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### RECORD OF THE SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

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President: Mr. NIEWODNICZAŃSKI (Poland)

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Abbreviations used in this record

ABACC	Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials
AFRA	African Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARCAL	Regional Co-operative Arrangements for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America
Basic Safety Standards	International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
CTBTO	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
IRRT	International Regulatory Review Team
LDC	Least developed country
MESA	Middle East and South Asia
NEA	Nuclear Energy Agency (of OECD)
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
PHARE	Poland, Hungary: assistance for economic reconstruction in Europe (the programme now covers several East European countries)
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
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
TLD	Thermoluminescence dosimetry
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNSCOM	United Nations Special Commission
WWER	Water-cooled and -moderated reactor (former USSR)



REQUEST FOR THE RESTORATION OF VOTING RIGHTS  
(GC(41)/INF/21, GC(41)/INF/22)

1. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee had met that morning and had considered two requests for the restoration of voting rights, from Liberia and Kenya. The Committee had recommended that the voting rights of Liberia and Kenya be restored in accordance with Article XIX.A of the Statute.
2. The Committee's recommendation was accepted.
3. Mr. HEATHCOTE (United Kingdom) said that a number of Member States considered the criteria governing the restoration of voting rights to be somewhat opaque and proposed that the Board be requested to devise criteria which would provide clearer guidance.
4. The PRESIDENT asked the Conference whether it wished, as proposed by the delegate of the United Kingdom, to request the Board to develop some criteria or principles to govern the future consideration of requests for the restoration of voting rights, for acceptance by the Conference at its next session.
5. It was so decided.

GENERAL DEBATE AND STATEMENTS MARKING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
THE AGENCY (resumed)  
(GC(41)/8)

6. Mr. SHKOLNIK (Republic of Kazakhstan) congratulated the President of the Conference on his election and extended his compliments to the Agency on the occasion of its 40th anniversary. He thanked the outgoing Director General for the efforts he had made to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime and promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and for the invaluable support he had given to Kazakhstan during the difficult period when it was preparing to join the international non-proliferation regime. He also congratulated the new Director General on his appointment and expressed his full confidence in the latter's capacity to pursue in a worthy fashion the efforts of his predecessors.
7. In addition, he welcomed the two new States which had joined the Agency since the preceding session of the General Conference, Malta and Burkina Faso.
8. Kazakhstan was fully committed to strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime. It was a signatory of the NPT and had voted for its indefinite extension, and it had concluded a safeguards agreement with the Agency and signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The Government of Kazakhstan was taking steps to dismantle the fifty-year-old nuclear testing ground at Semipalatinsk, with the co-operation of the Agency. Missions had been dispatched to study the radiation situation with a view to cleaning up the results of many years of nuclear weapons testing at the site.

9. In September 1997, Kazakhstan had hosted an international conference on the problems of nuclear non-proliferation which had been attended by experts from many countries and international organizations, including the IAEA. The address of the participants at the conference to the Agency had been circulated as an official document.

10. His country supported the Agency's efforts to strengthen the safeguards system and had begun to implement the Part 1 measures of Programme 93+2. It also supported the efforts of the international community to prevent the spread of military nuclear technology and attached great importance to the role played by the Agency in the field of non-proliferation. The Model Additional Protocol to comprehensive safeguards agreements would undoubtedly promote the more effective detection of undeclared nuclear activities and should generally enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the non-proliferation regime. He congratulated Australia on being the first State to sign an additional protocol and urged others to follow suit. Moreover, he welcomed the initiative of the nuclear powers - in particular the Russian Federation and the United States - in widening the scope of application of safeguards to their nuclear activities and nuclear material under their jurisdiction.

11. Illicit trafficking in nuclear materials was an issue of growing importance to Member States, and Kazakhstan had adopted the Agency's requirements in that field as standards for its own nuclear export and import policy.

12. Like any country with a developing nuclear industry and nuclear power programme, Kazakhstan was searching for acceptable solutions to the problem of radioactive waste management. It needed to develop up-to-date legislation and standards in the field of radiation safety and waste management, and to create the corresponding infrastructure. The Kazakh Government supported the Agency's regional project which aimed at solving such problems by the beginning of the next century. His country had also signed the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. Moreover, it endorsed the Swedish Government's request that the possibility be investigated of combining into one programme, under the aegis of the Joint IAEA/NEA Uranium Group, projects relating to the study of the environmental impact of uranium industry waste, discharges into the air and water, working conditions, radiation safety, decommissioning, and restoration of the environment.

13. Kazakhstan actively participated in Agency technical co-operation projects on the use of nuclear and isotopic techniques in industry, agriculture, medicine, hydrology, and other fields, and was eager to expand those co-operative efforts. It had acquired extensive experience in the use of a fast reactor for sea water desalination which it was willing to share with interested States.

14. In conclusion, he assured the Agency of his country's continued support for its activities.

15. Mr. RYDZKOWSKI (Poland) having welcomed Malta and Burkina Faso to the Agency, said that Poland, as one of the States associated with the European Union, fully

shared the views contained in the statement delivered by the delegate of Luxembourg on behalf of the Union.

16. Poland had participated in the Conference on the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency in October 1956, had ratified its Statute in July 1957 when it had come into force, and had actively participated in the work of the Agency since its inception. Over the past 40 years the Agency had faithfully served the international community, reducing fears and turning expectations concerning the peaceful use of atomic energy into reality.

