GC

GC(44)/OR.7
May 2001

International Atomic Energy Agency
GENERAL CONFERENCE

GENERAL Distr.
ENGLISH

FORTY-FOURTH (2000) REGULAR SESSION

RECORD OF THE SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Austria Center Vienna
on Thursday, 21 September 2000, at 10.05 a.m.

President: Mr. OTHMAN (Syrian Arab Republic)

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[*] GC(44)/21.

The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(44)/INF/18/Rev.2.

00-04120 (XLIX)

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(Contd.)

Abbreviations used in this record

AFRA	African Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARCAL	Co-operation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
CTBTO	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
MESA	Middle East and South Asia
NDT	Non-destructive testing
NPT	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
OSEF	Operational safety experience feedback
RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
SEAP	South East Asia and the Pacific
TCDC	Technical co-operation among developing countries
TCF	Technical Co-operation Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

REQUEST FOR THE RESTORATION OF VOTING RIGHTS

1. The PRESIDENT said that at its meeting that morning the General Committee had had before it a request from Belarus for the restoration of voting rights under Article XIX.A of the Statute. The Committee had recommended that, in view of the continued adherence by Belarus to its payment plan agreement with the Agency, Belarus should be permitted to vote during the present session of the General Conference. It had further recommended that Belarus's right to vote should be restored until the end of its payment plan on the understanding that Belarus continued to meet the requirements of the payment plan and that the Secretariat would report annually on the status of the payment plan.

2. He took it that the General Conference wished to accept the General Committee's recommendation.

3. It was so decided.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
(GC(44)/10 and 22)

4. 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 would be held; balloting would only take place for those areas where no candidate had been agreed upon. That procedure considerably facilitated the rational use of the General Conference's time. 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.

5. He was happy to report that agreement had been reached in all area groups on their candidates for the vacancies to be filled.

6. Drawing attention to document GC(44)/10, containing a list of the Agency Member States which the Board of Governors had designated to serve on the Board from the end of the Conference's present session until the end of the forty-fifth (2001) regular session, he recalled that, under Rule 83 of the Rules of Procedure, he had to inform the General Conference of the elective places on the Board which had to be filled. To that end, document GC(44)/22 had been prepared; it indicated that the Conference had to elect eleven members to the Board from the seven categories listed.

7. He took it that the General Conference wished to elect Argentina, Mexico and Peru to the three vacant seats for Latin America.

8. Argentina, Mexico and Peru were duly elected.

9. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Ireland and Switzerland to the two vacant seats for Western Europe.

10. Ireland and Switzerland were duly elected.

11. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Ukraine to the vacant seat for Eastern Europe.

12. Ukraine was duly elected.

13. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Ghana and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the two vacant seats for Africa.

14. Ghana and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya were duly elected.

15. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Pakistan to the vacant seat for the Middle East and South Asia.

16. Pakistan was duly elected.

17. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Thailand to the vacant seat for South East Asia and the Pacific.

18. Thailand was duly elected.

19. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Egypt to the floating seat for Africa/MESA/SEAP, which it was the turn of a member from Africa to fill.

20. Egypt was duly elected.

GENERAL DEBATE AND ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1999 (resumed)
(GC(44)/4)

21. Mr. PATHMANATHAN (Sri Lanka) welcomed Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and the Central African Republic to membership of the Agency.

22. Among the many threats to international peace and security, terrorism - one of the most heinous crimes that could be committed against innocent civilians - had become an issue of critical concern. The adoption by the United Nations of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism was accordingly most welcome.

23. The threat posed to humanity by nuclear weapons must not be underestimated. His country was pleased to note that the number of signatories to the NPT had increased to 187, and it hoped that action would be taken immediately to initiate the proposed fissile material cut-off treaty. It welcomed the Agency's efforts to strengthen the safeguards system and would take the necessary steps to sign and ratify the additional protocol at the earliest possible date.

24. Sri Lanka had demonstrated its recognition of the CTBT’s importance for ensuring a nuclear-weapon-free world by being one of the first countries to sign that treaty, on

24 October 1996, and by entering into an agreement with the CTBTO for setting up a monitoring station under the international monitoring system.

25. However, the existence in the Middle East of nuclear facilities that were not subject to safeguards posed a security concern that could not be disregarded. It was in the interests of all countries in the region to support the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

26. The Agency's technical co-operation programme had enabled Sri Lanka to acquire the capability of using nuclear technology to improve health care facilities and agricultural and industrial productivity. His Government wished to express its appreciation to the Government of India for supporting a footnote-a/ project. Non-power applications of nuclear technology were of great importance for most Member States and that fact should be given due consideration in the preparation of the Agency's budget.

