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Chairman: Mr. POSTA (Hungary)

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[*] GC(XXXVII)/1085

The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(XXXVII)/INF/328/Rev.2.
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Abbreviations used in this record

ASSET	Analysis of Safety Significant Events Team
CEC	Commission of the European Communities
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
G-7	Group of Seven
G-24	Group of Twenty-Four
INES	International Nuclear Event Scale
INSAG	International Nuclear Safety Advisory Group
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NUSSAG	Nuclear Safety Standards Advisory Group
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
PWR	Pressurized water reactor
R&D	Research and Development
RBMK	High-power channel-type reactor (Soviet Union)
WWER	Water-cooled and -moderated reactor

SCALE OF ASSESSMENT OF MEMBERS' CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS THE
REGULAR BUDGET (GC(XXXVII)/1070 and Add.1)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the amended draft resolution contained in document GC(XXXVII)/1070/Add.1.

2. Mr. KOSTENKO (Ukraine) said that he could not agree to the proposed assessment for his country, which was based on decisions taken by the United Nations General Assembly in New York. At its forty-seventh session the General Assembly, in attempting to redistribute the assessment of the former Soviet Union, had adopted a new scale which had involved major changes for many of the countries of the former Soviet Union. The Ukrainian contribution had been raised by 58%, which had been unacceptable at the time and was still unacceptable. The Agency, following the United Nations' lead, was now attempting to make a similar change in its scale of assessment - as a result of which his country's contribution would increase by 1.64 times from 1993 to 1994 - without any consultation of the countries affected. His delegation was unable to endorse such an approach.

3. The new demands on his country had come at a very difficult time in its history. As everyone knew, Ukraine was suffering economic problems connected with the setting-up of an independent State, the introduction of profound political and economic reforms, and the expenditure of billions - on efforts to eliminate the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster. Despite all those difficulties, his country was trying to discharge its obligations and over the past year had paid part of its outstanding contributions: on the very eve of the present session of the General Conference, on 14 September, Ukraine had paid US \$500 000 towards its debt. Yet, according to information provided by the Secretariat, the outstanding debt remained at more than \$5 million. The underlying problem was that his country's debt was being calculated on the basis of a scale of assessment which had been adopted without his country's views being properly taken into account.

4. He therefore reserved his position not only on the proposal regarding Ukraine's contribution as it appeared in the document, but on the whole approach. The Secretariat and Member States must realize that if they operated a system whereby \$5 million could arbitrarily increase to, say, \$10 million, with a point eventually being reached where the

legal question arose whether the country was still allowed to vote at all, some countries might not be able to meet their obligations, with serious effects for the budget. Figures like the 1.996% asked of Ukraine for 1994 might seem acceptable on paper, but when it came to payment by the State concerned, they took on a different significance.

5. In conclusion, his country objected to the way the proposed scale of assessment had been arrived at and urged the Secretariat, when proposing any such figures, to take account of the real world situation and Members' ability to pay.

6. Mr. MARTINENKO (Belarus) said that he, too, could not agree to the increase in his country's contribution. In addition to the points made by the preceding speaker, he wished to stress how much the whole situation had changed since the adoption of the scales forty years earlier, in particular as a result of the Chernobyl disaster. His country had been one of the main sufferers from that disaster, which had seriously affected its economy: 25% of its territory and 40% of its agricultural land had been put out of productive use. Nearly 200 000 people had had to be resettled, and a similar number had moved on their own. The State had incurred enormous expenditure on building new dwellings and creating a new industrial infrastructure and new jobs for the resettled people, with the result that State expenditure, direct and indirect, on mitigating the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster was taking up an inordinate proportion of national income. On top of that there was the damage to public health and the whole range of economic and energy-related problems which his country and the other republics of the former Soviet Union were facing.

7. Even if the Agency was limited in its ability to respond to that situation, since many other Member States had their own problems, too, it should at least bear in mind that its mandate was not only to promote the accelerated, broader use of nuclear power, but also to provide speedy and effective technical and medical assistance in dealing with the consequences of a serious nuclear disaster.

8. If the Agency could see its way to reducing his country's regular assessed contributions, it would be helping to overcome the consequences of Chernobyl and would also be fulfilling its moral duty to those who had suffered so much as a result of that disaster. Belarus hoped it could rely on the Agency's understanding of its special situation

and count on the easing of its conditions of membership in the light of the points he had just made.

9. Mr. NORDIN (Malaysia) said that his country had always honoured its obligations by paying its contribution to the Agency on time. It would continue to do so, and it also agreed with the current calculation of its contribution. However, with reference to the Agency's special arrangement for payment, namely the split assessment whereby countries paid partly in United States dollars and partly in Austrian schillings, he hoped that arrangement would be re-examined in the course of the review of the Financial Regulations.

