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**RECORD OF THE FIRST PLENARY MEETING**

Held at the Austria Center Vienna  
on Monday, 16 September 1996, at 10.15 a.m.

Temporary President: Mr. KASEMSARN (Thailand)

President: Mr. PADOLINA (Philippines)

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[\*] GC(40)/1.

The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(40)/INF/13/Rev.2.

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Abbreviations used in this record

AFRA	African Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
Agreed Framework	Agreed Framework between the United States of America and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea
ARCAL	Regional Co-operative Arrangements for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America
ASSET	Analysis of Safety Significant Events Team
CTBT	Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty
CTBTO	Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization
DECADES	Databases and Methodologies for Comparative Assessment of Different Energy Sources for Electricity Generation
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-7	Group of Seven
G-24	OECD Group of 24
ITER	International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor
KSNP	Korean Standard Nuclear Power Plant
London Convention	Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (1972)
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
PHARE	Poland, Hungary: assistance for economic reconstruction in Europe (the programme now covers several East European countries)
RADWASS	Radioactive Waste Safety Standards
RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
SAGTAC	Standing Advisory Group on Technical Assistance and Co-operation
SIR	Safeguards Implementation Report
TACIS	Technical Assistance for the Commonwealth of Independent States
TC	Technical co-operation
TCDC	Technical co-operation among developing countries
TCF	Technical Co-operation Fund
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNSCOM	United Nations Special Commission for the Elimination of Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction
Vienna Convention	Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage (May 1963)
WHO	World Health Organization

## OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT declared open the fortieth regular session of the General Conference.

2. In accordance with Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, he invited the delegates to observe one minute of silence dedicated to prayer or meditation.

All present rose and stood in silence for one minute.

3. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT said the current session of the General Conference marked a milestone, being the fortieth anniversary of the approval in October 1956 of the Statute by which the Agency had been established and given responsibility for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the prevention of nuclear proliferation.

4. Since the previous session of the General Conference, considerable progress had been made, and the Director General and the Secretariat were to be congratulated. In November 1995, the General Assembly had adopted a resolution commending the Agency for its nuclear verification efforts and welcoming the measures being taken to strengthen the safeguards system. It had further affirmed its confidence in the Agency's role in the application of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

5. Over the past year, the Agency had made significant progress in the areas of technical co-operation, safeguards and safety. The technical co-operation programme played an important role in the daily lives of peoples throughout the world, since nuclear technology helped to improve their economic well-being. He was convinced that that aspect of the Agency's activities would grow as the danger of nuclear proliferation receded, and he hoped that, with the co-operation of the major contributors, the Agency would be able to enhance the role envisaged for it by its founding fathers in regard to the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

6. The Agency had now been authorized to implement the Part 1 measures of Programme 93+2, and negotiations on the Part 2 measures were proceeding in a committee established in June 1996 to finalize a model protocol additional to comprehensive safeguards

agreements with the aim of increasing the Agency's capability to detect clandestine nuclear activities.

7. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty had been overwhelmingly supported at the General Assembly. It was to be hoped that, with its adoption, further steps would be taken to establish a good working relationship between the Agency and the future preparatory commission for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization.

8. It was encouraging to note the nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties concluded in various parts of the world, the most recent being the Pelindaba Treaty covering Africa, signed in April that year, and the Treaty on the South East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, signed in December 1995, which should contribute to a more peaceful and secure world. It was also encouraging to note that the Convention on Nuclear Safety would be coming into force on 24 October and that the work of the Standing Committee on Liability for Nuclear Damage was moving into its final phase. The tenth anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear accident had brought together over 800 scientists and Government officials in Vienna in April to discuss its consequences and impact. Such international efforts should help to allay the public's misgivings and build up confidence in the peaceful applications of nuclear energy.

9. In conclusion, he thanked Member States, the Director General and the Secretariat for the support and co-operation extended to him over the past year.

#### ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND APPOINTMENT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE

10. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT invited nominations for the office of President of the Conference.

11. Mr. NAKAGAWA (Japan), speaking on behalf of the Far East Group, proposed Mr. Padolina (Philippines), whose extensive experience in the fields of science and technology and personal attributes made him eminently suitable for the office of President.

12. Mr. Padolina (Philippines) was elected President by acclamation.

13. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT, speaking on his own behalf and on behalf of all the delegates, congratulated Mr. Padolina on his election and wished him success in his task.

Mr. Padolina (Philippines) took the Chair.

14. The PRESIDENT said it was with a deep sense of gratitude that he accepted the post of President of the fortieth regular session of the General Conference. The Philippines had presided over the General Conference twice before, in 1974 and 1982, and he had been asked to convey the best wishes of the President of his country to the Conference for a successful session. He thanked Mr. Kasemsarn, the outgoing President, for his able direction of the thirty-ninth session in 1995. He would make every effort to ensure the success of the present session and looked forward to enjoying the co-operation of all delegations and the Secretariat.

15. The General Conference was taking place in the centenary year of the discovery of radioactivity by Henri Becquerel, an event flanked by two other revolutionary discoveries - that of X-rays in 1895 by Wilhelm Roentgen and that of the electron in 1897 by Joseph John Thomson. Even as the benefits of those discoveries continued to unfold today, people were looking to ways in which nuclear science could enhance the quality of life in the 21st century. In all Member States the peaceful atom had made quiet inroads in medicine, industry, agriculture and the environment, saving lives and improving health, increasing food supplies, reducing pollution, improving industrial products and securing fresh water supplies. Public support for an expanded role for nuclear energy was crucial; consequently, efforts to enhance public understanding of the risks and benefits of nuclear applications had to be strengthened. The attainment of a nuclear-weapon-free world and reasonable guarantees of safety in the various applications of nuclear energy would contribute to increased public understanding. Much was expected of the Agency in the areas of preventing nuclear proliferation, achieving nuclear disarmament and implementing the prospective Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. The Agency had clearly demonstrated the effectiveness of its safeguards system, even as it continued to search for means of enhancing that system.

16. Aside from safeguards, it was time for serious discussion on ways in which nuclear science could be increasingly devoted to development and thereby ensure that the atom served to promote both the peace and prosperity of mankind.

17. Reverting to the election of officers and the appointment of the General Committee, he recalled that, under Rules 34 and 40 of the Rules of Procedure, the Conference had to elect eight Vice-Presidents, the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole and five additional members of the General Committee, resulting with himself as Chairman in a Committee of 15. Following consultations, however, there seemed to be agreement in favour of a General Committee of 16 members so that the Far Eastern Group, in addition to providing the President of the Conference, might also have a Vice-President. He had been advised that that had been done in comparable situations in the past. He therefore proposed that Rule 40 be suspended, and that the delegates of Canada, France, Indonesia, Japan, Lebanon, Morocco, Nicaragua and the Russian Federation be elected as Vice-Presidents, that Mr. Mohammad Sadegh Ayatollahi of the Islamic Republic of Iran be elected as Chairman of the Committee of the Whole and that the delegates of Croatia, Cyprus, Ethiopia, Mexico, Romania and the United States of America be elected as additional members of the General Committee.

18. The President's proposals were accepted.

19. The PRESIDENT proposed that, prior to the General Committee's meeting and submitting its recommendations on the agenda, the General Conference waive Rule 42 and proceed with its consideration of items 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7 of the provisional agenda in order not to lose time.

20. The President's proposal was accepted.

#### APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE AGENCY (GC(40)/2)

21. The PRESIDENT informed delegates that the General Conference had before it an application for membership by the Republic of Moldova (document GC(40)/2). That application had been endorsed by the Board of Governors, which had also submitted an associated draft resolution for adoption by the General Conference.

22. He assumed that the Conference wished to adopt the draft resolution by acclamation.

23. It was so decided.

24. Mr. ANDRIESH (Republic of Moldova)\* expressed his Government's deep gratitude for the invitation to participate in the work of the 40th regular session of the General Conference and for the decision to accept the young sovereign State of Moldova as a Member of the Agency. That decision was a further act of recognition of his country on the international stage and would contribute to the expansion of its co-operation with interested States in such areas as radiation protection and non-proliferation.

25. The Republic of Moldova was located at the southeastern end of Europe. Its total area was slightly more than 33 500 km<sup>2</sup> and the population was about 4.5 million. Moldova had a strong industrial base, half of it connected with the processing of agricultural goods. The country possessed no nuclear power plants or other facilities that used nuclear materials but, with eight nuclear power plants located within a radius of 125 to 400 km from Moldova's borders - in Ukraine, Romania and Bulgaria, protection of its territory from the threat of radioactive contamination was paramount, especially in view of Moldova's high population density (130 per km<sup>2</sup>) and the role of agricultural production in the country's economy.

