

General Conference

GC(47)/OR.2

Issued: June 2004

General Distribution

Original: English

Forty-Seventh (2003) Regular Session

Plenary

Record of the Second Meeting

Held at the Austria Center Vienna on Monday, 15 September 2003, at 3.05 p.m.

President: Mr. TAKASU (Japan)

Later: Ms. HALL (Canada)

Contents

Item of the provisional agenda*		Paragraphs
7	General debate and Annual Report for 2002 (<i>continued</i>)	1–108
	Statements by the delegates of:	
	Austria	1–9
	China	10–19
	Republic of Korea	20–33
	Serbia and Montenegro	34–38

The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(47)/INF/14/Rev.2.

[*] GC(47)/1 and Add.1.

Contents (continued)

Item of the provisional agenda	Paragraphs
Indonesia	39–50
Guatemala	51–55
Saudi Arabia	56–61
Ukraine	62–71
Ethiopia	72–75
South Africa	76–85
Sudan	86–95
Brazil	96–108

Abbreviations used in this record:

ABACC	Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials
AFRA	African Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARCAL	Co-operation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BATAN	Indonesian National Atomic Energy Agency
Chemical Weapons Convention	Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GPS	Global Positioning System
IEA	International Energy Agency
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
IRRT	International Regulatory Review Team
ITER	International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor
Joint Convention	Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management
LWR	light-water reactor
NGO	non-governmental organization
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
Paris Convention	Convention on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy
PATTEC	Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
R&D	Research and Development
SIT	sterile insect technique
SMR	small and medium-sized reactor
SSAC	State System of Accounting for and Control of Nuclear Material
TCDC	Technical cooperation among developing countries
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
TranSAS	Transport Safety Appraisal Service

7. General debate and Annual Report for 2002 (continued) (GC(47)/2)

1. Ms. FERRERO-WALDNER (Austria) said that, in fighting the threat of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, the international community was united in spite of differing views. Developments over the preceding year had both highlighted the importance and raised the profile of the Agency as a nuclear safety and non-proliferation watchdog, underlining its immense responsibility for maintaining international stability and security. Vienna was proud to host such an organization.

2. A key element of nuclear security was the protection of nuclear material against theft and the protection of nuclear facilities against sabotage or unauthorized access. The Agency's physical protection guidelines had served those purposes well since the early 70s. The CPPNM, although an important first step towards a legally binding instrument in that field, failed to meet current needs. She therefore commended the Director General for his initiative in convening a group of experts to discuss possible amendments to the Convention, and for having presented the results of those deliberations to Member States. Austria had participated actively in the expert meetings and was working with other countries to prepare a proposal for amendment of the Convention.

3. Another key element of nuclear security and nuclear non-proliferation was safeguards. Over the preceding twelve months the Board had dealt with proliferation challenges in Iraq, the DPRK and Iran. It was of utmost importance that the Agency should be able to verify not only non-diversion of nuclear material but also the absence of undeclared materials and activities. As a staunch supporter of the safeguards system, Austria had welcomed the adoption of the Model Additional Protocol and the development of the integrated safeguards system, but it shared the Director General's disappointment at the low number of additional protocols that had come into force so far. Furthermore, 47 countries had not yet even concluded a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the Agency as required under Article III of the NPT. Her country held the view that the conclusion of an additional protocol was not optional but a legal obligation for non-nuclear-weapon States party to the NPT. It therefore called upon all States to negotiate and conclude an additional protocol to their safeguards agreements without delay. It also appreciated the efforts of the Agency and the Government of Japan to promote the universal application of the additional protocol.

4. Nuclear security was a precondition for nuclear cooperation and trade, and States party to the NPT were obliged to ensure that any nuclear items they supplied were not diverted to non-peaceful uses. To do that, it was essential to verify that the recipient state had concluded a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol, that it adequately protected its nuclear material, had adopted and implemented stringent export control legislation, and had adequate measures in place to combat illicit trafficking in nuclear material. Many countries lacked the experience to devise and implement such a national nuclear security system. It was therefore incumbent on the Agency and Member States with sufficient experience to assist those countries to close the security gap.

5. Austria's nuclear power policy aimed at gradually phasing out nuclear power production at international level, and at assisting those countries wishing to follow that path. However, as nuclear power plants would continue to exist for quite some time, it was essential to reduce the risks of that technology as far as possible. Austria was therefore actively participating in all efforts to reduce such risks and was closely involved in nuclear safety issues within the context of EU enlargement and the establishment of common EU safety standards for nuclear installations. It also fully supported the Agency's efforts to upgrade and complete its set of safety standards.

6. The public expected legally binding and enforceable standards. For that reason, Austria attached particular importance to nuclear liability and had adopted a strict nuclear liability regime. Current international nuclear liability regimes granted many privileges to industry but did not provide sufficient guarantees for potential victims of a nuclear accident. The pending amendments to the Paris Convention failed to remedy that situation.

7. Future energy strategies should focus on demand. Austria had concluded energy partnerships with several neighbouring countries and, with a view to ensuring fair competition, it advocated the elimination of unwarranted advantages, subsidies and assistances to well established energy industries, in particular the nuclear industry.

8. Several countries had ratified or acceded to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management over the preceding year. The first review meeting for that Convention was to be held in November 2003 and it was hoped it would yield positive results. Austria called upon all States which had not yet done so to sign and ratify the Convention, particularly those that operated nuclear power plants or dealt with significant amounts of radioactive waste.

9. The effectiveness and efficiency of the technical cooperation programme continued to increase. Austria fully supported the Agency's activities in the field of non-power applications of nuclear energy, in particular in the areas of human health, hydrology and the environment. It had once again paid its full share of the TCF target in 2003 and would continue to meet its financial obligations.