10. The CHAIRMAN replied that, he understood from the Deputy Director General's clarification at the preceding meeting that the question would indeed be dealt with during the current review of the Financial Regulations.

11. Mr. GUÉ (Director, Division of Budget and Finance) said that the representatives of Ukraine and Belarus had raised a very difficult issue, but, as they undoubtedly knew, the Agency could do little - or nothing - about it. The contribution rates, which formed the basis of the calculation of the actual assessment in the Agency, must automatically follow the decisions made by the United Nations in New York, because the Agency simply applied the rates approved there, only one year later. Consequently, the 1994 assessments for the Agency were based on rates approved in New York for 1993. The Agency could neither deviate from the rules laid down in the past nor make special exceptions.

12. The CHAIRMAN said that, as there appeared to be no further speakers, he would take it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the draft resolution in document GC(XXXVII)/1070/Add.1, on the understanding that the comments made in the Committee would be duly reflected in the summary record.

13. It was so agreed.

MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN MATTERS RELATING TO NUCLEAR SAFETY AND RADIOLOGICAL PROTECTION

(a) IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTION GC(XXXVI)/RES/582

- (i) AGENCY ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE SAFETY OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS IN EASTERN EUROPE AND COUNTRIES OF THE FORMER SOVIET UNION (subparagraph 3(i)) (GC(XXXVII)/1064, GC(XXXVII)/INF/318)

14. Mr. KOSTENKO (Ukraine) noting that Ukraine had five nuclear power plants, of Soviet design, said that in recent years, and particularly the past year, the international community had shown great interest in the safety of such plants.

15. His country was grateful to the Secretariat staff members involved in the activities described in the report attached to document GC(XXXVII)/1064 and also to the experts from various countries who had participated. In that connection, he noted that Ukrainian experts had been taking part in the programme on the safety of RBMK plants - i.e. plants of the type found at Chernobyl and hence of special interest to Ukraine.

16. Referring to the section of the report entitled "International Co-operation and Training", he said he was pleased to see from paragraph 35 that the programme of training workshops mentioned there was being extended to include Ukraine, which was suffering from a serious shortage of trained personnel in the nuclear safety area.

17. With regard to document GC(XXXVII)/INF/318, Ukraine was happy to be taking part in the joint UNDP/IAEA initiative. The Forum held in May had been a credit to the Agency; it had been interesting to hear the views of the senior officials who had participated in the Forum, and he was grateful to the Secretariat for its careful analysis of those views and for the recommendations which it had formulated on the basis of them. Those recommendations would be studied carefully by Ukraine's nuclear safety experts.

18. The joint UNDP/IAEA initiative was opening up possibilities in the nuclear energy field which the countries of the former Soviet Union had been awaiting impatiently for some time.

19. Mr. ORNSTEIN (Argentina), expressing his delegation's support for the activities described in the report attached to document GC(XXXVII)/1064, noted with satisfaction that the title of the present agenda sub-item reflected comments made by his delegation at the preceding General Conference session to the effect that reactor safety problems arose not because reactors had been built according to earlier safety standards but because they had been built according to inadequate safety standards and because of poor operating practices.

20. Mr. AAMODT (Norway) expressed his country's support for the international efforts being made to improve nuclear safety levels in Eastern Europe and countries of the former Soviet Union and stressed the importance of the Agency's role in identifying the most pressing needs. Also, he commended the Agency's initiative in addressing the problem of safety at nuclear facilities other than power plants and its efforts to strengthen national radiation protection and nuclear safety infrastructures.

21. At the bilateral level, Norway was co-operating with the Russian Federation in the examination of problems connected with the Kola Nuclear Power Plant and the dumping of radioactive waste in Arctic waters. The latter subject was one in which the Agency's involvement would be particularly welcome.

22. Mr. MANNINEN (Finland) was pleased to note the rapid progress made in terms of both political reorientation and practical measures since the G-7 Summit held in Munich in July 1992, at which the Heads of States of the G-7 countries had expressed their firm support for a multilateral programme of action to improve the co-ordination and increase the effectiveness of a vast range of bilateral and multilateral assistance efforts.

23. The fact that the countries of the former Soviet Union operating Soviet-designed reactors now enjoyed the same status as aid recipients as other countries in transition operating such reactors would serve the interests of both the recipient and the donor countries. Moreover, in the long run the recruitment of experts from the former Soviet Union would yield great benefits for international co-operation in the field of nuclear safety.