26. The consequences of the Chernobyl accident remained vivid in the memory of his people. For a short period, the maximum gamma radiation background level had exceeded the norm by a factor of 10 to 12. The situation had now returned to normal, but the public remained concerned, forcing the Government to take concrete measures. There were 340 enterprises, organizations and agricultural, municipal and health institutions using sources of ionizing radiation for peaceful purposes. The necessary civil protection facilities had been created to prevent and cope with emergency situations. A national radiation protection committee had been established, relevant legislation was being developed and a Government decree concerning regulations for the transport of dangerous cargo in Moldova had been promulgated. Intergovernmental agreements had been concluded with the Russian Federation

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\* Speaking under Rule 30 of the Rules of Procedure.

and Romania concerning co-operation in the event of accidents or natural disasters, and drafts of similar agreements with Ukraine and Belarus had been prepared for signature. Interstate co-operation in the field of nuclear engineering could only developed successfully under the auspices of the Agency which was why his country had felt the need to become a Member. In conclusion, he reiterated Moldova's gratitude for its acceptance into the Agency and pledged its full adherence to the Statute.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

27. Mr. GIACOMELLI (Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations) said that profound change had been the hallmark of recent years and new opportunities had appeared. The end of the Cold War had offered the prospect of a new era of international peace, co-operation and prosperity, and the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations had been celebrated with renewed hope for the future. However, as events had shown, world peace remained fragile. Strengthening the mechanisms for peace and fostering peace through development were more important than ever, and the Agency had a key role to play in global peace-building.

28. The nuclear non-proliferation regime remained the cornerstone of international efforts to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to curb the spread of nuclear weapons. The agreement reached the previous year for the indefinite extension of the NPT had reflected the collective commitment of the international community. It was gratifying to note that 182 countries, including nuclear-weapon States, were now party to the Treaty and that 177 thereof had accepted the application of Agency safeguards.

29. Verification of nuclear control pledges was a vital element in the process towards a nuclear-weapon-free world, and credible Agency verification was becoming increasingly important. Governments and the public at large wanted the Agency safeguards system to have the capacity to detect possible undeclared nuclear material and installations. There should be no relaxation in the Agency's quest for comprehensive international norms concerning safeguards and safety in facilitating the peaceful uses of atomic energy.

30. However, while verification, disarmament and non-proliferation were indispensable, political will was the most important precondition for further advances towards a nuclear-

weapon-free world. In that connection, he welcomed the establishment of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and the signing, in December 1995, of the South East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty. The world was now looking forward to progress on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

31. He attached great significance to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), and had been greatly disappointed that the Conference on Disarmament had been unable to approve the text of the Treaty by consensus. However, as requested by the General Assembly, preparations had been initiated for the opening of the Treaty for signature later that month and he appealed strongly to all States, despite their differences, to lend their support to that landmark agreement and to intensify their efforts to adopt further nuclear disarmament measures which would bring the international community closer to its ultimate goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. He was sure that the Agency would be ready to co-operate with the preparatory commission for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization, which would be set up after the Treaty had been opened for signature.

32. 1996 marked the tenth anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster. No nuclear accident had been the subject of more intense analysis. The international conference held in Vienna in April under the joint auspices of the Agency, WHO and the European Commission had produced an international scientific consensus on the accident's consequences. Since the accident, the Agency's role in the field of nuclear safety had expanded, particularly in providing effective advisory services to Member States. Efforts to strengthen the Agency's role in that work should continue.

33. The Convention on Nuclear Safety, the first legal instrument directly concerned with the safety of nuclear power plants worldwide, had been signed by 63 Member States, and now having been ratified by the required number of States, would enter into force on 24 October, United Nations Day. He urged other Member States that had not yet signed and ratified the Convention to do so as a matter of urgency.

34. At a time when peace and development were increasingly being recognized as interdependent, the Agency's technical co-operation activities to promote the peaceful uses of atomic energy were assuming increased significance. They were of vital importance to

numerous developing countries in their quest for sustainable development, their search for fresh drinking water and in other critical areas.

35. In 1997, the General Assembly would hold a special session to assess progress in implementing Agenda 21 - the framework for action formulated by UNCED in Rio - and it had been proposed that it devote particular attention to energy for sustainable development. In view of the fact that global energy consumption would continue to increase rapidly, one of the greatest long-term challenges for humanity was to identify environmentally sound sources of energy. Welcoming the Agency's contribution to implementing Agenda 21, including its role as task manager for radioactive waste management, he was pleased to note that good progress had been reported by the expert group responsible for elaborating the draft convention on the safety of radioactive waste management. It would hopefully be possible to convene a diplomatic conference on that vital issue the following year.

36. The Agency also had an important role to play in the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa. It should reinforce its activities of direct benefit to African countries, such as its contributions to the search for water in arid zones, the development of more productive seeds, the eradication of insect pests and improving the productivity of cattle rearing.

37. Close co-operation between the Security Council and the Agency remained of paramount importance in the quest for international peace and security and was exemplified by the work of the Agency in implementing the Security Council resolutions on Iraq and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

38. Within the United Nations system, the Agency had a special and specific mandate. Its ramifications were broad and had a direct bearing on the goals of the Charter of the United Nations. The past years had been marked by good teamwork between the Agency and the United Nations. In pledging full support for the work of the Agency at a time when the United Nations was being transformed into a more responsive and effective instrument of service to its Member States, he called on all countries to continue working together towards peace, development and prosperity with the Charter of the United Nations as their guide.

STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

39. The DIRECTOR GENERAL said that in many countries the public sector was being examined critically in view of resource constraints and it was natural that the international public sector should also be subject to critical evaluation. In order to remain relevant and responsive to the interests of their members, intergovernmental organizations had to be alert to the need for change and the need for efficiency in their methods of work.

40. The subjects of world conferences in recent years showed that attention was now concentrated on how to improve man's wellbeing rather than on how to avoid extinction through nuclear war. That welcome change of focus had important consequences for the work of international organizations, including the Agency. While the original mission of the Agency - to promote nuclear science and technology without furthering any military purposes - remained relevant, the needs and interests of Member States and the new international climate had led and were leading to many changes in the thrust of the Agency's programme.

41. In many Member States, nuclear science and the development of nuclear techniques were no longer top priority. In many nuclear activities, private enterprise had taken over from Government institutions, which now tended to focus more on policy framework and regulation. While those changes had been reflected in the Agency by reduced emphasis on basic science and expanded activities in the fields of nuclear safety and waste, science had by no means been abandoned. The Agency remained a very practical and relatively inexpensive instrument for the sharing of scientific data and experience and the promotion of new nuclear techniques. It offered a forum for discussion and a framework for co-operation in areas such as fusion and accelerator-driven transmutation, which might assume great practical importance in the future. A number of countries continued to show an interest in the development of advanced nuclear reactor systems, fast reactors and the use of nuclear power for purposes other than electricity production, such as the production of heat for industrial processes and desalination.

42. The safe management, use or disposal of plutonium was a subject requiring attention. The global inventory of civil plutonium would increase for several years to come and

disarmament measures would contribute sizeable quantities. The question of what to do with such plutonium had been raised at the Moscow Nuclear Safety and Security Summit the previous spring and France would be hosting a meeting in Paris in October on the safe and effective management of fissile material designated as no longer required for defence purposes. The Agency had been invited to participate and was also itself organizing a major symposium in June 1997, entitled "Nuclear Fuel Cycle and Reactor Strategy: Adjusting to New Realities".

43. Turning to the Agency's role in the field of nuclear power, he said that nuclear generated electricity was not universally accepted, nor was it always the cheapest option. Some Governments were determined opponents, others were strong supporters of expanded use and most had a low profile on the subject. The declaration adopted at the Moscow Nuclear Safety and Security Summit expressing a commitment to measures that would enable nuclear power to continue to play an important role in meeting future world energy demand in the next century had expressed the views of many Governments. The Agency's programme reflected the shift in Government attitudes and interests, with the emphasis now placed on improving safety in the operation of nuclear power plants, promoting the safe management of nuclear waste and assessing the benefits, risks and costs of the nuclear option, compared with other energy options. The Agency had long experience in the making of such comparisons. While the costs had generally increased, not least as a result of additional safety measures, the prospects of standardization, factory produced parts and better planning in construction and operation suggested that in the future the cost of nuclear power would remain competitive with that of fossil fuels for base load electricity generation. However, comparisons between energy sources could no longer be limited to direct economic cost but had to take into account factors such as reliability, energy independence and the impacts on life, health and the environment. The Agency's comparative studies covered those aspects and the data obtained provided an interesting input into the discussion of national and global energy mixes.

44. Extensive studies had been made of the risks posed to life, health and the environment by different energy sources. While the highest health risks were associated with accidents and even the normal use of fossil fuels, and while hydropower accidents were responsible

for the largest number of casualties, the very small risk of a major nuclear accident - the Chernobyl type - increased public fear of nuclear power. That blinded people to the fact that the reliability of nuclear power was steadily increasing and that the impact of civilian nuclear power upon the global environment was minimal. No scenarios for future energy mixes showed greater promise for reducing greenhouse gas emissions than those including a big expansion of nuclear generated electricity. Against that background, it seemed paradoxical that only marginal consideration was given to nuclear power in the discussions connected with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. At the recent session of the Parties to the Climate Change Convention, the Executive Director of the International Energy Agency was one of the few who had focused on nuclear power, stressing that it had accounted for the greater part of the lowering of carbon intensity in the energy economies of the OECD countries over the past 25 years.

45. The Agency should continue to work impartially - preferably with other international organizations - to refine the relevant data and place them before the appropriate fora. Global energy consumption was going to increase and the present tendency was to use more fossil fuels, which accelerated the emission of CO<sub>2</sub>. The welcome renewable resources - discounting hydropower - would play only a marginal role in the coming decades, so that a proper understanding of the benefits, costs and risks of the nuclear option compared to others was very important.