10. Mr. ZHANG Huazhu (China) commended the INPRO project, which should inject new vitality into the development and application of nuclear energy in the future, and the Agency's work on nuclear technology applications in human health, water resource development, food safety and environmental protection, as well as the progress in the development of integrated safeguards.

11. The year 2004 marked the fiftieth anniversary of nuclear power generation. Over that period, nuclear power had come to be acknowledged as a clean, safe and economic form of energy, and had played an important role in the energy mix throughout the world. Nuclear power was undergoing stable development in China. In the course of a year or more, five new reactor units had been installed, doubling the country's installed capacity, and another three would be put into operation over the coming two years. Nuclear power would be further developed to meet the power demands of economic development up to 2020 and feasibility studies for new nuclear power projects were in progress.

12. China strongly opposed the proliferation of nuclear weapons and consistently supported the efforts of the international community to prevent proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It had taken the lead among the nuclear-weapon States by bringing into force an additional protocol in March 2002 and submitting a declaration to the Secretariat, and had clarified some issues on its nuclear cooperation with non-nuclear weapon States. He called upon all countries with major nuclear activities to sign and ratify an additional protocol.

13. Terrorism was currently a great threat to peace and development and China supported the Agency in its efforts to combat nuclear terrorism, in accordance with the principles and objectives of the Statute. It also hoped that the modification of the CPPNM would be completed at an early date. In cooperation with the Agency, the Chinese Government had hosted a training course on physical protection of nuclear material and facilities in late 2002 and had provided aid in kind for that event worth US \$100 000. The Chinese Government and the Agency had decided to hold a training course on SSACs early in 2004 to help train personnel from countries in the Asia and Pacific region.

14. The safe operation of nuclear reactors, disposal of nuclear waste and management of radioactive sources had always been challenges facing nuclear energy development. His country therefore noted with pleasure that the Agency had finished compiling a series of international legal documents on nuclear safety, and that the implementation of the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention was progressing systematically with energetic support from Member States. The Agency had reinforced its efforts on the safety and security of radiation sources by organizing the International Conference on Security of Radioactive Sources and formulating and revising the code of conduct and the action plan on that issue. Its work fully demonstrated the high level of importance the Secretariat and Member States attached to the matter.

15. China, like other countries in East Asia faced with the problem of integrating nuclear power technology, had accumulated successful experience in incorporating management technology and safety supervision mechanisms from other countries. In 2004, a regional seminar on management and safety was to be held in China which would be co-sponsored by the Agency and would serve as an appropriate forum for Member States to share and exchange such experience.

16. The Agency still tended to give more attention to safeguards than to technical cooperation. The shortage of funds for technical cooperation activities had not been given enough attention during the discussions of the Agency's budget for 2004–2005. Some projects of vital importance to developing countries had not been included in the Agency's core programme owing to financial constraints. Moreover, some developed countries had obstructed scientific visits and training under technical cooperation projects, which had affected their successful implementation.

17. As the only intergovernmental organization in the nuclear field, the Agency should devote more attention to technical cooperation and adopt effective measures to meet the legitimate needs of developing Member States for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Equally, Member States should support the Agency's promotional activities, ensure sufficient and reliable funding was available and facilitate the successful implementation of technical cooperation programmes.

18. China pursued an independent and peaceful foreign policy and held that disputes within the international community should be settled through friendly consultations and negotiations. Following the trilateral talks on the Korean nuclear issue in Beijing in April, six-party talks had been held successfully in Beijing from 27 to 29 August. At those talks, all parties had expressed their willingness to resolve the Korean nuclear issue through peaceful dialogue with a view to maintaining peace and stability and creating lasting peace on the Korean peninsula. They had spoken in favour of the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and had recognized the need to consider and resolve the security concerns of the DPRK. Moreover, they had agreed to seek a comprehensive and reasonable package solution that allowed for phased, simultaneous or parallel implementation, had given assurances that they would not take any measures which would escalate the situation during the talks, had agreed to continue the dialogue with a view to building confidence, reducing divergences and expanding consensus, and had agreed to continue the six-party talks. China, as the host country, had been pleased with the progress made and remained convinced that the issue could be properly and peacefully resolved as long as all parties involved maintained the political will to do so. It hoped that the Agency would continue to play an active role in settling such issues through peaceful negotiations based on objectiveness and fairness.

19. The year 2004 would mark the 20th anniversary of China's accession to the Agency. As a developing country, China had benefited greatly from the Agency's assistance and had also contributed to the Agency's activities. The Chinese Government was committed to maintaining its full support for the Agency's work and remained convinced that, with the joint efforts of Member States and the Secretariat, and provided it followed the principles and objectives of the Statute and

maintained a proper balance between its two main functions, the Agency could look forward to even greater achievements.

20. Mr. Ho-koon PARK (Republic of Korea) commended the Secretariat's efforts to prevent nuclear terrorism since 11 September 2001 and its significant contribution to the establishment of a nuclear security infrastructure for Member States. In April 2003, the Republic of Korea had concluded an arrangement for technical cooperation on nuclear security with the Agency with a view to consolidating the relevant expertise and experience of both parties in that area. It had also promulgated a new domestic law on physical protection of nuclear material and facilities and measures for a radiological emergency in May 2003.

21. The Government of the Republic of Korea had assigned the highest priority to nuclear safety in developing its nuclear policy and the Korean nuclear community had adopted a nuclear safety charter setting forth eight fundamental principles in September 2001. With regard to the safety and security of radiation sources, his country was testing a GPS-linked tracking method for source containers and hoped the Agency and other Member States would join it in studying that approach. It also supported the Agency's initiative to establish an Asian nuclear safety network and had hosted the second consultation meeting for that venture in March 2003 to share its experience of the Korean safety networking programme.