24. The G-24 co-ordination mechanism established within the framework of the CEC had been reorganized and its staff reinforced, with the result that a better overall picture was

already emerging of the gaps in assistance programmes and the areas of duplication. A further move in the right direction had been the establishment by the major donor countries of a special multilateral fund - the Nuclear Safety Account - within the framework of the EBRD. There had undoubtedly been a need for an international instrument for providing grants for the most urgent safety improvements and the enhancement of regulatory organizations, and Finland had been among the first countries outside the G-7 to contribute to the Nuclear Safety Account.

25. Recent studies by the International Energy Agency of OECD and the World Bank on various nuclear energy scenarios and possible non-nuclear power production options had illuminated the energy situation in various recipient countries and formed a basis for the World Bank's decisions regarding projects in the energy sector.

26. Broadly speaking, therefore, it appeared that an adequate co-operation structure for nuclear safety assistance and its co-ordination was now in place.

27. However, successful assistance also called for objective background information on countries' real needs. In that regard, he noted with satisfaction the Agency's effectiveness in providing such information.

28. The Agency had launched several programmes on the safety of nuclear power plants in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, the first being focused on WWER-440/230 plants and the later ones on WWER-440/213, WWER-1000 and RBMK plants. The achievements had been considerable despite constraints due to the extrabudgetary nature of the programmes. In fact, largely because of the confidence and respect enjoyed by the Agency in the recipient countries, the programmes had faced fewer obstacles than most multilateral exercises.

29. Through these programmes, a broad spectrum of international experts had been furnished with information on plant types previously unfamiliar to the Western experts and had been able to verify data jointly and consider recommendations for possible improvements. It was clear that the activities in question should continue and be expanded.

30. Of all the activities undertaken, however, the most effective had been the bilateral co-operative efforts of Western experts and individual beneficiary countries. As a result of those efforts, safety deficiencies had been corrected without unnecessary delays.

31. For the time being, all the different forms of activity - whether multilateral or bilateral - were necessary. Changes in emphasis would ultimately follow, in the light of the progress made in the various safety improvement programmes.

32. Mr. BERANEK (Czech Republic) said that while his country welcomed the Agency's programmes relating to the safety of Soviet-designed reactors, he was afraid that the programmes were proceeding at too slow a pace. For example, his country had to take major decisions the following year with regard to its WWER-440/213 plants and considerable changes in changes in the safety documentation for the Temelin Nuclear Power Plant would have to be made within the next two years.

33. He hoped, therefore, that the overall pace of programme implementation would be accelerated.

34. Mr. DICKSON (United Kingdom) commended the work done by the Agency with regard to Soviet-designed reactors, and especially WWER-440/230 plants; the Agency had helped to identify the safety problems associated with such reactors and thus to provide a basis for the provision of international assistance. It was essential, however, that the Agency took full account of the related activities under way in order to ensure the best use of the scarce technical resources available.

35. As the projects co-ordinated by the G-24 matured, it would become increasingly important for the Agency's assistance activities to be targeted precisely to the needs identified by the recipient countries and for duplication with other multilateral activities - and even with bilateral activities - to be avoided. Also, it was important that the scope of the Agency's activities match its acknowledged areas of expertise.

36. Finally, he hoped that the Agency would continue to provide effective technical advice in support of the G-7/G-24 programme of action.

37. Ms. CZOCH (Hungary), commending the Agency's nuclear safety activities, said that Hungary had received through the Agency effective support for the enhancement of its nuclear safety culture. The Agency was responding promptly to her country's needs in areas such as radioactive waste management, spent fuel management, reactor maintenance and seismic safety.

38. Her delegation was pleased that all types of nuclear power plant of Soviet design were now covered by various Agency activities. Her country was ready to share the experience it had gained in operating its Soviet-designed plants.

39. Mr. TITKOV (Russian Federation) applauded the Agency activities described in the Attachment to document GC(XXXVII)/1064 and expressed his country's gratitude to the countries which were supporting them. As a result of those activities, a common understanding had been reached regarding technical aspects of the safety of WWER-440/230 plants.

40. The countries operating such plants had begun to apply the Agency's findings in improving plant safety, and it was to be hoped that the Agency activities relating to other plant types would prove equally worthwhile.

41. Mr. OMRAN (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his country, which attached great importance to nuclear safety, both in Eastern Europe and countries of the former Soviet Union and elsewhere, hoped that the Agency would expand its activities to embrace all causes of nuclear accidents - including poor reactor design, the poor enforcement of regulations, and human factors. That would help to enhance nuclear safety throughout the world.

