



GC(43)/OR.1
October 1999
GENERAL Distr.

International Atomic Energy Agency

GENERAL CONFERENCE

Original: ENGLISH

FORTY-THIRD (1999) REGULAR SESSION

RECORD OF THE FIRST PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Austria Center Vienna
on Monday, 27 September 1999, at 10.25 a.m.

Temporary President: Ms. LAJOUS VARGAS (Mexico)
President: Mr. KADRI (Algeria)

CONTENTS

<u>Item of the provisional agenda*</u>		<u>Paragraphs</u>
-	Opening of the session	1 - 6
1	Election of officers and appointment of the General Committee	7 - 15
2	Applications for membership of the Agency	16 - 19
3	Message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations	20
4	Statement by the Director General	21 - 63
6	Contributions to the Technical Co-operation Fund for 2000	64
7	General debate and Annual Report for 1998	65 - 124
	Statements by the delegates of:	
	Finland	67 - 83
	Slovakia	84 - 94
	Japan	95 - 106
	Republic of Korea	107 - 117
	Morocco	118 - 124

[*] GC(43)/1, Corr.1 and Add.1.

The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(43)/INF/15/Rev.3.

For reasons of economy, this document has been printed in a limited number.
Delegates are kindly requested to bring their own copies of documents to meetings.

Abbreviations used in this record

AFRA	African Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
FMCT	fissile material cut-off treaty
Interpol	International Criminal Police Organization
KEDO	Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization
Kyoto Protocol	Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
NEA	Nuclear Energy Agency (of OECD)
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review and Extension Conference	Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
PHARE	European Union programme of assistance for economic restructuring in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe
PPAS	Programme Performance Assessment System
RBMK	High-power channel-type reactor (Soviet Union)
RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
SIT	Sterile insect technique
TACIS	Technical Assistance for the Commonwealth of Independent States
TC	Technical co-operation
TCF	Technical Co-operation Fund
UN	United Nations
WWER	Water-cooled and -moderated reactor (former USSR)
Y2K	Year 2000

OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT declared open the forty-third regular session of the General Conference.
2. In accordance with Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, she invited 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 expressed her gratitude for the support given to her by the Secretariat - and in particular the Legal Division - during the forty-second session of the General Conference. That session had been highly controversial, taking place shortly after a new round of nuclear testing. Perhaps because of that the international community was now more aware of the dangers of nuclear proliferation and the need to proceed with ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. She also wished to express her appreciation for the support that she had received from her companions in the Latin American and Caribbean Group and for the co-operation of all representatives, without which the work of the General Conference would have been even more difficult.
4. Every year the General Conference offered an opportunity to re-evaluate the role played by the Agency within the United Nations family. The past year had been marked by the Agency's efforts to achieve a consensus on measures to cope with the proliferation potential of neptunium and americium. The undertaking by the Agency of measures to verify surplus weapon-origin fissile material was a major step and would need an appropriate legal and financial framework to make it credible and reliable. The support of Member States would be necessary for the trilateral initiative to take on an international dimension.
5. The Agency's nuclear safety programme had now assumed vital importance and she welcomed the results of the first review meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety held in April 1999. It was also pleasing to note that the technical co-operation programme was contributing more and more to the development of States thanks to the new technical co-operation strategy despite the constant shortage of resources.
6. In conclusion, she expressed the hope that with a spirit of co-operation, the issues left unresolved the previous year - in particular amendment of Article VI of the Statute - would be brought to a successful conclusion in 1999.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND APPOINTMENT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE

7. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT invited nominations for the office of President of the Conference.
8. Mr. ABDULAATI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), speaking on behalf of the African Group, proposed Mr. Kadri (Algeria) for that position.
9. Mr. Kadri (Algeria) was elected President by acclamation.

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

Mr. Kadri (Algeria) took the Chair.

11. The PRESIDENT expressed his gratitude for the honour of presiding over the forty-third regular session of the General Conference.

12. Since its foundation 42 years ago the Agency had played a crucial role in the global quest for the safe and peaceful use of nuclear energy. His country had become a Member State of the Agency in 1963 and had thus been actively involved in the Agency's achievements for over 36 years. It had acceded to the NPT in 1994 and concluded a safeguards agreement in 1996, thereby demonstrating its commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and to total nuclear disarmament. That commitment was shared by all African Member States and had been consolidated in the Pelindaba Treaty, establishing Africa as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Another African regional instrument, AFRA, was an efficient tool for promoting nuclear research and development in Africa.

13. He hoped that the forty-third regular session of the General Conference - the last of the century and of the millennium - would contribute significantly to achieving the Agency's objectives and that it would respond to the expectations and concerns of all Member States. He would do his best to promote the Agency's consensus tradition and he appealed to all delegations to respect that practice. The Agency had an enviable reputation as a well-managed international organization and he was sure that, with goodwill prevailing, it would emerge from the Conference as a strong and effective body capable of facing the challenges of the next millennium.

14. Turning to the election of officers and the appointment of the General Committee, he recalled that under Rules 34 and 40 of its 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. For the forty-third session of the General Conference, he understood that there was agreement that there be 16 members of the General Committee, so that the area of Africa, in addition to providing the President of the Conference and the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole, might also have a Vice-President. He therefore proposed that Rule 40 be suspended and that the delegates of Belgium, Canada, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Korea, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Peru and the Russian Federation be elected as Vice-Presidents, that Ambassador Abderrahim Benmoussa of Morocco be elected as Chairman of the Committee of the Whole and that the delegates of Bulgaria, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Slovakia and the United States of America be elected as additional members of the General Committee.

15. The President's proposals were accepted.

APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE AGENCY
(GC(43)/2 and 28)

16. The PRESIDENT informed delegates that the General Conference had before it two applications for membership - one by Honduras contained in document GC(43)/2 and the other by Angola in document GC(43)/28. Both applications had been endorsed by the Board of Governors, which had also submitted two draft resolutions for adoption by the General Conference.