22. Nuclear energy had been a major stimulus to economic growth in his country, which had eighteen nuclear power plants in commercial operation providing approximately 40% of the nation's electricity supply. Six units were Korean standard nuclear power plants with a capacity of 1000 MW(e). The Republic of Korea had also developed the innovative advanced power reactor with a capacity of 1400 MW(e), the first of which scheduled for construction in 2004. It was planned that 27 nuclear power plants would be on the grid by 2015. His country had also launched a pilot project for a 65 MW(t) SMR, the SMART-P (System-integrated Modular Advanced Reactor P), scheduled for completion in 2008. Moreover, it was very willing to share its experience in the planning, construction and operation of nuclear power plants with all Member States and encouraged them to participate in the SMR deployment programme.

23. The Republic of Korea appreciated the Secretariat's initiative in convening an international conference on innovative technologies for nuclear fuel cycles and nuclear power in June 2003 which had provided a forum for a collaborative approach to the development of future-oriented nuclear technologies. It was also a member of INPRO and would be actively participating in the implementation of that project, including the conducting of a case study of user requirements and the continued assignment of a cost-free expert to the Agency's Department of Nuclear Energy.

24. Turning to other future energy sources, the hydrogen economy had been discussed at an IEA meeting in April 2003, and nuclear energy could play a key role in clean, large-scale hydrogen production. The Agency should therefore revisit that issue and consider revitalizing its hydrogen energy programme. In June 2003, the Republic of Korea had joined the ITER project as a full partner and would be contributing fully to it using its superconducting tokamak advanced research facility.

25. Radiation technology was being ever more widely used in such areas as water resource management, health care, food preservation and environmental protection. In December 2002, his country had enacted a law on the promotion of the utilization of radiation and radioisotopes and it would be making extensive efforts to increase the share of radiation technology in the nuclear industry up to 30% by 2010. To that end, a new advanced radiation technology R&D centre was under construction in Jeongeup City which it was hoped would be used as a shared resource for the North-East Asia region.

26. The Republic of Korea supported the Agency's nuclear knowledge management activities pursuant to resolution GC(46)/RES/11 and the idea of an international nuclear university. In collaboration with the Agency, it had hosted an inaugural meeting for the Asian network for higher education in nuclear technology in June 2003.

27. The RCA Regional Office had been opened in the Republic of Korea in March 2002 with a view to consolidating RCA ownership, and his Government had contributed \$500 000 annually for its operation. It was expected that a resolution legally establishing that office would be adopted at the 32nd RCA General Conference to be held during the current week.

28. His country unswervingly supported the Agency's safeguards system, which was essential to international peace and security. The system currently faced unprecedented challenges despite the excellent record of compliance by the vast majority of NPT countries.

29. He noted with concern that the Agency was still unable to provide assurances regarding the non-diversion of nuclear material to nuclear weapons in the DPRK, whose nuclear programme posed a serious and immediate threat to the nuclear non-proliferation regime. He urged the DPRK to retract its announced withdrawal from the NPT and comply with its NPT obligations, to dismantle its nuclear weapons programme completely, irreversibly and verifiably, to commit itself to the complete and effective implementation of its safeguards agreement, and to cooperate promptly and fully with the Agency. The six-party talks held in Beijing in August 2003 had marked a significant step towards a peaceful resolution of the DPRK issue. In particular, the six parties had agreed in principle on the ultimate goal of establishing a nuclear weapon-free Korean Peninsula through peaceful dialogue. It was hoped that there would be a timely resumption of the talks to facilitate meaningful progress.

30. The Board's resolution of the preceding week on Iran's nuclear programme demonstrated the firm commitment of the international community to resolving swiftly all outstanding safeguards issues and maintaining the integrity of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. He expressed the hoped that Iran would offer accelerated cooperation and full transparency on all aspects of its nuclear programme and comply with the resolution in a constructive manner.

31. The Republic of Korea supported universal adherence to the additional protocol, which had greatly contributed to building confidence within the international community that all States would fully comply with their non-proliferation commitments. His Government had recently completed its domestic preparations for the implementation of an additional protocol and it was expected that the parliamentary ratification process would be concluded by the end of 2003. Moreover, the new partnership approach for LWRs between the Agency and the Republic of Korea had already saved more than thirty days of inspection time, as described in the *Safeguards Implementation Report for 2002* (document GOV/2003/35, paragraph 81).

32. The amendment to Article VI of the Agency's Statute had been adopted unanimously at the 43rd regular session of the General Conference in resolution GC(43)/RES/19. The outcome of nearly twenty years of discussions at the Agency aimed at adapting the Board's composition to conform to present-day realities, it accommodated the principle of greater democratic representation without jeopardizing the Board's efficiency. He urged all Member States that had not yet done so to accept the amendment as soon as possible and encouraged the Director General to continue to remind Member States of the need for the amendment to enter into force.

33. Fifty years had passed since President Eisenhower had made his historic 'Atoms for Peace' speech. Over that period, nuclear technology had been used to generate the electricity needed to meet human needs and, over the coming fifty years, nuclear science and technology would surely bring greater prosperity and enhanced quality of life for future generations.