27. The Model Project concept and Country Programme Frameworks would undoubtedly enhance the socio-economic benefits and end-user orientation of the technical co-operation programme. The CPF for Sri Lanka had been finalized and priority areas for future co-operation identified.

28. It was his country's view that in order to ensure self-reliance and sustainability, national nuclear institutes should establish strong links with potential users of nuclear technology. The Sri Lankan Atomic Energy Authority had managed to increase its income to about 35% of its operational expenses by initiating scientific programmes of national relevance. He thanked the Government of Malaysia for holding a very successful seminar on the self-reliance and sustainability of national nuclear institutes.

29. His Government had increased the financial and other resources allocated to science and technology in recognition of that sector's importance for national development. High priority had been given to infrastructure and human resources development, which would enhance the Atomic Energy Authority's contribution to national development through the use of nuclear technology.

30. In spite of the financial constraints Sri Lanka faced as a result of its difficult security situation, his Government had agreed to double its payments of assessed programme costs to the Agency so as to settle the arrears more quickly.

31. Technical assistance received by Sri Lanka under the interregional projects on strengthening radiation protection and waste management infrastructures had made it possible significantly to improve the country's regulatory programme. New radiation protection regulations had been approved by Parliament, and all the country's radiation sources had been prepared for notification, authorization and inspection.

32. Regional co-operation under the RCA, had brought participating countries considerable benefits in activities ranging from nuclear applications in medicine, agriculture, industry and the environment to radiation protection and nuclear power. Sri Lanka welcomed the improvements being made in the RCA's management structure and believed that closer

consultation in decision-making on the implementation of RCA programmes should be established between the Agency and Member States. UNDP's decision to discontinue its support for the joint UNDP/RCA project on sustainable industrial development, despite a very favourable mid-term review, was a matter of concern, and he requested the Agency to take up the matter with UNDP at the highest possible level.

33. In conclusion, he pledged his Government's active support for the programme and activities of the Agency.

34. Mr. KING'ORIAH (Kenya), after welcoming the new members to the Agency, said that the IAEA was undoubtedly one of the most efficient and productive of the technical agencies set up by the United Nations. In particular, he wished to commend its Department of Technical Co-operation for attaining a high implementation rate in 1999. Technical co-operation activities had assumed greater importance in his country owing to growing challenges in health care, food and agriculture, industry, energy and research. Benefits derived from such activities included manpower development, technology transfer and improvements in agricultural production, animal health, human health, nuclear safety and waste disposal technology.

35. The Agency's support for regional arrangements like ARCAL, RCA and AFRA attested to its visionary approach to regional challenges. Its activities under AFRA had greatly enhanced integration and harmony in the African region, with a number of countries becoming Partners in Development. Kenya looked forward to the expansion of projects under AFRA. The increasing use of TCDC was encouraging, as it would ultimately ensure optimum use of the scarce available resources and increase the impact of the technical co-operation programme.

36. His country strongly supported AFRA and believed that the identification of centres of excellence should be vigorously pursued. Conscious of its responsibility to share with other developing countries its modest resources, expertise and experience in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, it was offering to IAEA fellows placements in institutions in various fields of nuclear science and technology.

37. Nuclear techniques were being used in his country to promote the production of high-yield, drought-resistant cultivars, to measure and monitor nutrients in soil/plant systems, to improve the diagnosis and control of livestock diseases and to increase milk and meat production. The Government was committed to eradicating the tsetse fly and trypanosomiasis using the sterile insect technique. A project for its application in the Lambwe Valley was being developed, but to ensure the required rate of implementation, the IAEA should consider sending experts in tsetse fly breeding who had sufficient knowledge of local conditions to advise local scientists.

38. In the past year, Kenya had further expanded the application of non-destructive testing techniques for quality control and the establishment of acceptable standards for industrial output. It was most grateful for the assistance of the United States of America and the Agency in that area. In its efforts to reinforce the nuclear technology manpower base, the

Government had emphasized the maintenance of modern instrumentation, training and appropriate analytical techniques.

39. The application of nuclear techniques to environmental conservation and health had been promoted. Health care delivery, including the provision of radiotherapy services, had been improved. Cervical cancer affected many women in their prime. Early diagnosis and treatment of various forms of cancer at the regional level was to be pursued, and additional facilities for nuclear medicine were to be established with the involvement of the private sector.