17. He assumed that the Conference wished to adopt the draft resolutions by acclamation.

18. It was so decided.

19. Mr. LOY DE FIGUEREIDO¹ (Angola) said that the forty-third session of the General Conference would be a milestone in Angola's history as a sovereign State and responsible member of the international community. Its presence in the IAEA would give it the opportunity to participate in efforts to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy for the benefit of mankind. His country was well aware that nuclear technology could contribute to rapid economic progress and improvement of living conditions. On behalf of the Angolan Government, he wished to assure other Member States that Angola would do its utmost to fulfil its obligations as a member of the Agency.

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

20. Mr. MAERTENS (Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations) read out the following message to the General Conference from the Secretary-General of the United Nations:

“It is a great pleasure to convey my warm greetings to the forty-third regular session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency. This session provides a unique opportunity to survey past results and to look ahead to new challenges. The IAEA has a unique role in tackling these challenges and addressing the larger issues of peace and security that they affect. By preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, spreading a strong safety culture and helping to develop the peaceful use of nuclear technology for sustainable development, the Agency is playing a major role in advancing the highest aims of the United Nations.

“Let me turn first to the Agency's role in seeking to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. After the Cold War the world has become safer and more complicated at the same time. I refer specifically to the multidimensional nature of potential proliferation threats, whether from ‘breakouts’ within the ranks of States committed to the nuclear non-proliferation regime; from States which have concluded, in the face of overwhelming conclusions to the contrary, that national interests are enhanced by pursuing the nuclear weapons option; from national or sub-national terrorist groups;

¹ Speaking under Rule 30 of the Rules of Procedure.

from illicit trafficking in nuclear material; or from weaknesses in arrangements to ensure adequate physical protection of nuclear material.

“These are some of the issues which I expect to find discussed at next year’s Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). At that time, Parties to the Treaty will be expected to give an account of their respective roles in seeking to implement the package of decisions adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. Last year, I welcomed the significant progress that had been made with regard to the Additional Protocols to the safeguards agreements. I regret that further progress has been delayed, even in countries with significant nuclear facilities. I trust that all countries committed to strengthening the safeguards systems will be ready to turn their words into deeds and thus demonstrate, at next year’s NPT Conference, that they have played their part in equipping their safeguards system to deal effectively with the challenges of the twenty-first century.

“I also hope that progress will be made towards nuclear disarmament. This has proven to be more difficult than expected. The START II agreement remains unratified, and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty has yet to enter into force.

“Negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices have been stymied by procedural wrangling. Again, the NPT Review Conference will provide a significant opportunity for taking stock of where we stand with regard to the noble and ambitious goals which States set for themselves in 1995 and of their willingness to match their intentions with actions.

“I am pleased to note that real progress has been made in achieving and maintaining a high level of nuclear safety worldwide. This has only been possible through the enhancement of national measures and international co-operation. The first ‘peer review’ meeting held last April within the framework of the Convention on Nuclear Safety demonstrated that Contracting Parties are taking steps in the right direction. I encourage all Member States to do so.

“Safety, in all aspects, including radiation and waste safety as well as safety of transport of radioactive materials, is a key to the future of nuclear technologies. The work of the Agency towards the establishment of a global ‘safety culture’, and in carrying out advisory services for assisting Member States to strengthen and improve their national regulatory infrastructures, is an example of long-term international co-operation for the greater good.

“Although effective actions have been taken to improve the security of material, the threat from illicit trafficking in nuclear materials and other radioactive sources to global security and public health remains. International co-operation has to be further strengthened to prevent these criminal activities. The IAEA has a crucial role in co-ordinating international efforts to reinforce national systems for the prevention and detection of, and response to, illicit trafficking.

“The IAEA also makes a valuable contribution to sustainable development, a central goal of the entire United Nations system. The Agency’s technical co-operation programme offers an important tool to meet the needs of Member States in many fields: industry, food and agriculture, water resource and environment management and human health. In a world with a growing population, the application of the best available technologies and their transfer in an efficient, effective and safe manner is an imperative need. For example, results obtained with the sterile insect technique (SIT) to eradicate the tsetse fly in Africa or the fruit fly in South America open the way to spreading this experience in other geographical areas. A great deal has also been done for improving human health with radiation therapy services, particularly in developing countries.

“I have repeatedly stressed the role of civil society in raising public awareness, alerting the world’s conscience and shaping policy. Efforts towards better communication between international organizations and civil society should be pursued. I appreciate the efforts that the Agency is making to strengthen its relationship with civil society and the private sector.

“Today, I have highlighted some of the most fundamental aspects of the IAEA’s role within the UN’s overall mission. As we know, the challenges we have to face will not disappear with the new millennium but will test our international system to its limit. I am confident that the IAEA will do its part to help us succeed.”

STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

21. The DIRECTOR GENERAL said that the forty-third General Conference was taking place on the eve of a new millennium, and presented an occasion to reflect on the past and plan for the future.

22. The Agency’s programme was centred around the three “pillars” that constituted its mandate, namely technology, safety and verification, coupled with two other important elements namely effective interaction with the outside world, and excellence in management.

23. To take the first pillar, nuclear technology provided the basis for all of the Agency’s work. In that area, the Agency’s mandate was to maximize the ability of Member States to make full use of nuclear technology for their economic and social development.

24. At the end of 1998, over four hundred nuclear power reactors in more than thirty countries were producing about 16% of world electricity, with sixteen countries relying on nuclear power for 25% or more of their electricity supply.

25. Global energy demand, particularly for electricity, was clearly rising. A conservative estimate from the World Energy Council was that global electricity demand would triple in the next fifty years. Nuclear power was one of the few options that could help countries meet base load electricity demand with virtually no greenhouse gas emissions and could thus satisfy growing energy needs, while helping to meet the carbon dioxide emission targets set out in the Kyoto Protocol.

26. While that might suggest that the share of nuclear power in global energy production would grow, or at least remain stable, current projections indicated that the nuclear share was likely to fall to about 13% in 2010 and to 10% in 2020.

27. The assumption that environmental considerations alone would trigger a resurgence of investment in nuclear power generation was at best doubtful. Only if the nuclear power industry consistently reflected three crucial attributes - safety, competitiveness and public support - could it be assured of a long-term future.

28. One of the prerequisites for nuclear power to remain economically competitive was for scientific and technical research to focus not only on how to improve fuel cycle technology but also on how to develop designs for reactors of various sizes, with higher efficiency and greater availability, shorter construction times and lower capital costs.