17. The Agency's promotional work, aimed primarily at the needs of developing countries, had steadily grown in volume. Though itself a beneficiary of the Agency's technical assistance programme, his country did its best to contribute to that programme as well and would continue to do so. Poland regularly provided the Agency with specialists in various fields and was pleased to see that their work seemed to be highly appreciated.

18. The rapid expansion of the commercial market in nuclear material and nuclear facilities in the Agency's early years had obviated the need for its becoming a broker in that market. For various reasons, arrangements for the supply of research reactors and commercial nuclear power plants had been almost exclusively bilateral and had not made use of the mechanism of Agency projects foreseen by the Statute. Under those circumstances, the IAEA had focused its attention on nuclear and radiological safety and safeguarding against the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

19. His delegation would especially like to commend the Secretariat for developing the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel and the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management and the Protocol to Amend the Vienna Convention, as well as for carrying out preparatory work on the review process under the Convention on Nuclear Safety. Poland had actively participated in the drafting of both the aforementioned international legal instruments and his delegation had just received authorization from the President of the Republic of Poland to sign them during the current session.

20. A strengthened safeguards system was vital to maintaining the Agency's credibility, and the Secretariat and the Board of Governors deserved to be complimented for elaborating the Model Additional Protocol to safeguards agreements which provided for a more rigorous regime.

21. The 40th anniversary of the Agency that year coincided with the completion of 16 years' service by Mr. Blix as Director General of the Agency. Poland was of the opinion that the contribution he had made to enhancing the useful role of the Agency in the world nuclear community was of inestimable value. He had dealt skilfully with serious crises during that period in the crucial areas of nuclear safety and safeguards and, by drawing lessons from those events, had moved the Agency into a position of increasing strength.

22. The Polish delegation wished to thank Mr. Blix very warmly for his generous and untiring service to the nuclear community, and bid him good health and happiness in the future.

23. The Polish Government had given its full support to the appointment by the Board of Governors of Mr. ElBaradei as Director General of the Agency for the four years commencing 1 December 1997. He congratulated him on the unanimous approval by the General Conference of that appointment and wished him a very successful tenure of office. If, as expected, the second wave of expansion of nuclear power arrived, and if further steps were taken on nuclear arms reductions, additional legal instruments would have to be negotiated and Mr. ElBaradei, another distinguished international lawyer with extensive experience of diplomatic service and a profound knowledge of the United Nations system and the international nuclear arena, would have every opportunity to become a worthy successor to the three Directors General who had served the Agency for over 40 years with great distinction.

24. The continuous development of the Polish economy was resulting in a growing demand for electricity despite increased efficiency in its use. Given the desirability of removing the virtual monopoly status of coal as a fuel in the Polish electrical power system, and in view of environmental constraints, there was growing interest in the natural gas and nuclear options. In the preceding year an international seminar had been held in Warsaw on the subject of new-generation nuclear power plants which had generated considerable interest. Poland was grateful to the Agency for the assistance it had provided with that seminar. In that connection, he urged that the question of new, advanced nuclear power plant designs, and in particular their safety and economic aspects, be accorded greater attention in the Agency's programme.

25. Mr. PUCCIO HUIDOBRO (Chile) noted the generally poor attendance at the general debate and suggested that, with a view to saving money, and in line with the current reforms within the United Nations, delegations should simply hand in their general debate statements to the Secretariat at the next session of the Conference and one day should be reserved for Member States to comment on those statements.

26. In the 40 years since the Statute had come into force, years which had seen remarkable developments in the world, the Agency had become one of the most widely respected international organizations. He paid tribute to the outgoing Director General who had played a central role in establishing the Agency in that position of strength. He also congratulated the new Director General on his appointment - the first Director General from a developing country - and applauded the points he had made in his statement, in particular the stress he had laid on the importance of technical co-operation.

27. Chile attached great importance to the Agency's technical co-operation activities. It was the responsibility of all Member States to meet their financial obligations to the Technical Co-operation Fund as far as they were able and, in that context, he applauded the efforts which were being made by several Latin American countries to pay their outstanding contributions. He appealed to donor countries not to reduce the level of their contributions at the very moment when the measures to strengthen technical co-operation were beginning to bear fruit. Subcontracting with a view to making greater use of specialized centres in the region, and to promoting TCDC, should help improve management of resources and lead to

healthy decentralization of technical co-operation activities. Traditional funding mechanisms were unlikely to be able to meet the growing demand for technical assistance, particularly if the level of contributions fell. Therefore it was important to seek new approaches. The private sector was playing an increasingly important role in technological and economic development throughout the world, and opportunities should be created for it to become involved in new technical co-operation approaches. Chile applauded the Secretariat's efforts to modernize and make more flexible the Agency's technical co-operation policy, and welcomed in particular the Model Projects, the Partners in Development concept, and the establishment of SAGTAC. The developing countries had attempted to adapt their national and regional projects to those developments and, with that in mind, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean had taken the decision to convert the ARCAL programme into an intergovernmental agreement.

28. Chile also recognized the importance of the Agency's verification activities and was planning to sign an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement in the near future. Equally, it was interested in the development of legal instruments regulating civil liability for nuclear damage. With regard to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, his delegation felt that a provision should have been included concerning prior notification of States of transit. It was therefore reviewing its reservations concerning Article 27 of that Convention before signing it.

29. Like other non-nuclear-weapon States, Chile had experienced difficulties in its national attempts to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear technology owing to the fears aroused by military applications, in particular where nuclear tests were carried out in locations where there was a threat of environmental damage. His country supported all initiatives aimed at disarmament and was therefore most heartened by the progress which had been made with the setting up of the CTBTO.