40. The exploration and optimum utilization of freshwater resources had high priority on Kenya's development agenda, and the role of nuclear techniques in that area was of great importance. Kenya was participating in the regional project on the application of isotope hydrology to water resource development and management. The rational exploitation of groundwater resources in the target area would do much to improve the livelihood and security of the population.

41. The efforts to strengthen the Radiation Protection Board - whose task it was to formulate nuclear safety and radiation protection policies - had continued. Its work had been instrumental in ensuring the safe handling, storage and use of radiation sources. Kenya was determined to comply with the safety standards set internationally.

42. His Government also intended to request expert advice from the Agency on the acquisition and utilization of nuclear research reactors, which it believed would foster better public understanding of the benefits of nuclear energy.

43. Kenya remained steadfast in its support for total nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation in all dimensions. The safeguards system was a tool for achieving non-proliferation, and nuclear security in tomorrow's world depended on its implementation in a clear, fair and transparent manner. In its efforts to provide credible assurances about declared and undeclared nuclear activities, the Agency should take full advantage of the latest applicable technology in order to accomplish its tasks as effectively, efficiently and non-intrusively as possible.

44. He commended the Director General for his efforts to increase the proportion of women professionals in the Agency and expressed the hope that in the recruitment of personnel at senior managerial and decision-making levels, candidates from all regions and subregions would be accorded due consideration.

45. In conclusion, he said that Kenya supported a balance between the Agency's regulatory and promotional functions and thought that deliberate efforts should be made to assist Member States that were pursuing peaceful applications of nuclear technology.

46. Mr. LAANEMÄE (Estonia), having welcomed the new members and endorsed the statement made on behalf of the European Union and associated countries, said that unlike most of its neighbouring States, Estonia had no operating nuclear facilities. Its main interest was to ensure the safety of the large amount of radioactive waste stored in its territory without

the knowledge or approval of the inhabitants and of the small additional amount from the use of radioactive materials in peaceful applications. Its unconditional support for the Agency's endeavours was fuelled by the conviction that nuclear energy should be used to benefit mankind. The Agency should pursue the implementation of the Action Plan for the Safety of Radiation Sources and the Security of Radioactive Materials.

47. Estonia looked forward to the integration of safeguards into one strengthened, efficient and cost-effective system. Its safeguards agreement with the Agency had entered into force on 24 November 1997. The additional protocol had been signed on 13 April 2000 and the preparation of the legislation needed to implement it had already begun. As one of the 54 States Party to the NPT that had concluded additional protocols, Estonia was concerned that a substantial number had not yet fulfilled their obligations. In further compliance with its own NPT commitments, Estonia had adopted new legislation on the import, export and transit of strategic goods and the specific procedures required to implement it had been approved.

48. His country was making steady progress in incorporating internationally accepted safety standards into its national legislation. In 2001, a new draft of the Radiation Protection Act which took account of present experience and European Union requirements would be submitted to Parliament. Several other acts awaiting approval in 2001 concerned radioactive waste, intervention in the case of radiological emergency, and supervision and control of radiation safety and radiation sources. He thanked the Agency for providing expert advice and training for Estonian specialists and welcomed its intention to continue technical co-operation in that area.

49. On 26 September 1995, Estonia had taken over responsibility for the former Soviet nuclear submarine training centre in Paldiski. Considerable progress had since been made towards decommissioning and all solid radioactive waste left on the site had now been conditioned. The Paldiski site served as an interim storage facility for all radioactive waste generated in Estonia. Although it was suitable for fulfilling that function for decades, his country fully recognized the need to explore options for the establishment of a final repository for radioactive waste. The present condition and future management of the sarcophagi covering the two reactors also needed to be assessed.

50. Estonia welcomed the inclusion in the Agency's technical co-operation programme for 2001-2002 of two projects relating to the use of radioactive substances in medicine. It attached great importance to the establishment of a national calibration laboratory for ionizing radiation and therefore found the continuation of the subregional co-operation project on that topic most welcome. Today, his country was no longer just a recipient of technical co-operation but an active partner, offering facilities for fellowships and scientific visits for specialists from other countries. It would continue to participate in the organization of seminars and training courses in co-operation with the Agency.

51. In conclusion, he commended the Agency on its efforts to ensure the peaceful use of nuclear energy and reiterated Estonia's firm commitment to doing its utmost to achieve that goal.