29. Public support was vital for a revival of the nuclear power option. Nuclear science and technology were complex subjects but that should not justify widespread misperception. Public understanding was a prerequisite for public acceptance. The role of industry and civil society in promoting public understanding could not be overemphasized. Key factors in that process were objectivity, openness and transparency, and there was also a great need to reach opinion leaders, who might not always be better informed on nuclear realities than the general public.

30. While the choice of nuclear power and of a particular energy mix was a national decision that could be made only in the light of national priorities, it was important that States considering the different energy options had the required information and tools to make informed decisions. In co-operation with eight other international organizations, the Agency had been pursuing an intensive programme to assist Member States in developing their own capacity for decision-making in the energy sector. Furthermore, the Agency was actively contributing to the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and was working with the United Nations and other organizations to prepare for discussions on energy within the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development in 2001. Its objective was to ensure that nuclear power was given a full and fair hearing in that important forum.

31. The Agency's activities in the field of nuclear power covered a wide front. Its international working groups would continue to facilitate the exchange of experience gained in the operation of different types of reactors. They would also serve as forums for discussion of technological advances in the nuclear field, including the assessment of new reactor designs or the use of small and medium-sized reactors in non-electrical applications such as desalination.

32. The first pillar of the Agency's work also included many nuclear applications that were making a significant contribution to human welfare. Drug-resistant strains of tuberculosis developed when treatment was ineffective or incomplete. The Agency and seven Member States in Africa had developed and were now field testing an isotope-based technique that reduced the period for diagnosis from weeks to days - a critical improvement in the efficacy of disease control. In Belarus, fifty thousand acres of prime agricultural land remained

contaminated after the Chernobyl accident. Agency technical co-operation projects had assisted with the production of rapeseed on the land. The seed could be used for economically valuable end products such as cooking oil and lubricants, and qualitative assessments would be made of the products to ensure they met international standards. The result would be not only accelerated decontamination of the land, but also the return of farmers to their former production areas, and the creation of jobs in the community.

33. Those examples, taken from the Agency's eighty-million-dollar programme of technical co-operation, pointed to the future direction of the TC programme: it should be demand-driven, results-based and closely aligned with national development strategies. In some countries the Agency would have to concentrate on capacity-building and the supply of equipment, in others, on technology exchange and quality assurance. It would also endeavour to strengthen its relationship with other international organizations in the development field.

34. Over the next few years the Agency would be seeking to meet the needs of Member States through an evolving, focused and responsive programme. With regard to nuclear energy, high priority would be given to the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle, in particular to measures for the safe management of waste, to small and medium-sized reactors (for both power generation and desalination purposes), to the exchange of information on innovative fuel cycles and reactor designs, and to the potential role of nuclear energy in sustainable development. With regard to nuclear applications, the Agency intended to redouble its efforts to respond to the urgent need of its developing Member States to increase food production, fight disease, manage water resources and monitor and protect the environment.

35. Turning to the second of the three pillars, nuclear, radiation and waste safety, he observed that it was now widely recognized that a demonstrated high standard of nuclear, radiation and radioactive waste safety would be a determining factor for the future use of nuclear technology and that a good safety record relied on good technology, good regulatory practices and well qualified and trained staff.

36. Nuclear accidents did not respect national borders, as witness the Chernobyl accident. Thereafter international co-operation on nuclear, radiation and waste safety had been considerably enhanced. As the global centre for that co-operation, the Agency was making an important contribution to the development of an effective worldwide safety regime that comprised three elements: international conventions prescribing the basic legal norms for the safe use of nuclear energy; internationally accepted safety standards; and measures to assist States in the implementation of those conventions and standards. In addition, technological solutions for improving safety were being promoted and during the past year the Agency had been assisting Member States in managing the Y2K readiness problem.

37. The international effort to strengthen nuclear safety had been highlighted by the first review meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, where States' reports on their safety practices had been subject to peer review. Also, participants at the recent International Conference on the Strengthening of Nuclear Safety in Eastern Europe, organized by the Agency in co-operation with the European Commission and the NEA had agreed that considerable progress in nuclear safety had been made in the operation of WWER

and RBMK reactors. Nevertheless, the Agency's *Nuclear Safety Review* underlined the need for constant vigilance to avoid complacency, and the important roles that self-assessment and peer review could play in maintaining that vigilance.

38. An area of major concern in the debate over the use of nuclear technologies was the safety of spent fuel and radioactive waste management. The Agency could assist Member States in that area, particularly through the development of consensus safety standards. In some areas, such as the near-surface disposal of low-level waste, that consensus existed, but in others, such as, geological disposal of high-level waste, it had been more elusive.

39. An Agency-sponsored international symposium had recently indicated that technologies existed for the safe, environmentally sound and cost-effective management of radioactive wastes, and that high-level wastes and spent fuel could be safely isolated in certain types of deep geological repositories. In his view, however, only when final high-level waste repositories were built would the public begin to accept that the waste issue had been resolved.

40. The Agency would be facing some specific challenges in the area of safety in the coming years. A particularly urgent concern was the threat to public health arising from "orphan" radioactive sources, i.e. radiation sources that, for a variety of reasons, were not under control by national authorities. Recently, such sources had been found in Georgia, Peru and Turkey. The Agency had sent missions to check the radiological impacts of the sources and provided assistance in taking the necessary protective measures, including emergency humanitarian assistance. The focus of the Agency's work in that area should be on prevention. Its draft action plan on the safety of radiation sources and the security of radioactive materials, which was before the General Conference², identified the immediate needs and the required financial resources.

41. Another area of concern was research reactor safety. Out of over 600 research reactors which had been built, 344 had been shut down but only 106 had been decommissioned. Furthermore, many States operating research reactors had inadequate regulatory infrastructures. There were also other serious issues such as ageing, obsolete equipment, lack of spare parts and budgetary limitations. The Agency's activities in that area had focused on upgrading regulatory structures and on safety review services, but more needed to be done. In the future, additional Agency efforts were envisaged to enhance operational safety, and assistance would be provided in the decommissioning of shutdown reactors.