34. Mr. NURKović (Serbia and Montenegro) said that relations between Serbia and Montenegro had been regulated by the Constitutional Charter of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro since 4 February 2003. The aim of establishing new relations had been, inter alia, to achieve equal status of the member States, to harmonize regulations and practices with European and international standards, and to sign the Stabilization and Association Agreement to be followed by accession to the European Union. The Constitutional Charter regulated relations between Serbia and Montenegro in a new way. Some matters that had previously been administered by the joint community had been transferred to member State level, including nuclear energy. The Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro had recognized the need to create two focal points for the establishment of national regulatory bodies to deal with all nuclear energy issues. Serbia and Montenegro would establish new communication channels, taking into account the standards and principles applied by the Agency for communications with its Member States. The Council of Ministers would also coordinate the harmonization of the positions and interests of the member States of Serbia and Montenegro.

35. Serbia and Montenegro fully supported the Agency's efforts to strengthen international cooperation in the field of nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety. Renewed impetus should be given to the management and disposal of spent high-enriched uranium nuclear fuel, and the tripartite activities of the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the Agency in that area should be resumed since they not only contributed to nuclear and radiation safety but also helped protect against nuclear terrorism. His country had a particular interest in those activities, since it had spent fuel of that type at the Vinča Institute. In 2002, its unused 80% enriched nuclear fuel had been shipped back to the country of origin, the Russian Federation.

36. His country understood the need to strengthen national radiation protection infrastructures and had made additional efforts to adopt safety standards and develop infrastructures that met Agency recommendations. Regrettably, it had so far been unable to join regional projects on the establishment of a regulatory body, control of radiation exposure in the working environment, during medical treatment and in the environment, and emergency response. However, it would be applying for support in that area in the 2005–2006 technical cooperation cycle and hoped that that would not affect its applications for assistance in other areas.

37. Serbia and Montenegro supported strengthened safeguards and was ready to embark on the harmonization procedure for the draft agreement on the application of safeguards in connection with the NPT and, subsequently, the additional protocol. Its priorities continued to be the removal of the spent nuclear fuel from the RA research reactor, the decommissioning of that reactor and the safe management of nuclear waste at the Vinča Institute.

38. His country had paid the envisaged amount into the Agency's Regular Budget for 2003 and would also take all necessary measures to meet its future financial commitments in a timely manner. It was also willing to pay a voluntary contribution to the TCF for 2004.

Ms. Hall (Canada) took the chair.

39. Mr. RAJASA (Indonesia) expressed appreciation for the level of resources the Agency committed both directly and indirectly to technical cooperation. To date, 87 CPFs were in place which were used as planning tools to design projects in the light of national priorities. To get the maximum benefits from the limited resources of the TCF, Indonesia had signed a CPF in November 2000 which was currently being updated to meet its changing development plans. He commended the Agency's efforts to expand and intensify the application of nuclear science and technology to improve quality of life, particularly in developing countries. The Agency's technical cooperation programmes had significantly helped his country with the development of human resources and technical capabilities.

40. Nuclear technology could have a significant impact in such fields as food irradiation, river basin management and the use of isotopic techniques to control communicable diseases. Indonesia attached high priority to activities in the areas of education and capacity building, and particular emphasis was being given to programmes that had a direct impact on improving quality of life and increasing social welfare

41. To disseminate their proven research products, the scientists of the Indonesian National Nuclear Energy Agency (BATAN) maintained close contacts with local government, universities, hospitals, small and medium-sized enterprises, cooperatives and NGOs. BATAN had recently released three new high-yield rice varieties which were resistant to pests and unfavourable climate. Significant progress had also been made in the development of nuclear techniques to improve animal reproduction and health, and of feed supplementation technology to increase meat and milk production and quality. The products in question had been transferred successfully to farmers and small and medium-sized enterprises.

42. For 2003–2004 the Agency had approved a project on the setting up of a radiotherapy centre on Borneo at the Ulin Hospital in South Kalimantan. The South Kalimantan Provincial Government had engaged to provide the infrastructure and financial support for operational and maintenance costs, as well as the cost of replacing the cobalt-60 source, on a cost-sharing basis. As the project counterpart, the Ulin Hospital would contribute by constructing a new laboratory building in the hospital area where the radiotherapy equipment would be installed.

43. Indonesia's national development programme for the medium and long term included nuclear power as a potential option in the energy mix. In view of the environmental merits of nuclear power, Indonesia would pursue and enhance systematic planning for its introduction, in particular in the fields of safety, regulation, final waste disposal, environmental impact analysis, and financing. In 1997, the nuclear power plant programme had been close to approval and BATAN had nearly completed the site and off-site data acquisition and evaluation. However, the programme had been interrupted by the economic crisis, prompting further investigation and data collection to strengthen the planning process. That study of different energy sources had been carried out through the Agency's technical cooperation programme and the results had been submitted to the President of Indonesia in August 2003. His country was also considering the use of nuclear power for seawater desalination. With Agency technical assistance, Indonesia and the Republic of Korea had initiated a joint feasibility study of a nuclear desalination plant to supply water and electricity for Madura Island.

44. The development of an effective and efficient regulatory framework and instruments, as well as the human resources required and the associated supporting scientific and technical infrastructure, was essential to ensure nuclear and radiological safety in the development and utilization of nuclear energy, especially in view of the plan to introduce nuclear power in Indonesia in the foreseeable future. Furthermore, the increasing terrorist threat to nuclear and radiation facilities, and illicit trafficking in and/or illicit use of nuclear material, radiation sources and radioactive waste, called for greater attention to nuclear security. In that connection, Indonesia appreciated the assistance and cooperation the Agency had given to Member States with the setting up of national regulatory frameworks, in particular through model projects RAS/9/026 and RAS/9/027. Those model projects had provided significant assistance to the Indonesian Nuclear Energy Control Board. IRRRT missions had been sent to Indonesia to review the effectiveness and efficiency of the national regulatory authority and make appropriate recommendations, in particular with respect to the development of emergency response capabilities. In addition, integrated safety evaluation missions and basic professional training courses had been conducted to assist the country with its preparations for the introduction of nuclear power.