42. Ms. OK (Turkey) said that her Government appreciated the Agency's efforts regarding nuclear safety in Eastern Europe and countries of the former Soviet Union, some of which were situated very close to Turkey. It was to be hoped that those efforts would lead to practical improvements soon.

43. Her Government welcomed the efforts of the international community and the Agency regarding the development of national legal and regulatory structures in States operating

nuclear power plants with reactors of the types in question. Without such structures, those plants would constitute a hazard for the operating States and their neighbours.

44. She hoped that, in the interests of transparency, the Director General would report regularly on developments concerning the subject under consideration to the Agency's policy-making organs.

45. Mr. GIOVANSILY (France) said that the activities described in the Attachment to document GC(XXXVII)/1064 were developing in the right direction and that, to the extent allowed by financial constraints, they should now be incorporated into programmes financed from the Agency's Regular Budget.

46. Noting that, in addition to convening meetings for information exchange and arranging for people to receive training, the Agency had also been organizing ASSET missions to some facilities, he said that in the nuclear safety field ASSET and OSART missions were the most effective tools available to the Agency, which had neither the means nor the mandate to engage in more ambitious activities.

47. Mr. MULTONE (Switzerland), commending the Agency for its efforts, said that substantial improvements in power reactor safety in Eastern Europe and countries of the former Soviet Union could be achieved only through the combined efforts of all those participating in the international endeavour aimed at achieving such improvements.

48. In that connection he said that no single participant could claim special oversight authority and that accordingly none of the participants should speak out in public without the consent of the others.

(ii) THE SAFETY OVERVIEW PROCESS: THE AGENCY'S SAFETY SERVICES (subparagraph 3(ii) and paragraph 4) (GC(XXXVII)/1065 and Corr.1)

49. Mr. ORNSTEIN (Argentina) said that future documents on the lines of document GC(XXXVII)/1065 should provide information on the nuclear safety services referred to in paragraph 3 of the cover note and that future reports on INES should be incorporated into reports on the implementation of the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident.

50. Mr. KOSTENKO (Ukraine) said that the past year had confirmed the importance of developing a more thorough and transparent nuclear safety overview process. Greater transparency and the existence of an "international presence" in the nuclear safety overview area were crucial to achieving higher levels of operational safety.

51. In that connection, his delegation subscribed to the widespread view that the nuclear accidents which had occurred in the former Soviet Union had been due partly to the secretive attitude prevalent in Soviet society, including those sections of Soviet society which had been concerned with the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

52. His country was grateful for the Agency's safety services, including OSART and ASSET missions. Also, an Agency-organized seminar on accident prevention held at the Rovno Nuclear Power Plant had proved useful for both participants and organizers.

53. He was pleased that the Agency was responding to his country's requests for missions to the Zaporozhe and Khmelnytsky plants; in addition to the value of such missions from the point of view of safety, they would contribute to Ukraine's preparations for accession to NPT.

54. Ukraine, which had become a participant in the Incident Reporting System in December 1992, would endeavour to report all nuclear incidents occurring on its territory. He hoped that there would be fewer such incidents in future, but a number of factors had to be borne in mind - the age of Ukraine's nuclear facilities, the difficulties encountered in upgrading them, and certain political considerations and requirements. Ukraine would continue to need Agency safety services.

55. Mr. JAMEEL (Pakistan), expressing his country's appreciation of the Agency's safety services, said that the Agency should expand them and also play a more active role in facilitating access to safety-related information and know-how.

56. Mr. LIU (China) said his delegation was pleased to see that over the past year much had been done to enhance the effectiveness of Agency safety services.

57. China, which welcomed the provision of such services, had several times received Pre-operational Safety Review Teams (Pre-OSARTs) at the Qinshan and Daya Bay Nuclear

Power Plants, and next year it would be inviting OSARTs to those plants. In addition, it had requested International Regulatory Review Team (IRRT) and Assessment of Safety Culture in Organizations Team (ASCOT) visits. He took the opportunity to mention also that China would like to send its own experts to participate in the safety service activities of other Member States.

58. Commending the efforts of the Agency to increase transparency, he said that greater transparency should help Member States to learn from one another's experiences, reduce public suspicion and help to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

59. Mr. DICKSON (United Kingdom), commending the Secretariat on the reports contained in the Annexes to document GC(XXXVII)/1065, said it was likely that the demand for safety services provided within an international framework would continue to grow. In that connection, he said there was a risk of overstressing the Agency's budget and the international nuclear community's pool of expertise, especially where Eastern Europe was concerned. As the demand grew, Member States would need to think about priorities and about how to ensure effective co-ordination with the services provided through other forms of international assistance, in order to avoid duplication and to ensure that expertise was offered by those best placed to provide it.

