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## THIRTY-SEVENTH (1993) REGULAR SESSION

### RECORD OF THE THREE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Austria Center Vienna  
on Wednesday, 29 September 1993, at 3.10 p.m.

President: Mr. AL-ATHEL (Saudi Arabia)  
Later: Mr. JAMAL (Qatar)  
Later: Mr. RYZHOV (Russian Federation)  
Later: Mr. SANGIAMBUT (Thailand)

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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

ABACC	Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials
ARCAL	Regional Co-operative Arrangements for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
Biological Weapons Convention	Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EURATOM	European Atomic Energy Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
G-24	Group of Twenty-Four
HEU	High-enriched uranium
LEU	Low-enriched uranium
NDT	Non-destructive testing
NEA	Nuclear Energy Agency (of OECD)
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NUSSAG	Nuclear Safety Standards Advisory Group
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
R&D	Research and development
RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
RIA	Radioimmunoassay
SAGSI	Standing Advisory Group on Safeguards Implementation
SAGSTRAM	Standing Advisory Group on the Safe Transport of Radioactive Materials
START	Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms
TACF	Technical Assistance and Co-operation Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WWER	Water-cooled and -moderated reactor

GENERAL DEBATE AND ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1992 (GC(XXXVII)/1060) (continued)

1. Mr. PLUG (Netherlands), having congratulated Dr. Hans Blix on his appointment as Director General for a further term, said that the Netherlands delegation endorsed the statement which had been made by the representative of Belgium on behalf of the European Community and its Member States.
2. The Agency was still confronted with serious financial constraints. Against the background of the challenges currently facing it, there was a continuing need to set clear priorities and reduce costs wherever possible. At the same time, Member States should pay their contributions in full and in a timely fashion; that was essential for the proper functioning of the Agency. Member States should also pay their full shares of the TACF target. The Netherlands, which was pledging US \$900 900 as its contribution to the TACF for 1994, was increasingly concerned about the continuing discrepancy between the TACF target shares of and the contributions actually made by several Member States. If the discrepancy persisted, the Netherlands might be forced to reconsider its position with regard to the TACF.
3. Turning to the nuclear safety situation in countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS, he said his Government appreciated the initiatives taken by the Agency in order to improve the safety of nuclear power plants in those countries. The Netherlands supported the Agency's extrabudgetary programme on WWER-type plants and attached great importance to the technical support being provided by the Agency within the G-24 co-ordination framework.
4. His Government welcomed the progress made by the Group of Experts drafting a nuclear safety convention and would join in working towards an early conclusion of that convention. Also, his Government was very much looking forward to the start of work on drafting a convention on safety in waste management as soon as agreement had been reached on the relevant safety fundamentals.
5. In addition to its role under the envisaged nuclear safety convention, the Agency clearly had a statutory role to play in enhancing the exchange of information on regulatory

experience and in codifying good safety practices - for example, through the recently established Regulatory Peer Discussions Programme.

6. Referring to the various activities to be conducted under the Nuclear Safety Standards (NUSS) programme, he said that a body like NUSSAG could play a useful role in guiding and co-ordinating them.

7. In the Netherlands, the results of Government studies on nuclear power safety, waste management, non-proliferation and environmental protection would be available shortly. They should enable decisions to be taken concerning a possible expansion of the country's nuclear power capacity.

8. Developments which just a few years previously would have seemed impossible were taking place on the world security scene, and the role of the Agency had become more prominent as a result. The non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the opportunities offered by the peaceful applications of nuclear science and energy were matters of concern not only for governments but increasingly also for society as a whole. It was against that background that his Government firmly supported the Agency's efforts to strengthen the safeguards system, for the viability of the NPT regime depended on credible verification. The recommendations made by SAGSI in that connection were of the utmost importance, and his Government looked forward to the Director General's proposals for implementing them. The New Partnership Approach agreed on by EURATOM and the Agency was also very important.

9. Noting that a safeguards system applied universally would have greater credibility, he said that since the accession of South Africa to the NPT progress had been made towards making Africa a nuclear-weapon-free zone - a laudable example for other regions. The growing understanding among the countries of the Middle East was an important step on the way to political stability and economic co-operation in that region. Adherence by all countries of the region to the NPT's provisions appeared to have become a realistic prospect.

10. Satisfactory implementation of the safeguards agreement between the Agency and the DPRK was indispensable if the credibility of the safeguards system was to be maintained, and the Netherlands fully supported the efforts of the Director General in that direction. He

recalled, in that connection, the firm and unequivocal position taken by the 12 member States of the European Community regarding the non-compliance of the DPRK with its obligations under the NPT and its NPT safeguards agreement.

11. In the coming year, the Agency would have the important task of preparing for an extension of the NPT. A favourable atmosphere in that respect had been created by - inter alia - the decision of the Conference on Disarmament to start negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear test ban and the voluntary moratoria on nuclear testing announced by four of the five nuclear-weapon States, in which connection he urged China to announce such a voluntary moratorium as well. They, together with such important developments as the ratification of START I and II, under which the United States and the Russian Federation would considerably reduce their nuclear arsenals, gave grounds for hope that the NPT would be extended unconditionally. The importance of the NPT could not be overstated, for it was the only formal framework which bound together an ever-growing number of States in a solemn undertaking not to rely on nuclear weapons for their security. In the period leading up to the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, that framework would have to be strengthened and defended by the Agency's Member States, which would have to be both very demanding and - above all - constructive. In that connection, he was pleased to say that a positive attitude had prevailed during the first session of the committee responsible for the Conference preparations, which had been chaired by the Netherlands.

12. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that the few countries still not members of the NPT family would ultimately be convinced that it was in everybody's interest to make the NPT as universal in adherence as it already was in scope.

13. Mr. SALLOUKH (Lebanon) said that, following the international developments of the past few years, the Agency had an important role to play in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in the world and preventing nuclear proliferation, which might lead to destructive wars that would only increase the misery of mankind. In order to accomplish its tasks, the Agency should continue its efforts to strengthen the safeguards system, and to achieve the early conclusion of a nuclear safety convention giving it the right to verify safety and radiation protection standards at nuclear facilities and to monitor the production and use of raw materials. To that end, all States should co-operate with the

Agency by giving it the right to carry out inspections so as to ensure that nuclear energy was used for exclusively peaceful purposes. The steady reduction of stocks of nuclear weapons which recent developments and the new trend towards peace made possible would enable savings to be achieved that could be invested in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, thereby helping to improve the standard of living in developing countries.

14. The main objective of strengthening the Agency's technical assistance and training activities should be to enhance the capabilities of developing countries and the practical applications of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The approach of the twenty-first century heralded an era in which technology would occupy a privileged position and the practical applications of nuclear energy would contribute to prosperity and stability in the world. The peoples living in developing countries had the right and the duty to join in efforts to improve standards of living and to ensure regular food supplies, the availability of adequate water, and proper health care. Also, they had the right to help in increasing industrial and agricultural production and to participate in environmental protection activities.

15. Technology transfer undoubtedly contributed to the progress of developing countries and made it possible to raise new generations aware of the dangers, but also the advantages of nuclear energy. Whatever the methods and applications, priority should be given to nuclear safety and radiation protection, which were essential to the success of any nuclear activity. Nuclear safety and radiation protection should form part of school curricula in the same way as mathematics, languages or sciences. In the developing countries, bringing forth a new generation familiar with such things as nuclear terminology, the biological effects of radiation and dose calculation methods was the starting point for more active participation in the use of nuclear methods in agriculture, medicine and industry. Furthermore, the exchange of information about radiation accidents should be promoted and strengthened, and lessons should be learned with a view to avoiding a repetition of such accidents. Lastly, as food irradiation was of considerable interest to developing countries, the Agency should provide such countries with the technology which they need in order to develop their own food industries.

16. With regard to the Agency's financial situation, in view of the adverse effects that budgetary reductions could have on the technical co-operation programme, which was one

of the Agency's essential activities and of vital interest to developing countries, it was important that that programme be financed from assured sources on a regular basis. Continued zero real growth in the budget could restrict the Agency's activities, and it would therefore be better to have real growth so as to help meet the needs of developing countries and give the Agency's activities a certain stability.

17. The supply of water could be a matter of peace or war. Water shortages and population growth could lead to numerous conflicts between the countries concerned. The Middle East, like many other regions of the world, was suffering from a shortage of water which could become irremediable. The countries in those regions were relying heavily on the Agency to develop nuclear techniques for the economic desalination of seawater. His delegation, which welcomed the steps already taken in that respect, hoped that the Agency would make every effort to achieve the desired results as soon as possible and that it would receive the support of all relevant specialized institutions and organizations.

18. There was no doubt that the Agency, in recruiting its staff, took account of a number of criteria such as calibre of work, competence, specialization and integrity. It was also true that the necessary qualities could be found in nationals from all Member States. It was therefore important to adhere to the quota principle so that the Agency's staff represented all Member States equitably. Highly qualified women, particularly from developing countries, should also be recruited for scientific and technical Professional posts, so that by the year 2000 women from all regions would be participating actively in the various areas of Agency activity.

19. With regard to Article VI of the Agency's Statute, his delegation considered that it had become essential to amend it in the light of the changes that had occurred at all levels since the Agency's establishment. Those changes made it necessary to increase the number of Board members so as to ensure equitable geographical representation and thereby improve the effectiveness of the Board and its deliberations.

20. The Middle East issue was a very important one and continued to be of worldwide concern. People living in the region, like all those who were participating in the search for a solution, would be satisfied only when a just and lasting peace based on the implementation

of international resolutions had been established and when the occupier of southern Lebanon and the West Bekaa Valley realized that the oppressed populations in the occupied territories had no choice but to resist in defence of their land and their rights. Despite the few glimmers of hope, global peace could be achieved only if all the parties concerned renounced nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, acceded to the NPT and submitted all their nuclear activities to Agency safeguards. The Director General's commendable efforts to apply Agency safeguards and to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East would be in vain if Israel did not accede to the NPT and submit all its nuclear activities to safeguards. So far Israel had refused to co-operate in the implementation of the resolutions adopted on that subject. Also, it had not participated in the seminar organized by the Agency from 4 to 7 May 1993. The peace for which Lebanon longed was a challenge which would reveal the real intentions of all concerned. Would Israel fulfil its obligations and would the Agency and those who played an important role in it treat all States equally? Time would soon tell.