45. According to the *Safeguards Implementation Report for 2002*, 145 States had safeguards agreements in force, and nuclear material and other items placed under safeguards had remained in peaceful uses or were otherwise adequately accounted for. Moreover, approximately 80 additional protocols had been approved.

46. His country was in the process of implementing the framework for integrated safeguards and had brought both a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol into force. Internationally, it also took part in discussions concerning the additional protocol. He believed that those measures would strengthen the effectiveness and improve the efficiency of the safeguards system and application of the Model Additional Protocol.

47. With regard to verification in the DPRK, at the 36th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting ASEAN Foreign Ministers had reaffirmed their conviction that a nuclear-weapon-free Korea and a peaceful resolution of the current tensions through dialogue and negotiation would be a valuable contribution to peace and stability in East Asia. In that connection, Indonesia strongly supported for the process of dialogue and consultation at the six-nation talks held in China, in August 2003.

48. The universality, consolidation and strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, including concrete steps to reduce the number of and dependence on nuclear weapons, were more important than ever for the continued sustainability and credibility of the regime. However, international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy was also important, and one of the fundamental pillars of the NPT. Both Article VI of the NPT and the inalienable right of all State parties to the unimpeded and non-discriminatory transfer of nuclear technology and material played an indispensable role in catering for national development requirements. The CTBT also constituted an effective step towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and his country was pursuing its efforts to ratify the Treaty as evidence of its commitment to world peace. It also supported the establishment of a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East and called upon all parties concerned to take urgent and practical steps to establish such a zone and, pending its establishment, to place all their nuclear facilities under Agency comprehensive safeguards without delay.

49. The recent bomb attack at the Marriott Hotel in Jakarta in August 2003 had demonstrated the heinous, ruthless and uncivilized nature of such attacks. The barbaric terrorist attack on the United Nations Office in Iraq had cost the lives of many United Nations staff. Indonesia condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. However, it was essential to address the root causes of terrorism and to reject any attempt to associate terrorism with a religion, race, nationality or ethnic group. Terrorism was a serious threat to international peace and security and his country stood ready to support measures at global and regional level to combat it. The real danger that terrorist groups might resort to the use of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction was cause for particular concern. He expressed appreciation to the Agency for its commitment in the area of nuclear security and its efforts to protect Member States and the international community against nuclear terrorism. In particular, he commended it for organizing the International Conference on Advances in Destructive and Non-Destructive Analysis for Environmental Monitoring and Nuclear Forensics in Karlsruhe, Germany, and the International Conference on Security of Radioactive Sources in Vienna, and for establishing the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security.

50. Indonesia also shared some of the concerns of coastal states with respect to nuclear transport safety and, in particular, the growing danger of accidents caused by natural events, human error, or criminal or terrorist acts. Nuclear security should be one of the world's priorities and he called upon all parties concerned to do their utmost to support efforts to strengthen international cooperation in nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety. It was also important that the activities proposed by the

Director General in his report on protection against nuclear terrorism (document GOV/2002/10) should continue. The Agency should use the Nuclear Security Fund for that purpose.

51. Mr. ARCHILA SERRANO (Guatemala) said that his country was pursuing integration with neighbouring countries under the Plan Puebla Panamá which would create enormous opportunities for over 65 million people. The electrical power networks of Mexico and Central America would be interlinked, joint clean energy projects would be developed and peaceful uses of nuclear energy promoted.

52. The Agency had proved a loyal ally of Guatemala in its development efforts. As a signatory to the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Tlatelolco Treaty, the country was committed to fostering global peace, security and nuclear disarmament. Radiation safety was a priority interest and the national body responsible for regulating ionizing radiation, backed by appropriate legislation and the authority to penalize offenders, monitored the safety of radiation sources entering or leaving the country, the security of radioactive material and good practice in handling radioactive material.

53. The Agency's model projects in the radiation protection field had strengthened Guatemala's regulatory authority through the support they had provided for the legislative framework governing radiation protection, ionizing radiation and the transport of radioactive material. The secondary standards dosimetry laboratory had been strengthened. It also served as a reference laboratory for the Central American region, currently providing calibration services to El Salvador, Nicaragua and Costa Rica for radiotherapy. Guatemala stood ready to offer such services free of charge to regulatory authorities in the subregion. Guatemala had attended the meeting of national counterparts and decision-makers on radiation protection model projects and it urged the Agency to extend the project for the next five years and to support the initiative of the Forum of Ibero-American Regulators to set up an Ibero-American network on nuclear and radiation issues, as well as supporting Guatemala's membership of that Forum. His country had undertaken to implement contingency plans for radiological emergencies and had established a national radiological emergency response plan. A recent audit mission to evaluate the effectiveness of the regulatory infrastructure for radiation safety and control of occupational exposure had concluded that the model project had been effective. The Agency thus played an ongoing promotional, supervisory and advisory role and Guatemala encouraged it to continue conducting such audits.