52. Mr. SAIDOV (Uzbekistan), after welcoming Tajikistan, Azerbaijan and the Central African Republic to the Agency, said that radiation protection and nuclear safety, physical protection and environmental protection were key elements in Uzbekistan's approach to nuclear energy, overseen by a number of special bodies established under the Agency for Supervision of Industrial Safety and Mining, the Ministry of Health, the State Committee for Environmental Protection, the State Committee on Geology and the Ministry of Emergencies. The first-named agency was the regulatory body for nuclear safety and radiation protection, and as such was empowered to draft and introduce regulations and standards, carry out safety assessments, issue licences, undertake inspections and monitor compliance with obligations relating to non-proliferation and physical protection. That agency was also responsible for establishing a system of accounting and control of nuclear materials and ionizing radiation sources and for regulating the safe transport of nuclear and other hazardous materials.

53. Soon after becoming independent, Uzbekistan had enacted legislation relating to nuclear safety, and since joining the Agency it had set up important components of its radiation protection infrastructure with the Agency's help.

54. In view of its richness in natural resources and economic potential Uzbekistan had many companies using modern technology involving radioisotope applications which had implications for radiation safety and for the regulation of imports and exports of radioactive and nuclear materials. The laws adopted in Uzbekistan in that connection complied with international conventions and agreements, such as the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Paris Convention on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy, the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage.

55. However, work needed to be continued on the drafting of regulations for the transport and handling of nuclear and radioactive substances.

56. In addition, qualified Uzbek staff were receiving training in countries with developed radiation safety infrastructures and had proven to be well prepared for that training. Several projects had been developed with the Agency aimed at improving the use of radioisotopic diagnosis methods in cancer cases. There was also co-operation in the applications of isotopic techniques in food, water and agriculture, and a study of pollution in the Aral Sea basin had been undertaken.

57. However, essential projects were being hampered by shortages of equipment and financial resources. Issues of particular concern to Uzbekistan at present included the disposal of spent nuclear fuel and the recultivation of land at former uranium mines. The tailings ponds of the Maili-Suu, Chorkesar and Yangiabad mines and of the "Kizilkumredmetzoloto" company were major sources of environmental pollution that might affect the life and health of thousands of people unless action was taken urgently.

58. In conclusion, he paid tribute to the donor countries and the Agency Secretariat for their help which, his delegation hoped now that the necessary legislation had been enacted, could

henceforth be relied upon to enhance radiation and nuclear safety in Uzbekistan. The concerns over nuclear waste management, particularly the disposal of spent research reactor fuel, would remain, though his country hoped that concrete assistance would be forthcoming with regard to the problem of former uranium mines.

59. Mr. NIÑO DE GUZMÁN (Bolivia) said that his country steadfastly supported the worldwide application of safeguards as part of the Agency's task in establishing an appropriate framework for maintaining nuclear security and preventing the misuse of nuclear energy and materials. Although it saw no real reason to abolish the shielding system for the financing of safeguards, which had been applied for over thirty years, in the interests of consensus it had supported the proposal to that effect made in the Board of Governors by the Chairman. That concession represented a large financial sacrifice by the developing countries and should be matched by a reciprocal gesture from the nuclear-weapon States in the form of elimination or reduction of nuclear arsenals.

60. His country participated, to the extent of its capacity, in the Agency's technical co-operation programmes, including bilateral ones implemented in Bolivia under which efficient, useful and practical projects had been carried out, such as the ones on improving Andean livestock reproduction and on the diagnosis of Chagas's disease using nuclear medicine. Bolivia's participation in regional co-operation programmes had likewise been constructive. Horizontal co-operation among countries of a region was an excellent example of how continuous and effective development could be achieved on the basis of common sociological, cultural and developmental elements. Co-operation from developed countries was equally effective, however, and should not be overlooked.

61. Turning to the financing of technical co-operation, he thanked Member States that were contributing their full share to the TCF. Bolivia was confident that the Secretariat would continue to give due attention to countries' needs, particularly in such areas as safety, water resources, human health and the environment, in all of which peaceful uses of nuclear energy could give practical impetus to development objectives. Appropriate steps should be taken to prevent a decline in the level of the TCF and he accordingly appealed to Member States to pay their contributions in full.