60. In paragraph 2 of the cover note to document GC(XXXVII)/1065 it was stated that the Secretariat had for some years been endeavouring to ensure the existence of an "international presence" in the nuclear safety review area. He felt it was necessary to emphasize once again that it was Member States which had the primary responsibility for regulating the safety of nuclear installations. The scale and character of any "international presence" should be such as to enhance the ability of Member States to exercise that responsibility.

61. In conclusion, he said it would be useful if Member States could be told more in due course about the various safety services referred to in document GC(XXXVII)/1065, particularly in cases where the results of the work involved were not automatically publicized.

62. Mr. TITKOV (Russian Federation) said that the teams which visited Member States in order to deal with various aspects of nuclear safety provided an important and necessary service. The Agency should continue to organize such missions, and more should be done to make the results of missions known to all Member States.

(iii) SAFETY PRINCIPLES FOR FUTURE NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS
(subparagraph 3(iii)) (GC(XXXVII)/1076)

63. Mr. LAMPARELLI (Italy), expressing his delegation's support for the activities described in the report attached to document GC(XXXVII)/1076, which could have significant consequences for the future development of nuclear power, noted that the report differed somewhat from the one submitted to the Board recently in document GOV/2663/Rev.1, the differences being modifications proposed by the Secretariat in document GOV/2663/Rev.1/Mod.1 in the light of comments received from a Member State. He had serious misgivings about those modifications, and especially the modification of the second point in paragraph 13 of the report; that modification imparted a very different flavour to the relevant recommendation made by an Advisory Group in July 1992. The report attached to document GC(XXXVII)/1076 should have reflected what had really happened - not what a particular Member State would like people to think had happened.

64. Mr. STRATFORD (United States of America) said his delegation appreciated the work done in preparing the draft IAEA-TECDOC referred to in paragraph 6 of the report and supported speedy completion of the final stand-alone document.

65. However, it could not go along with the idea of using such a document as input for the preparation of a future series of INSAG or NUSSAG documents on safety criteria for future nuclear power plants. Any decision on the development of such criteria should be deferred until the present R&D work on future reactors had progressed sufficiently to warrant consideration - a stage unlikely to be reached in the foreseeable future.

66. He hoped that the Director General would report again on progress in developing safety principles for future nuclear power plants to the General Conference in 1994.

67. Mr. GENTILE (Argentina) said that work carried out in his country on safety principles for future nuclear power plants and reported in international technical publications

seemed not to have been taken into account in the activities described in the report attached to document GC(XXXVII)/1076. He hoped that in future due consideration would be given to the work being done in Argentina.

68. Mr. KABANOV (Division of Nuclear Safety) said that the PWR design produced by Conjunto Argentino de Reactores Modulares (CAREM) was described in IAEA-TECDOC-712 - "Safety aspects of designs for future light water reactors (evolutionary reactors)".

69. Mr. MOHAN (India) said that, while the activities described in the report were very important, the development of new types of nuclear power plant was an evolutionary process and at the present stage it would be possible to formulate only general safety principles and guidelines; it was too early to formulate criteria. Nevertheless, his delegation looked forward to receiving further reports on such activities.

70. Mr. DICKSON (United Kingdom) said that he also felt it was too early to formulate criteria.

71. Mr. TITKOV (Russian Federation) said that, in his delegation's view, the international harmonization of safety principles for future nuclear power plants was an important venture. Building on the work done since 1991, the Agency should continue its work on technical aspects of the question, especially in relation to accident prevention and design.

72. Mr. WOJCIK (Poland) said that there was a need for higher levels of safety in the so called "new generation" of nuclear power plants, a fact which had attracted considerable public attention. He therefore commended the effort being devoted by INSAG to the difficult task of developing safety principles for future nuclear power plants and was looking forward to seeing the results of INSAG's work.

73. Given the large number of documents before the Conference for consideration under agenda item 14, he wished to use the present opportunity to say a few words about reporting on nuclear safety and radiation protection matters within the Agency.

74. There were various media for reporting (the Agency's annual report and the Nuclear Safety Review, on one hand, and reports of the kind now under consideration, on the other), and the number of pages involved was substantial. Many reports of the kind now under consideration were produced in response to Conference resolutions, and there seemed to be a widespread belief that every resolution had to be responded to with at least one document.

75. He believed that, in the interests of reducing and streamlining the Agency's documentation, it would be a good idea if the Conference conveyed certain of its wishes to the Director General and the Secretariat not through resolutions, but through decisions. The decisions in question could be taken into account during programme implementation, which could then be reported on in "standard" documents like the Agency's annual report and the Nuclear Safety Review.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.