21. In conclusion, he thanked the Agency for having resumed its provision of technical assistance to Lebanon and for having organized missions to determine what the country needed for the implementation of its recovery, development and reconstruction plan.

22. Mr. UMAR (Nigeria), commending the Agency's efforts aimed at promoting non-power uses of nuclear energy, which were of great benefit to developing Member States like Nigeria, said that his country attached great importance to the transfer of nuclear technology to developing countries. Those efforts should be intensified, and a proper balance should be maintained between the Agency's promotional and non-promotional activities so as to ensure that the principal objectives of the Statute were not compromised.

23. The Nigerian delegation noted with satisfaction the significant progress which had been made in strengthening the Agency's safeguards system. It welcomed and fully associated itself with the specific measures taken to enhance the Agency's role and to increase the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the safeguards system. He had noted the Director General's assurance that those objectives would continue to be a major preoccupation in the coming years and wished to assure the Director General that Nigeria would continue to offer its co-operation.

24. In that connection, he wished to place on record his delegation's appreciation of the work being done by SAGSI. His delegation was convinced that, with the support and encouragement of Member States, the Director General would be able to achieve a high level of cost-effectiveness in the safeguards system without sacrificing efficiency. He expressed his country's appreciation to those Member States which had volunteered to co-operate with the Secretariat in testing new measures recommended by SAGSI and said that the Nigerian delegation looked forward to examining concrete proposals on SAGSI's recommendations - with the legal, financial and political implications taken into account - later in the year.

25. The Nigerian delegation was deeply concerned about the Agency's serious financial situation and regretted that in the course of the year it had resulted in a number of approved programmes being cut or deferred. It therefore hoped that Member States in arrears with their Regular Budget contributions would take urgent steps to meet their statutory obligations. It also hoped that Member States would endeavour to make future payments promptly.

26. Many developing countries such as Nigeria benefited from the TACF, and the decline in the amounts pledged and actually paid into it was therefore a source of concern. In 1992, there had been a sharp decline in the value of contributions in major non-convertible currencies. That, together with a decline in the extrabudgetary amounts received from UNDP and elsewhere and in assistance in kind, had had a negative impact on the quantum of resources available for technical assistance. The situation was highly unsatisfactory and should be rectified.

27. The Agency was, more than ever before, paying attention to the use of nuclear techniques in dealing with environmental problems, and considerable success had been achieved in demonstrating the potential of such techniques, through meetings, consultant services and co-ordinated research programmes. Many developing countries had severe water problems, and support should therefore continue to be given to the national institutions in such countries concerned with the use of nuclear techniques in assessing water resources and water pollution.

28. Expressing appreciation of the support which his country had received from the Agency in various areas where nuclear techniques were applied, he said that in June the

Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources had, in collaboration with one of its nuclear research centres, organized a workshop on radiation safety in the Nigerian petroleum industry - the largest importer and user of radioisotopes in Nigeria. During the workshop, in which the Agency had participated, recommendations had been made regarding - inter alia - the promulgation in Nigeria of a law on nuclear safety and radiation protection. Machinery had been set up to ensure the early enactment of such a law, and Nigeria looked forward to the Agency's co-operating in the drafting exercise.

29. A major problem facing developing countries was that of providing adequate food for their ever-increasing populations. Food irradiation could well become important in that connection, for a substantial number of developing countries had the potential for introducing food irradiation on a commercial scale. Believing that in the medium or long term restrictions on international trade in irradiated foodstuffs would ease, to the benefit of people everywhere in the world, Nigeria had taken steps to enable its entrepreneurs to benefit from the efforts currently being made to improve food safety and would shortly discuss with the Secretariat how appropriate assistance could be provided.

30. In general, the Nigerian delegation was satisfied with the Secretariat's continuing emphasis on projects dealing with food and agriculture and with the physical and chemical sciences in the distribution of technical assistance. Also, given the exceptional needs of African Member States, it was pleased that Africa accounted for an increasing share of the disbursed funds. The current welcome trend had been accompanied by efforts aimed at a gradual redirection of the technical co-operation programme towards more end-user oriented projects and at ensuring that the links between technical co-operation projects and the overall development objectives of recipient countries were strengthened. Nigeria fully endorsed - and commended the Secretariat on - an imaginative approach.

31. The Nigerian delegation, which had noted the progress made with regard to the Professional and higher-category staff of the Secretariat, believed that further efforts were necessary in order to rectify the existing imbalances. He reiterated his delegation's strong support for the appointment of suitably qualified women from all geographical areas with a view to ensuring a significant increase in the representation of women in the Professional and higher categories by the year 2000.

32. The Nigerian delegation had studied with interest the report of the Director General, in Attachment 1 to document GC(XXXVII)/1075, on the Agency's verification activities in South Africa, and considered that remarkable progress had been made in the implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement between the Agency and South Africa, particularly with regard to the verification of the completeness of the inventory of South Africa's nuclear installations and material. Also, it was grateful for the Agency's assessment of the status of South Africa's former nuclear weapons programme.

33. It was reassuring that, following additional visits by the Agency team entrusted with the verification of the completeness of the inventory of South Africa's nuclear installations and material, the magnitude of the discrepancy in the uranium-235 balance reported the previous year (in document GC(XXXVI)/1015) for the pilot enrichment plant had now been substantially reduced - to the level of the uncertainties normally associated with the operation of a plant of that nature. His delegation expected that further Agency investigations of uncertainties reported for the semi-commercial enrichment plant would also lead to satisfactory clarifications in due course.

34. Nigeria, which had welcomed South Africa's disclosure of 24 March 1993 regarding the abandonment of its nuclear weapons programme, welcomed the prompt action taken by the Agency to assess and report on the status of that programme. It also welcomed the co-operation which the Agency had received from the South African authorities in the process of the assessment, which confirmed that South Africa had abandoned the programme before acceding to the NPT and that the programme had been dismantled. That had greatly enhanced the prospects for making Africa a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Nigeria hoped that the Secretariat would continue its excellent co-operation with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations in elaborating a draft treaty on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa and that other Member States would support that important effort, the results of which would have a major impact on worldwide non-proliferation.

35. In conclusion, the Nigerian delegation welcomed the appointment of Dr. Blix as Director General for a further term of office. He had demonstrated immense competence

as an administrator and great sensitivity - especially in matters of interest to Africa, and to Nigeria in particular.

Mr. Jamal (Qatar) took the Chair.

36. Mr. MARSCHIK (Austria) said that the far-reaching political changes that had occurred in the world during recent years had had significant implications for the political environment in which the Agency operated.

37. Although by no means assured, there now appeared - for the first time - to be a real chance of: significant reductions in nuclear armaments following the conclusion of START I and II; a complete and comprehensive cessation of nuclear weapons tests in all environments now that negotiations for a comprehensive test ban treaty were to start in Geneva early in 1994; an effective and functioning international control regime to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons being established now that all nuclear-weapon States had become parties to the NPT and with the approach of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. There seemed to be growing support for an improved and strengthened safeguards system and, in general, a growing willingness to co-operate in reducing and controlling the risks involved in the use of nuclear energy.

38. That new international situation could well mean new challenges for the Agency: an expanded role for Agency safeguards in support of increased international non-proliferation efforts; a role in safeguarding nuclear material that would have to be stored in the event of large-scale dismantling of nuclear weapons; and a role in the verification of a treaty banning all nuclear weapons tests.

39. Austria continued to consider the Agency's work on the nuclear safety front particularly important. In many countries, including his own, anxiety remained high about possible hazards associated with nuclear power plants, and particularly with the continued operation of certain older reactors of Soviet design in Eastern and Central Europe. The advice and assistance given by the Agency to Member States in analysing the problems presented by those reactors was of great importance, and Austria trusted that the Agency would continue - and where necessary expand - the activities in question. Also, Austria

hoped that all countries concerned would give very serious consideration to the Agency's recommendations.

40. Everything should be done to ensure that the operation of nuclear power plants was as safe as possible. Austria welcomed all national and international efforts directed towards that goal, and it was in that context that Austria viewed its contribution to the extrabudgetary programme on the safety of East European reactors. He was glad that Austrian experts, along with experts from other Member States, had been able to contribute to that programme.

41. At the bilateral level, the Austrian Government had continued to pursue its efforts to promote a dialogue and an exchange of information on nuclear safety and radiation protection matters with countries in its immediate and wider neighbourhood. Agreements with a number of those countries were already contributing to the maintenance and improvement of neighbourly relations, and further agreements were in process of negotiation.

42. An important step in international endeavours to enhance nuclear safety would be the establishment of an appropriate legal infrastructure, particularly through early agreement on a nuclear safety convention. For years, Austria had been calling for the adoption of internationally binding nuclear safety standards and the mandatory global monitoring by the Agency of compliance with them.

43. His country found it difficult to accept the fact that nuclear safety should invariably be regarded as a matter of exclusive national responsibility and jurisdiction when recent events had demonstrated tragically the transboundary - even transcontinental - consequences of major nuclear accidents. In that area, as in the related area of nuclear liability, an extra effort of political will and imagination would be required in order to achieve more satisfactory solutions.

44. His delegation was pleased that the expert talks convened by the Agency on a nuclear safety convention had made considerable progress. Although his country would have preferred a more comprehensive approach to such a convention, it could for the time being go along with an approach covering only nuclear power plants, on the understanding that other parts of the nuclear fuel cycle would subsequently be taken up without delay.

45. With regard to the current negotiations on a new liability regime for nuclear damage, the prospects did not seem very encouraging. It might be true that substantial progress had been made in the formulation of certain texts, but there appeared to have been little progress on what Austria considered the main issue - improving the legal and material situation of victims of the transboundary effects of a nuclear accident. That issue was of special interest to countries which, although having no major nuclear installations on their own territories, faced the prospect of damage originating at nearby nuclear sites.

46. Austria supported the leading role of the Agency with regard to safety in the transport of radioactive materials and appreciated the fact that, under the guidance of SAGSTRAM, the relevant regulations underwent continuous review in the light of the latest technical and scientific advances so that they might form the basis for national and modal legislation.

47. His country, which was supporting the current efforts to strengthen the effectiveness and improve the efficiency of the Agency's safeguards system, believed that international security must be backed by a strong and reliable non-proliferation regime.