62. Mr. BAHRAN (Yemen), expressed support for the Agency's activities aimed at developing international co-operation in the areas of nuclear, radiation and waste safety, the transport of radioactive materials, the strengthening of the safeguards system and the enhancement of its effectiveness. He also supported the Agency's action against illicit trafficking in nuclear materials and other radioactive substances.

63. As the escalation of the nuclear arms race in any part of the world was a source of unrest and instability and a threat to human life and the environment, Yemen strongly supported nuclear disarmament, universal adherence to the NPT and the placement of all nuclear facilities, in every State without exception, under international supervision in the form of Agency safeguards. In 1979 Yemen had been one of the first countries in the region to ratify the NPT, and it had been scheduled to sign a safeguards agreement in early October 1980, but institutional shortcomings had prevented it from doing so at that time. However,

following the establishment of the National Nuclear Energy Commission, the legislative and institutional obstacles had been eliminated and he had pleasure in announcing that Yemen would be signing a safeguards agreement with the Agency during the present session of the General Conference, thus reaffirming its commitment to the application of the NPT. He called on all States without exception to follow suit.

64. Yemen welcomed all serious initiatives aimed at promoting dialogue among the parties to conflicts on the basis of international legal norms and the legitimate rights of peoples. While it noted that some progress had been made in the peace process in the Middle East, it wished to stress the importance of defending the legitimate right of the Arab Palestinian people to the establishment of an independent State with its capital in Jerusalem. It also urged the international community to end the ongoing sufferings of the Iraqi people, which weighed heavily on the conscience of humanity as a whole.

65. Yemen called on the Agency to take appropriate steps to persuade Israel to sign the NPT and thereby end the nuclear threat to the peoples of the Middle East region and to world peace.

66. As President Salih of Yemen had stated at the United Nations Millennium Summit, the last decade of the twentieth century had opened up a new era for Yemen as a united democratic State which respected press freedom, women's participation in political life and human rights in general. Yemen had entered the twenty-first century at peace with itself and its neighbours. It had signed border agreements with Saudi Arabia and Oman and solved its dispute with Eritrea through international arbitration, thus reaffirming its commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes and to regional peace and stability, including the safety of international shipping in the Bab al-Mandab straits. Yemen had held the first direct competitive presidential election in its modern history and under a new Local Authority Act the Yemeni people would have the opportunity to elect local representatives to run their affairs on a decentralized basis.

67. Yemen would continue to pursue policies of economic, financial and administrative reform oriented towards social and economic development, exploiting the potential of modern technology and incorporating the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in its economic development programme. A major challenge for the National Atomic Energy Commission, following the qualitative legislative and institutional development achieved through patience and compromise, consisted in building a solid infrastructure, introducing radiation protection regulations and promoting peaceful applications of nuclear energy for the benefit of the population as a whole. Yemen counted on the support of its neighbours and friends as well as the Agency in implementing development projects in areas such as health, agriculture, the environment and water resources.

68. Yemen was deeply grateful to the Director General and the Department of Technical Co-operation for their assistance, particularly in connection with the radiation protection infrastructure programme. It urged the Director General and the Board of Governors to strengthen the Department of Technical Co-operation by increasing its material and human resources, because the Agency's role in that area was of vital importance, especially to the

developing countries. Projects such as the building of a cancer radiotherapy or nuclear medicine centre, or the use of nuclear technology to produce mutations of local plant or animal species or for isotope hydrology in arid or semi-arid countries, played a creative humanitarian role that was fully consistent with the spirit and purpose of the United Nations and the resolutions adopted at the Millennium Summit.

69. Mr. BOLD (Mongolia), after welcoming Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and the Central African Republic as new members, said that IAEA safeguards were a crucial element in promoting nuclear non-proliferation. Mongolia was in full compliance with the NPT and the CTBT and, as one of the first 63 States to ratify the CTBT, accorded the utmost importance to its early entry into force. It was now making all the necessary arrangements with a view to concluding as soon as possible an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement on the basis of the Model Additional Protocol.

70. Humankind had achieved a great deal in the application of science and technology, and particularly in the use of nuclear energy. Further development of nuclear technology in the new millennium should be aimed at improving the quality of human life. Mongolia sought new avenues for the development of nuclear energy which would, it firmly believed, make a major contribution to resolving the country's critical energy situation. To that end, it needed professional advice, support and technical assistance from the Agency. It looked forward to conducting a national programme to develop a safe and secure nuclear reactor and nuclear fuel under the technical co-operation programme.