42. In recent years, the Agency had provided assistance to Member States in the radiological assessment of areas affected by residual radioactive waste, for example in Kazakhstan, the Marshall Islands and French Polynesia. While continuing to advise on the restoration of such contaminated areas, the Agency would increase its efforts in future to develop internationally harmonized guidance and criteria for the cleanup or rehabilitation of areas affected by residual wastes.

² See document GC(43)/10 and Corr.1.

43. The Agency expected that the implementation of the existing conventions would result in a better global safety record but it would continue to be vigilant in identifying areas where new legal norms were required or existing norms needed to be modified. It also intended, following the review and revision of the Agency's safety standards, to focus its efforts on assisting Member States in their application. As regarded safety services, it envisaged that the development of new services and the integration of existing ones would result in a comprehensive set of services in which safety culture and self-assessment played a more central role.

44. A concern of immediate importance was the Y2K readiness problem. Successfully managing the Y2K transition would be an important demonstration and reassuring signal of the safety of the nuclear industry. In the past year, the Agency had acted as a central point of information exchange and had been closely involved in assisting Member States to address the Y2K issue in respect of nuclear facilities and medical facilities that used radiation sources. That effort had included preparing guidance documents, organizing workshops for the exchange of information and experience, and conducting preparatory and review missions to nuclear power plants.

45. The Agency's Emergency Response Centre would be in a state of increased readiness for the millennium change at the end of December. It would be ready to answer questions and follow up any information or reports about Y2K-related incidents in nuclear facilities.

46. With regard to the third pillar of the Agency's work, verification and the security of nuclear material, Agency safeguards were central to international efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Safeguards had evolved steadily since their inception as advances in technology had led to improvements in verification techniques and capabilities. A major catalyst for change, however, had been the Agency's experience in Iraq. Since 1991, efforts had concentrated on equipping the safeguards system to provide assurance not only of the absence of diversion of a State's nuclear material from declared activities, but also of the absence of any undeclared material or activities. That had culminated in the adoption by the Board of Governors, in May 1997, of the Model Additional Protocol to safeguards agreements which provided the Agency with the necessary complementary authority in that regard.

47. A long-standing concern of the Secretariat was the number of States which had still not concluded safeguards agreements with the Agency, despite their obligation to do so. In anticipation of the NPT Review Conference in 2000, he urged the 52 NPT States without safeguards agreements in force to conclude and bring such agreements into force without further delay. The full potential of the strengthened safeguards system could be realized only through universal adherence to the Additional Protocol. That, in turn, depended upon all relevant safeguards agreements being in force.

48. Since the 1998 General Conference, a further 13 Additional Protocols had been approved by the Board of Governors bringing the total of Additional Protocols approved to 45. That progress, while welcome, fell short of expectations. States had consistently emphasized the great importance that they attached to a strengthened safeguards system, so he

appealed to all States which had not yet done so to conclude Additional Protocols at the earliest possible date.

49. His report to the General Conference on “Strengthening the Effectiveness and Improving the Efficiency of the Safeguards System”³ described the work that the Secretariat had undertaken. He was confident that the new system would enable the Agency to provide enhanced assurance to the international community that all States with comprehensive safeguards agreements and Additional Protocols were using nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes. At the same time, it was necessary to continue striving towards universality of the non-proliferation regime, towards nuclear disarmament and towards a better system of global and regional security.

50. Turning to the physical protection of nuclear material, which was closely associated with the Agency’s safeguards and verification mission, it was important that nuclear materials should not be misused either by States or by subnational groups. The Secretariat would continue to assist States in their efforts to prevent, detect and respond to illegal uses of nuclear and radioactive material, and to co-operate to that end with other international organizations, such as customs and police organizations. The Secretariat was also convening in November, at the request of Member States, an open-ended expert meeting to consider whether there was a need to revise the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

51. In the area of nuclear arms control and reduction measures, the Agency had continued its work on a joint initiative with the Russian Federation and the United States, focusing on Agency verification of weapon-origin fissile material in the two States. A meeting of the three parties was to be held later that day to review the work and set goals for the coming year.

52. Clearly, any new verification activities would pose a challenge for the Agency in terms of resource requirements, and he had submitted to the Board of Governors earlier in the year a document⁴ outlining the possible options for financing Agency verification of future nuclear arms control and reduction measures, including the possible establishment of a nuclear arms control and reduction fund based on assessed contributions. At its June meetings, the Board of Governors had held an initial discussion on the subject and he expected the issue to be pursued when the envisaged verification tasks became concrete. If the Agency were asked to take on new roles in the important field of nuclear arms control, it needed to be prepared and, in particular, the financing arrangements needed to be worked out.

53. Some nine months had now passed since the Agency’s last inspection in Iraq under the relevant Security Council resolutions. One year ago the Agency had been cautiously optimistic that it would be able to proceed with the full implementation of its monitoring and verification plan. That had not happened, and the United Nations Security Council was still consulting on a mechanism for the resumption of verification activities in Iraq. Clearly, under

³ See document GC(43)/22.

⁴ See document GOV/INF/1999/9.

present circumstances, the Agency could not provide any measure of assurance regarding Iraq's compliance with its obligations under the said resolutions. However, the Agency continued to be ready to resume its activities in Iraq at short notice.

54. The Agency also remained unable to verify that all nuclear material subject to safeguards in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) had been declared to the Agency. However, it continued to monitor the freeze on the DPRK's graphite-moderated reactors and related facilities, as requested by the Security Council. The measure of co-operation received from the DPRK continued to be limited, and, despite twelve rounds of technical discussions, there was still no progress on important issues such as the preservation of information relevant to verifying the DPRK's compliance with its safeguards agreement. As he had indicated previously, without that information it would be difficult, if not impossible, to verify, in the future, compliance by the DPRK with its safeguards agreement.

55. Pursuant to the mandate conferred on him by the General Conference, he had continued his consultations with States of the Middle East region regarding the application of full-scope Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities in the Middle East with a view to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region. During visits in the course of the year to Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and the Syrian Arab Republic, he had reiterated the importance of obtaining more detailed information from States of the Middle East on key issues relevant to his mandate. Additionally, he had written in May to the Foreign Ministers of Middle East States in that regard and had received a number of replies that were annexed to his report to the General Conference⁵. He had also reiterated his willingness to provide any assistance within his power to States of the region in seeking to fulfil the objectives of successive General Conference resolutions. There was clearly a common view among the States of the region, which was globally shared, that a Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zone would contribute to regional stability and security. It was to be hoped that the political climate now prevailing in the region would be conducive to progress in the attainment of those important goals.