30. Mr. PASTORELLI (Monaco) congratulated the President of the Conference on his election and paid tribute to the outgoing Director General, Mr. Blix.

31. For many years, Monaco had followed the development of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy with interest. Many countries clearly found nuclear power to be an economically attractive option. However, like any industrial activity, the development of nuclear power had to be accompanied by a high degree of safety in the operation of facilities, management of radioactive waste and spent fuel, and final disposal of high-level waste to be acceptable. As the Chernobyl accident had shown, the radioactive pollution caused by a major nuclear accident knew no boundaries.

32. Owing to its location, Monaco was particularly concerned over pollution of the marine environment, especially by artificial radionuclides. That concern had prompted Prince Rainier III to host the first international scientific conference on the disposal of radioactive waste on land and at sea in Monaco in 1959. Subsequently in 1961, a tripartite agreement had been concluded between the Agency, the Government of Monaco, and the Monaco Museum of Oceanography, which had led to the setting up of the International Laboratory of Maritime Radioactivity whose main activity had been, initially, the application

of nuclear and isotopic techniques to the study of the behaviour of radionuclides in the marine environment.

33. In 1988, the Laboratory, whose work was highly valued by the international scientific community, had been moved from its original home in the Museum of Oceanography to a site in the district of Fontvieille. Its field of activities had been growing progressively over that period and, in 1991, it had been renamed the Marine Environment Laboratory to reflect that fact. However, the laboratory was already outgrowing its second home and, in October 1998, its new and larger premises in the Port of Monaco would be officially opened. That event had been planned to coincide with the International Symposium on Marine Pollution organized by the Agency, the UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, UNEP, and the International Commission for Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean Sea, which would be held in the Monaco Congress Centre.

34. Monaco fully supported the Agency's nuclear safety and radiation protection activities, the safeguards programme, and the advisory role played by the Agency in the combating of illicit trafficking in nuclear material and radioactive sources. It also approved of the Agency's work on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in medicine, agriculture, scientific research and environmental protection. Through the support it gave to the Marine Environment Laboratory, and through the latter's training activities for Agency fellowship holders, it also contributed to the Agency's technical assistance programme. His country had signed the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency. It also welcomed the progress which had been made towards achieving consensus on a Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, and on amendment of the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage.

35. In conclusion, he noted that nuclear power would play a major role in electricity generation for many years to come, and said he felt sure that the Agency would continue to contribute as effectively as it had in the past to the development of the peaceful uses of atomic energy. It could certainly rely on the support of Monaco for its activities in the field of protection of the marine environment.

36. Mr. CHAUNY de PORTURAS-HOYLE (Peru) associated himself with the comments made by the representative of Chile regarding reorganization of the general debate in line with United Nations reforms. He also welcomed Burkina Faso and Malta as new members of the Agency.

37. The work done by the Agency over the past year was to be commended, especially in the fields of safeguards and nuclear, radiation and waste safety. On behalf of the Peruvian Government he paid tribute to Mr. Blix for his able leadership and for the support he had given to the developing countries, including Peru, during his sixteen years as Director General. Peru was highly appreciative of the Agency's achievements during the first forty years of its existence. Given the great importance of nuclear energy in the world of the future, those achievements were bound to multiply. His country had been an active supporter of the

Agency's objectives, and had decided to mark the Agency's fortieth anniversary by dedicating the annual nuclear technology seminar of the Peruvian Institute of Nuclear Energy to the Agency and its forty years of promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. He felt sure that under its new Director General, Mr. ElBaradei, the Agency would carry on its successful record.

38. Nuclear technology was an essential factor in promoting sustainable improvement in the quality of life of underprivileged sectors of the population and overall development. Peru was grateful to be a beneficiary of the Agency's 1997-98 technical co-operation programme and happy to participate in two of its Model Projects - on child nutrition and the cultivation of barley. Both projects were making extremely satisfactory progress: the former had already generated improvements in the quality of nutrition of two million children in the most deprived areas of Peru; under the latter, work was proceeding on the improvement and delivery to farmers of new varieties of barley and other native cereal crops with a high nutritional value. Notable amongst the bilateral projects currently being carried out by Peru were the joint evaluation with Bolivia of the water resources in the Lake Titicaca basin and the joint activities with Chile aimed at combating the fruit fly and other agricultural pests. Another project with major social impact involved the establishment of a tissue bank which, with the help of nuclear technology, was now providing various sterilized materials for medical use. With respect to staff training, a Master's course in medical physics was reaching its conclusion which should help improve quality levels in hospitals and health centres in the country. In addition, the Peruvian Government had approved new national radiation protection regulations which made it compulsory for hospital centres to employ medical physicists. Agency support had been provided for the construction of a cell for the production of iridium-192 for medical and industrial use. Moreover, nuclear techniques were being used to quantify the environmental impact of mining, metallurgical and power engineering effluents, and Peru now had the capability to perform real-time measurements of probable emissions from the RP-10 reactor under both normal operating and accident conditions.

39. Over the past year Peru had hosted a number of international events organized by the Agency, including a regional workshop on radionuclide and radiopharmaceutical production in November 1996 and a workshop on harmonization of food irradiation regulations in Latin America and the Caribbean in April 1997.