71. The implementation of various technical co-operation projects in such fields as human resource development, nuclear technology support and uranium evaluation, as well as human health and agriculture, had been particularly fruitful. Mongolia looked forward to increased support from the Agency and to active co-operation under the RCA, a useful mechanism for nuclear technology transfer benefiting countries in the Asia and Pacific region.

72. Notwithstanding the financial difficulties that Mongolia faced, it undertook to pay its full contributions to both the Regular Budget and the Technical Co-operation Fund.

73. His country commended the IAEA on its work to develop nuclear-weapon-free zones. He thanked the Agency for its valuable assistance in the preparation of the legislation on Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, which had been adopted by Parliament in February 2000. Arrangements were now being made to attain recognition of that status at the international level.

74. Mr. AL-SHAMAYLEH (Jordan) welcomed Tajikistan, Azerbaijan and the Central African Republic as new members. Their accession brought the Agency’s total membership to 130, a figure that attested to countries’ growing esteem for the Agency and its vital role in spreading and developing the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, enhancing nuclear safety and the safety of radioactive sources and materials, and preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons by means of its strengthened safeguards system.

75. In the century since the discovery of radioactivity, nuclear energy had served many beneficial purposes. But since the middle of the twentieth century, it had also been used to

build up huge arsenals of nuclear weapons. It was therefore essential, at the start of the new millennium, to strengthen the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and prevent its exploitation for non-peaceful purposes, eliminating the nuclear threat entirely from every region of the world.

76. Since the 1950s, Jordan had taken a keen interest in the peaceful use of radiation, especially for medical purposes. In the 1970s, it had begun to use isotope technology in studies of surface water and groundwater. In the following two decades, it had extended the applications of nuclear energy to industry, agriculture, earth sciences, scientific research and other areas. At the same time, it had developed legislation, supervision, certification and training to meet the growing need for expertise. A Nuclear Energy Department had been formed in the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources in the 1980s and preparations were under way for the establishment of an independent national nuclear energy authority.

77. Jordan had received effective support in the area of nuclear energy and radiation protection from the Agency. It was deeply grateful for that support and hoped it would continue in the future. Despite its lack of resources, Jordan was working hard to achieve higher standards in various branches of scientific knowledge and in health and other social services. It was firmly convinced of the Agency's importance not only because of the technical support it provided to Jordan and other developing countries but also because of its international role in promoting the safe use of radiation sources, the safe disposal of radioactive waste, the development of national regulatory bodies and capacities, the strengthening of safeguards and the combating of illicit trafficking in nuclear materials and radiation sources.

78. To enhance the Agency's role in those areas, steps should be taken, inter alia, to expand the technical co-operation programme, which should be financed from the Regular Budget so that it no longer depended on voluntary contributions and donations. To ensure the success of the safeguards system, it should be applied comprehensively to all parties in all geographical regions. That need was particularly urgent in the Middle East: Israel's delay in acceding to the NPT and its refusal to place its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards thwarted international efforts in that area. Jordan therefore urged the Conference to call on Israel to accede to the NPT and to place all its nuclear facilities under international supervision as the Arab States had done.

79. In conclusion, he announced that Jordan would be paying its pledges to the TCF for 2001 in full as had been its practice in previous years.

80. Mr. SANTER (Luxembourg) said that his country welcomed the unanimous adoption of the final document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference as a great success for the entire international community. The Review Conference had not only confirmed the IAEA's role as guarantor of nuclear non-proliferation but had also acknowledged the importance of additional protocols to safeguards agreements, pointing out that aside from the general benefits for international peace and security that would result from a strengthened safeguards system, the signature by more States of additional protocols would facilitate the exchange of nuclear materials and would thus also be in the interests of those countries which sometimes criticized the nuclear supplier States for not always responding positively to requests for the

provision of nuclear installations and material. He accordingly appealed to States which had not yet done so to undertake the necessary procedures for concluding such additional protocols and supported the Director General's desire to finalize the integrated safeguards system in 2001.

81. The first review meeting under the Convention on Nuclear Safety had had a positive impact on the safety of nuclear power plants, but in some cases additional safety measures had still to be carried out. He hoped that would be done before the second review meeting in 2002.

82. Luxembourg hoped that the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management would come into effect before the end of 2000 so that the first review meeting could be held within the scheduled time frame.