48. Everything possible should be done to provide confidence that no clandestine nuclear activities were being conducted anywhere in the world. That might mean going beyond the safeguards task traditionally performed by the Agency, but Austria was convinced that all efforts to that end should be concentrated within a single organization - namely the Agency. The extension of the Agency's work to include the detection of undeclared activities was an important contribution to the credibility both of the Agency and of the non-proliferation regime. In that connection, and particularly in connection with the efforts to develop a comprehensive or integrated safeguards system, he recalled that at the General Conferences' 1992 session the Austrian delegation and the delegation of the Czech Republic had presented a non-paper outlining certain ideas on the structure and content of such a modified system.

49. Austria welcomed the recommendations made by SAGSI earlier in the year on how to strengthen and streamline safeguards activities - and in particular on alternative approaches. There were now many ideas on the table, and the time was ripe to implement them.

50. Austria, which was pleased that in 1992 further important countries had acceded to the NPT, hoped that all countries which had not yet done so would adhere to the Treaty soon. It also hoped that those States parties to the NPT which had not yet concluded the required safeguards agreements with the Agency would lose no time in complying with the treaty obligation in question.

51. His country, which was also pleased that the DPRK had not put into effect its intention to withdraw from the NPT, hoped that the DPRK would maintain that position and that it would co-operate fully with the Agency in implementing the NPT safeguards agreement and in resolving outstanding safeguards issues.

52. Technical assistance and co-operation, involving well over 1000 operational projects, remained one of the Agency's main activities. It was reassuring for his Government when supporting the technical assistance and co-operation programme that most technical assistance requests from Member States related to non-power applications of nuclear energy, especially in human health, food and agriculture, the physical and chemical sciences, and radiation protection. Also, his Government was pleased that emphasis was now being placed on the requirements of requesting countries as seen by those countries and on infrastructural improvements.

53. In conclusion, as representative of the host country he extended a warm welcome to all delegates and expressed continued support for the Agency, which for nearly four decades had been a highly valued member of the family of international organizations and of Vienna's international community.

54. Mr. HADDAD (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the items on the General Conference's agenda could be regarded as falling under three major headings: promotion of the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy; non-proliferation measures and prevention of the utilization of nuclear energy for non-peaceful purposes; and strengthening of the Agency's capacity for action.

55. With regard to the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy, the Agency had, through the provision of training and basic equipment, enabled many developing countries to acquire the necessary technical competence. The next step should be to put the accent on certain

activities: the use of nuclear techniques in geological prospecting for nuclear raw materials and other minerals and in the determination of groundwater resources; the use of nuclear power in seawater desalination; and the use of nuclear techniques in molecular biology, biotechnology and immunology. Also, the principles of nuclear power plant safety should be further developed, the efforts to produce electricity through nuclear fusion should continue to be supported and ways should be found of ensuring reliable, regular and increasing resources for technical assistance and co-operation. His delegation believed that excessive centralization should be avoided through, for example, the establishment of regional centres responsible for initiating and supporting activities in areas such as electronic equipment maintenance, biology and medicine. Also, it hoped that the Agency would intensify its bilateral co-operation with those developing countries which placed at its disposal trust funds to be used in the acquisition of scientific equipment necessary for technical co-operation projects approved for implementation in their territories.

56. With regard to the utilization of nuclear energy for non-peaceful purposes, his delegation was optimistic. On one hand, the two big nuclear Powers had drawn closer together and initiated steps to reduce their nuclear arsenals and stop nuclear testing; on the other, several regional groups had concluded agreements on the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones. He hoped that those developments would lead to the destruction of the nuclear weapons in the world. Recalling the legal instruments - including the recent agreement between Brazil and Argentina - designed to make Latin America a nuclear-weapon-free zone and the fact that South Africa had destroyed all its nuclear weapons and acceded to the NPT, he said that there were countries in the Middle East endeavouring to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone there also. Most countries in the Middle East had acceded to the NPT and placed all their nuclear activities under Agency safeguards, and he wondered whether Israel - the only Middle East country with nuclear weapons - would follow South Africa's example and comply with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the Agency's General Conference and with the wishes of the peoples of the region and the whole world. He also wondered whether the Agency and other international organizations would make a special effort to persuade Israel to take an initiative similar to that taken by South Africa. In

addition, his delegation hoped that the two Koreas would continue talking and negotiating at all levels in the interests of a non-confrontational resolution of their differences.

57. With regard to the Agency's capacity for action, his delegation welcomed the fact that further countries had been approved for membership of the Agency and looked forward to co-operating with them in furthering the Agency's work. He believed that the time had come to expand the Board of Governors and modify its composition in such a way as to do justice to certain regions; that would help to promote confidence and reduce the differences of view within the Agency. The geographical factor should carry as much weight as the nuclear capacity of Member States. With the climate of détente now prevailing in the world and the steady increase in the number of Agency Member States, the call for an amendment of Article VI of the Statute was becoming still stronger. Article VI had been drafted not long after the Second World War, at the time of the Cold War, when the distribution of roles and balance of forces had been different from what they were now, and the States which were apprehensive about amending it should pluck up the courage to settle for a reasonable, acceptable and balanced solution.

58. Mr. PRINATH DIAS (Sri Lanka), after commending the Agency on an impressive record of achievement in many parts of the world, said his delegation believed that the international community had a responsibility to co-operate with the Agency in ensuring that nuclear technology was not misused for military purposes. The safeguards agreements concluded by the Agency were a sufficient basis for co-operation to that end as long as the States entering into them complied fully with the obligations which they imposed. Now that the world was free of the bipolar confrontation which had used up valuable resources, damaged the environment and diverted technology for non-peaceful purposes, the possibility of achieving greater international responsibility and co-operation in the nuclear domain no longer seemed so remote.

59. In that regard, the recent announcements by the United States, France and the Russian Federation that they were extending the nuclear test moratoria had led to various international initiatives; for example, the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva had given its Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban a mandate to start negotiating a comprehensive test ban treaty in 1994. If a total test ban treaty regime became a reality, the international community

would need to consider what role the Agency should play in the new circumstances. His delegation hoped that a comprehensive test ban treaty would enable international resources to be harnessed in such a way that nuclear technology was used more widely, exclusively for peaceful purposes and on a non-discriminatory basis. In view of the interdependent nature of the emerging world order, attitudes in certain parts of the world would need to change in order to ensure successful technology transfer and further strengthening of the safeguards system.

60. His Government welcomed the South African Government's voluntary disclosure of its past nuclear weapons programme, but it was still very concerned about the potential dangers of such undisclosed programmes. It was likewise concerned about the nuclear arsenals and facilities in countries of the former Soviet Union which, like many other parts of the world, were in a volatile state characterized by rising nationalism and violent conflicts. The role of the Agency was going to be a delicate one, and the Agency would have to act with complete impartiality in seeking solutions acceptable to all - and particularly when endeavouring to eliminate the risks associated with a proliferation of nuclear materials, know-how and technology and with the absence of centralized arrangements for ensuring an acceptable level of nuclear safety.

61. The present concern with safeguards which was evident within the Agency's policy-making bodies should not be allowed to detract from the Agency's role of promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear technology and providing technical assistance to developing countries. The strengthening of all the Agency's main activities should remain a priority. In a similar vein, his delegation hoped that the outcome of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference would not enhance the role of the Agency in implementing the NPT to the detriment of its promotional programmes.

62. His delegation was very interested in the progress being made by the Group of Experts drafting a nuclear safety convention. Also, it hoped that the current work on devising a new nuclear liability regime would soon produce useful results.

63. With regard to the practical utilization of food irradiation in developing countries, his delegation was interested in the techno-economic feasibility studies which had been or were

to be carried out under the Action Plan adopted by the Board of Governors in February. While acknowledging the limitations of irradiation techniques, particularly in developing countries, his delegation believed that in the long run an international food irradiation plan, with the Agency in a central role, could alleviate the food problems of developing countries. Accordingly, he hoped that the Agency would continue its efforts in co-operation with organizations such as FAO and WHO.

64. Turning to his country's atomic energy programme, he said that his Government, in recognition of the contribution nuclear technology had made to Sri Lanka's development, had allocated funds for the construction of new facilities for the National Atomic Energy Authority (NAEA) which would be completed in 1995.

65. With no large nuclear facilities and no plans to acquire any in the near future, Sri Lanka was concentrating on applications of nuclear techniques in industry, medicine and agriculture. The NAEA co-ordinated the activities of the institutes concerned with such applications and provided radiation protection, nuclear electronic equipment repair and maintenance, X-ray fluorescence and various other services.

66. Medical applications of nuclear technology in Sri Lanka included the use of in vitro RIA methods and in vivo nuclear imaging techniques in disease diagnosis. Improved radiation techniques for cancer therapy had been introduced, and RIA was being used in the scanning of donor blood for the hepatitis-B virus prior to transfusion. Sri Lanka had submitted to the Agency a proposal for a model project on the radiation sterilization and banking of tissue grafts. In view of his country's long experience of sterilizing and banking eye corneas, the Sri Lankan authorities were confident that the project would benefit not only Sri Lanka but also end-users in other parts of the world.

67. In Sri Lanka's industrial sector, research and development work on the radiation vulcanization of natural rubber latex had shown that the prospects were good for introducing that technique on a commercial basis in the near future. The NAEA had established a capability for providing non-destructive testing services and was conducting demonstrations of tracer technology applications.

68. In hydrology, radioactive tracer and environmental isotope methods had been successfully used in solving practical problems connected with the exploitation of groundwater resources and with seepage from irrigation canals and reservoirs. Caesium-137 fallout studies had been conducted in successfully dealing with the twin problem of soil erosion and water body siltation.

69. The use of nuclear techniques had produced significant changes in agriculture. The main areas of application included the development of superior varieties of rice and mung bean through irradiation-induced mutation breeding, soil improvement, water and fertilizer management for enhanced crop production, the biological fixation of atmospheric nitrogen by plants, and animal production and health.

70. The generation of electrical energy by means of nuclear power was not at present a viable option for Sri Lanka, since the capacity of the power reactors currently available on a commercial basis was too large for its needs. Unfortunately, although several conceptual designs of small and medium power reactors had been in existence for more than a decade, none of them had been proven yet. A number of developing countries, including Sri Lanka, would stand to gain if small and medium power reactors became commercially available.