56. Proper interaction with Member States, partners and the public was fundamental to the Agency's ability to maintain broad support and deliver its programme, and to address the concerns of the general public about the health and environmental effects of radiation, the risk of accidents, the disposal of waste and the threat of proliferation.

57. In the past year, the Secretariat had sought to review and strengthen its ties with United Nations system organizations and other relevant bodies. The objective in all cases was to optimize synergies, encourage greater pooling of human and financial resources and avoid duplication of effort.

58. In June, he had approved a new public information and outreach policy which was intended to enhance the Agency's interaction with opinion leaders, the media and civil society. Part of that effort would focus on establishing a dialogue with private industry

⁵ See document GC(43)/17/Add.1, Add.1/Corr.1 and Add.2.

groups, nuclear research centres, the arms control and disarmament community and other relevant non-governmental organizations. The public information and outreach strategy that had been developed should help the international community to assess objectively the advantages and risks of nuclear science and technology.

59. Almost immediately after taking up office, he had initiated a process to address the broad question of management reform and modernization. The Agency had moved forward on several fronts in its efforts to ensure better planning, better implementation, and better evaluation of its programmes and activities. The planning area had already seen some substantial changes. A draft Medium Term Strategy had been prepared and was being considered by the Board of Governors. Formulation of the programme and budget, which would be based on the objectives set out in the Medium Term Strategy, would follow a structured process for assessing Member States' needs and priorities, and would identify expected results and set performance indicators.

60. Good programme planning had to be accompanied by effective implementation, and that was not just a question of technical competence. It also relied on there being a clear, common understanding within the Secretariat of the Agency's overall purpose, priorities and objectives - the "one house" concept that he had consistently advocated. During the past year he had focused on how to improve and harmonize the interaction between the Regular Budget and technical co-operation programmes as well as the interaction between the relevant Departments, with emphasis on a team approach and matrix management. The final component in good programme management was effective evaluation. As part of the process, Programme Performance Assessment System (PPAS) evaluations of the Agency's activities under all Major Programmes would be carried out. The Agency could therefore look forward with confidence to improved programme planning that was based on the needs and interests of Member States, more effective programme implementation carried out by an organization with a clearly defined mission and efficient management, and more comprehensive and in-depth evaluation of its programme results that would ensure continued improvement, constant adjustment and greater relevance of its work to those whom it served - the Member States.

61. In meeting all the challenges that lay ahead, the Agency remained dependent on Member States to provide guidance and support and, above all, the required financial resources. However, a budget which had remained virtually static for over a decade and where 27 Member States had been in arrears that exceeded their financial contributions for more than two years meant that the Agency could not implement all its high-priority tasks. Its responsibilities were growing but its resources were not. It was imperative that there should be a correlation between tasks and resources if it was to continue meeting Member States' demands and fulfilling their expectations.

62. With regard to the Technical Co-operation Fund (TCF), there was reason for both encouragement and concern. The TCF had had pledges for 1998 amounting to about US \$53 million, just less than 75% of the target. Although that absolute amount was a record, the percentage of the target pledged was the fourth lowest of the decade. Altogether, 75

countries had pledged support to the TCF for 1998. That was again a record, but it fell far short of the total membership.

63. While great progress had been made in the world in the last fifty years, serious global challenges remained, in particular those of improving social and economic conditions over much of the globe where 1.3 billion people lived on less than one dollar per day, curbing the spread and eventually eliminating the threat of nuclear weapons from a world where some tens of thousands of warheads continued to exist, and stopping the degradation of the environment. The Agency had an important role to play in helping the world to meet those challenges, and it pledged to do its best, with the continued support of its members.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION FUND FOR 2000 (GC(43)/25/Rev.1)

64. 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 TCF. Subsequent to agreement reached in 1998 on target figures for the following two years, the Board had recommended a target figure of \$73 million for 2000. The early pledging and payment of contributions to the TCF greatly helped the Secretariat in planning the Agency's technical co-operation programmes, and he therefore urged delegations in a position to do so to notify the Secretariat during the Conference of the contributions which their governments would be making to the Fund in 2000. 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 1998 (GC(43)/4)

65. The PRESIDENT, announcing that there were already over 80 delegates on the speakers' list, said that, in order to avoid prolonged afternoon meetings or even a night session - the total cost of the latter being over \$16 000 - he wished to propose under Rule 50 of the Rules of Procedure that the duration of speeches be limited to 15 minutes.

66. It was so agreed.

67. Mr. TUOMIOJA (Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union and the associated countries: Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, welcomed Angola and Honduras as new members of the Agency.

68. During his first full year in office, the new Director General had launched several commendable initiatives aimed at improving the Agency's overall effectiveness and efficiency which the European Union fully supported. In particular, it appreciated the introduction of the draft Medium Term Strategy based on the three pillars of technology, safety and verification. It welcomed the holistic approach to strategic planning with Agency-wide prioritization as a key element. Since priorities varied considerably among Member States, dialogue on prioritization, notably in the Board of Governors, was crucial. The

phasing-out of outdated or low-priority activities would enable financial and human resources to be allocated to high-priority activities hitherto funded from extrabudgetary resources or listed as unfunded regular programme activities. The European Union held the view that all statutory activities should be funded from the Regular Budget.

69. The European Union attached great importance to ensuring the highest standards of technical competence in the Secretariat and called for a rigorous recruitment policy to that end. It noted with satisfaction that in recent years the Agency had paid greater attention to human resource management, including internal training programmes.

70. The NPT remained the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the basis for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. The European Union continued to support the Agency's role in safeguarding nuclear material and facilities, especially within the framework of the NPT, and had actively promoted the universal conclusion of Additional Protocols. It called on all non-nuclear-weapon States to conclude and ratify comprehensive safeguards agreements with the Agency as well as Additional Protocols to them. Recalling resolution GC(42)/RES/17, it urged those States that had no comprehensive safeguards agreement to negotiate Additional Protocols with the Agency, as provided for in the foreword of the Model Protocol and, in that connection, welcomed Cuba's decision to sign the Additional Protocol.