40. As in previous years, Peru had participated in ARCAL activities which were of vital importance to the region. The co-ordinated efforts of various bodies in participating countries had helped improve the efficiency of nuclear applications. The new project requests for the 1999-2000 biennium reflected the priority needs of countries in the region. The Peruvian Government would like to see the ARCAL programme strengthened through an intergovernmental mutual co-operation agreement, under the aegis of the Agency, which should not only help promote nuclear science and technology and their peaceful use but also enhance exploitation of available resources. Finally, concluding his comments on technical co-operation, he warmly thanked the United States of America for its extrabudgetary contributions which had once again made possible the approval of important projects in Peru.

41. His country attached great importance to the strengthening of the safeguards system and, with a view to improving the legal framework governing safeguards activities, was considering early signature of an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement with the Agency.

42. Peru supported efforts to improve the global safety culture and, in July 1997, had deposited its instrument of ratification of the Convention on Nuclear Safety. Similarly, his Government welcomed the recent approval of the texts of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, the Protocol to Amend the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage, and the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage. It was currently undertaking a careful study of those major international instruments.

43. The recent commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Tlatelolco Treaty had coincided with significant progress in the negotiations on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Peru had taken an active part in those negotiations and had signed the Treaty on the day it had opened for signature. In conclusion, he reconfirmed Peru's support for the aims and objectives of the Tlatelolco Treaty, and its commitment to peace and disarmament.

44. Ms. AGGREY-ORLEANS (Ghana) congratulated Mr. ElBaradei on his appointment as the next Director General of the Agency and paid tribute to his predecessor, Mr. Blix. She also welcomed Malta and Burkina Faso as new members of the Agency.

45. As the Agency celebrated its fortieth anniversary it deserved to be applauded for having helped to ward off the possibility of the extinction of the human race by ensuring that nuclear energy was used only for purposes beneficial to mankind. The current global landscape made it imperative for all nations to support with total dedication the Agency's objectives. Genuine efforts to create prosperity for all could only be sustained and accelerated in an environment where there were no deadly weapons and where there was the will and capability to use atomic energy to stimulate economic growth for the benefit of people. For those reasons Ghana was committed to the objectives of the NPT, the CTBT and the Pelindaba Treaty. It also supported the Agency's programmes and activities relating to safeguards and verification, nuclear safety and waste management, and the transfer of nuclear technology. Her country was particularly interested in the transfer of nuclear and radiation technologies for the effective handling of waste, and for improving food supplies and the provision of safe drinking water.

46. With the assistance of the Agency, the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission was training its staff in foreign universities and institutions and had itself offered training to personnel from other Member States. The first phase of the National Radiotherapy and Nuclear Medicine Project in Accra, on which work had started three years previously, would soon be commissioned thanks to a US \$3 million Agency contribution in terms of equipment, expertise and human resource development; work had already started on the project's second phase in Kumasi, and the third phase in Tamale would soon be under way. The three centres would provide treatment for cancer patients in Ghana and the West African sub-region. Her country

gratefully acknowledged the support given to the project by the United States of America and China. The Ghana Atomic Energy Commission was also producing radiopharmaceuticals for diagnostic purposes, for the investigation of iron deficiency anaemia, vitamin A deficiency and iodine deficiency. The Department of Food Science and Nuclear Agriculture Research of the Biotechnology and Nuclear Agriculture Research Institute, a unit of the Commission, was utilizing irradiation for the preservation of foodstuffs and the sterilization of hospital equipment, with the assistance of the Agency. Moreover, the Department of Plant and Soils Sciences was producing healthy seedlings and plantlets for important crops. However, the Commission's capacity to transform the country's food situation in order to forestall famine and hunger needed to be strengthened with appropriate support. The Commission's research reactor was being used for work in many areas including environmental monitoring and, under AFRA, to teach reactor core calculations. Consultancy and analytical services were also provided on environmental issues.

47. In conclusion, she reconfirmed Ghana's unflagging interest in, and support for the Agency's programmes.

48. Mr. KASTCHIEV (Bulgaria) thanked the outgoing Director General for the contribution he had made to the international prestige of the Agency and wished the new Director General every success. He also associated himself with the statement which had been made by the representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union and associated countries, including Bulgaria.

49. Bulgaria had been pleased with the results of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. The decisions taken there had far-reaching consequences for the Agency's work in the fields of safeguards and the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In that context, he noted that no indication of diversion of nuclear material or misuse of nuclear facilities, equipment or non-nuclear material had been found in 1996. He also applauded the approval by the Board of the Model Additional Protocol to safeguards agreements. His country had always supported the Agency's efforts to strengthen the effectiveness and improve the efficiency of its safeguards system, was already implementing Part 1 of Programme 93+2, and was preparing to conclude an additional protocol to its own bilateral safeguards agreement with the Agency. National control of nuclear exports was another important means of preventing nuclear proliferation. As a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Zangger Committee, Bulgaria felt that research into, and production and use of, nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in accordance with Article IV of the NPT should conform with the non-proliferation objectives set forth in Articles I and II of that Treaty.

50. The problems of illicit trafficking in nuclear material and other radioactive substances remained on the international community's agenda since they constituted a challenge to the non-proliferation regime and a hazard to public safety. Although the primary responsibility for preventing illicit trafficking lay at the national level, the importance of international co-operation and the Agency's role in facilitating such co-operation was increasing. The programme for preventing and combating illicit trafficking in nuclear material agreed upon at the Moscow Nuclear Safety and Security Summit was expected to strengthen international

co-operation in that area. His country was also pleased to note that the Agency's illicit trafficking database was already operational and that other measures were being contemplated.