54. The new approach adopted in the Agency's technical cooperation programme had enhanced the design, monitoring and evaluation of projects in Guatemala. National and regional workshops on project development had been held in the country to develop managerial capacity in the region. Guatemala had enhanced its institutional capacity and the expertise of its human resources and had used nuclear technology to solve problems in the areas of health, agriculture, industry and the environment. The Agency had provided technical assistance in the form of medical equipment and training for medical physicists, and had helped with the introduction of quality assurance programmes in radiotherapy. Guatemala's geothermal fields had been evaluated through the regional project on the development of geothermal energy and it hoped to achieve an overall output of 500 MW from its known geothermal areas. With help from the United States and Mexico, and the support of the Agency and the FAO, the medfly had been successfully eradicated and fellowship holders from all over the world had been trained in the SIT. The medium-term technical cooperation programme would focus on activities aimed at eliminating poverty and promoting rural development. Finally, at the most recent meeting of the ARCAL Technical Coordination Board, his country had been elected Vice-President and the next meeting would be held in Guatemala. He commended the Agency's support for ARCAL, which had promoted and implemented a large number of nuclear applications projects.

55. In conclusion, he urged all Member States to continue to pay their assessed contributions and announced that Guatemala had undertaken to pay off its arrears to the TCF over a period of ten years.

56. Mr. AL-ATHEL (Saudi Arabia) said that the results of the Agency's analysis of its policy and management over the preceding two years should be taken into account when developing the Medium Term Strategy for 2006–2011.

57. Although Saudi Arabia's nuclear activities were confined to the educational field and a limited number of medical, agricultural and industrial projects, it was eager to maintain its constructive programme of technical cooperation with the Agency.

58. Saudi Arabia had joined the hard-won consensus in the Board of Governors on the package proposal on the Agency's draft programme and budget for 2004–2005. Board members had expressed divergent views on the Secretariat's justifications for ending the policy of zero real growth, although the Director General had insisted on the need for an increase in the Regular Budget to meet the demands of the Agency's expanding membership and requests for increased technical cooperation and safeguards activities. The consultations had been so protracted that they had prevented the Board from taking the customary steps to transmit the draft programme and budget to the General Conference.

59. There seemed to be a discrepancy between States' priorities in submitting requests to the Agency and the criteria applied by the Agency in drawing up its programme and budget, namely its legal obligations under the Statute and pursuant to the decisions of its policy-making organs. The Secretariat saw little opportunity for further savings in administrative costs, citing the opinion of the Swiss external management consultant Marnet to the effect that any further cost reductions would adversely affect the quality of the Agency's programmes and services. However, many Board members had taken a different view, continuing to urge the Agency to seek ways of cutting costs while maintaining the quality of its performance. According to the Agency, safeguards activities were one of the main reasons why an increase in the Regular Budget was necessary in real terms. It had so far failed, however, to achieve the anticipated savings from the introduction of integrated safeguards, nor had it undertaken the planned redeployment that would have reduced safeguards posts by seven. Perhaps the safeguards activities currently under way in a State whose Government was bearing the full cost of the Agency's verification and inspection activities could be used as a precedent for the future in order to reduce the financial burden on the Agency.

60. The use of part of the requested increase in the Regular Budget for 2004–2005 for the funding of statutory — principally verification — activities that had formerly been financed from extrabudgetary resources in order to eliminate uncertainty with respect to their implementation, and the planned reduction in extrabudgetary funds from 8.6% to 2.5%, had prompted developing countries to question the importance attached by the Agency to efforts to develop more stable arrangements for financing technical cooperation. The decline in the resources available for implementing technical assistance programmes adversely affected the Agency's cooperation with Member States that required its assistance with the implementation of nuclear applications to promote their sustainable development.

61. Finally, he expressed the hope that the Agency would be able to wrap up the items on the application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East and Israel's nuclear capabilities and threat, which had been on the Conference's agenda — to no avail — for a number of years, and that the outcome would be the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East through the adoption of an equitable approach to the States concerned.

Mr. Takasu (Japan) resumed the chair.

62. Mr. YERMILOV (Ukraine) said that, for his own country and many others which used nuclear power to produce energy, some of the main priorities were improvement of the safety and reliability of nuclear reactors and management of spent fuel and radioactive waste. The Ukrainian Government had introduced a programme to upgrade its 13 operating nuclear power plant units and improve their safety. It was also concerned over their physical security and was participating actively in the work on the amendment of the CPPNM. Ukraine also supported the efforts of the Agency and its Member States to prevent nuclear terrorism.

63. Dealing with the consequences of the accident at Unit 4 of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant was still an important issue for his country. A number of unique and large-scale projects were under way at the site, involving organizations, scientists and engineers from many countries. A new containment structure for the destroyed Unit 4 was being designed and infrastructure created for decommissioning the plant. Particular attention was being paid to nuclear and radiation safety standards in that work. Ukraine had fulfilled all its obligations in respect of the shutdown of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. He expressed the hope that the signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding signed in Ottawa in 1995 would fulfil their obligations equally conscientiously. The Agency was making an important contribution to resolving the problems of making the Chernobyl Shelter ecologically safe and minimizing the nuclear and radiation risks from the destroyed unit. An Agency technical cooperation project was currently working on approaches for evaluating the fuel-containing masses and radioactive waste in the Shelter.

64. Another key element of the Agency's technical cooperation activities was its work to improve the operational safety of nuclear power plants. Ukraine would be commissioning two new units at the Rovno and Khmelnytsky nuclear plants over the coming few years and it was working to raise safety standards at its nuclear power plants, including the new units, to the level expected by the international community. It stood ready to cooperate with the Agency and other countries on that issue.

65. Ukraine was also interested in industrial, agricultural and medical applications of nuclear technology, but its chief priorities in its technical cooperation with the Agency were improving the safety of its nuclear power plants, ageing management and extension of plant operating life. All those aspects were covered in its CPF. Ukraine also met its financial obligations to the Agency in full and on time.