83. The Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material clearly had a very limited scope, since it covered only the international transport of nuclear material, not the storage, use and domestic transport thereof. Luxembourg believed there was a need to revise and extend its scope in the interests of preventing illicit trafficking. Although, for reasons of confidentiality, a system of periodic meetings to review national reports by the Contracting Parties could not be envisaged under such a revised Convention, is should be possible to replace it by some other suitable mechanism.

84. Finally, he noted that Luxembourg was conscious of the importance of technical co-operation for developing countries, especially in the fields of safety, health, agriculture and water resources, and therefore would contribute its full share to the TCF.

85. Mr. MATTUG (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that his country attached the utmost importance to technical co-operation in promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy, which yielded immediate economic and social benefits to developing countries through the enhancement of their scientific and technological capabilities, and was deeply grateful to the Agency for its valuable co-operation in recent years. However, he urged it to devote a greater proportion of its financial resources to the technical co-operation programme and to encourage the transfer of nuclear technology among Member States for use in the fields of food and agriculture, human health, industry and water resource management, in accordance with General Conference resolution GC(43)/RES/14. Greater emphasis should also be placed on the principle of assisting the developing countries to obtain materials and equipment from the industrialized countries.

86. The safeguards system should be applied to all States without exception and the nuclear-weapon States should draw up programmes for the elimination of their nuclear arsenals and the termination of all weapons development programmes. Otherwise, the safeguards system would appear as an instrument that served the interests of the nuclear Powers, enabling them to oppress other peoples by using their weapons as a deterrent.

87. He appreciated the Agency’s work in the areas of radiation protection, safe transport and disposal of radioactive waste and materials, and the combating of illicit trafficking in

nuclear materials. In that connection, he announced that the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had decided to accede to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

88. His country attached great importance to the use of nuclear energy as a clean and economical means of seawater desalination. Water shortages were threatening human life all over the world and wars would be fought in the future for access to water unless vigorous action was taken to increase supplies of potable water. The Agency could contribute to that endeavour by promoting the use of nuclear technology for seawater desalination. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, which had been one of the sponsors of General Conference resolution GC(XXXIII)/RES/515 on the plan for the production of low-cost potable water, would continue to provide material and moral support for such projects.

89. Attention should be given to the potential of small and medium-sized nuclear reactors for the production of electricity to meet the power requirements of small countries as well as for seawater desalination.

90. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya regularly attended international conferences and meetings at which the need for the nuclear Powers to liquidate their nuclear arsenals within a fixed time frame and in accordance with an internationally agreed programme was discussed. There was still a dangerous security imbalance in the Middle East region because Israel alone possessed nuclear weapons and refused to place its nuclear facilities under international supervision. Moreover, States outside the region were exerting pressure on some Middle Eastern States even though they were parties to the NPT and some had signed the Pelindaba African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty and the additional protocol. That was a clear example of the application of double standards. Peace in the region would remain unattainable so long as certain Powers continued to provide excuses for Israel’s failure to respond to appeals for peace. The General Conference should therefore give priority to the implementation of relevant international resolutions so that a nuclear-weapon-free zone could be established in the Middle East.

91. Mr. BORG (Malta), after welcoming the new Member States and associating himself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union, said that the increased use of nuclear technology for purposes other than energy production and the need to combat the ever-growing illicit trade in radioactive substances had made it appropriate for even small, non-nuclear States like Malta to join the Agency. Malta had done so in 1997. It was planning the enactment of legislation to establish a central authority for the control of activities connected with radioactive substances and the Agency's assistance would probably be sought for that purpose. Pending the elaboration of domestic regulations, Maltese officials were currently guided by British standards in all activities undertaken in connection with nuclear materials. Radioactive substances were used in Malta primarily in the medical field.

92. Action had already begun on upgrading to the highest international standards Malta's activities relating to radioactive substances. Equipment for the detection of radioactive substances in merchandise containers entering Malta had been obtained with the assistance of the United States of America and a course of training in its use had been held in Malta in

November 1999. About a third of the thirty participants had been from Mediterranean countries other than Malta.

93. The administrative procedures necessary for the ratification of the NPT and the CTBT had also already started.

94. There had been much co-operation between the Agency and Malta in the short period for which Malta had been a member. Two Agency experts had visited the country in 1998 for talks on the development of a policy for the handling of radioactive substances. Some of their proposals had already been put into effect. Maltese personnel whose work involved the handling of nuclear materials had attended courses under IAEA sponsorship. Projects were being carried out in civil protection and veterinary and medical services with the co-operation of the Agency.