71. His country had benefited significantly from most of the activities organized within the context of the RCA, which now covered all aspects of nuclear science and technology, and in particular from the ten-year Agency/UNDP/RCA project on industrial applications. His delegation was particularly pleased that UNDP had agreed to provide a major share of the funding for a new project on "The use of isotopes and radiation to strengthen technology and support environmentally sustainable development".

72. In conclusion, he reiterated his delegation's support for the Agency's programmes and activities, which had been very effective in promoting the application of nuclear science and technology for development and without which developing countries such as Sri Lanka would have made little or no progress in the nuclear field.

73. Mr. VALERIO (Portugal), after associating himself with the statement made by the delegate of Belgium on behalf of the 12 member States of the European Community, said that nuclear non-proliferation was vital for the maintenance of international peace and

security and that universality of the NPT offered the best way of achieving that objective. Accordingly, the NPT should in 1995 be extended unconditionally for an indefinite period.

74. Portugal believed that it was necessary to continue strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of Agency safeguards, and in that connection it welcomed the New Partnership Approach agreed upon by EURATOM and the Agency.

75. His country, which supported the activities of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, had joined the other member States of the European Community in requiring the application of full-scope Agency safeguards in countries to which they exported nuclear materials and technologies, including dual-use ones.

76. His country considered it important to strengthen the safeguards system through the voluntary declaration by Member States of their exports and imports of nuclear materials and sensitive equipment.

77. Portugal had not opted for nuclear power, but it was obviously interested in improving the safety of nuclear facilities. It was therefore following with great interest the efforts to draft a nuclear safety convention, which ultimately covered more than just power reactors; radioactive waste management and other fuel cycle facilities should be covered once an international consensus had been reached on the relevant basic safety principles.

78. He expressed appreciation of the Agency's system of biennial technical co-operation programming, with which Portugal's experience had been very positive, and also of the support which Portuguese institutes had received from the Agency in nuclear research and the application of nuclear techniques.

79. In conclusion, he also expressed appreciation of the way in which the Agency was run by Dr. Blix, whom he congratulated on his election as Director General for a further term.

Mr. Al-Athel (Saudi Arabia) resumed the Chair.

80. Mr. ONSY (Egypt) said that the world was witnessing a series of events which augured well for a future in which international understanding and the end of the Cold War would lead to greater co-operation in all spheres and increase the chances of making science and knowledge accessible to all peoples without discrimination so that they might enjoy the

fruits of economic development and scientific and technical progress without confrontation or conflict. In that regard, Egypt particularly appreciated initiatives aimed at the peaceful resolution of conflicts, the progress made in reducing nuclear armaments levels, and the accession of new countries to the NPT. He looked forward to further developments along the same lines in the interests of peace and stability throughout the world.

81. His delegation was confident that the Agency could persuade those States which had not yet acceded to the NPT and joined the safeguards system to change their position. The resolutions adopted by consensus at the two previous sessions of the General Conference concerning the application of safeguards in the Middle East were proof positive of the support of the international community and of its willingness to help achieve peace in the region through measures likely to create confidence among the parties concerned. With regard to the Director General's report on the matter, Egypt had supported the proposals regarding the obligations and the verification requirements and modalities to be included in an agreement establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Also, it had suggested new elements which might strengthen the application of safeguards within the framework of the envisaged agreement. Furthermore, it appreciated the Agency's participation in the meeting of the Multilateral Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security held in Washington in May and the workshop which had taken place in Cairo in July.

82. The Middle East had recently witnessed positive developments which should encourage all parties to support efforts aimed at putting an end to nuclear proliferation and making the Middle East a zone free not just of nuclear weapons but of all weapons of mass destruction, as Egypt - convinced that the attainment of that objective was essential to building confidence and ensuring stability and security - had proposed in April 1990. Recalling that General Assembly resolution 47/48 on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, in which all States of the region had been invited to accede to the NPT as a means of achieving that objective, had been adopted by consensus, he said his delegation hoped that the General Conference would, in its turn and as in previous years, adopt a resolution reflecting the support that the international community continued to lend to those efforts.

83. The African States, aware of the dangers associated with the presence of nuclear arms on their continent, were taking important steps to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa and focusing their efforts on the strengthening of regional co-operation so that nuclear energy might be used in improving the living conditions of their populations, and they were counting on Agency support in that connection. The encouraging developments in question were taking place at the same time as historic changes within the framework of efforts to establish the foundations of a democratic regime in South Africa. Egypt strongly supported those efforts, which served the interests not only of the people of South Africa but also of the entire African community.

84. The Agency was providing substantial technical assistance to developing countries in order to help them benefit from nuclear energy in such fields as research, medicine, agriculture, industry and the environment. The developed countries should give greater support to the Agency's technical co-operation projects, and the latter should be financed from predictable and assured resources so as to remain unaffected by the financial difficulties of the Agency and by the cut-backs associated with other activities.

85. Egypt had made considerable progress in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology. A second multi-purpose research reactor was being constructed and the radioactive waste treatment facility built in collaboration with the Agency and the former Soviet Union was being commissioned. In addition, the radioisotope production facility had been modernized with the help of the Agency's technical co-operation programme in response to the country's needs, particularly in the medical sector, and work had started on the construction of a cyclotron for the production of short-lived isotopes.

86. Turning to food irradiation, he said that Egypt had taken all necessary steps to start applying this technique in 1994. The matter had been examined in detail at two important meetings held in Cairo in the spring. The first, for the Middle East region and attended by representatives of 14 countries, had been organized in collaboration with FAO. The second, for Africa and attended by representatives of 12 countries, had been organized in co-operation with the Agency. All participants had acknowledged the benefits of food irradiation for Africa and the Middle East and the importance of co-operation between all countries in research and in applying the technology.

87. An important project designed to improve agricultural production in desert areas with the help of nuclear techniques was also making progress. The necessary infrastructure was already in place, and the project was receiving support from many countries. Egypt hoped that the Agency would also support the project, which should enable agriculture to be pursued with less water and chemical fertilizers and hence facilitate the establishment of communities in desert areas.

88. With regard to nuclear safety and environmental protection, the first phase in establishing a national monitoring service and putting it into operation had been completed, with the setting up of 22 radiation measurement laboratories. The second phase, in which the number of laboratories would be doubled, had already started. In addition, steps were being taken to strengthen the country's capacity for dealing with radiological emergency situations and to update the corresponding national plan.

89. For the first time in Egypt and on the African continent an experiment on the propagation of pollutant gases had been carried out at El-Daba, the site selected for the country's first nuclear power plant. Similar experiments would be carried out in other regions, in particular at Inshas, the site of the nuclear science and technology city where many of Egypt's nuclear installations were located. A marine radioactivity laboratory had been established in the Suez Canal region thanks to Agency assistance, and his delegation hoped one would also be established on the Red Sea coast in due course.

90. Egypt had also made progress in nuclear electronics, in nuclear fuel studies and in basic and applied nuclear fusion research. In support of work in the last-mentioned field, it was currently constructing a small tokamak reactor near Inshas with assistance from Germany. Furthermore, thanks to strenuous efforts in prospecting for raw materials, in infrastructure development and in training personnel and exploiting local resources, Egypt should succeed in becoming more self-sufficient in the manufacture of nuclear power plant components.

91. In view of its considerable interest in seawater desalination by means of nuclear power, Egypt had taken part in a study on the technical and economic feasibility of desalination in North Africa with local manufacture of desalination plant components. The

study had demonstrated the advantages of nuclear desalination using small or medium power reactors. Owing to the interest shown by Arab countries, steps had been taken for the report in question to be translated into Arabic by the Agency. There might well be a practical follow-up to the study, given the fact that seawater desalination was very common in the Gulf countries and given the progress being made in the Middle East peace process.

92. Egypt was well placed to provide training in final waste storage, food irradiation and nuclear power development for personnel from other Arab and African countries at its facilities. It was making all its resources available for strengthening regional co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy - particularly within the framework of AFRA, for African countries needed the technical and financial support provided by the Agency and donor countries and also the experience acquired through RCA and ARCAL.

93. Egypt, which had been participating in the work of the Group of Experts responsible for elaborating a nuclear safety convention, agreed that initially only power reactors should be covered, research reactors and fuel cycle facilities - especially nuclear waste management facilities - being covered subsequently. The industrialized States had recently celebrated the 50th anniversary of the start of the nuclear era - a celebration in which the developing countries has not really been able to take part in view of their, as yet, very limited utilization of nuclear power. In that connection, Egypt proposed that, to mark the start of the second half-century of the nuclear era, the Agency organize a scientific meeting on all nuclear energy and safety issues of interest to developing countries, the aim being to show those countries how they might make greater use of nuclear energy for their economic and social development, to strengthen technical co-operation between the North and the South, and to establish a special fund in support of that co-operation on the lines of what was currently being done by the Group of 7 for the countries of Eastern Europe.

Mr. Ryzhov (Russian Federation) took the Chair.

94. Mr. AAMODT (Norway), associating himself with the Director General's repeated appeals to Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full and on time, said it was likely that certain 1994 activities would have to be deferred and that certain activities deferred in earlier years would be proposed for implementation in 1994. In his

delegation's view, priority should be given in a particular year to projects belonging to the programme for that year as they corresponded more closely to current needs. Since such an approach was not possible under the Financial Regulations as they stood at present, however, the situation called for fresh thinking on the part of the Secretariat during the comprehensive review of the Financial Regulations.

95. Expressing support for the TACF target for 1994, he said that there had unfortunately been an overall decline not only in the fraction of the TACF target actually pledged (from 77.2% in 1991 to 71.6% in 1992), largely because the value of contributions in non-convertible currencies had declined sharply, but also the implementation rate had (from 67.6% in 1991 to 61.9% in 1992). His delegation therefore wondered whether the TACF target should be raised as rapidly in the future as in the past. It would perhaps be better to ensure that the target was actually matched by pledges.

96. Protection of the environment was of vital interest to the entire international community, and a substantial contribution in that area had been made by the Agency's "Nuclear applications" programme. His delegation was pleased that the Secretariat, in its contacts with other organizations of the United Nations system, was emphasizing the role which various nuclear applications could play in connection with the environmental issues confronting developing countries.