66. The results of INPRO were important to many countries including his own, which was developing an energy strategy in which nuclear power played a large part. Over the coming 30 years, electricity generated by nuclear power plants would play a key role in meeting the energy needs of the country.

67. His country supported the Agency's efforts to improve the efficiency of the safeguards system in the face of the new challenges that had arisen in recent years. Safeguards agreements and additional protocols were undoubtedly a key element of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. As a State which had voluntarily renounced the world's third largest nuclear arsenal and had adopted non-nuclear-weapon status, Ukraine appealed to all Agency Member States, and especially the DPRK itself, to do their utmost to preserve that country's non-nuclear-weapon status and re-establish its full cooperation with the Agency. Ukraine was currently preparing to ratify the additional protocol to its safeguards agreement which it had signed in August 2000.

68. His country was a party to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management and those issues were of great interest to it owing to its significant reliance on nuclear power, and the aftermath of the Chernobyl accident. He called on all States which had not already done so to accede to the Joint Convention and expressed the hope that those issues would be adequately reflected in the Agency's technical cooperation programme. He

thanked the Secretariat for its work in preparing the first Review Meeting of Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention to be held in November 2003, which should allow the situation in each country to be assessed, priorities to be determined and appropriate recommendations elaborated.

69. The International Conference on Security of Radioactive Sources, held in Vienna in March 2003, had strengthened Governments' understanding of the tasks to be faced in that area and their readiness to work together to fulfil them. His Government supported an enhanced role for the Agency in the Action Plan for the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. Ukraine was participating in the approval of the draft Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and felt sure that the changes which it had suggested would help strengthen the safety and security regime for such sources. He expressed the hope that the General Conference would endorse the Code of Conduct and that the Agency would continue to promote its application. Although it was not legally binding, Ukraine intended to abide by its provisions and he called upon other Member States to do likewise.

70. In February 2003, his Government had submitted its instrument of ratification for the amendment to Article VI of the Agency's Statute to the depositary. Increasing the number of members of the Board of Governors would undoubtedly make its decisions more effective.

71. Finally, during the coming year the parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety would be preparing for the third review meeting under the Convention which should provide an opportunity to demonstrate what progress the Contracting Parties had made in improving the nuclear and radiation safety of their nuclear power plants.

72. Mr. AMHA (Ethiopia) said that more than 85% of Ethiopia's population depended on the agricultural sector for their livelihood and increasing agricultural production was therefore the main priority of his Government's economic policies. The Agency's technical cooperation with Ethiopia had focused on two major projects: one on use of the SIT for tsetse eradication, and one on exploration of groundwater and geothermal resources. Some 150 000 to 200 000 km² of land in the south, west and north-west of the country were infested with tsetse flies, placing 10–14 million head of cattle and an equivalent number of small ruminants at serious risk of trypanosomosis. The tsetse eradication project had been initiated some five years previously and its achievements so far included manpower development and baseline data collection and analysis. Its activities focused mainly on the establishment of tsetse fly mass rearing and sterilization centres and on pest suppression and surveillance. Those tasks required substantial resources and there was an imperative need to search for additional sources of support. The efforts being made by the Agency were greatly appreciated, and he also expressed gratitude to the United States Government for its support. Ethiopia had played a leading part in the establishment of PATTEC, and the recent meeting of Heads of State and Government of the African Union held in Maputo had confirmed the commitment of African countries to dealing with the problem. He called on the Agency to consolidate and strengthen its efforts in that area.

73. Agency support in the area of isotope hydrology had helped generate the information needed to understand the movement, recharge and origin of groundwater, lake level rise problems and geothermal resources. The Government of Ethiopia was launching a groundwater resources assessment programme aimed at mapping the hydrogeology of the country using a phased approach over a period of 10–12 years. There was a clear need for proper management of water resources in order to ensure sustainable water supplies and food self-sufficiency and Ethiopia was seeking strong support from the Agency and the international community.

74. As early as 1993, Ethiopia had established a national radiation protection authority. For the last five years it had been actively cooperating with the Agency in the framework of the regional model projects for the development and strengthening of radiation protection infrastructure in Africa. Efforts

to build a sustainable national infrastructure compatible with the socio-economic conditions of the country, and to establish sound protection standards and a deep-rooted safety culture in all areas where ionizing radiation sources were used, would continue. Ethiopia looked forward to continued technical cooperation with the Agency in that area. His country had also actively participated in the revision of the Code Of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, had successfully hosted a number of AFRA events through the year, and would continue to foster regional cooperation.

75. In conclusion, the Agency had been a reliable development partner for his country over a number of years and he thanked the Director General for the assistance it provided. Ethiopia was committed to making a positive contribution towards the achievement of the Agency's major objectives.

76. Ms. SHABANGU (South Africa) said that the peaceful application of nuclear technology formed an integral part of the NPT. South Africa had continued its efforts to promote international cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear activities and had encouraged the exchange of scientific information, particularly in Africa. It welcomed the united manner in which the Board of Governors had acted to encourage the Government of Iran to further its cooperation with the Agency on the implementation of safeguards and to clarify outstanding issues so that the Agency could fulfil its mandate. In that context, it was essential to remember the cardinal importance of maintaining and enhancing the integrity of the NPT and the Agency.