46. With regard to non-power applications of nuclear science and technology, he said that the attitude of Governments and the public to most aspects thereof remained positive and there was no reason to change the direction of the Agency's efforts to help promote those applications, especially for the benefit of developing countries. However, continuous evaluation was required to ensure that only those nuclear techniques that were clearly superior to other existing or emerging techniques were passed on. Nuclear techniques that could now be bought by States in the market at reasonable cost should be obtained through the market. However, the transfer of nuclear applications frequently called for training, impartial expert advice and radiation protection, all of which were not easily provided except through governmental or intergovernmental channels. In that connection he noted that one

of the Agency's largest ongoing TC projects, which would eventually cover some 50 developing countries, aimed at ensuring, before the end of the century, that their legislation and practices in the area of radiation protection were satisfactory. In the field of training, institutions in Member States and the Agency's laboratories in Seibersdorf and Monaco provided unique assistance. Thus, the Agency was facilitating the use of nuclear technology in less developed countries not only by assisting in transferring the required technology but also by helping to ensure that the basic infrastructure was in place.

47. In the field of technical co-operation, the Agency's recent initiatives and approaches placed a premium on projects that helped effectively to improve health and provide more food and adequate water supplies for end users. Through improved management, TC programme delivery had reached a record high and improvements in quality were evident. Furthermore, the regional co-operation arrangements covering the Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America regions (AFRA, RCA and ARCAL) were proving very effective in implementing technical co-operation among developing countries (TCDC). TCDC was also being pursued through contacts with a number of centres of excellence in developing countries. In terms of regional priorities, the Agency was particularly mindful of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa and continued to pay particular attention to the needs of the region.

48. The Sterile Insect Technique had, when combined with conventional control methods, proved very effective in eradicating the medfly in South and Central America and the tsetse fly in Africa. The TC Model Project for the eradication of the tsetse fly from Zanzibar, Tanzania, should be completed within 18 months. The excellent progress made was attributable to the host Government's commitment, bilateral and multilateral funding, co-operation with the FAO, and many years of remarkable innovation by the Agency's laboratory at Seibersdorf. Recently some of the improvements in methodologies for the rearing of flies had been transferred to the tsetse production facility in Tanga, Tanzania. Following the good results of the Model Project in Tanzania, the Ethiopian authorities had expressed interest in an eradication campaign in a 20 000 km<sup>2</sup> area of the Rift Valley. Such a project would have strong national support and good prospects of funding and he hoped that it would materialize.

49. Soil salinity was a major problem worldwide. Studies and field trials in Pakistan and elsewhere, encouraged by an Agency co-ordinated research programme, had demonstrated that economically viable use of such land was possible through cultivation of salt-tolerant plants. Nuclear techniques were used to determine appropriate soil, water and plant management practices. Eight countries from North Africa and Asia were now planning to expand the use of that biosaline agriculture through an interregional TC project starting in 1997.

50. Another important area of work concerned the problem of pollution and rapidly declining fisheries in the Black Sea. It involved the Agency in three ways. First, the Agency's Marine Environment and Hydrology Laboratories were participating in the international efforts to determine marine processes in the Black Sea. Second, through a TC project, regional laboratories were being equipped and trained to collect marine samples, to monitor marine radioactivity and to apply marine tracer techniques. Third, the Agency was collaborating with the Global Environment Facility's Black Sea Environmental Programme to upgrade the region's capacity to monitor organic and inorganic pollutants.

51. The main difficulty with inter-agency work on marine environment matters was the unpredictability of extrabudgetary funding. On the other hand, he was pleased to report the continued unstinting generosity of the Principality of Monaco, which was providing the Marine Environment Laboratory with excellent new facilities for its research and training programmes.

52. Concluding his remarks on technical co-operation, he expressed the hope that the good performance in TC delivery would be matched by a good performance in contributions and that all States, both industrialized and developing, would pledge and pay their TCF target shares in full.

53. Within the IAEA Secretariat nuclear safety activities were now the charge of a separate Department. During the year the various advisory groups, in which Government experts considered draft international safety standards and guides, had been strengthened and reorganized with a view to ensuring strong input and guidance from Member States and products of high quality and consistency.

54. The number of international conventions, which provided legally binding norms as part of the regulatory framework, was increasing. With the Convention on Nuclear Safety, which dealt with the safety of nuclear power plants worldwide, entering into force on 24 October, he urged all Governments that had not yet ratified it to speed up the required processes. A meeting of the States parties would take place within six months of the entry into force to prepare for the full operation of the Convention.

55. Another important event was the expected adoption, in 1977, of new rules in the field of nuclear liability. After years of difficult work by the Standing Committee on Liability for Nuclear Damage, it now seemed that sufficient agreement had been reached on the major issues for a diplomatic conference to be called to revise the Vienna Convention and to adopt a convention on supplementary funding. It was to be hoped that the momentum which had been built up through the negotiations, through the signature by Russia of the Vienna Convention on 8 May and through the Moscow Nuclear Safety and Security Summit Declaration would lead to agreement and also encourage more States to sign the Convention.

56. A third important development was the drafting of a convention on the safety of radioactive waste management. Much progress had already been made by an international working group under Professor Alec Baer, and he hoped that Member Governments would settle the issues still unresolved without delay so that a conference to conclude the convention could be called in 1997.

57. With regard to the provision of services and assistance, he noted that peer reviews under OSART, ASSET and other programmes had been offered for a number of years. Those services would remain available, but in the interest of economy and since the methodology was now quite familiar, emphasis would shift to missions ensuring quality of similar national safety services. In the area of safety assistance, attention continued to be devoted to reactors built to earlier standards, notably WWER-440 and RBMK types.

58. As greater quantities of spent nuclear fuel and nuclear waste were arising from civilian nuclear activities, Governments were increasingly interested in sharing knowledge and experience in that field. Given that some material of that type was transported between countries, that in the past some had been disposed of at sea and also that some long-lived

waste would be a heritage to future generations, there was now a strong international interest in commonly respected standards of conduct. The waste management convention was an important way of responding to that interest, as were the RADWASS programme and the related services that were available.

59. The idea of regional nuclear waste disposal sites had been advanced from time to time. While it was evident from some of the reactions to that concept that its time had not yet come, it was hard to understand why such sites should be any more unacceptable than regional disposal sites for other toxic substances. It would seem preferable from both a global and an economic point of view, to have a smaller number of well-placed, well-equipped repositories for shared disposal rather than for every country, regardless of the size of its nuclear activities and resources, to have to arrange its own facilities.

60. While most of the activities of the Agency were aimed at making current or future nuclear activities safer or more effective, it was also being called upon to provide professional and impartial international assessment of the causes and consequences of accidents and of the effects of nuclear testing.

61. In April, Dr. Angela Merkel of Germany had chaired an Agency-hosted conference to sum up the results of various assessments and specialized meetings on the consequences of the Chernobyl accident. It had attracted high-level political participation, with over eight hundred experts from 71 countries, and had concluded with a remarkable degree of consensus, considering the many controversial issues involved. The summary of the conference results - reported in document INFCIRC/510, IAEA Bulletin No. 3 1996 and a special Agency brochure - deserved wide dissemination to help build an accurate international understanding of the consequences of the accident.

62. At the request of the Member States concerned, the Agency had become engaged in the assessment of the radiological situation at three former nuclear weapon test sites.

63. An assessment of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site had provided assurance that radiation levels in villages around it were very low. However, it had also been concluded that lengthy human occupation of the test site itself would lead to unacceptably high radiation

doses, and the authorities of Kazakstan had been advised to take steps to clean up the site or - more realistically - prevent access to it.

64. The habitability of the Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands had been assessed by an international scientific advisory group convoked by the Agency, to determine in particular whether the islanders, who had been evacuated from the atoll before the start of nuclear testing, could safely resume living there. The assessment had concluded that, if some contaminated soil were removed and if the uptake of radioactive caesium by crops were controlled through the use of special fertilizers, the Bikini Atoll could be re-occupied without restriction.

65. In the third study, directed by an International Advisory Committee chaired by Dr. Gail de Planque of the United States, the test site at Mururoa and Fangataufa atolls in French Polynesia was being investigated. A final report could be expected by the end of 1997.

66. As the world was now hopefully putting the era of nuclear weapons testing behind it, it was appropriate that impartial international assessments should be made of radiological hazards remaining from past testing.

67. On the question of safeguards, while it had been the Agency's mission from the outset to verify that nuclear material, equipment and installations were not used to further any military purpose, the dimension and direction of that activity had changed considerably over the years. The most dramatic development had been the obligation on States parties to the NPT and regional nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaties to place all their current and future nuclear activities and material under Agency safeguards. Some 177 States had legally committed themselves to concluding comprehensive safeguards agreements and 120 States had actually done so. States which had not yet fulfilled their obligation were reminded from time to time by the Secretariat of their duty to do so without further delay. At present the Agency was particularly anxious that all States parties to the Tlatelolco Treaty, notably some Caribbean States, should enter into safeguards agreements, so as not to delay the full entry into force of that Treaty. The Agency had every reason to believe that Cuba, which had

signed the Treaty, would proceed with ratification, contacts regarding a safeguards agreement having already been made.