97. Norway favoured a gradual redirection of the technical co-operation programme towards projects which were more carefully focused on end-user requirements, which had better cost-benefit ratios and which were more closely attuned to national development objectives.

98. With regard to radiation protection, his delegation was pleased that work on drafting a code for the safe carriage of irradiated nuclear fuel, plutonium, and high-level radioactive wastes in flasks on board ships had been concluded. The Agency's safety services - such as the OSART and ASSET services, the Incident Reporting System and the International Nuclear Event Scale - were valuable, and he commended the Agency on its efforts to increase the transparency of those services.

99. His country felt that nuclear energy should not be used unless operating nuclear installations in all countries performed in accordance with the strictest safety and environmental protection standards and waste management practices. The early establishment of a convention on nuclear safety was crucial in that regard. Difficulties had been encountered in reaching consensus in the Group of Experts on a number of outstanding issues, including the scope of the convention. He hoped that consensus would be reached on a limited convention that could be submitted to a diplomatic conference in 1994. A convention covering only civil nuclear power reactors should, however, include a commitment to continue negotiations in order to establish international obligations regarding at least waste management and disposal at an early date thereafter.

100. Norway, which was particularly concerned about the safety of nuclear installations in Eastern Europe, welcomed both the joint project of the Agency and UNDP aimed at strengthening the radiation protection and nuclear safety infrastructures in countries of the former Soviet Union and the Agency's efforts to assess the safety of Soviet-designed reactors. It had initiated co-operation with the Russian Federation in the nuclear safety area by providing 20 million Norwegian kroner to help improve the safety of the Kola nuclear power plant.

101. His country was deeply concerned about the dumping of radioactive waste by the former Soviet Union in the Kara and Barents Seas and was co-operating with the Russian Federation and the Agency in assessing its possible consequences within the framework of the International Arctic Seas Assessment Project, which had been launched earlier that year by the Agency. Under a bilateral agreement between the Russian Federation and Norway, an exploratory cruise to investigate dumped materials had taken place, with the participation of an Agency representative the previous summer, and a second cruise, with representatives of the Agency and the European Community, was currently under way. The results of the first cruise had been presented recently at an international conference in Norway. The main conclusions were that the levels of radioactivity in the Kara and Barents Seas were still quite low, but that there were grounds for concern with regard to the radioactive situation in the future. The Norwegian government felt that a total prohibition of dumping of all forms of radioactive waste at sea should be incorporated into the Convention on the Prevention of

Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (the London Dumping Convention of 1972), and it would like to see the scope of that convention extended to cover military waste.

102. While noting that the Agency had not been able to confirm the correctness and completeness of the initial report submitted by the DPRK pursuant to its NPT safeguards agreement, his delegation was pleased that the DPRK had decided to postpone its withdrawal from the NPT. It hoped that the DPRK would remain a party to the NPT and looked forward to speedy and complete implementation of the DPRK's safeguards obligations.

103. Welcoming the accession of further countries to the NPT and the entry into force of further safeguards agreements concluded pursuant to it, he said that Norway assumed that the creation of a number of independent States on the territory of the former Soviet Union would not increase the number of nuclear-weapon States.

104. With regard to the fulfilment of NPT obligations, he deplored the fact that at the end of 1992 there had been 47 non-nuclear-weapon States party to the NPT which had not concluded the required safeguards agreements with the Agency within the prescribed period of 18 months after ratification or accession.

105. His delegation, which believed that the safeguards system should undergo continuous evaluation and adjustment in the light of changing circumstances, commended the Director General for having sought advice in that connection from an expanded SAGSI, whose valuable recommendations should receive due consideration.

106. His delegation was concerned about possible clandestine trading in nuclear materials. The Agency should investigate all indications of illicit transactions and do its utmost to prevent diversion.

107. Norway, which was a strong supporter of reliable and effective safeguards, considered that the application of safeguards to declared facilities in non-nuclear-weapon States provided largely satisfactory assurance of non-diversion. The main safeguards problems at present were, on one hand, undeclared facilities and materials and, on the other, cost-effectiveness. His country would like to see Agency safeguards applied ultimately to all peaceful nuclear activities in all States, and it therefore favoured the gradual extension of safeguards in

nuclear-weapon States, although that would make the question of resources for safeguards more acute.

108. The issue of undeclared nuclear facilities and materials had been highlighted by events in Iraq. The number of cases of undeclared nuclear facilities and materials was undoubtedly low, however, and a considerable improvement could be achieved through special inspections, through the universal reporting of imports and exports of nuclear material and specified equipment and non-nuclear material, and through the use of all the information available to the Agency. Environmental monitoring might also prove valuable if it was considered less intrusive than other safeguards methods.

109. In the long run, however, cost-effectiveness might prove to be the greater problem as the increasing amounts of nuclear material under safeguards made it more and more difficult to maintain safeguards quality. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the New Partnership Approach agreed upon with EURATOM as a step in the right direction.

110. In conclusion, he commended the Director General and the staff of the Secretariat for the results achieved in 1992 despite financial problems.

111. Mr. EL-MADANI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), commending the Agency on its effectiveness in the face of new challenges, said that, in endeavouring to disseminate the peaceful applications of nuclear energy for the benefit of mankind and to strengthen international co-operation in nuclear safety and radiation protection, it had adapted well to the changes which had taken place on the international scene.

112. The Agency had been created in order to serve its Member States, most of which believed that its most important task was to promote technology transfer. That fact should be borne in mind in 1995 during the NPT Review and Extension Conference.

113. With regard to the strengthening of the Agency's main activities, he expressed his delegation's support for activities relating to the technical, legal and financial aspects of the practical utilization of food irradiation in developing countries and said that his country would like to participate in those activities.

114. Calling upon all Member States with the necessary resources to support the programmes being carried out within the framework of AFRA, he expressed the hope that support would be provided by the Arab Atomic Energy Agency.

115. With regard to the environment and radiation protection, he said that more should be done to prevent a repetition of accidents like the one that had occurred at Chernobyl, which had thoroughly shaken the people living in the affected region and turned them completely against nuclear power.

116. A particular problem in the nuclear safety area was that of nuclear waste, which constituted a potential worldwide environmental hazard. Nuclear waste management standards should be raised, and the sanctions for infringing them should be increased. Moreover, the Agency should be directly responsible for ensuring compliance with those standards, which should be obligatory.

117. A major task of the Agency was to devise policies and procedures conducive to nuclear disarmament. His delegation was pleased with the efforts being made by the Agency in that connection, particularly its efforts directed towards the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, and called upon those States which were creating obstacles to co-operate with the Agency. The Agency should pursue its efforts, for nuclear weapons had no *raison d'être* in the present world situation.

118. With the accession of further States, the NPT was coming close to being universal. A universal NPT would be a major factor in ridding the planet of nuclear weapons. At present, nothing could guarantee the use of nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful development better than the NPT, which should nevertheless be adapted in the light of scientific and technical progress with due consideration for the sovereign equality of States.

119. Like many Member States, his country believed that States with significant nuclear activities should contribute more towards the costs of safeguards.

120. Aware of the potential advantages of using nuclear power for seawater desalination, his delegation welcomed the Agency's activities in that area. His country intended to continue supporting those activities, providing experts and making financial contributions in collaboration with the other countries of North Africa and with Saudi Arabia.

121. Ms. KSENTINI (Algeria) said that, given the profound changes taking place in the world, the Agency would have to intensify its efforts and use greater imagination in devising new ways of attaining its high objectives and in ensuring that its activities served the cause of international co-operation for peace and development. More than ever, it would have to demonstrate its ability to help in strengthening confidence among States and to promote the peaceful uses of atomic energy in the interests of the present generation and future ones and with due regard for the environment.

122. The Agency's safeguards activities were widely appreciated but the credibility of the Agency also depended on how it went about promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Accordingly, the Agency would do well to pursue a harmonious balance between its regulatory and its promotional activities, of which technical assistance was the central element.

123. With the support of Member States, the Agency had made significant efforts to strengthen the effectiveness and improve the efficiency of its safeguards. The results should be judged in the light of complementary action in other organizations and of the positive measures to be taken in order to strengthen confidence among States, such confidence depending ultimately on the development and implementation of a global, non-discriminatory approach to nuclear non-proliferation and on a nuclear disarmament policy requiring a complete cessation of nuclear tests, an appreciable reduction in nuclear arsenals and a universal commitment not to resort to the threat or use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States.

124. Negotiations currently in progress held out hope of the realization of conditions conducive to the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones. As far as the Middle East was concerned, the Agency had an important role to play with regard to Israel's nuclear capacity, and her delegation hoped that recent developments in the region would make things easier for the Agency. Algeria had welcomed the signing in Washington D.C. of the Peace Agreement between the PLO and Israel, which would - it hoped - prove to be the first step towards a settlement of the Middle East conflict and towards the self-determination and independence of the Palestinian people.

125. In Africa, a United Nations/OAU expert group had reached a decisive stage in formulating a legal framework for a nuclear-weapon-free zone, which the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU had been calling for since 1964, when they had adopted the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa. The attainment of that goal, which had long been frustrated by the situation in Southern Africa, might be brought nearer by the current positive developments in South Africa and by its Government's policy of transparency in respect of its nuclear programme. Her country had welcomed the agreement reached in South Africa in the negotiations on the establishment of a Transitional Executive Council; that would - it hoped - help pave the way for the April 1994 elections and for the creation of a democratic, unified and non-racial South Africa.

126. More and more demands were being made on the Agency, but its ability to respond was being undermined by financial difficulties. For several years now, the Agency's budget estimates had been based on zero real growth. Moreover, the non-payment of contributions by several Member States had forced the Agency to defer various programme activities or even make a substantial overall cut in financial plans. There was a danger that perennial financial constraints would plunge the Agency into a structural crisis, upset the delicate balance between its different activities and reduce its effectiveness.

127. The heaviest burden fell on the technical assistance and co-operation programme, which had been seriously affected by the overall cut in financial plans and was suffering from a financing system which did not provide for assured, adequate and foreseeable resources.

128. In the present difficult period, it was necessary to reaffirm the importance of maintaining a balance among the main activities of the Agency and to strengthen its promotional activities, with due regard for the needs of developing countries, which depended on Agency technical assistance and co-operation.