71. Although the implementation of the strengthened safeguards system was a matter of the highest priority, the introduction of new measures should not simply be regarded as an addition to existing measures: the old and new systems had to be properly integrated to achieve the most effective use of resources and inspection effort. The principles underlying integrated safeguards - qualitative rather than quantitative verification - required a shift in the approach to safeguards, to which some resistance within the Secretariat was inevitable, but the European Union was convinced that the Director General, with the assistance of the new Deputy Director General for Safeguards, would provide the strong leadership required to bring about that change.

72. The situation regarding the implementation of safeguards in the DPRK remained a matter of serious concern. In spite of the Agency's efforts no progress had been made on any of the important issues since 1994. The DPRK was therefore urged to comply as soon as possible with its safeguards agreement and to co-operate fully with the Director General.

73. For nine months now the Agency had not been able to implement its mandate in Iraq under the relevant Security Council resolutions and was thus unable to provide any assurance regarding Iraq's compliance with its obligations thereunder. It was imperative that the Agency's monitoring and verification activities in Iraq should be re-established without delay.

74. Ensuring a high level of nuclear safety throughout the world was of paramount importance. To that end, safety aspects needed to be taken into account at the earliest stage of design of a nuclear facility. While the responsibility for the safe design, construction and operation of a nuclear installation rested with the State concerned, international co-operation was required to ensure that internationally accepted levels of nuclear safety were in place. Through its PHARE and TACIS programmes as well as bilateral activities, the European

Union contributed to international efforts to help the States of Eastern and Central Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States to improve their nuclear safety. Noteworthy advances had been achieved but much remained to be done, and indeed progress on nuclear safety was an essential factor in the Union's ongoing process of enlargement.

75. The first review meeting under the Convention on Nuclear Safety had shown the Convention to be a valuable tool for assessing and improving nuclear safety. He stressed the need for the Contracting Parties to exercise greater openness and transparency, and looked forward to substantial progress being reported in future meetings in areas where a need for safety improvement had been identified. He hoped that the example of the Convention on Nuclear Safety and its review process would encourage the early signing and ratification of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management.

76. The European Union supported the Senior Expert Group's recommendation that, once the current standards programme was completed, the Agency should focus on implementation, analysis of results and the introduction of the necessary amendments.

77. He commended the Agency's efforts in helping operators and regulators to develop suitable Y2K-compliance programmes, and pledged the European Union's continued support in that direction.

78. The TC programme was strongly supported by the European Union, as borne out by the high level of voluntary contributions to the TCF by its Member States - approximately 30% of the total in 1998. However, the TC programme as a whole should be reappraised in the light of existing budgetary constraints and the Agency's mandate, and also taking into account the comments of the External Auditor. The technical assistance provided by the Agency should be fully in line with national development programmes and it was primarily the responsibility of the recipient State to ensure that that was the case. In addition, a significant contribution to the cost of projects should be made by recipient States to demonstrate their commitment. The considerable shortfall in the assessed programme costs for 1998 was disappointing and he called on all recipient States to pay their share of the project costs on time and in full. Finally, there was a need for closer co-ordination between the Agency and other organizations on TC activities in a country with a view to achieving synergy and avoiding duplication of effort.

79. The first step in combating illicit trafficking in nuclear materials was physical protection, and that was entirely the responsibility of individual States. The European Union supported the Agency's activities under that head, including the revision of its recommendations, the provision of advice through the International Physical Protection Advisory Service, and the provision of guidelines and training. It welcomed the Agency's efforts to strengthen those activities in accordance with resolutions GC(42)/RES/12 and 18 and encouraged it to pursue its co-operation with the European Commission, the World Customs Organization and Interpol with a view to developing guides.

80. Turning to the proposed amendment of Article VI of the Agency's Statute, he commended the efforts of successive Board Chairmen to resolve the issue. Although the European Union did not favour enlargement of the Board, it was none the less prepared to join a consensus on a package of proposals covering enlargement of the Board, composition of area groups, and designation criteria. Following the recent inconclusive discussions in the Board, the European Union hoped that the General Conference would be able to finally settle the matter.

81. The European Union considered it especially important for fissile material no longer required for defence purposes to be placed under an appropriate system of Agency safeguards and welcomed efforts aimed at setting up verification mechanisms and further measures envisaged under the trilateral initiative between the Russian Federation, the United States and the Agency. Special consideration should now be given to ways and means for financing such arrangements. The decision by a number of Member States to adopt a set of guidelines for the management of plutonium in all peaceful activities was also welcomed.

82. For some time the European Union had steadfastly supported negotiations on a multilateral and internationally binding treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, and it stood ready to discuss a verification role for the Agency in that connection.

83. Looking ahead to the 2000 NPT Review Conference, he said the European Union supported and promoted the implementation of both the NPT itself and the decisions of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, in particular the decision on Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament and the decision on Strengthening the Review Process for the Treaty. The successful outcome of the 2000 NPT Review Conference was vital to the common endeavour to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime and accelerate nuclear disarmament.

84. Mr. HAMŽÍK (Slovakia), having welcomed Angola and Honduras to the Agency, said that, with the 2000 NPT Review Conference just around the corner, the current measures aimed at strengthening the safeguards system were vital for the non-proliferation regime and noted with satisfaction that more than 40 Additional Protocols had so far been approved by the Board of Governors. In that regard, he announced that a new safeguards agreement between Slovakia and the Agency and an Additional Protocol had recently been approved by the Slovak Government and would be signed during the General Conference. He urged other Member States which had not already done so to speed up the process of concluding Additional Protocols.

85. Another step towards global non-proliferation was the verification of weapon-origin fissile material and the verification of nuclear arms control and reduction measures. For credibility's sake it was essential that such verification be carried out under Agency auspices and that measures relating to nuclear arms reduction and weapon-grade fissile material control should be irreversible. It was regrettable that the Conference on Disarmament had so far failed to produce a fissile material cut-off treaty. A more flexible and pragmatic approach

in that forum would contribute to the successful outcome of negotiations and to the effective implementation of Article VI of the NPT.