51. The Agency had contributed greatly to the development and strengthening of the international regime on the safe use of nuclear energy in the preceding year. The entry into force in October 1996 of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, and the recent adoption of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, the Protocol to Amend the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage and the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage were notable achievements in that area. Although Bulgaria had signed the Final Acts of those Conventions, its current economic difficulties did pose significant problems as regards their implementation.

52. The Agency had also done much to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in Member States through the transfer of nuclear technology, training of specialists and provision of assistance and equipment. He congratulated the Secretariat on the results achieved in implementing the technical co-operation programme and thanked the Agency for the assistance it had provided to his country in national and regional projects.

53. His country supported the proposed budget for 1998, but he appealed to the Secretariat to undertake additional measures to ensure that most effective use was being made of financial resources. In particular, the recommendations of the External Auditor should be implemented. With regard to the financing of technical assistance, Bulgaria would be paying the equivalent of \$10 000 in national currency into the TCF for 1998.

54. Nuclear power played an important role in the Bulgarian economy and the Kozloduy nuclear power plant had produced approximately 42% of the total amount of electricity generated in the country in 1996. Bulgaria devoted a great deal of attention to nuclear safety and radiation protection problems, in particular to the enhancement of safe operation at the Kozloduy nuclear plant, strengthening of the effectiveness and independence of the national safety inspectorate, and the development of national nuclear legislation and its harmonisation with the legislation of the European Union. The Agency had provided considerable assistance by training Bulgarian inspectors. Moreover, as part of a technical co-operation project, an IRRM mission was to be conducted the results of which would be used to enhance the effectiveness of the Bulgarian Nuclear Safety Authority. As a country operating WWER-type reactors, Bulgaria was also very interested in the Agency's extrabudgetary programme on the safety of WWERs which could be extended to co-ordinate the planning and technical assistance required for upgrading and modernizing the units. In recent years, a number of safety measures had been carried out to improve the safety level at the Kozloduy nuclear power plant. A programme to ensure safe operation of the unit 1 reactor pressure vessel during the rest of its lifetime had been implemented in 1996 and the results clearly showed that the pressure vessel could be operated safely for several years to come without any additional technical measures. The elaboration of a comprehensive programme to enhance the safety of units 1-4 of the Kozloduy nuclear power plant had begun in May 1996. Its aim was to eliminate design shortcomings and the first draft was currently being assessed. In addition, an

upgrading programme had been developed to ensure safe operation of units 5 and 6 of the plant. The proposals and recommendations of the Agency experts invited to review the programme had been incorporated, and it was to be implemented by a consortium of German, Russian and French companies, as well as by Westinghouse and the plant.

55. Turning to the issues of radiation protection and the environment, he said that a modern system for permanent monitoring of the radiation and meteorological conditions in the country had been delivered and installed with the financial support of the European Union's PHARE programme. Furthermore, a computer network had been set up in the regulatory body to process, analyse and record information on the use of radioactive sources in scientific research, medicine, industry and agriculture.

56. In conclusion, he confirmed his Government's support for the Agency's activities and wished the Director General and his staff every success in their work.

57. Mr. AL-GHAIS (Kuwait) praised the leadership of Mr. Blix to whom the Agency owed much of its reputation for efficiency and good management, and wished Mr. ElBaradei every success as the new Director General. The year leading up to the Agency's fortieth anniversary had witnessed some notable achievements, such as the conclusion of the Model Additional Protocol to safeguards agreements, the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, and the Protocol to Amend the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage; and the Director General and the Secretariat had every reason to be proud. He also welcomed Malta and Burkina Faso as new members of the Agency.

58. The countries of the Middle East looked forward to the establishment in that region of a nuclear-weapon-free zone but, for that goal to be achieved, Israel had to join the NPT and submit its nuclear installations to Agency safeguards, and Iraq had to abandon its irresponsible behaviour. Kuwait looked forward to a Middle East free of all kinds of weapons of mass destruction. Kuwait's position regarding Article VI of the Agency's Statute was that changes should be made to accommodate the least represented regions on the Board of Governors, especially the MESA Group and the African Group, but that the responsibility for deciding upon the composition of regional groups lay with the groups themselves.

59. The General Conference had before it four documents on Iraq's implementation of the Security Council resolutions relating to its aggression against Kuwait on 2 August 1990. Those documents made it clear that Iraq had not fulfilled its obligation under Security Council resolution 687(1991) to make a full declaration to the Agency of its nuclear programme within 15 days. Indeed, six and a half years had elapsed without it doing so, despite the Agency's tireless efforts. It had used delay, omission, obstruction and concealment tactics and, as was stated in paragraph 6 of document GC(41)/20, its minimalist approach in withholding from the Agency all but the minimum necessary information had resulted in the expenditure of considerable additional time and effort.

60. It was astounding that the Government of Iraq had not abandoned its practice of obstructing the Agency's inspectors despite repeated warnings both from the Agency and from

the Security Council. In February 1997, Iraq had prevented the IAEA and UNSCOM inspection teams from using the fixed-wing aircraft required for the inspection missions. The Director General of the Agency had expressed his grave concern over that incident in a meeting with the Iraqi Foreign Minister in March 1997. Moreover, paragraph 28 of the Appendix to document GOV/INF/810 stated that, as a result of that instance of obstructive behaviour, it was impossible to consider the monitoring and verification plan to be fully operational. Iraq had also obstructed joint UNSCOM and IAEA inspection teams on a number of occasions in June 1997, prompting yet another Security Council resolution condemning its actions and threatening to impose additional measures against Iraqi officials. Undeterred, Iraq had delayed and threatened two UNSCOM inspection teams in September 1997, forcing another Security Council warning. The latter incident was of relevance to the Agency since there was evidence that the Iraqi authorities had moved and concealed materials and documents during September, fully justifying Kuwait's suspicion that some of those documents were nuclear-related. The incidents placed in doubt the sincerity of the Iraqi authorities when they promised to co-operate with the Director General of the Agency and the new Chairman of UNSCOM.