129. Given the profound changes she had referred to earlier, the Agency should conduct a detailed study of the staffing situation in the Secretariat and of the composition of the Board and its main committees with a view to a consensus on ways of achieving broader representation of developing countries on the basis of more equitable geographical distribution.

130. The current discussions on the staffing of the Secretariat, on Article VI.A.2 of the Statute and on Article VI as a whole were taking place at a time when bold changes were being made in other international organizations. The Agency should not keep aloof from such developments.

131. The excellent co-operation between Algeria and the Agency bore witness to Algeria's interest in all of the Agency's statutory activities and its belief in the universality of peace and security, in nuclear non-proliferation and in scientific and technological development with transparency in the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy. The appreciable results had been achieved through that co-operation in the health, the agricultural, the energy and other sectors. There were also prospects in the field of food irradiation. Algeria intended to call increasingly on the Agency's services in such fields as radiation protection, waste management and radioisotope production using research reactors.

132. The experience gained by Algeria in those different fields would benefit the sub-regional and continental co-operation in which Algeria was intending to become involved. In the light of the success achieved in the Maghreb in combating the screw worm, Algeria intended to continue with efforts to eradicate the Mediterranean fruit fly in that region and seek other areas of common interest; seawater desalination might be one such area.

133. At the continental level, her country was supporting AFRA, for which it would like to see more international assistance. AFRA's first successes, albeit modest, had been made possible by the momentum imparted by the Agency's technical and financial support, and the valuable contributions of various donor countries; also, mention should be made of the commitment and energy of the AFRA member countries in implementing the programme. While welcoming the work already done, Algeria hoped that the Agency would provide additional resources and that donor countries would respond positively to AFRA's financial needs.

134. The Algerian delegation, which had excellent relations with the Secretariat as a whole, was particularly grateful to the Department of Technical Co-operation for its advice and support and to the Department of Safeguards for its co-operative attitude with regard to safeguards implementation.

135. A time of new hopes, challenges and risks should prompt everyone to reflect and, through constructive dialogue, seek ways in which the Agency could participate fully in the necessarily collective effort directed towards world peace, development for all and shared progress. Member States should prepare themselves for that long-term effort, so as to ensure that the present decade did not prove to be a decade of lost opportunities.

136. Ms. NGUYEN THI HOI (Viet Nam), reviewing the Agency's activities in the context of the recent improvements in international relations, said that her country was in favour of all initiatives aimed at enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the technical co-operation programme and that the Director General and the Secretariat were to be commended for their efforts in that respect. However, the numerous occasions on which developing countries had had urgent technical co-operation requests denied owing to resource constraints were an indication that much still remained to be done. Her delegation therefore believed that during the next biennial technical co-operation cycle more should be done to maintain a balance between safeguards and promotional activities.

137. As a party to the NPT and a firm proponent of nuclear non-proliferation, her country looked forward to the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in Africa and the Middle East, and it was in favour of strengthening the Agency's safeguards, which should be applied in accordance with the provisions of the Statute and with full regard for national sovereignty.

138. In Viet Nam, all activities involving applications of nuclear techniques were carried out within the framework of the five-year National Development Programme, which was well integrated with the Agency's regional technical assistance and co-operation activities - an arrangement which benefited Vietnamese research and development in support of nuclear science and technology. Awareness of the advantages offered by nuclear techniques had increased throughout the country, resulting in a growing demand from the industrial, agricultural, health and environmental protection sectors.

139. Technical assistance received from the Agency had enabled the National Atomic Energy Commission (VINATOM) to start helping the industrial sector through the provision of guidance and training and through other support of efforts to introduce nuclear techniques such as NDT. Groundwater and sedimentation studies using tracer techniques had been

carried out with the assistance of UNDP and the Agency, with promising results. In response to growing needs, a further industrial irradiation facility had been built; located in the south of the country, it complemented the facility located in Hanoi, which had been inaugurated in April in the presence of Agency representatives.

140. Encouraged by the Agency, Viet Nam was in the initial stage of a comprehensive assessment of its energy potential, including the prospects for using nuclear power, and she hoped that the Agency would actively support it during the later stages.

141. In response to the increased use of nuclear techniques at various institutions, great efforts were being made with Agency assistance to promote nuclear safety and radiation protection. There were plans to establish a national monitoring system for nuclear activities, and a radioactive waste management programme was being launched. Also, a Decree on Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection was in the process of being drafted.

142. In conclusion, she thanked the Director General and the Secretariat for the effective assistance which the Agency had provided to Viet Nam and wished them every success in their future endeavours to promote development and prosperity through the peaceful application of nuclear technology.

Mr. Al-Athel (Saudi Arabia) resumed the Chair.

143. Mr. DECLAN (Ireland), having associated himself with the statement made the previous day by the representative of Belgium on behalf of the European Community and its Member States, said that, as one of the original proponents of the NPT, Ireland favoured its indefinite and unconditional extension in 1995. Universal accession to the NPT and full compliance with its obligations would help to prevent major threats to international peace and security, and his country therefore welcomed the recent accession to the Treaty of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Uzbekistan. He appealed to the countries remaining outside the NPT to accede to it, thereby making the NPT regime truly universal, and in particular he urged Ukraine and Kazakhstan to become parties to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States as soon as possible.

144. Latin America was rapidly moving towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone, and there were encouraging developments in the same direction on the African

continent. It was greatly to be hoped that similar developments would become possible elsewhere. With regard to the Middle East, Ireland was all too well aware that fears of nuclear proliferation had contributed greatly to the region's instability. It took heart from the positive steps taken in recent weeks in the peace process, which greatly enhanced the possibility of a nuclear-weapon-free zone being established and of full-scope safeguards being introduced throughout the region. With that prospect in view, he urged all parties to the NPT in the region to abide fully by their undertakings.

145. The Agency remained in the forefront of the collective endeavours to stem the tide of nuclear proliferation, primarily through the effective application of the safeguards system. The Agency had learnt important lessons from the experience of uncovering Iraq's clandestine nuclear weapons programme, and that had led to a renewed political commitment to strengthen the non-proliferation regime. It was his delegation's hope that that commitment would be reflected in continuing improvements in the safeguards system.

146. Ireland believed that the Agency had the right to carry out, when necessary and appropriate, special inspections in Member States with comprehensive safeguards agreements, and it accordingly supported the efforts of the Director General to implement the Agency's safeguards agreement with the DPRK. Continued non-compliance by the DPRK with its NPT obligations would be an entirely retrograde development, and Ireland therefore urged the DPRK to respect in full its safeguards obligations and to reaffirm its intention to respect its bilateral agreement with the Republic of Korea on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

147. His country welcomed the report by the Director General on the Agency's verification activities in South Africa. It was clear that the inspection team had undertaken a task of considerable scope and complexity. The results of the inspection activities were encouraging, and Ireland commended South Africa on the transparency of its non-proliferation policy.

148. His delegation particularly welcomed the emerging debate on international plutonium storage; it was right that the Director General should again call attention to the issue in his statement to the General Conference. In his delegation's view, any new arrangement would have to take into account plutonium from all sources - civil and military. The international

community was entitled to assurances that the implementation of START I and II would not pose any nuclear safety or nuclear proliferation risks. The best way of providing such assurances was through the active involvement of the Agency in the process of dismantling warheads and safeguarding the nuclear material.

149. Nuclear safety was not simply a national matter, but a subject of legitimate international concern. It was not enough to say that nuclear safety was the prime responsibility of the operator; it was the duty of the State to ensure that the operator exercised that responsibility adequately. Also, it was important that the State undertake a commitment vis-à-vis the international community to enforce that responsibility and to ensure that any transboundary effects were minimized.

150. In that context, Ireland welcomed the progress made by the Group of Experts preparing a draft nuclear safety convention. Early agreement on the convention was of vital importance, and he hoped that an agreed text would be finalized shortly.

151. Ireland regretted, however, that the text would not embrace all nuclear fuel cycle activities involving risk and giving rise to public concern. It also regretted that it had not been possible to achieve a consensus on using the Agency's safety standards as the criteria underpinning the convention. Nevertheless, Ireland was encouraged by the emerging commitment to proceed with the preparation of a separate convention on the safety of nuclear waste management as soon as there was agreement within the Agency on the relevant safety fundamentals; it was also encouraged by the general agreement that the door must be left open to developing, in due course, appropriate instruments covering the safety of other parts of the nuclear fuel cycle. It was important that the General Conference, at the present session, affirm the political commitment to move forward on those lines.

152. Ireland appreciated the important role being played by the Agency in assessing the safety of nuclear power plants in Eastern Europe and countries of the former Soviet Union and its promptness in responding to nuclear events there. The Agency should continue assisting the G-24 in that area.

153. Commending the IAEA-UNDP initiative aimed at strengthening radiation protection and nuclear safety infrastructures in countries of the former Soviet Union, he said that the

sub-standard state of many of the nuclear power reactors in the countries in question had been known for some time. He hoped that the offers of technical and financial assistance made by a number of Member States would be accepted and the proposals put forward by those countries implemented without delay.

154. For many years it had been evident that the existing nuclear civil liability regime was seriously deficient. For its part, Ireland had been urging that priority be given to the development of an enhanced international regime on liability for nuclear damage with adequate compensation for victims and that the Agency assume a major role in that connection. Four years had elapsed since the Board of Governors had established the Standing Committee on Liability for Nuclear Damage, but in that period the problem had, if anything, become more pressing. In the past two years alone, a series of incidents at Soviet-designed nuclear reactors and the discovery of serious safety problems at others had given rise to new fears of a major disaster. That underlined the pressing need to bring into being an effective and generally acceptable liability regime; without one, international efforts to improve nuclear safety would lack a substantial factor necessary for the public acceptance of nuclear energy.

155. The progress achieved so far in the Standing Committee was to be welcomed, but the Committee needed to intensify its efforts and bring the work to a conclusion quickly. Ireland's position was that the modernization and strengthening of the liability regime should include - on one hand - a revision of the Vienna Convention, with the incorporation of some elements of State liability, and - on the other - the introduction of supplementary funding to complement the liability of operators. Ireland believed that supplementary funding should be an integral part of the new liability regime. It looked forward to the holding in 1994 of a single diplomatic conference covering both a liability convention and a supplementary funding convention.

