the most important. The recent events in the Middle East had clearly shown that the security of supply was economically vital. A worldwide increase in demand was inevitable alone because of the population growth in the developing countries. Although the changes taking place in Central and Eastern Europe should lead to significantly more efficient utilization of energy, that did not preclude an increase in overall energy requirements. Another major concern, that of environmental protection, had become an absolute priority both on a global scale and, more particularly, for all the industrialized countries. The need for fast, joint action was recognized by all. What to do still remained to be defined, and that was a difficult problem in itself. In any case, it was for the industrialized countries with energy know-how to do their best to limit their consumption of energy, so as not to place too much pressure on world markets and thus jeopardize the economic development of the poorer regions, since such a development was a guarantee for the social and political stability which would permit positive changes to take place in North-South relations. Thus, policy-makers at the national and international levels were being asked to square the circle: to ensure security of supply, to protect the environment in a context of increasing world energy consumption and to limit that consumption of energy.

127. In that situation, nuclear energy certainly had a role to play. In the medium and long term, providing the public could be persuaded that safety was assured and that waste could be managed in an acceptable way, nuclear energy should be able to consolidate its current position and claim its place as an increasingly significant source of energy. In that connection, it should be remembered that the highest political authorities, including the Houston summit in July 1990, had recognized that nuclear energy helped to reduce polluting emissions from the burning of fossil fuels, which was a clear political message regarding the role of nuclear energy.

128. The European Community had within it a strong concentration of nuclear activities. That situation required both Member States and Community authorities to provide vigilant management which was none the less open to the broadest co-operation with all parties concerned. In that spirit, the CEC especially welcomed the fact that its co-operation with the Agency had both strengthened and widened to include the continuing implementation of the agreements signed in 1988 and 1989 on the placement of fellowship holders from Asia and Latin America with centres in the Community, the participation of the Commission in the preparatory work for the international research centre at Chernobyl, and the Commission's active participation in the post-accident evaluation project at Chernobyl.

129. EURATOM safeguards also played an important role and, in response to a request from the European Parliament, the Commission had in 1990 for the first time published a comprehensive report on the operation of that safeguards system. It highlighted the ways and means for determining, inter alia, that there had been no diversion of ores, source materials and special fissionable materials from their intended uses, as declared by the users, in the territories of the Member States. The report also described the very close co-operation links between EURATOM safeguards and the Agency's Department of Safeguards. In that context, it was worth remembering that the European Council, in its statement on non-proliferation at its June meeting, had reaffirmed the need for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy to be covered by credible, effective and efficient international safeguards. While recognizing the essential role played by Agency safeguards, it had recalled the considerable contribution of EURATOM safeguards. Similar conclusions had been drawn at the Houston summit in July. In addition, the Commission had attended

the Fourth NPT Review Conference as an observer, noting that the Review Conference had been unable to reach agreement on a joint declaration but that it had made an in-depth review of the implementation of the Treaty.

130. The future development of nuclear power depended on how the public viewed the safety of waste management. In 1989, the Community had adopted a new programme for 1990-94 aimed at contributing to the demonstration and implementation of a complete and safe system of waste management. With regard to nuclear safety in general, the Council of Ministers had concluded in March 1990 that activities within the Community were aimed at achieving an optimum degree of protection with the highest possible safety levels. It had recognized the existence, at Community level, of a process of co-ordination between the safety authorities of Member States designed to ensure an equivalent degree of protection among all of them. The Council had also considered it important for the nuclear safety philosophy resulting from such co-ordination to contribute to the establishment of an internationally accepted philosophy through the Agency. To that end, the Commission would seek to ensure consistency between all of its international nuclear safety co-operation activities and the Community co-ordination process. Also, at the Agency's Board of Governors meeting in June, the Commission had reaffirmed its support for the nuclear safety conference to be held under the auspices of the Agency in 1991.

131. On the subject of reactor safety, the Commission was continuing its research programmes, giving priority to present and future generations of light-water reactors; at the same time, it would study in greater detail the prevention, phenomenology and management of serious accidents. The Community was also conducting radiation protection research which would cover all relevant topics in that area.

132. Turning to nuclear fusion, he mentioned that the current phase of the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) project started in 1988 under Agency auspices by the four parties which had major programmes in that field (the European Community, Japan, the United States of America and the Soviet Union) was approaching its conclusion. The work done by the participants during that phase was an excellent example of international co-operation in the field of science and technology, and the supporting role played by the Agency had fully satisfied the parties involved in the project.

It was to be hoped that negotiations on the signing of an agreement for the engineering studies would start soon.

133. The past 12 months had been a remarkable turning point in the history of Europe and the world. The Commission was deeply aware of that and was acting accordingly. As part of its policy of opening up towards the East, including the Soviet Union, the Community planned to conclude an agreement in three areas of co-operation: nuclear safety, trade in nuclear materials, and controlled nuclear fusion. Furthermore, in April, the Community had announced an initiative to promote contacts and exchanges of experience between producers of nuclear power in the Community and in Central and Eastern Europe, with the principal aim of capitalizing on the experience accumulated by both sides. Some Central and Eastern European countries had expressed concern regarding the safety of some of their nuclear power plants and had sought financing for projects to evaluate the safety of those plants and suggest possible improvement measures. In the very near future, the Commission would be entering into specific commitments with regard to Czechoslovakia, but it planned to take a strategic approach to the whole region with a view to systematically dealing with all the practical issues raised by the safety of the power plants in question.

134. Lastly, it was worth mentioning that the action taken by the Community complemented the Agency's own activities and those of the World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO), which would benefit from a certain synergistic effect. The Agency, in particular, would be kept informed on a regular basis of the activities undertaken by the Community and the results obtained.

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATE OF IRAQ

135. Mr. AL-KITAL (Iraq), exercising his right of reply, said that he did not wish to dwell on the wholly senseless and groundless statement made by the delegate of Israel about the Iraqi nuclear programme, which was devoted to peaceful purposes and under Agency safeguards. He wished simply to reiterate his country's willingness to accept the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction, including the nuclear weapons owned by Israel about which the General Conference had been debating for many years.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.