61. An example of the way in which Iraqi officials either refused to co-operate with the Agency, despite attempts to give the opposite impression, or did not reveal the facts, was given in paragraphs 4 and 5 of document GC(41)/20 which reported a failure to supply the Agency with a requested summary of achievements giving a description of Iraq's capabilities. Paragraph 8 of the same document described an attempt to conceal the involvement of the Iraqi General Intelligence Service (Mukhabarat) in clandestine procurement. Kuwait urged the Agency to take the utmost care in monitoring Iraqi purchases in order to prevent the import of dual-use equipment which might be used for Iraq's nuclear programme. Countries exporting such equipment had a great political and moral responsibility to prevent its acquisition by Iraq, and to co-operate closely with the Agency in implementing the export-import mechanism adopted via Security Council resolution 1051(1996).

62. Iraq was trying to achieve two goals at the same time: to have the international embargo lifted, and to hide the greatest possible amount of materials and information from the Agency and UNSCOM. The progress the Agency had made in the past six and a half years was due to its own efforts and not to co-operation by the Iraqi authorities. Hence, the Agency should be extremely vigilant in carrying out its mandate in Iraq, because the Iraqi regime had not abandoned its aggressive intentions towards Kuwait and the other countries in the region, and should take the utmost care in preparing its semi-annual reports to the Security Council.

63. Finally, he paid tribute to the late Professor Zifferero who had led the Agency's Action Team, and assured its new leader, Mr. Dillon, of Kuwait's unlimited trust and support.

64. Mr. MENDONÇA E MOURA (Portugal) welcomed Malta and Burkina Faso as new members of the Agency.

65. His country had been a member of the Agency since its establishment 40 years ago and was proud of the latter's success in the fields of technical co-operation, safeguards, nuclear safety, the development of guidelines and regulations on such matters as the handling and

transport of radioactive material, and the promotion of the development of legal instruments such as the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage, and the Model Additional Protocol to safeguards agreements. He urged all States to adhere to those instruments as soon as possible which were very important for the promotion and general strengthening of a nuclear safety culture. The Agency's impressive record was due in large part to the dedication of its successive Directors General and their teams. In that context, he commended the outgoing Director General, Mr. Blix, and congratulated his successor, Mr. ElBaradei, on his appointment.

66. He commended the Secretariat's efforts to improve the efficiency of technical co-operation activities and noted with interest that only 36% of the Agency's expenditure on technical co-operation went to projects related to electricity production, radiation and nuclear safety, the fuel cycle and radioactive waste, whereas 64% went to such sectors as food, agriculture, health, earth sciences, industry and the physical and chemical sciences. The general public tended to think of nuclear energy only in terms of atomic bombs, nuclear accidents and radioactive waste, and should be made more aware of the full range of applications. In particular, he stressed the importance of projects connected with the production of potable water and water resource management. Significant efforts were also being made to improve the effectiveness of safeguards, and the adoption of the Model Additional Protocol was a welcome step forward in that regard.

67. Mr. NGWE (Myanmar) commended the Agency's achievements over the past 40 years and congratulated both the outgoing Director General, Mr. Blix, and his successor, Mr. ElBaradei. An RCA working group meeting had been held in his country in March 1997 which had coincided with the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of that Agreement. As part of the celebrations an exhibition had been held on the subject of nuclear science and technology which had emphasized the Agency's role and had been very successful in generating public awareness of its work.

68. Myanmar was committed to actively participating in the United Nations and other multilateral and regional fora, as well as to promoting nuclear science and technology. It had established a separate Ministry of Science and Technology in October 1996, and a Department of Atomic Energy within that Ministry in July 1997. It was also a strong advocate of global nuclear disarmament and had signed the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. Moreover, although it was not yet a party to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, it was giving the matter careful consideration.

69. The Agency's technical co-operation activities in Myanmar were progressing satisfactorily though there was much room for expansion. His country was particularly appreciative of the Agency's work on the use of isotope hydrology for water resource management, and the plan for producing potable water economically which could be particularly helpful in the country's central dry region. Myanmar was also planning to launch a project on radiation technology development and was grateful to the Agency for providing

assistance in the form of a pre-project mission; with further assistance the project could become a success.

**ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS  
(GC(41)/6, GC(41)/30)**

70. The PRESIDENT recalled that in 1989 the General Conference had approved a procedure whereby, when there was agreement regarding the candidate or candidates from a particular area, no secret ballot was held; balloting only took place for those areas where no candidate had been agreed upon. That procedure considerably facilitated the efficient use of the Conference's time.

71. Accordingly, he proposed that Rule 79 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, which provided that elections to the Board should be by secret ballot, be suspended in respect of those areas for which there was agreement.

72. He then drew attention to document GC(41)/6 which contained a list of the Agency Member States which the Board of Governors had designated to serve on the Board from the end of the current session of the Conference to the end of the next session.

73. Under Rule 83 of the Rules of Procedure, the presiding officer had to indicate to the General Conference those elective places on the Board which had to be filled. In that connection, he drew attention to document GC(41)/30 and noted that agreement had been reached among the Member States in all areas except Africa and the Middle East and South Asia. In the case of Africa, there were two seats to be filled and more than two candidates had been put forward. In the case of the Middle East and South Asia, there was one seat to be filled, and more than one candidate had been put forward. A secret ballot would therefore have to be held in respect of both those areas.

74. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Mexico and Peru to the two vacant seats for Latin America.

75. Mexico and Peru were duly elected.

76. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Italy and Sweden to the two vacant seats for Western Europe.

77. Italy and Sweden were duly elected.

78. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Hungary and Slovenia to the two vacant seats for Eastern Europe.

79. Hungary and Slovenia were duly elected.

80. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Viet Nam to the vacant seat for the Far East.

81. Viet Nam was duly elected.

82. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect the Republic of Korea, from the area of the Far East, to fill the so-called "floating" seat.

83. The Republic of Korea was duly elected.

84. The PRESIDENT invited the General Conference to proceed with a vote by secret ballot for the two vacant seats for Africa and the vacant seat for the Middle East and South Asia.

85. Mr. TIWARI (India), speaking on behalf of the Middle East and South Asia Group, said that the election of members from that Group to serve on the Board had been a contentious issue in the past and it had not always been in a position to put forward the right number of candidates. He was happy to announce that the Group had agreed to put forward Pakistan for the vacant seat, on the understanding that when the next vacancy fell due Saudi Arabia would be nominated. It would also strive to avoid any need for elections on its candidate in the future.

86. The PRESIDENT, noting the comments of the representative of India, took it that the General Conference wished to elect Pakistan to the vacant seat for the Middle East and South Asia.

87. Pakistan was duly elected.

88. The PRESIDENT then invited the General Conference to proceed with a vote by secret ballot for the two vacant seats for Africa.

89. A secret ballot was held to fill the two seats for Africa.

90. At the suggestion of the President, a member of the delegation of the Czech Republic, a member of the Peruvian delegation and a member of the Finnish delegation were appointed as tellers.

91. The PRESIDENT, noting that the counting of the votes would take some time, suggested that the General Conference should resume the general debate until the results could be announced. He also thanked the tellers, on behalf of all delegates, for their kind co-operation.

GENERAL DEBATE AND STATEMENTS MARKING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AGENCY (resumed)  
(GC(41)/8)

92. Mr. NSIMBI (Zimbabwe) commended Mr. Blix for his tireless efforts during his period of office. The conferment on him of the title of Director General Emeritus was a fitting tribute to his sterling work at the Agency. He also joined previous speakers in welcoming Mr. ElBaradei as the new Director General.

93. For the past ten years, the Government of Zimbabwe had recognized the role played by the peaceful application of nuclear techniques in promoting its economic development in the fields of agriculture, human health and water resources. The impact of nuclear techniques in those areas had stimulated interest from other national institutions. At the same time, the country needed a sound radiation protection infrastructure and well-trained staff to maintain the momentum achieved, ensure the steady growth of technical co-operation activities, and improve the effectiveness of project implementation.

94. Under the 1997 technical co-operation programme, Zimbabwe had made progress with the implementation of activities under the Model Project on increased crop production for smallholders through the use of biofertilizers and the current results were promising. Use of that technique should be extended to improve productivity in other cash crops.

95. With regard to the project on tsetse control programmes employing the sterile insect technique, baseline data had been compiled in preparation for the Matusadona Game Reserve pilot project. If the tsetse fly were successfully eradicated in the Matusadona Game Park and the surrounding areas of the Zambezi Valley, the Zimbabwean Government would be in a position to consider plans to increase the level of economic and social activities.

96. Efforts were continuing to upgrade the national radiation protection infrastructure in order to meet the requirements of the Basic Safety Standards. The Government of Zimbabwe was committed to increasing the level of support to the country's radiation protection unit with a view to achieving effective operations by January 1998.

97. The establishment of a new isotope hydrology laboratory, as part of the country's groundwater development activities, should strengthen analytical capabilities in the water sector. Zimbabwe expected to make greater progress in water development as it progressively introduced nuclear techniques alongside conventional techniques.

98. He welcomed the completion of the restructuring exercise in the Agency's Department of Technical Co-operation and hoped that it would enhance programme delivery to recipient Member States. The beneficiaries of the technical co-operation programme appreciated the concepts and tools which the Department had introduced to improve planning and management. The changes would also bring with them new challenges for recipient countries. In addition, he noted with interest the proposed funding mechanisms which would assist some national projects with partial funding. An arrangement of that kind should result in closer interaction between donors and beneficiaries and might also promote TCDC. He also announced that Zimbabwe had begun to redress its assessed programme costs arrears and was committed to meeting its obligations in that regard.

99. Turning to the amendment of Article VI of the Statute, he said that his delegation had followed with interest the work of the Board on that issue and hoped that the General Conference would find a satisfactory solution. In that connection, the African proposal merited serious consideration.

100. In conclusion, he announced that Zimbabwe had completed the majority of its internal ratification formalities for the Pelindaba Treaty.

101. Mr. SUÁREZ (Ecuador) welcomed Malta and Burkina Faso as new members of the Agency and, on behalf of the President and Government of Ecuador, commended the outstanding achievements of Mr. Blix over the past 16 years and wished him every success in the future. The Agency's prestige, the changes which had taken place within it, and the assistance which it had given to the developing countries owed much to his efforts, vision and wisdom. He also welcomed Mr. ElBaradei as the new Director General. It was the first time someone from a developing country had held the most senior post in the Agency and he could count on the full support of Ecuador in his future tasks.