156. Lastly, Ireland wished to put on record once again its concern regarding the reprocessing of nuclear fuel. The matter was highly relevant because of the imminent conclusion by the United Kingdom Government of a consultation procedure prior to the taking of a decision on the licensing of the Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant (THORP) at Sellafield. Ireland's concern about the resulting expansion of nuclear fuel reprocessing was

based on two main considerations: first, the substantial and increasing discharges of radioactive waste into the environment, which would lead to increased radiation exposure of the Irish population; and secondly, the risk of much more severe contamination due to an accident at the plant or occurring in the course of the transportation of nuclear material to or from it.

157. In a wider context, reprocessing brought with it serious safety and safeguards hazards due to growing stockpiles of and a growing trade in plutonium and other highly active materials for which there was no immediate use. The justification for reprocessing derived from ideas of an earlier decade when nuclear power had been seen as having a prosperous and expanding future. At that time, reprocessing had been considered a key component of the nuclear fuel cycle, necessary in order to conserve uranium resources and provide plutonium for fast breeder reactors. Today, the arguments for reprocessing were far from persuasive: the expected expansion of nuclear power had not occurred and uranium supplies had become plentiful; fast breeder reactors were not seen as having any immediate commercial future; and the plutonium and uranium recovered from spent fuel were no longer required on grounds of economy or security of supply.

158. Accordingly, Ireland believed that the entire question of reprocessing, together with the related issues of transportation, discharges and plutonium storage and management, should be examined more closely by both the Agency and its Member States.

159. Mr. ARCILLA (Philippines) said that his delegation shared the concern voiced by the Director General over the Agency's precarious financial situation and expressed the hope that arrears of Regular Budget contributions would soon be fully paid. It was particularly anxious that the deferred programmes - having a total value of \$16.2 million - should be implemented.

160. In 1992, Member States had affirmed the need to achieve an adequate balance between the Agency's safeguards and non-safeguards activities. The fact remained, however, that the two groups of activities, while equal in legal status, were not equal in the sense that they both enjoyed assured and predictable financing. His delegation would like to see the

imbalance gradually rectified, although it appreciated the complementary relationship between the two groups of activities.

161. His delegation welcomed the Board's decision to hold a wide-ranging policy review of technical co-operation activities in 1994. It looked forward to a thorough discussion on the identification of more specific criteria for assessing project proposals and project implementation.

162. Although the Philippines had decided to consider only non-nuclear options for the possible operation of the mothballed Bataan nuclear power plant, it recognized the need to continue studying the feasibility of nuclear power for generating electricity. Accordingly, President Ramos had recently directed the agencies concerned to produce a comprehensive nuclear power programme.

163. The Philippines, which appreciated the promptness with which the Agency had in the past assisted his Government by sending experts to help deal with some of the issues involved in such a programme, looked forward to availing itself of the support extended by the Agency to developing countries in the formulation of an integrated approach to energy, electricity and nuclear power programme planning.

164. Regarding non-power applications of nuclear energy, the Philippines had been engaged in projects in agriculture, medicine, industry and research. The idea of model technical assistance projects was an innovation which should enable countries to focus resources on projects likely to have a national impact.

165. The Philippines recognized the need for public acceptance of and support for peaceful uses of nuclear energy and, with the Agency's support, was preparing to hold a seminar on the subject in Manila in 1994.

166. In March, the Philippines had had the privilege of hosting the fifteenth meeting of the working group of RCA representatives, at which the 47 participants from 13 RCA member States had reconfirmed the strength and maturity of the technical co-operation network fostered by the RCA. His country had noted with appreciation the approval for a UNDP/RCA/IAEA regional industrial and environmental project which, it hoped, would further enhance the contribution of the regional approach, particularly in the important area

of environmental protection. Also, it appreciated the valuable technical co-operation projects executed through and with the Agency.

167. Despite growing and increasingly complex challenges, the Agency continued to play a vital role in the promotion of peace and development. As the United Nations Secretary-General had pointed out in his message to the General Conference, the time had come for the integration of disarmament and non-proliferation issues into the broader international agenda for peace, development and security. The Agency had much to contribute to such efforts, on one hand by vigorously pursuing its mandate with regard to safeguards, nuclear safety and spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste management, and on the other by promoting nuclear techniques for peaceful, developmental uses.

168. Referring to the Agency's role as guardian of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, he said it was incumbent upon all Member States to uphold the integrity and credibility of the international safeguards system and to ensure that no derogations from States' obligations under the NPT and the related safeguards agreements with the Agency were allowed to take place. It was mainly for that reason that the Philippines fully shared the universal concern over the lack of full compliance by the DPRK with its obligations under its safeguards agreement with the Agency. The Conference must continue to be vigilant and determined in insisting upon adherence to and compliance with the NPT and on the fulfilment of safeguards obligations.

169. His country welcomed the progress made in the implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement between the Agency and South Africa; the conclusion of the quadripartite safeguards agreement between Argentina, Brazil, ABACC and the Agency and of other arrangements - bilateral, subregional and regional - relating to nuclear non-proliferation; the steps taken by the countries concerned towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East; and the efforts of the African States towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa.

170. In his country's part of the world, the members of ASEAN had long been committed to the creation of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality which would include a south-east

Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone. In July, the ASEAN foreign ministers had affirmed their desire for an indefinite extension of the NPT beyond 1995.

171. The Director General had given a glimpse of the wide-ranging tasks which the Agency would face if and when agreement was reached on an international regime for the management of plutonium and highly enriched uranium, on a verified cut-off of the production of fissionable material for use in weapons or explosives, and on a complete ban on testing of nuclear weapons and other explosives. His Government was confident that the Agency would be able to carry out those tasks.

172. The approval of further countries for membership of the Agency, which he welcomed, highlighted the important issue of achieving greater democracy within the Agency and the Secretariat. In that connection, he commended the Director General on his efforts to recruit staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible and to increase the number of women serving in higher grades.

173. The Philippines believed that the issue of more equitable representation in, and therefore democratization of, the Board should be given urgent attention. In that connection, it considered that a comprehensive revision of Article VI of the Statute would be better than partial, ad hoc amendments to it and that Article VI as a whole should be examined with a view to greater transparency and consistency.

174. Mr. SANGIAMBUT (Thailand) said that in the past year there had been satisfactory progress in various areas of Agency activity and commended the Agency particularly on its technical assistance programme, from which Thailand had benefited greatly. The nuclear techniques mastered through co-operation with the Agency were playing an important role in his country's development.

175. On the subject of food irradiation, he said that Thailand had successfully irradiated a range of products but that many industrialized countries were still banning the import of irradiated foodstuffs even though they were - and could be proven to be - safe for human consumption. He appealed to those countries to lift what was in effect a trade barrier.

176. Thailand continued to attach importance to strengthening of the Agency's safeguards system. While noting with satisfaction what had been done recently in that regard, he said

that there was still some way to go; an incentive-based approach might prove successful. Developing countries which accepted comprehensive, transparent safeguards should be allowed to benefit from intensified technical co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear technology.

Mr. Sangiambut (Thailand) took the Chair.

177. Mr. SHEARAR (South Africa) said that South Africa had provided ample proof of its commitment to the aims of the Agency, even at times when relations had been rather difficult, and that in welcoming the approval of further countries for Agency membership he wished to emphasize his Government's belief that all countries of the world, regardless of whether they had nuclear programmes, should contribute to the attainment of those aims by becoming Agency Member States.

178. Turning to South Africa's decision to terminate its nuclear deterrent programme and accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State in response to the dissipation of the perceived threat to its security, he said that his country was deeply committed to the ideals of the NPT, to the principles of disarmament and the non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction, and to the process of making Africa a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

179. His Government, which had taken careful note of the Director General's stated intention to strengthen safeguards implementation, regarded the strengthening of safeguards as an important step towards establishing a climate of international confidence and ensuring transparency in the policies of Member States. For its part, South Africa had set a precedent and exceeded its safeguards obligations by inviting the Agency to examine its past facilities and records and to verify the abandonment of its limited deterrent programme. The Agency had responded positively, despite the considerable strain placed on its resources by verification commitments in other parts of the world, notably Iraq and the DPRK.

180. Following the South African State President's announcement in March concerning the existence and subsequent abandonment of a South African nuclear weapons capability, the Agency had begun to assess the status of that programme. The report contained in document GC(XXXVII)/1075 substantiated the State President's announcement. The concerns of some Member States regarding alleged discrepancies in respect of the amounts of HEU declared

in South Africa's initial inventory report had been addressed. Similarly, an apparent discrepancy in the uranium-235 balance was now being clarified within the framework of the Agency's normal verification activities. The events of the preceding six months, which had shown how full use of the Agency's expertise and full transparency on the part of the State could bring mutual advantages, constituted a practical demonstration of a procedure which other countries might do well to consider, both in their own interests and in the interests of the nuclear community at large.

181. The Agency was to be congratulated on the progress achieved in the preparation of a nuclear safety convention. Having studied the arguments in favour of both a broader and a more limited convention, his delegation could go along with a more limited one provided the ultimate objective - wider application of the basic principles embodied in the draft convention - was kept firmly in view.

182. With regard to the NPT Review and Extension Conference in 1995, he said that South Africa favoured indefinite extension of the NPT, but in reaching a final decision it would consult its fellow African States and take into account the commitment of all NPT parties to the reduction of nuclear arsenals and the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons and to meeting their obligation to facilitate and promote the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

183. Since acceding to the NPT in 1991, South Africa had taken a number of steps to help promote the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, playing an active technical role in the working groups engaged in preparations for the establishment of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and in the expert meetings concerning verification under the Biological Weapons Convention, becoming a participating observer at the Conference on Disarmament and joining the Zangger Committee. It was engaged in discussions concerning membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group and also of the Missile Technology Control Regime. In addition, a combined South African/United States team was to investigate the technical and economic feasibility of converting South Africa's SAFARI-1 research reactor from HEU to LEU fuel.

184. Comprehensive legislation had been passed with a view to reinforcing non-proliferation, including a provision that all exports of relevant nuclear equipment and material should be for peaceful purposes only and that, when the recipient country was a non-nuclear-weapon State, comprehensive international safeguards should be applied at all times.