68. With regard to two other nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaties - the Pelindaba Treaty for Africa and the Bangkok Treaty for South East Asia - the Agency was preparing for verification and other tasks arising thereunder. In accordance with the request of the General Conference, consultations had continued with States in the Middle East concerning the application of IAEA safeguards in that region. A report on those efforts was given in document GC(40)/6.

69. The Agency was about to take a major step forward in further developing the safeguards system to make it more cost-effective and to provide vitally needed confidence that non-proliferation commitments were being fully respected. That would also help make the safeguards system an adequate instrument for verifying future nuclear arms control and disarmament measures, a need stressed recently in the report of the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

70. The traditional Safeguards Statement, included in the annual Safeguards Implementation Report (SIR), that it was reasonable to conclude that the nuclear material and other items declared and placed under safeguards had remained in peaceful nuclear activities or had otherwise been adequately accounted for, was based chiefly on nuclear accountancy and inspection. The more extensive those accountancy and inspection efforts, the more confident the Agency could be that the absence of evidence of diversion was due to a real absence of diversion. Had Agency inspectors had access to some of the activities that had taken place in the declared nuclear centre at Tuwaitha in Iraq, they would have suspected that safeguards obligations were being violated. Furthermore, if more comprehensive information had been available about the Iraqi nuclear programme, inconsistencies would undoubtedly have been discovered and questions raised.

71. That experience, combined with the vital interest of States in reliable safeguards, had led to the development of Programme 93+2 and a protocol additional to comprehensive safeguards agreements, designed to give the Secretariat much more information, especially more data from the State and more data through observations by inspectors granted wider

access. Only if the information acquired and inspection access were sufficiently comprehensive would the absence of evidence of diversion give confidence that non-proliferation commitments had not been breached. The demand of Member States that safeguards should give confidence, not only about non-diversion of declared material but also about the absence of non-declared nuclear material and installations, made access to more information and greater access for inspectors a high priority.

72. The requirements placed on States under the proposed additional protocol were not insignificant, but States which had accepted them on a trial basis had not found them unduly onerous. Member States would in any case have to weigh their interest in effective verification in other States and in demonstrating convincingly their own compliance with non-proliferation commitments against the burden which they might feel they were assuming by accepting such verification for themselves.

73. Clearly, all parties to comprehensive safeguards had to be treated equally. It therefore followed that States with large nuclear programmes would have to supply more information and allow inspectors to visit more sites and locations than would States with small programmes. However, the need for follow-up would depend just as much on the quality as on the quantity of the information supplied.

74. States with non-comprehensive safeguards might be able to contribute information of value for the operation of comprehensive safeguards, such as details of exports and imports, and might also help make the Agency's safeguards operations more effective and less costly by accepting new techniques, such as environmental sampling and remote data transmission. They could help further by joining others in dispensing with visa requirements or granting multiple-entry visas and accepting streamlined inspector designation procedures. However, the central rationale for strengthening safeguards verification in States with comprehensive safeguards, namely, to increase confidence about their compliance with their non-proliferation pledge, did not apply to States with non-comprehensive safeguards, as they had made no such pledge. It would therefore appear appropriate to suggest that such States accept international verification of the steps they were taking, or hopefully would be taking, toward nuclear arms control and disarmament, in order to create confidence that nuclear material released through the dismantling of weapons was irreversibly transferred to the

peaceful sector. That matter had been raised at the Moscow Nuclear Safety and Security Summit, and the United States and Russian Ministers attending the General Conference had been invited to discuss with him the possible modalities for such verification by the Agency. The Agency had in fact already verified some quantities of such nuclear material at the invitation of the United States.

75. The Agency's ongoing monitoring and verification activities in Iraq had involved more than 600 inspections since August 1994, the majority of which had been conducted without prior notice. No instance of proscribed activities, or of the presence of proscribed materials or equipment had been detected.

76. The Agency's activities in Iraq during the past year had also involved extensive efforts to analyse the vast amount of documentation which had been handed over to it and the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) following the departure from Iraq, in August 1995, of the late Lt. General Hussein Kamel Hassan Al Majid. Much work had also been devoted to following up procurement transactions and assessing draft versions of Iraq's reissued "Full, Final and Complete Declaration" of its former nuclear weapons programme. Iraq had recently transmitted its finalized version of the Declaration to the Agency's Nuclear Monitoring Group in Baghdad, and the work of verifying its completeness and correctness would commence as soon as it reached Headquarters.

77. The Agency's inspectors were remaining in Baghdad to continue their monitoring and verification activities but, in view of recent developments, their activities were currently restricted to areas having reliable radio communications with the Agency's Monitoring and Verification Centre in Baghdad. Activities outside the Baghdad region would be resumed as soon as conditions permitted. Transport to and from Baghdad had been severely affected by the recent events, and a close watch was being kept on the safety of IAEA personnel in Baghdad.

78. The SIR for 1995 stated that the Agency remained unable to verify the initial declaration of nuclear material made by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and that the DPRK was still not in full compliance with its safeguards agreement. That was still the case, and a full report on the matter was to be found in document GC(40)/16.

79. Technical discussions between the IAEA and the DPRK had taken place in late June, resulting in some progress, but the DPRK had still not accepted various measures which the Secretariat considered important for verifying the correctness and completeness of its initial declaration, in particular, measures for the preservation of data and the provision of information about certain facilities. On the positive side, the DPRK had agreed to measures to improve Agency communications from the DPRK and to accept the designation of more inspectors. A further round of technical discussions was expected to take place in the near future.

80. The Agency had made great strides in the area of efficiency and management in recent years. Despite the limitations on resources, its programme had expanded to include such new activities as combating illegal trafficking in nuclear materials. Resources for such activities had become available through the phasing out of some programmes and through efficiency gains. That process continued: the budget for 1997 provided for substantial cuts in overhead costs in parallel with an increase of some US \$10 million in programme activity.

81. Systematic evaluation of programme performance was now used routinely as an important tool for increasing efficiency. In addition, the independent external auditors helped to identify shortcomings in efficiency, and the internal audit and management services, which worked with the same objective, were being strengthened.

82. The Agency also made increasing use of efficient modern information technologies for the compilation and dissemination of data, for improved management of the many projects in the TC programme, for the processing and analysis of the vast amounts of safeguards data, and for financial and personnel administration. It had an extensive home page on the Internet where, inter alia, all Professional posts were advertised. Official documentation was becoming available on-line to Missions and Governments, which improved efficiency. The making available to the public of documentation on Internet enhanced transparency, and it had recently been decided that such documents would include most Board documents over two years old which had hitherto been restricted.

83. Good staff and good staff management were crucial to both programme delivery and efficiency. The paramount consideration in the choice of staff had to be efficiency, technical

competence and integrity, and those qualities continued to characterize Agency staff. Furthermore, management-staff relations were healthy and founded on mutual respect. The change in the staff composition over the past 15 years had been considerable. In 1981, when the first resolution on the staffing of the Secretariat had been discussed, a number of Members had proposed that a target of 30% be set for the representation of developing countries on the Professional staff. That proportion was now 32.5%. However, although the number of Professional women had doubled since 1981, it remained far from adequate at only 18%. Efforts to improve that situation would continue.

84. Member States could contribute in a number of ways to making the IAEA even more efficient and responsive to their own changing needs, for example by interacting and co-operating effectively with other Member States and with the Secretariat to achieve the desired results of the many programmes and activities which formed the substance of the Agency's work, and - most importantly - by paying their contributions to the Regular Budget and to the Technical Co-operation Fund in full and on time. Late or limited payments jeopardized programmes and efficiency and undermined the reliability of the Agency as a provider of essential services in such areas as radiation protection, nuclear safety and safeguards.

85. He wished to conclude by offering thanks on behalf of everyone connected with the Agency to the Government of Austria and the City of Vienna for their continued support and co-operation.

#### VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION FUND FOR 1997 (GC(40)/21)

86. The PRESIDENT said that since 1982 the Agency's Policy-Making Organs had observed a practice of recommending indicative planning figures to serve in fixing annual targets for contributions to the Fund. The approved target for contributions to the Technical Co-operation Fund (TCF) for 1996 was \$65.4 million. In September 1995 the Board had agreed that the indicative planning figures for 1997 and 1998 should provide for target increases of at least \$3.5 million in each of those years. Accordingly, in draft resolution B relating to the TCF in Annex I to document GC(40)/10, the Board had recommended a figure of \$68 million as the target for voluntary contributions to the Fund for 1997.

87. The early pledging of contributions to the TCF greatly helped the Secretariat in planning the Agency's technical assistance programmes. Delegations in a position to do so were therefore urged to notify the Secretariat during the Conference of the contributions which their Governments would be making to the TCF in 1997. The major contributors were urged to pledge their targets in full.

88. He would report at the end of the session, under a later agenda item, on the contributions which had been pledged up to that time.

#### GENERAL DEBATE AND ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1995 (GC(40)/8)

89. The PRESIDENT, pointing out that over 80 delegates had already inscribed their names on the speakers' list, said that he took it that the Conference authorized him, under rule 50 of the Rules of Procedure, to limit the duration of speeches to 15 minutes, in accordance with past practice.