95. The Government of Malta looked forward to continued co-operation with the Agency in the interests of nuclear safety and was confident that, with the IAEA's support, the country would very soon be in a position to satisfy the European Union's criteria in areas relating to the use of radioactive substances, thus bringing its membership of that community closer to reality.

The meeting was suspended at 12.10 p.m. and resumed at 12.20 p.m.

96. Mr. MALESKI (The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) said he wished to convey his country's unwavering support for the Agency in its work as a catalyst for the development of nuclear technology, a recognized authority on nuclear safety and an instrument for the verification of nuclear non-proliferation. He welcomed the Director General's "one house" concept for the management of the Agency and was convinced that it would lead to better alignment of programmes, a more streamlined Secretariat and a more effective outreach policy.

97. On 11 September 1999, the Board of Governors had authorized the Director General to conclude a safeguards agreement and additional protocol with The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Overall co-operation with the Agency was very satisfactory: thanks to the Agency, his country had been able to develop safety standards in conformity with international recommendations and to upgrade its safety infrastructure. New national legislation on radiation protection had been drafted and preparations for its promulgation and the establishment of a national regulatory body were well under way.

98. The country programme consisted of projects in the fields of nuclear medicine, animal production, water for irrigation and NDT techniques in industry. His country also benefited from regional technical co-operation projects and was grateful to the Agency for having approved the Prespa Lake study, which was being implemented jointly with Albania and Greece. He thanked the Agency for training Macedonian experts through scientific visits and fellowships for courses and seminars. His country was also willing to host specialists from neighbouring States, an activity for which support from the Department of Technical Co-operation would be especially appreciated.

99. He encouraged the Agency to persevere in its mission of furthering the use of nuclear energy for mutual benefit and enhanced co-operation and reaffirmed his country's willingness to remain a reliable member in facing the challenges of the new millennium.

100. Mr. CUTOIU (Romania) having associated himself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union, recalled that the latest NPT Review Conference had reaffirmed the importance of the safeguards activities carried out by the Agency and its fundamental role in promoting nuclear non-proliferation worldwide. On 7 July 2000, Romania had notified the IAEA that Parliament had ratified the additional protocol to its safeguards agreement. Preparations to produce the reports and information required under Article 3 of the protocol were under way. Romania was a new beneficiary of the co-ordinated technical support programme for newly independent States and would, he was confident, be able to perform an efficient self-assessment of its system of accounting for and control of nuclear materials, thereby facilitating the implementation of the additional protocol.

101. Specific activities had been conducted in co-operation with the police forces of other European countries to prevent and combat illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive materials. The Agency was providing assistance in training Romanian specialists, and he hoped that co-operation in that area would continue with the same good results.

102. The excellent record achieved in the operation of Unit 1 of the Cernavoda nuclear power plant confirmed that nuclear power represented a viable alternative for the production of electricity in Romania. The unit assured about 10% of overall national electricity production, thus avoiding the release into the environment of flying ashes and greenhouse gases that contributed to acid rain and global warming. The new market economy, with its emphasis on deregulation and competition, encouraged the further development of nuclear power in Romania. Unit 2 of the Cernavoda plant was scheduled to be completed by 2005.

103. At the request of the Romanian regulatory body, the Agency had recently performed an operational safety experience feedback (OSEF) review mission whose recommendations and findings were being incorporated into Romania’s OSEF process with a view to ensuring safer operation of the Cernavoda plant.

104. Romania had ratified the Protocol to Amend the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage and the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage. A national draft law on civil liability which closely followed those international instruments was under consideration by the Romanian Parliament. Internal procedures for the acceptance of the amendment of Articles VI and XIV.A of the Agency's Statute were at an advanced stage and he expected Parliament to approve the amendments by the end of the year.

105. Following the restructuring of the Romanian regulatory body, higher priority was now being given to safeguards and physical protection, radioactive waste management and public awareness. The National Commission for Nuclear Activities Control was updating its nuclear regulatory framework. Fundamental norms on radiological safety which reflected the

relevant European Union directive and took into account the Agency's latest recommendations had recently entered into force.

106. In recent years, within the framework of the Agency's technical co-operation programme, fellows and experts from several developing countries had been trained in Romania. His country was ready to continue such training and to contribute substantially to the regional technical co-operation programme for Europe. In conclusion, he thanked the Agency for its assistance in organizing a national public information symposium on peaceful uses of nuclear energy whose agenda had included topics related to radioactive waste management and site restoration in the uranium industry.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.