185. South Africa, which was deriving benefit from its participation in AFRA activities, had proposed four AFRA training projects in whose funding it was prepared to share. Naturally, its involvement in those projects would affect the amount which South Africa could contribute to the TACF.

186. South Africa had also been actively involved in the drafting of a treaty on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa - a legal instrument which would, it hoped, bring a nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere closer. Success in concluding the treaty would be a demonstration of how sovereign States could transcend their suspicion of one another in the interests of joint security. The African experience might well serve as an example to other regions, such as the Middle East and the Asian sub-continent.

187. It was a matter for serious concern that two Member States, Iraq and the DPRK, had not fulfilled their obligations under the NPT and their safeguards agreements with the Agency. He called on Iraq to comply with the Security Council resolutions concerning it and on the DPRK to co-operate with the Agency's Secretariat and, in the interests of peace and security on the Korean Peninsula and in the surrounding region, to resolve its differences and fulfil its safeguards obligations.

188. Since South Africa's relations with the Agency had been largely determined by its domestic political situation, he felt that it was not inappropriate to remind the Conference that legislation had recently been adopted providing for the establishment of a multi-party Transitional Executive Council to oversee the run-up to elections by universal suffrage, scheduled by common agreement for April 1994. With the establishment of the Council, the economic sanctions still being maintained against his country should be removed. In particular, the mandatory embargo imposed by the Security Council in 1977 in resolution 418, including its nuclear-related provisions, should be lifted, for the findings

which had given rise to that resolution had long since lost whatever reality they had once possessed.

189. South Africa had done all that could be expected of it - or even more - to normalize its participation in the work of the Agency, and he trusted that the General Conference would acknowledge that fact in its discussion of the item "The denuclearization of Africa".

190. Mr. SHTEYNBERG (Ukraine) said that, after two years of independence, his country was still having to cope with many political and economic problems in the course of consolidating its independent statehood.

191. One problem - that of the nuclear weapons which Ukraine had inherited from the former Soviet Union - was the focus of constant international attention. Unfortunately, however, the position of Ukraine regarding the nuclear weapons on its territory was all too often distorted. The position of Ukraine, and of the other Republics of the former Soviet Union on whose territories parts of the nuclear potential of the former Superpower were located, was quite unique. Existing international legal instruments, including the NPT, were silent about the status of successor States which, on the basis of national legal instruments, had inherited nuclear weapons. For the first time in the history of the world a nuclear Power had disintegrated, and no single successor State could be considered the sole heir; by virtue of the principle that successor States were equal, all were legally entitled to claim nuclear status.

192. Each successor State had independently adopted its own stance on the nuclear weapons issue in the light of its national interests and its sense of responsibility with regard to the future of its own people and of mankind in general.

193. From the legal point of view, Ukraine's right to possess nuclear weapons stemmed from laws, passed before the disintegration of the Soviet Union, which were in conformity with international legal standards, in particular the 1983 Vienna Convention on Succession of States in respect of State Property, Archives and Debts.

194. In accordance with the 1990 Declaration of Sovereignty of Ukraine and the 1991 Supreme Soviet Declaration of Ukraine's non-nuclear status, his country was determined not to accept, not to produce and not to acquire nuclear weapons.

195. Ukraine was systematically taking steps directed towards the achievement of non-nuclear-weapon status. The removal of tactical nuclear weapons from Ukraine's territory had been completed, and the removal from combat readiness and the dismantling of strategic nuclear weapons had begun. The strategic nuclear forces deployed in Ukraine had been placed under joint CIS operational command, Ukraine having only administrative responsibility, which in no way enabled it to use the nuclear weapons in question or to gain access to military nuclear technology.

196. As Ukraine still possessed nuclear weapons components, it could not automatically acquire non-nuclear-weapon status. Until the weapons in question had been completely destroyed, it was difficult to say whether, in law, Ukraine was a nuclear-weapon State in the classical sense or a non-nuclear-weapon State.

197. His country valued the Agency's safeguards activities, which were acquiring particular significance at a time when nuclear weapons were being destroyed, and welcomed the Agency's efforts to strengthen the comprehensive safeguards regime. Ukraine was very conscious of the fact that the world community was looking forward to Ukraine's peaceful nuclear activities being placed under comprehensive safeguards soon - something it was itself endeavouring to achieve. As previously indicated, however, there were still problems to be resolved before Ukraine could accede to the NPT. Nevertheless, his country was taking practical steps to minimize the lead-time until the start of safeguards application. At the previous session of the General Conference, his Government had declared its willingness to submit Ukraine's nuclear power plants and its research reactor to Agency safeguards, and since then there had been technical visits by Agency safeguards inspectors to all those facilities.

198. A few days previously, regulations for the establishment of an SSAC had been registered with the Ukrainian Ministry of Justice. His country was grateful for the invaluable help given by Sweden in that respect.

199. Work was in progress to establish a nuclear export/import control system. An Export Control Committee had been created with the task, inter alia, of monitoring compliance with international norms regarding the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their

delivery systems. A further important step had been ratification of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material by Ukraine's Supreme Soviet. Thus, his country was - in both word and deed - laying the foundations for full participation in the non-proliferation regime.

200. In view of the progress already made in that direction, his delegation had been authorized by the Ukrainian Government to announce that Ukraine was ready to place its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards without waiting for the creation of all the conditions necessary for accession to the NPT, and it proposed that appropriate discussions be initiated.

201. Nuclear power played a major role in Ukraine's economy. In 1992 nuclear power plants had accounted for approximately 30% of Ukraine's total electricity production. Thermal power plants were occasionally being put on standby because of the increasingly acute fossil fuel situation, so that the contribution of nuclear power was rising steadily - reaching 34.5% in the first half of the current year.

202. The Ukrainian Supreme Soviet had decided that the Chernobyl nuclear power station should be shut down at the end of 1993, and at present the station - which was operating normally - was being prepared for shutdown. In view of the critical energy situation in the country, however, his Government was considering the possibility of keeping the station in service until replacement plants, with WWER-1000s, were ready for operation. The construction of six such units in Ukraine had been "frozen" until 1995 by order of the Supreme Soviet.

203. Nuclear power was at present going through difficult times in Ukraine. The economic crisis was affecting the production of equipment and material essential for nuclear power plant safety and reliability. Matters were being made worse by the shortcomings of the country's nuclear-related legislation and standards and by a shortage of qualified R&D, design and other personnel. Spent fuel management was becoming a very urgent problem, which his country was trying to solve through approaches so far not attempted there.

204. The most important task facing his country was - undoubtedly - ensuring a high level of nuclear safety. In that connection, the attitude of the world community had shifted

perceptibly over the past year: firstly, downright rejection of Soviet technology had been replaced by a desire to better understand its advantages and shortcomings; secondly, it had been realized that the qualifications of former Soviet nuclear experts were by no means inferior to those of their counterparts in other countries, but that there had been - and still was - a "safety culture" gap; thirdly, it had been realized that, for economic reasons, the early shutdown of outdated nuclear power plants in Eastern Europe and in countries of the former Soviet Union would not be possible. As a result, the safety of Ukraine's nuclear power plants was now being analysed and improved in a climate of practical co-operation rather than of confrontation. The Agency was playing an important role in that process through regional technical co-operation projects and extrabudgetary projects in which Ukraine was very actively involved. His country was grateful to the United States of America, Germany and France for the support which it had received from them, and it was pleased at the way in which co-operation with the European Community, OECD and EBRD was developing. Although it would still take some time to resolve all the problems involved in establishing a nuclear regulatory regime that was in accordance with Agency recommendations and achieving an acceptable level of nuclear safety, he was optimistic about the ultimate outcome.

205. He commended the Agency on its efforts to strengthen international co-operation in nuclear safety and radiation protection and mentioned in that connection that Ukraine had concluded nuclear co-operation agreements with Russia, Germany, Poland and a number of other countries.

206. Ukraine welcomed the progress made in drafting a nuclear safety convention and in the preparation of new Basic Safety Standards - two tasks which would, he hoped, be completed in 1994. Also, it was pleased with the work being done to establish a more effective nuclear liability regime, to which it was hoping to accede, and the considerable progress already made in formulating standards for radioactive waste management. There was a need for international consensus on an acceptable level of safety in the case of operating nuclear power plants built to earlier standards and for nuclear power plant safety

principles which would serve as the basis for nuclear power development in the coming century. His delegation was convinced that the line being followed by the Agency would result in very high levels of safety and help to dispel fears about nuclear power.

207. For the Ukrainian population, nuclear safety and radiation protection were not something abstract, but a practical aspect of everyday life. Ukraine was still feeling the consequences of the Chernobyl tragedy. His Government was doing a great deal to mitigate the consequences of the accident despite the difficult political and economic situation, and he was grateful to the world community for its understanding and support.

208. Scientists and other experts from many countries had participated in an international competition for the design of a long-term replacement of the "Sarcophagus" containing the former Unit No. 4 of the Chernobyl nuclear power station, and preparations were under way for the next stages of the exercise. In conjunction with NEA, Ukraine was planning to hold, early in 1994, a seminar on the present safety status of Unit No. 4, the safety studies currently being carried out there and the safety measures which still needed to be taken.

209. Expressing his delegation's support for the Agency's 1994 budget, he said that, because of an extraordinary economic situation, Ukraine had not been able to completely pay off its arrears of Regular Budget contributions. On the other hand, it had managed to reduce its debt level substantially in the course of the current year. On 16 September Ukraine had made a payment of \$500 000 towards the Regular Budget, and his Government was taking steps with a view to paying off the remainder of its accumulated arrears as soon as possible.

210. However, paradoxical as it might seem, at a time when his country was on the economic brink, a decision was about to be taken in the United Nations, and hence in the Agency, regarding an increase by a factor of 1.64 in Ukraine's rate of assessment. His country could not accept such a decision, which was nonsensical. The Ukrainian delegation to the United Nations General Assembly was pursuing the matter, but meanwhile he wished to emphasize that a decision to increase Ukraine's assessment rate to 1.996% could only undermine his country's participation in Agency activities.

211. Ukraine appreciated and supported the Agency's varied activities directed towards strengthening international co-operation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy and would help in every way possible to resolve the extremely important problems facing the Agency.

The meeting rose at 7.30 p.m.