90. It was so agreed.

91. Mr. NAKAGAWA (Japan) said that modern society clearly needed a vast amount of energy. In the light of predictions that the world's population would increase to more than ten billion by the middle of the twenty-first century, securing energy supplies in the future would present a great challenge. In addition, environmental problems such as global warming and acid rain were threatening the very foundations of human life. The importance of nuclear power was growing considerably thanks to the advantages it offered, such as stability of supply, fuel recycling capabilities and low environmental impact. It was essential, therefore, to pursue international discussions on the future role of nuclear power, with the Agency taking the lead.

92. Nuclear power plants were a primary source of energy in Japan, producing more than 30% of the total electricity generated. A sodium leakage accident at the prototype fast-breeder reactor "Monju" in Japan in December 1995 had raised doubts among the population about their country's nuclear policy, and the Japanese Government was consequently doing its utmost to establish a national consensus on its nuclear policy.

93. Japan welcomed the fact that the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) had recently been adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. That should prove a historical step towards the creation of a more peaceful and secure world with the promotion of worldwide nuclear disarmament and strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Japan hoped that, with its accumulated expertise in the field of nuclear safeguards, the Agency would assist the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) in its activities to implement the Treaty.

94. Following the terrible experience of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan had maintained the three principles of not possessing, not producing and not introducing nuclear weapons into its territory, and was carrying out its obligations under the NPT. Japan considered it important that realistic measures be taken step by step towards nuclear disarmament, with a view to attaining a world free of nuclear weapons. Japan would continue to strive for the early establishment of an international framework to ban all nuclear testing through the CTBT. It was also important for the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva to commence negotiations without delay on a cut-off convention.

95. Turning to the DPRK question, he noted with satisfaction that some positive developments had resulted from the Agreed Framework concluded between the United States and the DPRK. Japan called on the DPRK to adhere strictly to the Agreed Framework and urged it to implement fully its safeguards agreement with the Agency, in order to dispel international concerns. Through its contribution to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) Japan was doing its utmost to help resolve the issue and it appealed to the international community for its support to that end.

96. As agreed at the Moscow Nuclear Safety and Security Summit in April, a conference of international experts would be held shortly to examine suitable options for the disposal of nuclear material derived from dismantled nuclear weapons and to identify possible areas for international co-operation. The nuclear-weapon States should place such material voluntarily under Agency safeguards. Japan would contribute to that conference with its own expertise on the subject.

97. The establishment of an international framework to promote transparency in the management of plutonium was currently being considered by the countries concerned. Japan, which regularly published its holdings of plutonium, would continue to do all it could to facilitate the early introduction of such a framework.

98. The Agency's nuclear safeguards system had contributed significantly to the effectiveness of the non-proliferation regime but recent events in Iraq and the DPRK had led to international calls for the Agency to strengthen that system. Japan considered that to be a high-priority task and therefore welcomed the setting up of the Committee on Strengthening the Effectiveness and Improving the Efficiency of the Safeguards System to draft an additional protocol to safeguards agreements permitting implementation of the Part 2 measures of Programme 93+2. Japan intended to take an active part in the forthcoming session of the Committee to help expedite agreement on those measures.

99. With regard to nuclear safety, he said that, in addition to the need for individual efforts by States to enhance power plant safety, it was important that an international framework should be created to make global co-operation possible. He commended the initiatives taken thus far by the Agency in that direction. Japan also welcomed the coming into force in October of the Convention on Nuclear Safety. It hoped that the Convention would promote a high level of safety in the nuclear power industry throughout the world and trusted that many more countries would ratify it. In addition, Japan was playing an active role in the preparatory meetings for a convention on the safety of radioactive waste management.

100. It was significant that at the Moscow Nuclear Safety and Security Summit the leaders of the G-7 nations and the Russian Federation had not only confirmed the main principles of nuclear power safety but also affirmed the importance of international co-operation in that field. With a view to extending the achievements of that Summit throughout the Asian region, Japan was preparing to hold the Tokyo Conference on Nuclear Safety in Asia in November which, it hoped, would strengthen regional co-operation in the field.

101. Turning to nuclear fusion, he said that Japan was actively engaged in the engineering design work on the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER). ITER was

expected to constitute a big advance towards the use of fusion energy and he reconfirmed Japan's commitment to completion of the project.

102. Aware of the importance of technical co-operation with developing countries, Japan had actively contributed both human and financial resources to the TCF and the Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (RCA). It would continue to provide as much support as possible to train personnel and improve technology.

103. As an international organization involved extensively in the field of nuclear power, the Agency had a vital role to play in the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and in maintaining and strengthening the non-proliferation regime - the foundation stone of peace and security in the world. Japan was determined to continue playing an active role in the Agency's activities and hoped that other Member States would do likewise.

104. Mr. MIKHAILOV (Russian Federation) said that one of the most important international political events in 1996 had been the Moscow Nuclear Safety and Security Summit. For the first time the leaders of eight highly developed countries, in which 80 per cent of the world's nuclear reactors were operated producing the bulk of the world's nuclear power, had met to discuss the optimum future strategy for the power industry, and by extension the future of the world economy.

105. The very fact of such a high-level international meeting being held in Moscow testified to the good working relations among the leading States of the world, as well as underlining the role of Russia in the development of advanced technologies, including nuclear power engineering. One of the most significant results of the meeting was the incontrovertible recognition of the importance of nuclear power in determining the strategy for development of the world in the 21st century.

106. Without denying the need for a variety of energy sources and continuing research on alternative energy options, the meeting concluded that at the present time the most promising energy form was nuclear power followed by fusion power. Nuclear power technology had come a long way from its theoretical and experimental beginnings and had now reached maturity, helping to meet man's most essential requirements.

107. At the same time the future of nuclear power as one of the main power sources of the 21st century was inextricably bound with satisfying ever increasing safety requirements. In that connection the Summit had seized the initiative by proposing concrete programmes for international co-operation aimed at the safe operation of nuclear power plants.

108. The highest priority was assigned to projects for constructing safe nuclear reactors for the 21st century. Collaboration on such projects should focus on advanced power engineering technology that would exclude all possibility of an uncontrolled nuclear chain reaction leading to accidents with serious consequences for the population and the environment.

109. The Russian Federation urged the Agency to respond as soon as possible to the call by the "eight" for international programmes in that field, especially considering that Agency Member States had accumulated sufficient experience and were already working in that direction. Examples of such activity were: the European reactor project involving France, Germany and, prospectively, Russia; the high temperature gas reactor project involving the United States, France and Russia; and the fast reactor project involving Japan, France and Russia.

110. The establishment of international centres for nuclear safety in Russia and the United States was a big step forward in international co-operation in the field of nuclear safety, and it was to be anticipated that other countries would join that venture. The Agency too could profit considerably from the activity of those centres.

111. Another important condition for the safe development of nuclear power was the solution of all the problems associated with the management of radioactive waste, and that had also been discussed at the Moscow Summit.

112. The current level of nuclear technology was such that nuclear waste could be safely and reliably disposed of. However, in view of the fact that the storage periods for radioactive waste could exceed a hundred years, it was necessary not only to ensure the technical reliability of the disposal methods but also to make them acceptable to the public.

113. Russia appealed to all countries using nuclear power to participate in a global waste management programme. The main target of that programme could be to avoid increasing

the quantities of radioactive isotopes in the world as nuclear technology was further developed.

114. Another subject for international co-operation could be the development of regional radioactive waste repositories with the scientific and financial support of all the countries involved.

115. The launching in Russia of a special federal programme on the management of liquid and solid radioactive waste reflected the importance it attached to that problem. That programme was now being implemented in the northern and far-eastern regions of Russia. The participation of countries of northern Europe, the United States and Japan in the venture would considerably accelerate the work and would enable Russia to accede formally in the near future to the 1993 Amendment to the London Convention.

116. In that important aspect of the safe utilization of nuclear energy the IAEA should serve not only as a co-ordinator but also as the motivator of all international co-operation.

117. A third important requirement for ensuring nuclear safety was the further development and improvement of existing international nuclear regulatory regimes. Russia was endeavouring to contribute in that area in the first place by establishing its own national legislative framework. Laws had already been passed on the utilization of nuclear energy, on the protection of the environment, on ecological investigations and on the radiation safety of the population. A law on the management of radioactive waste was currently being considered by the State Duma.

118. In pursuance of the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident, Russia had concluded bilateral agreements on the mutual exchange of information on the status and operation of nuclear facilities with Norway, Finland, United Kingdom, Germany, Poland, Sweden and Denmark.

119. The coming into force in October of the Convention on Nuclear Safety was an important event. He wished to reconfirm that Russia had already begun to implement the provisions of that Convention in April.

120. Work was also proceeding in that important sphere on the development of multilateral mechanisms to deal with questions of liability for nuclear damage. Ideally, all States possessing nuclear facilities and technology should participate in that process, in which the IAEA was playing a significant role.

121. Russia had signed the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage and was now taking steps to have it ratified by the Federal Assembly.

122. A system for exchange of information on independent monitoring of the radiation situation in areas around nuclear installations could soon become widespread. A start had been made with a joint Russian-German project, and it was likely that Scandinavian countries would also participate. The Agency could perhaps serve as co-ordinator and provide expert services for that venture.