86. A further component of the non-proliferation regime was the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). In view of the forthcoming CTBT Conference, and as one of the countries which had already ratified the Treaty, Slovakia called on all Member States to follow its example and thereby accelerate entry into force of the Treaty.

87. Slovakia supported the Agency's verification activities in the DPRK, being conducted under difficult circumstances. While some technical progress had been made in the past 12 months, the fact that the DPRK's initial declaration could still not be verified was a matter of grave concern.

88. In the light of resolution GC(42)/RES/3, Slovakia was concerned about Iraq's decision to suspend its co-operation with the United Nations Security Council and the withdrawal of Agency inspectors from the country in December 1998, and it called on Iraq to comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions as well as the Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations Secretary-General of February 1998.

89. The Slovak Government attached high importance to the safety of nuclear installations and was in the process of updating its energy strategy plan. In the medium term, nuclear power would remain an important source of energy for Slovakia and the foremost prerequisite for its use was safety. The project for the gradual reconstruction of the Bohunice V-1 nuclear power plant was currently nearing completion and the second unit of the Mochovce plant would resume operation shortly following extensive safety upgrading.

90. Slovakia had presented its national report and answered a host of questions at the review meeting of the Convention on Nuclear Safety in April 1999, earning praise for its safety improvement programmes. At the International Conference on Strengthening Nuclear Safety in Eastern Europe in Vienna in June the upgrading work carried out at the Bohunice V-1, Bohunice V-2 and Mochovce nuclear power plants was duly recognized in the Conference report.

91. The Agency had a vital role to play in improving existing safety levels at nuclear power plants worldwide and its extrabudgetary programme on the safety of WWER and RBMK nuclear power plants had contributed greatly to the safety improvement activities in Slovakia. Those activities would be fully implemented by early in 2000. A safety analysis report on the Bohunice V-1 plant following its reconstruction would be submitted to Slovakia's Nuclear Regulatory Authority and it was intended to invite an IAEA mission to the plant in 2000 to assess implementation of the Agency's safety recommendations.

92. With regard to the Y2K issue, he noted that pursuant to resolution GC(42)/RES/11 Slovakia had launched its Project Year 2000. Slovak experts had actively participated in Agency activities relating to Y2K and an IAEA mission had visited the Bohunice V-1 plant. By the end of October the nuclear power plants should be fully Y2K compliant. Other organizations dealing with radiation sources and radioactive waste had also been encouraged to develop contingency plans.

93. Slovakia attached great importance to the Agency's technical co-operation activities, particularly in the field of nuclear safety. Slovakia was currently co-operating with the Agency on six national and more than twenty regional projects. The Agency's services were an essential part of international co-operation and transparency and he wished to convey his Government's thanks to the Director General and his staff for their efforts in that regard.

94. Slovakia was not in favour of amendment of Article VI of the Statute but, with a view to finally resolving that long-standing issue, was willing to support a proposal which would both be acceptable to regional groups and reflect the interests of its own region.

95. Mr. INABA (Japan) welcomed Angola and Honduras as new members of the Agency.

96. Japan had been one of the first countries to sign the Additional Protocol, the Diet had approved its ratification in July and the Government was currently revising domestic legislation to suit. He urged all Member States of the Agency to sign Additional Protocols in order to strengthen the safeguards system.

97. After the nuclear testing in 1998 Japan had organized the Tokyo Forum for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, which had come up with 17 major proposals for the reduction of strategic nuclear weapons and the cessation of the state of readiness against them. He hoped that all countries would consider those proposals seriously.

98. The conclusion of the FMCT would be another important step in the direction of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, and he urged the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva to press forward with negotiations. It was important that the Agency's knowledge be fully utilized when considering verification systems under such a treaty. Japan would also endeavour to accelerate entry into force of the CTBT as President designate of the forthcoming CTBT Conference.

99. It was very important that plutonium removed from dismantled nuclear weapons was not diverted for military purposes and was disposed of safely and quickly, and Japan looked forward to progress in the discussions between the United States, the Russian Federation and the Agency aimed at enabling the Agency to monitor surplus plutonium. Japan had offered to provide some \$200 million to help countries of the former Soviet Union dismantle their nuclear weapons and dispose of the resultant plutonium.

100. Japan was also helping to resolve the nuclear issue in the DPRK by supporting the light-water reactor project being managed by KEDO. However, if the latter were to reach fruition, it was essential that the DPRK comply fully with its safeguards agreement.

101. In the light of current financial constraints, Japan hoped that integrated safeguards could be introduced swiftly and the efficiency of inspections improved in order to ensure effective safeguards without the need for budget increases. He therefore urged that work on implementation of integrated safeguards be accelerated.

102. International co-operation in efforts to improve nuclear safety was vital, and he welcomed the first review meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety held in Vienna that year. Japan would continue to support improvements in safety in other countries, particularly in the former USSR and Central and Eastern Europe, where it had assisted with the training of operating staff and with the sarcophagus for the Chernobyl nuclear power reactor. It also supported the RCA, and the Japan Atomic Energy Commission was organizing the Forum for Nuclear Co-operation in Asia, whose aim was to promote the sound development and use of atomic energy in that region. In addition, personnel and financial support was provided to developing countries through the Technical Co-operation Fund.

103. Although it appreciated the Director General's efforts to manage the Agency efficiently under difficult financial conditions, Japan believed that a further effort should be made to achieve a zero-nominal-growth budget, and that the Agency should scrutinize its work to ensure that funds were used to support activities that were truly essential. It also strongly encouraged member countries to pay their assessed contributions in full and to make greater efforts to pay their share of the TCF. The long-standing issue of the amendment to Article VI of the Statute was now approaching its final stages, and he believed that agreement should be reached at the current Conference.

104. On nuclear energy prospects, he noted that his country would be implementing the policy of "best mix energy apportionment" with an appropriate role for nuclear energy, in order to realize the targets agreed in the Kyoto Protocol for reducing the emission of gases causing global warming. Since Japan had to import most of its energy resources, its policy was to operate the complete fuel cycle. Thus the Government, while making safety a prerequisite, was promoting private fuel reprocessing, the use of MOX fuel in light-water reactors, and research and development on fast breeder reactors. It had recently amended the existing law to ensure that spent fuel in excess of Japan's reprocessing capability was stored appropriately away from power stations until it could be reprocessed.