102. Looking back over its 40-year history, the Agency's most important achievement had undoubtedly been the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons through its safeguards programme and relevant treaties. World peace was mankind's most precious possession. Support for the development and application of nuclear technology had been universal, and countries throughout the world had benefited from its use in health, agriculture, environmental protection, industry and power generation. With the help of the Agency and its experts, professionals from developing countries had received training through courses, seminars, symposia and workshops. Without that support, and the materials, equipment and information which had been provided, the progress made by the LDCs in medicine, agriculture and environmental protection would not have been possible. One particular problem in LDCs was the lack of adequate, permanent and reliable supplies of potable water, and his country therefore welcomed the Agency's work on the production of potable water economically.

103. Arguably the Agency's greatest success had been the bringing together of the Latin American countries under the ARCAL programme to implement projects designed to promote the development of the region. The Partners in Development concept had boosted co-operation between countries in the region which should be further strengthened by the joint resolution of common problems. His country was deeply grateful to the Agency for the support it had given the ARCAL programme. Ecuador currently held the Presidency of ARCAL and hoped that, in the near future, an intergovernmental agreement would be signed for the promotion of nuclear science and technology in Latin America and the Caribbean which would strengthen assistance between countries and greatly benefit their populations.

104. The Agency's fortieth anniversary coincided with the thirtieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Tlatelolco Treaty and the fifth anniversary of ABACC. Both those organizations and the Treaty had been a major influence in promoting the exclusively peaceful uses of nuclear energy at world, regional and sub-regional level. Ecuador supported the strengthening of the Agency's safeguards system as the best possible way of promoting nuclear non-proliferation, but there was still a need to strengthen the Agency's technical assistance programme for developing countries. Ecuador had sponsored a resolution on the latter subject and hoped that the programme would be strengthened in the near future in view of the great benefits it brought to Third-World countries.

105. Ms. ROMERO de GONZALEZ (Paraguay) welcomed Malta and Burkina Faso as new members of the IAEA.

106. The Agency, which was currently celebrating its fortieth anniversary, was the only organization whose principal role was to promote worldwide the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. It worked together with all the main United Nations agencies in such fields as human health, food safety, pollution control, fresh water resources, climate change, power generation, and other essential areas affecting economic development and the environment. Paraguay had joined the Agency in 1957 and was confident that, with the assistance of the agencies of the United Nations system and other organizations, it would continue to ensure that nuclear energy was used for sustainable development and for the benefit of mankind.

107. The Paraguayan National Atomic Energy Commission had just held a commemorative nuclear science day to present the results obtained by various public and private institutions which had participated in and benefited from national technical co-operation projects, the ARCAL programme, regional projects and research contracts. The Nuclear Information Centre of the Commission had had its own home page on the Internet since July 1997 through which it pursued its publicization activities, with the help of the National Computer Centre of the National University of Asunción.

108. Paraguay welcomed the progress which had been made in the field of technical co-operation and transfer of nuclear technology, and fully supported the Model Project and Partners in Development concepts which were being employed in its own national project on sustainable water resources management. Another valuable project for her country was the one on feed supplementation to improve cattle productivity which was providing support to small-scale milk producers. The National Atomic Energy Commission attached great importance to the interregional project on upgrading of radiation protection infrastructure, an area in which every country had a role to play in order to ensure the safe use of radiation and the safe management of radioactive waste. It was also working together with the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare on the elaboration of appropriate legislation and regulatory controls with a view to preventing accidents and their costly consequences.

109. Her country continued to participate actively in the ARCAL programme. Several of the projects under that programme had fully achieved their objectives, such as the one on maintenance of nuclear instrumentation. Under the project on radiopharmacy, an attempt was being made to include that subject in the pharmacy curriculum of the National University of Asunción. In addition, as part of the project on improvement of radiotherapy practice, physicists were being encouraged to train in medical physics. Analysis services were being offered for various types of samples employing X-ray fluorescence, neutron activation analysis, and gamma spectrometry. In the field of radiation protection, efforts were being made to double the number of people using TLD dosimeters and to ensure compliance with the Basic Safety Standards, in conjunction with the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare. With regard to training, the National Atomic Energy Commission was providing courses on radiation protection, nuclear analytical techniques and electronics for industry, with

the assistance of technicians, professionals and students from the National University of Asunción.

110. In conclusion, she reaffirmed her country's full support for the peaceful use of nuclear energy and international co-operation for development, and its strong opposition to the use of nuclear energy for military purposes. Paraguay's commitment to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the strengthening of the safeguards system remained unwavering. She also thanked the Agency for its continuous efforts to respond to the challenges it had been faced with in the nuclear field over the 40 years it had been in existence.

111. Mr. FARIS (Iraq), responding to the comments which had been made by the representative of Kuwait, said that he was dismayed to find his brother delegation from Kuwait introducing political issues into the discussions which had no place inside the Agency since it was a purely technical organization. He therefore appealed to delegations not to raise political issues.

112. Mr. AL-GHAIS (Kuwait), responding to the comments of the representative of Iraq, noted that that representative had referred to Kuwait as a brother delegation. However, actions spoke louder than words and brothers did not behave to one another as Iraq had behaved towards Kuwait. Moreover, the Conference had just witnessed the behaviour of the representative of Iraq who had banged on the table when requesting the right to respond to the comments made by his own delegation. The Iraqi delegation had indulged in similar behaviour in other meetings in other organizations, sometimes even resorting to physical assault. He requested the Iraqi delegation to refrain from such behaviour in future.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