123. As had also been noted at the Moscow Summit, at a time when the atom from being a symbol of intimidation and alienation of nations was becoming an agent for partnership, co-operation and peace, special importance was becoming attached to international co-operation in the peaceful utilization of materials arising from the dismantling of nuclear weapons.

124. In Russia a unique technology had been developed for converting weapons uranium into fuel for nuclear power plants. Measures providing for openness and transparency had been developed and agreed with the United States which demonstrated the irreversibility of the nuclear disarmament process.

125. In 1995 Russia had reprocessed and converted into fuel 6 tonnes of highly enriched uranium. That corresponded to the destruction of more than 200 nuclear warheads or to the conversion of 100 million tonnes of TNT equivalent of nuclear explosives into 10 million kW of electric power per year at nuclear power plants. In 1996 Russia intended to reprocess twice as much - 12 tonnes of highly enriched uranium - and in future would further increase the rate of disposal of uranium explosives to 30 tonnes per year.

126. Still awaiting solution was the question of how to deal with plutonium arising from the dismantling of nuclear weapons. Russia was collaborating in that field with the United

States, France, Germany and Canada. The next step would hopefully be decided at the meeting in Paris in the autumn referred to by the Director General.

127. Another aspect of nuclear safety discussed in Moscow had been the need to respond adequately to the latest challenges, in particular the risk of proliferation of nuclear weapons and the threat of uncontrolled proliferation of nuclear technology.

128. Russia had taken vigorous measures to concentrate on its territory all the nuclear weapons of the former Soviet Union. That year it had completed the last stage of that process - the removal of nuclear stockpiles from Ukraine. In that connection he wished to note that Russia viewed the deployment of nuclear weapons on the territory of non-nuclear States as a form of proliferation of nuclear weapons.

129. The Russian Federation had constantly supported a complete ban on nuclear tests. It had been the first to declare a moratorium on nuclear explosions, and all the nuclear-weapon States had subsequently followed suit. The conclusion of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty would be a big leap forward. Russia welcomed the decision of the United Nations General Assembly to approve the Treaty and open it for signature. The Treaty would serve as an additional international instrument strengthening the non-proliferation regime. Its conclusion would enable countries to approach the forthcoming review of the NPT with greater confidence, above all from the point of view of the fulfilment by the nuclear-weapon States of their obligations under the Treaty.

130. It would be necessary in the near future to work out measures for implementing the proposal by the Russian President at the Summit to place under Agency safeguards the storage facility for weapons plutonium being constructed in co-operation with the United States. That store would contain almost half the Russian stocks of weapons plutonium. Russia was planning to hold trilateral consultations during the Conference on that extremely complex question with the United States and the Agency's Director General.

131. Russia wished to reconfirm its commitment to an early start to negotiations on a non-discriminatory and universally applicable agreement banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons.

132. Directly bound up with non-proliferation and nuclear safety was the question of illicit trafficking in nuclear materials which had recently become a major problem attracting wide attention in the mass media. Russia considered that the programme for combating illicit trafficking adopted at the Moscow Summit was an adequate response to the concerns of the international community.

133. Turning in conclusion to the Agency's programme, he said the Russian Federation fully supported the priority activities of the Agency, namely the strengthening of safeguards, the combating of illegal trafficking in nuclear materials, increasing the operating safety of nuclear power plants, waste management, safeguarding of excess weapons-grade fissile materials, and the development of effective mechanisms for verifying nuclear-weapon-free zones, which would undoubtedly contribute significantly to solving the crucial problems of increasing nuclear safety and strengthening the non-proliferation regime.

134. Russia supported the Agency's efforts to introduce an effective system for detecting possible clandestine nuclear activities (Programme 93+2) and accordingly attached great importance to the work of the Open-ended Committee on Strengthening the Effectiveness and Improving the Efficiency of Safeguards.

135. Russia had always assigned great importance to technical assistance and it was therefore pleased to note that the previous year had been one of the best in the history of the Agency as regards the implementation of technical co-operation projects.

136. At the same time, Russia wished to see full use made of its contribution to the Technical Co-operation Fund which to date had been largely neglected. His delegation hoped that the Secretariat would take account of its concern and pursue ways of making effective use of the resources provided by Russia for technical assistance. Despite the difficult economic situation of the country, the Government of the Russian Federation had decided to contribute 7.5 billion roubles to the Fund for 1996.

137. With regard to the Agency's Annual Report for 1995, the Russian delegation would like to express its satisfaction with the Agency's efforts over that period to organize international co-operation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy. In general the Agency had fulfilled the difficult tasks required of it in its main areas of activity.

138. As for future plans, the Russian delegation hoped that due account would be taken in the Agency's programmes of the recommendations made at the Moscow Nuclear Safety and Security Summit which would depend on the wide participation of international organizations for their implementation.

139. Russia would continue to lend its full support and assistance to the Agency which it had always regarded as a most important international organization.

140. Mr. KOO (Republic of Korea) welcomed the Republic of Moldova to membership of the Agency, and thanked the Director General and the Secretariat for their dedicated work over the past year.

141. While the 20th century had been an era of economic development, the 21st century was expected to be an era of social development, in which more attention was paid to the quality of life. Sustainable development would be a key feature, and peaceful nuclear applications would have an important role. The keystone for the peaceful use of nuclear energy had been laid with the indefinite extension of the NPT the previous year, and a framework for its safe use would be established with the Convention on Nuclear Safety, due to come into force on 24 October that year. His Government had supported both those initiatives and hoped that the planned follow-up measures would be implemented successfully.

142. The international community was becoming increasingly concerned about the effect on the environment of the burning of fossil fuels, and nuclear power was expected to be one of the most effective options for solving that problem. There also seemed to be a bright future for new applications of radioisotopes and radiation, and he believed it was the right time to step up efforts to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology, and to share the extensive experience gained.

143. In Korea, some 1090 organizations used radioisotopes, and the country's 30 MW research reactor, HANARO, would soon supply up to 40 per cent of future domestic radioisotope requirements. Currently, Korea had 11 nuclear power reactors in operation and five more under construction. Nuclear power generated 36 per cent of the country's total electricity needs and had become the basis for economic growth in a country with few natural energy resources. The demand for domestic electricity was expected to double by the

year 2010, which would necessitate the construction of further nuclear power plants, and his country had accordingly developed the Korean Standard Nuclear Power Plant (KSNP) with substantially upgraded safety and reliability. On the basis of experience gained with the KSNP project, Korea was planning to expand its research and development efforts into the area of small and medium-sized reactors to be used for cogeneration and desalination.

144. His Government was grateful to the Agency for its support with the implementation of Korea's nuclear energy development programme through technical co-operation projects. He hoped that Korea could contribute to the advancement of nuclear technology and to the strengthening of the Agency's technical co-operation activities. The country was now supporting the Agency's activities on nuclear seawater desalination and enhancement of the reliability of advanced water-cooled reactors, as well as the DECADES project.

145. In addition, Korea was setting up an international nuclear training centre in order to share with other Member States the technical expertise it had gained in the design, construction, operation and maintenance of nuclear power plants.

146. Nuclear safety could be assured through consolidated efforts to make nuclear facilities physically sound and environmentally safe, and to that end his Government hoped that all Member States would soon accede to the Agency's Convention on Nuclear Safety. It also hoped that a convention on the safe management of radioactive waste would soon be concluded and implemented.

147. Since the Asian region was expected to emerge as the most active in the world in the development and use of nuclear power, his Government was in process of reviewing ways to establish an on-line radiation monitoring system for surveilling the environment in that region. That would lead gradually to the development of a regional nuclear safety co-operation system which, it was hoped, might one day form part of a global system.

148. His delegation wished to express its great concern over the continuing non-compliance of the DPRK with its safeguards agreement. Since the previous General Conference only limited progress had been made, and many fundamental issues - including that of preservation of information on the history of the DPRK's nuclear programme - had yet to be resolved. It was deplorable that the DPRK should persist with such irresponsible and non-cooperative

behaviour. While some progress had been made with the implementation of the Agreed Framework between the United States and the DPRK, there should be equal efforts on the latter's part to implement its safeguards agreement.

149. The Republic of Korea was greatly concerned about the history of the DPRK's nuclear activities because of their security implications, and called on it to co-operate fully with the Agency to preserve the information needed for the verification of the correctness and completeness of its initial report. It commended the Director General and his staff on their efforts to implement safeguards and urged them to persevere until a final solution was found to that intractable problem.

150. His Government attached great importance to the amendment of Article VI of the Agency's Statute, since it believed that the Board of Governors needed to be restructured without further delay in order to reflect the fundamental changes that had taken place in the international nuclear community during the past twenty years. He was pleased to note that there was now a trend within the Open-ended Consultative Group in favour of amendment, and hoped that a compromise formula could be worked out. His delegation looked forward to a continuation of the Group's work and would provide any support needed.

151. There was also need for a change in the current process for designating members to serve on the Board, and he hoped that the Open-ended Expert Group examining the question would soon come up with more objective and transparent criteria for the selection process.