105. The development and use of atomic energy in Japan would be strictly limited to peaceful uses, and Japan would continue to follow the principle of retaining no more plutonium than strictly necessary. Transparency in the use of plutonium was being further enhanced through the annual publication of management status reports and listing of amounts of plutonium stocked. Finally, Japan was currently working on the formulation of a new long-term programme for research, development and utilization of nuclear energy in the twenty-first century.

106. In conclusion, he pledged Japan's continued active participation in the Agency's programmes.

107. Mr. Jung-Uck SEO (Republic of Korea) joined in welcoming Angola and Honduras to membership of the Agency.

108. In an increasingly deregulated energy environment, the nuclear industry was faced with the twin challenges of economic competitiveness and public acceptance. It was encouraging

to note that the rapid increase in energy demand, coupled with growing concern about the impact of greenhouse gases, was making nuclear power more of a practical option for large-scale power generation. The Agency's role was to point the direction of nuclear technology development and to assist its Member States to derive the maximum benefit from that technology.

109. As nuclear safety was paramount, the Agency's safety role should be further expanded with the development of an extensive nuclear safety regime, comprehensive safety standards, and technical co-operation programmes offering a wide range of safety services to Member States. The promotion of non-proliferation was equally important, and the Agency should strengthen safeguards by developing national or regional safeguards systems and introducing advanced surveillance and monitoring methods.

110. Thanks in large measure to Agency support, the Republic of Korea was now capable of designing, building and operating nuclear power plants on its own. It now had fourteen units in full operation, providing over 40% of its total power supply, and six further units were under construction. Research and development programmes were under way aimed at producing safer, more reliable and more economical reactor fuels, which would in turn help to win wider public acceptance of nuclear power. Those programmes included the development of the System-integrated Modular Advanced Reactor (SMART), destined for a desalination project under the Agency's TC programme.

111. Nuclear power had contributed to overcoming the recent economic crisis in his country by reducing imports of fossil fuel for electric power generation. The Republic of Korea was willing to share its experience in nuclear technology within the framework of the TC programme and was currently preparing a comprehensive series of training courses, including nuclear energy planning for developing countries.

112. His country was participating actively in the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and fully supported the Agency's efforts to strengthen its safeguards system. It had recently signed the Additional Protocol and was taking the necessary measures under its constitution to bring it into force. Also it would shortly be hosting the Regional Seminar for Asia and the Pacific on Safeguards for the Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy.

113. His Government was deeply concerned about continuing failure of the DPRK to comply with its safeguards agreement, and again called on it to fulfil its obligations. Welcoming the recent announcement that the DPRK would not carry out missile tests, the Republic of Korea now urged it to renounce its nuclear development programme and co-operate fully with the Agency.

114. His delegation attached great importance to the amendment of Article VI of the Statute and hoped that the issue could be resolved without further delay to enable Board membership to better reflect world technological advancement. In particular, it was desirable that Member States designated for the Board should include those States with active nuclear programmes.

115. He welcomed the outcome of the first review meeting of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, and hoped that all Contracting Parties would continue to strive to fulfil the objectives

of that Convention. He also looked forward to early entry into force of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management.

116. He was pleased to report that the Republic of Korea had completed tests to ensure Y2K readiness for all of its operating nuclear power plants. Being geographically one of the first countries to enter the year 2000, its experience in that respect would be valuable to other countries, and it would be happy to pass it on to the Agency as well as to the NEA.

117. The 20th century had seen momentous scientific and technical developments but man would be the victim of modern technocracy unless he utilized technology rationally for the benefit of all mankind. It was therefore essential for all countries to pool their knowledge and resources to cope with the challenges of the 21st century

118. Mr. BENMOUSSA (Morocco), welcoming Angola and Honduras to membership, said that Morocco was playing its part in promoting the peaceful uses of atomic energy. As well as having been signatory to the NPT for three decades, it was now a signatory to the CTBT and to the Pelindaba Treaty, and had also signed a safeguards agreement with the Agency. In addition, it hoped to be signing an Additional Protocol in the near future.

119. In the Middle East region, all Arab countries now subscribed to the NPT. It was a matter for concern that certain other countries still refused to become signatories and still refused to put their facilities under safeguards, in defiance of Security Council resolutions and in flagrant disregard of their obligations. The safeguards system would serve no purpose unless it covered all countries of the region. The general application of safeguards in the Middle East should be effected independently of the peace process and independently of the setting up of any demilitarized zone in the area. In that connection, he noted that the strengthened safeguards system offered a unique opportunity for the Agency to monitor whether a particular country was indeed fulfilling its obligations to use nuclear energy solely for peaceful purposes.

120. Public opinion demanded that the Agency find solutions to all the problems involved in the area of nuclear safety, such as the transport of nuclear waste and illicit trafficking in nuclear materials. There was thus need for a broad-based safety system, which kept pace with technological advances. It was not enough just to have regulatory instruments. Equal emphasis should be placed on the implementation of those instruments, and the developing countries should be given help with the training of personnel charged with implementing safety regulations.

121. In order to achieve both sustainable development and nuclear safety, countries needed to put in place medium-term national plans which would ensure that nuclear energy served the needs of development. Morocco had called on the Agency to prepare an "Agenda 21" for the nuclear industry, which would ensure that development problems were tackled in a way that preserved the environment. It would be choosing nuclear power as an energy option with a view to minimizing the release of greenhouse gases, as required under the Kyoto Protocol and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

122. Nuclear technology was crucial in overcoming water and power shortages, which were major obstacles to development. With the help of the Agency, Morocco had signed an agreement with China to develop small and medium-sized reactors to provide power for desalination plants.

123. The question of increasing the size of the Board of Governors continued to be of great concern to his delegation. It would be unacceptable to enter the new century with a Board that had remained unchanged for the past three decades, and he strongly supported the initiatives taken by the last three Board Chairmen to secure better representation for the developing countries.

124. The changes needed in the coming century in order to achieve progress while at the same time safeguarding the environment would have to be made through joint action by all nations. The Agency, as a truly international body, was thus uniquely placed to oversee those changes.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.