152. His country had always supported the strengthening of the safeguards system, in particular measures designed to increase the Agency's capability to detect undeclared nuclear activities, and it was now contributing to the implementation of the Part 1 measures of Programme 93+2 by making its facilities available for environmental sampling. Korea now looked forward to the satisfactory conclusion of negotiations on the Part 2 measures requiring complementary legal authority, and stressed that due account should be taken of the legitimate concerns of Member States regarding the new regime as long as they did not affect the main thrust of the measures concerned.

153. His delegation fully supported the Agency's future role as foreseen in the study entitled "the Agency beyond 2000"<sup>1</sup>. Member States would need to work together to ensure that nuclear energy was given a wider range of applications, both in economic development and in the enhancement of the quality of life. His country pledged itself to play its part in that work, and to make every effort to support the continued success of the Agency.

154. Ms. DORAN (Ireland), speaking on behalf of the European Union and the associated countries - Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia - welcomed Moldova as a member of the Agency.

155. In 1995, the Union had welcomed the indefinite extension of the NPT, the Decision on Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament and the Decision on Strengthening the Review Process for the Treaty. Further progress had since been achieved on the path to universality of the NPT with the accession of Andorra, Comoros and the United Arab Emirates. She appealed to the small number of States that had not yet acceded to the Treaty to do so at the earliest possible date, particularly the States with unsafeguarded nuclear facilities.

156. The European Union warmly welcomed the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 September of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty which was a concrete measure in the spirit of Article VI of the NPT and as envisaged in the Decision on Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament. The Union looked forward to signing the Treaty the following week.

157. Within sixty days of the Treaty being signed by fifty States, the United Nations Secretary-General would convene the first session of the preparatory commission to work out the practical arrangements for the establishment of the CTBTO in Vienna. The physical location of the CTBTO in Vienna together with the IAEA would help ensure maximum co-operation and the minimum of duplication between the two bodies in the fields of administrative and logistical support in the interests of both efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

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<sup>1</sup> See Preface of the Annual Report for 1995 (GC(40)/8).

158. The European Union urged the Conference on Disarmament to activate without delay the ad hoc committee which had been mandated early in the previous year to negotiate a non-discriminatory, multilateral, and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices - the so-called "cut-off convention". The moratoria on production currently observed by some nuclear-weapon States had created the conditions for progress but could not in themselves provide sufficient assurance against proliferation. The early conclusion of a cut-off treaty was, moreover, another important goal agreed at the NPT Review and Extension Conference.

159. The Union welcomed the Safeguards Statement for 1995 that the Secretariat had not found any indication that nuclear material under safeguards had been diverted for any military purpose. The confidence with which that statement was made was, of course, directly related to the adequacy of the means at the Agency's disposal in fulfilling its safeguards obligations. She would return to that subject later, when commenting on Programme 93+2.

160. An unsettling feature of the Safeguards Implementation Report, however, was the continued difficulty encountered by the Agency in attempting to verify the correctness and completeness of the initial declaration of nuclear material by the DPRK and the Agency's consequent inability to conclude that there had been no diversion of nuclear material in the DPRK. Obstacles continued to be placed in the Agency's path as it attempted to carry out its task. As delay could have a critical effect on the evidence in the matter, she urged the DPRK to comply with its safeguards commitments. She commended the Secretariat for its ongoing efforts in trying circumstances and assured it of the Union's full support and determination to achieve a satisfactory conclusion.

161. With regard to Iraq, the Union took note of the Director General's report on implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions submitted pursuant to General Conference resolution GC(39)/RES/5. It also noted the conclusion of the Safeguards Implementation Report that, as of 31 December 1995, there had been no indication of a need to change the Agency's assessment that Iraq's practical capability to manufacture nuclear weapons had been destroyed, removed or rendered harmless. In the light of Iraq's deception in the past, its continuing failure to comply with Security Council resolutions and recent

reports of attempts to purchase missile components, the Union urged the Secretariat to continue to exercise vigilance. The Union also expressed its dismay at the attempts by the Government of Iraq to impose conditions on the conduct of interviews with Iraqi officials by UNSCOM and other actions that ran counter to the relevant Security Council resolutions.

162. Despite those continuing causes for concern in the non-proliferation context, there had also been progress during the past year, notably in the development of regions free of nuclear weapons. The NPT Review and Extension Conference had agreed that internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones, based on arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned, enhanced global and regional security. Such zones were important complementary instruments to the NPT.

163. The Union therefore welcomed the signature on 11 April 1996 of the Treaty of Pelindaba, establishing an African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. Four of the five nuclear-weapon States, by their signature of the relevant Protocols, had demonstrated their support for the Zone. By signing the relevant Protocols to the Treaty of Rarotonga on 25 March 1996, France, the United Kingdom and the United States had demonstrated their support for the South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone. The consolidation of the regime established by the Treaty of Tlatelolco continued. The Union took note of the signature, on 14 December 1995, of the Treaty of Bangkok establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South East Asia. In the Middle East, the European Union continued to support efforts for the early establishment by the States in the region of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. It called upon all States directly concerned to overcome the existing difficulties and to take the steps required for the implementation of a mutually and effectively verifiable nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region.

164. The Union confirmed once more its strong support for strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of the safeguards system and its full commitment to Programme 93+2. The experience of recent years had demonstrated the need for a vigorous approach to verification. The thrust of Programme 93+2 was to build as complete a picture as possible of a State's nuclear activities which would facilitate the detection of inconsistencies and thereby increase the Agency's capability to detect undeclared nuclear

activities. The increased risk of detection was in itself a major deterrent to potential proliferators.

165. The European Union had consistently supported the general approach of the Secretariat in the successive proposals it had put forward for consideration. The adoption of tougher new measures would significantly increase the Agency's capability to detect undeclared nuclear activities, thereby reinforcing the nuclear non-proliferation regime and enhancing international peace and security. In that spirit, the Union was already working with the Agency on the implementation of the Part 1 measures. As far as Part 2 measures were concerned, it had supported the establishment of the committee charged with drafting a model protocol. The Union intended to submit a draft resolution on safeguards issues to the Conference in line with its initiative the previous year.

166. In addition to international treaties, nuclear export control measures were useful instruments for preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It had to be clearly understood that the right enshrined in Article IV of the NPT to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes was to be exercised in conformity with the non-proliferation obligations set out in Articles I and II of that Treaty. Thus, far from being an obstacle to the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, nuclear-related export controls were the necessary corollary of peaceful nuclear co-operation. The European Union, which had endorsed the guidelines for nuclear exports contained in the INFCIRC/254 series, called on all exporting countries which had not yet done so to accept those guidelines and to establish an effective national mechanism for export control. The Principles and Objectives adopted at the NPT Conference stated that transparency in nuclear-related export controls should be promoted within the framework of dialogue and co-operation among all interested States party to the Treaty. The European Union had taken the initiative in developing, with others, a follow-up on that important issue. It looked forward to engaging a wide range of countries in a dialogue on the subject.

167. In relation to illicit trafficking, the European Union had noted the Director General's report on implementation of General Conference resolution GC(39)/RES/18, adopted the previous year. With a view to maintaining public confidence, the Agency should continue to follow up media reports, however misinformed they might be on occasion. Altogether

in 1995 nine incidents of safeguards significance had been brought to the attention of the Agency by the State or facility operator concerned.

168. The Union welcomed the programme for combating illicit trafficking in nuclear material agreed upon at the Moscow Summit in April, called on all Governments to implement that programme, and expressed the hope that it would lead to increased co-operation among Governments in all aspects of prevention, detection, exchange of information, investigation and prosecution in cases of illicit trafficking. Following its initiative the previous year, the Union would again be submitting a draft resolution on that important matter.

169. Physical protection of nuclear material was one of the key elements in the fight against illicit trafficking. The Union reiterated its call to all States which had not yet done so to place all their nuclear material under an effective protection system in accordance with international guidelines. It was the responsibility of all States to ensure the efficiency of their national nuclear material accounting systems as well as maintaining appropriate physical protection standards. The Union further called on all States which had not yet done so to become parties to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

170. In that context, the Union expressed its satisfaction at the work done by all concerned on the management of civil plutonium. International guidelines on separated plutonium would certainly increase transparency through agreed procedures for publishing national information on plutonium stocks and help to strengthen public confidence in the effective management of civil plutonium.

171. At the same time, such guidelines would constitute an important complement to the Moscow Summit's declaration on the safe and effective management of weapons fissile material designated as no longer required for defence purposes which should be safely stored, protected and placed under Agency safeguards. In that regard, the European Union looked forward to the conclusions of the forthcoming meeting in Paris to examine available options and identify possible areas of international co-operation.

172. Technical co-operation was the area of Agency activity of most direct relevance to many Member States. The Union was conscious of the contribution which targeted assistance

could make to economic and social development. That was reflected in the scale of the Union's contribution across the range of co-operation activities, which amounted to one third of TCF resources in 1995. In addition, over one fifth of extrabudgetary and in-kind contributions had been provided by the Union, almost a quarter of footnote-a/ projects made operational had been funded by it, and it had provided 940 experts for TC assignments, as well as hosting 772 trainees. Such input clearly demonstrated the Union's commitment to helping the developing countries which were members of the Agency to utilize nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

173. In April, the tenth anniversary of the tragic accident at Chernobyl had presented a good opportunity for the Agency, the European Commission and WHO to organize a conference to review the consequences of the accident and the lessons learned. The Conference had discussed the many scientific, medical, environmental, social and political issues arising from the accident, and its conclusions would serve as a factual basis for decisions about future work and collaboration.

174. The Agency was to be commended for its pioneering work in facilitating international co-operation to limit the effects of an accident, should one occur. The scale and severity of the Chernobyl accident had underscored the need for national authorities responsible for emergency preparedness to review their radiation protection and emergency planning systems, as well as the need for co-operation at international level to increase public confidence in regulatory authorities and to deal with possible transboundary releases.

175. The Union welcomed the decision of the Moscow Summit to provide international assistance to Ukraine with implementing the Action Plan agreed in June 1994. It was also committed to providing financial support to Ukraine for improving nuclear safety and security. Finally, the Union wished to see the old Chernobyl installations closed by the year 2000 at the latest.

176. The Moscow Summit had highlighted the importance of international partnership in tackling nuclear safety concerns. The G-7 strategy to help improve the safety of Soviet-designed reactors in the Newly Independent States and Central and Eastern European countries had been developed at the Munich Summit in 1992 and had been complemented by

decisions taken at subsequent summits. A number of initiatives had been undertaken since then for improving safety and strengthening regulatory regimes in which the Union had played a leading role. They included the establishment of the Nuclear Safety Account administered by EBRD, the G-24 coordinating mechanism, the European Union PHARE and TACIS programmes, the EURATOM Loan Facility, coordinated support from the international financial institutions for the energy sector, and bilateral co-operation projects. The countries of the Newly Independent States and of Central and Eastern Europe had themselves taken action to improve safety and strengthen their regulatory regimes. The Union urged them to continue those efforts.

177. While recognizing that primary responsibility for nuclear safety rested with national Governments, the Union strongly supported international co-operation and accordingly welcomed the initiatives taken by the Agency to strengthen co-operation and foster a global nuclear safety culture. The Convention on Nuclear Safety was a major accomplishment in that field and the peer review process, involving the periodic submission of safety reports for review, would enhance transparency in nuclear activities. Members of the European Union either had already ratified the Convention or were in the process of completing their ratification procedures. All States which had not yet done so were urged to become parties to the Convention as soon as possible. The Union intended to submit a draft resolution on that subject again at the present session.

178. Radioactive waste management issues were increasingly important to the public perception of nuclear safety and had become a matter for closer international co-operation. The elaboration of a draft convention on the subject was well under way and the Union hoped that a diplomatic conference could be held in 1997 to adopt it.

179. Turning to the question of liability and compensation in the event of a nuclear accident, she noted that some progress had been made recently by the Standing Committee on Liability for Nuclear Damage in negotiations for a revision of the 1960 Vienna Convention and on a global supplementary funding convention. The Moscow Summit had also emphasized the importance of a viable international nuclear liability regime.

180. Vital safety improvements were needed in nuclear programmes in certain States. The Union was concerned that those improvements were not being made because suppliers were reluctant to undertake them pending the provision of adequate protection against legal action under new international liability arrangements. It was desirable therefore that States should make every effort to finalize work in the Standing Committee with a view to convening a diplomatic conference in 1997.

181. The Union welcomed the progress achieved in the discussions on Article VI of the Statute, and hoped that acceptable solutions might evolve by consensus if more time was allowed for negotiation. In regard to the Director General's report on the composition of regional groups, the Union endorsed the Director General's view that Article VI assumed that every Member State belonged to one of the area groups. While the Union acknowledged that it would be preferable to solve any outstanding issue by consent of all Member States concerned, it could not but re-affirm the principle of sovereign equality of all Member States within the Agency.

182. At a time of financial stringency in both national administrations and international organizations, it was gratifying to see the extent to which the Agency fulfilled the tasks entrusted to it. Extrabudgetary contributions from certain Governments provided valuable assistance. However, prompt payment of assessed contributions by all Member States would immediately improve the Agency's financial situation and permit a greater degree of stability and forward planning in its activities. She urged all Members to pay promptly and in full their assessed contributions to the Regular Budget. She likewise urged those who had pledged contributions to the Technical Co-operation Fund to pay in good time. The Union wished to commend the Director General and his staff for concentrating on priority activities and applying rigorous standards through the organization. In the same spirit, it urged the Agency to build on its achievements and explore ways of effecting greater savings before the 1998 Budget was finalized and to keep striving for greater cost-effectiveness and efficiency in its operations.

183. In conclusion, she noted that the representative of the European Commission would be providing more detailed information in writing on European Union activities of interest to the Agency.

184. Speaking now on behalf of her own delegation, she said she wished to offer a few additional remarks on issues to do with nuclear safety and liability which were of special concern to Ireland.

185. Ireland had deposited its instrument of ratification of the Convention on Nuclear Safety on 11 July and looked forward to the entry into force of the Convention in October. The Convention was an important first step in creating a comprehensive nuclear safety regime and she called on all States which had not yet done so to become parties to it as a matter of urgency.

186. One of the most important aspects of nuclear safety was the safe management of radioactive waste. The General Conference had initially envisaged a nuclear safety convention with wider scope, covering not only nuclear power reactors but also research reactors, nuclear waste, reprocessing plants and other parts of the nuclear fuel cycle involving nuclear risks. Unfortunately that had proved impractical, so it had been decided to begin with a convention dealing with the safety of civilian nuclear power reactors and subsequently to cover other parts of the nuclear fuel cycle in separate conventions.

187. Work on the second convention, covering the safe management of radioactive waste, was now quite advanced, and the third draft of the text had already been considered by the expert group concerned. However, serious differences had arisen concerning such issues as the scope of the convention, the inclusion of spent fuel, military waste, the effects of radioactive waste on neighbouring countries and the standards of radiation protection to be applied in such cases.

188. Ireland maintained that provisions covering the safety of spent fuel reprocessing facilities should be included in the proposed waste management convention. Spent fuel could not be excluded from the convention on the pretext that it was not waste. Spent fuel contained both waste and reusable material and, pending the separation of the two elements, should be considered as waste and thus as falling within the scope of the convention.

189. There were two options for the inclusion of military/defence waste. The first was by way of a voluntary declaration that such waste was radioactive waste for the purpose of the convention and, the second was by a mandatory declaration of certain types of

military/defence waste, for example waste in long-term storage. Ireland preferred the latter option, because it would allow a more consistent application of the convention in different countries and also because it was more in keeping with the way in which non-military waste was covered in the draft.

190. With regard to the effects of radioactive waste on neighbouring countries, the preferred option at present allowed a contracting party to impose effects on individuals, societies and the environment beyond its borders, provided those effects would be permitted within its own boundaries by its national legislation. Ireland believed that such an extra-territorial extension of national law was neither appropriate nor acceptable.

191. Ireland hoped that those problems would be resolved at the next expert group meeting in November to avoid having those issues referred to additional conventions.

192. Turning to the reprocessing and transport of nuclear materials and problems relating to the disposal of nuclear waste, Ireland wished once again to put on record its concerns regarding the continued reprocessing and storage activities at the Sellafield complex in England, and in particular: the accumulation of large amounts of spent fuel from around the world; serious hazards from a safety and non-proliferation point of view due to the growing stockpile of plutonium, for which there was no immediate use; the current backlog of nuclear waste awaiting vitrification with the resulting increased risks; and proposals to construct an underground nuclear waste storage facility in the Sellafield area.

193. The economic benefits from reprocessing did not justify the associated safety and proliferation risks. The transport by sea of spent nuclear fuel for reprocessing and the return by sea or air of plutonium and radioactive waste products to the countries of origin of the spent fuel represented a further cause of disquiet.

194. In view of those concerns, the entire question of reprocessing should be more closely examined by both the Agency and its Members as a matter of urgency.

195. As regards the question of nuclear liability, there were still many dangerous and ageing Soviet-designed nuclear reactors in the Newly Independent States and in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. In the event of a nuclear accident, the existing international civil nuclear liability regime would be seriously deficient in many respects. For that reason,

Ireland attached great importance to the development in the Agency of an updated and enhanced international liability regime offering adequate compensation for damage to health and environment in the event of a nuclear accident.

196. It was regrettable that negotiations had not yielded a text which included unlimited State liability in the event of an accident. Greater efforts should be directed at finalizing a revision of the existing Vienna Convention and also the draft supplementary funding convention. All environmental damage should be compensated, and preventative measures and loss of profit should be included in the scope of the regime. Only a very comprehensive nuclear liability regime with adequate and meaningful compensation for nuclear damage, particularly where transboundary nuclear damage occurred, would attract universal acceptance from both countries with and without nuclear facilities.

#### APPLICATIONS FOR RESTORATION OF VOTING RIGHTS

197. The PRESIDENT drew attention to document GC(40)/INF/11, entitled "Statement of Financial Contributions to the Agency as at 13 September 1996". Included in that document was a table indicating those Member States which had lost their voting rights by virtue of application of Article XIX.A of the Statute. Since that document had been issued, communications had been received from Iraq and Peru, which were among those Member States to which Article XIX.A of the Statute applied, requesting that their voting rights be restored. Those requests were contained in documents GC(40)/INF/6 and GC(40)/INF/8. He took it that, following past practice, those requests would be referred to the General Committee for consideration.

198. It was so agreed.

The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.