77. South Africa valued the Agency's work in the area of technical cooperation and had, for its part, continued to make available technical experts for missions to States in the region dealing with such issues as conditioning and safe storage of spent radiation sources, sharing of experience and provision of advice on increasing the financial independence and sustainability of national nuclear institutions, and the use of tracer techniques in agriculture and industry. It had also continued to support programmes aimed at promoting applications of nuclear technology in African countries. Its contributions in kind over the preceding year in that regard had amounted to more than \$180 500. She expressed appreciation for the Agency's technical cooperation project on the use of isotope techniques to assess nutrition intervention programmes related to HIV/AIDS in Africa, which addressed problems of immense importance for the region. Continued support was needed for the application of nuclear techniques in nutrition studies. Her country also supported the efforts to enhance regional resource centres, which would give impetus to TCDC. A project aimed at emerging cattle farmers had been set up in South Africa, with the assistance of AFRA, under which the Agency would be supplying ten African States with radioisotope-labelled progesterone produced in South Africa to assist farmers with the early diagnosis of infertility as part of a regional project to improve the performance of dairy cattle.

78. South Africa had continued to seek innovative solutions to the problem of radioactive waste management and valued the support the Agency had given to the project aimed at the development and demonstration of technology to evaluate boreholes as a disposal option for disused sealed radiation sources, which she hoped would help developing countries to prevent accidents involving such sources.

79. South Africa appreciated the Agency's initiatives relating to the preservation and strengthening of nuclear knowledge. As a follow-up to the Agency meeting on that subject in June 2002, it had established a mechanism whereby funding for nuclear training could be generated, inter alia, from international countertrade agreements. A training agreement relating to various disciplines within the nuclear sector had been entered into with a French company and 10 staff members from nuclear organizations within South Africa had already completed courses in France.

80. She commended the Agency's efforts to increase the representation of women among its staff. South Africa supported initiatives such as Women in Nuclear, and the Charter of Women in Nuclear South Africa had recently been adopted. Her country looked forward to working together with Women in Nuclear Global and the Agency to achieve greater participation of women in that field.

81. South Africa had signed an additional protocol prior to the preceding session of the General Conference and had submitted an expanded declaration within the required time period. It appreciated the Agency's ongoing efforts to organize training in the area of nuclear security. Following a request from South Africa, a workshop had been held on the design basis threat, which had led to the strengthening of security measures in the country. In addition, some South Africans were undergoing training in physical protection in the United States under the auspices of the Agency. Effective systems for nuclear material accountancy and control were essential to maintain the security of nuclear material and combat illicit trafficking. The Agency's efforts to achieve increased cooperation with State and regional systems of accounting and control were welcome. South Africa would be holding the Agency's SSAC course for the African region in October.

82. The studies carried out under the INPRO initiative should be expanded. South Africa had completed preparations for joining INPRO and would be making a formal proposal to the Agency in that connection before the end of the year. Her country had actively continued its work on the development of the pebble bed modular reactor project as part of the international drive to establish novel concepts for nuclear power generation in the 21st century. An environmental impact assessment of the reactor had been approved in June and the National Nuclear Regulator was currently reviewing its safety. A comprehensive and systematic approach for the licensing process was being followed, which also provided for public involvement.

83. South Africa continued to support and participate actively in the Agency's safety standards programme and it welcomed the initiative to broaden representation on Agency safety standards committees. Her Government had recently made public its radioactive waste policy and strategy, which was based on the Agency's fundamental safety principles, thereby paving the way for South Africa to become party to the Joint Convention. It had published five regulations in the area of nuclear safety, including a new set of safety standards. South Africa had also adopted the Agency's transport safety standards as basic requirements for the safe transport of radioactive material and was pleased to note that the Agency had approved the research project proposal by South Africa on risk assessment of bulk transport of zircon sands. The Agency should consider developing a programme to address exposure from naturally occurring radioactive materials. South Africa was well advanced in assessing radiation hazards in various industries dealing with naturally occurring radioactive materials and reports from the working groups established to address those issues would be made available to the Agency's technical working groups.

84. Her country supported the trend towards the establishment of international nuclear regulatory authority cooperative groups; it belonged to the network of regulators of countries with small nuclear programmes and would be participating in that body's next meeting in September 2003.

85. In conclusion, she expressed appreciation for the support the Agency had given to the first all-African congress of the International Radiation Protection Association held in South Africa in May 2003. The congress had helped promote a better understanding of problems associated with radiation protection in Africa, creative indigenous solutions to those problems had been discussed and a practical programme elaborated to help Africa enhance its role in the field of radiation protection.

86. Mr. TAHA NASAR (Sudan) commended the Agency on its promotion of peaceful applications of nuclear energy and expressed strong support for its efforts to eliminate the hazards of non-peaceful use by encouraging compliance with relevant international treaties.

87. Sudan was deeply committed to the goal of making the Middle East region a nuclear-weapon-free zone under a comprehensive treaty binding on all parties concerned. Israel's nuclear capability continued to be a major concern for all States in the region, since Israel was the only entity in the Middle East that possessed nuclear weapons. It was high time for the international community to put pressure on Israel to sign and ratify relevant Agency agreements, thus ceasing to apply double standards and reducing tension in the Middle East in pursuit of a just solution to the Palestinian problem.

88. Sudan would shortly be signing an additional protocol. In line with its aspiration to make Africa a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, it had hosted the first conference of African national authorities on enforcement of the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention in August 2003. Twenty-nine African States had sent representatives, and representatives from Romania, France, the United States of America and the International Committee of the Red Cross had participated as observers. Sudan was willing to host more regional conferences on non-proliferation.

89. He expressed the hope that dialogue would continue between the Agency and Iran with a view to reaching a solution to the current problem that satisfied all parties concerned, so that Iran could benefit from Agency assistance in the peaceful uses of atomic energy and the international community could rest assured that Iran was complying with its obligations.

90. Both the United Nations weapons inspectors and the coalition forces had failed to discover the alleged weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, and peace could only be restored if the occupying forces withdrew and the United Nations was mandated to play a fundamental role in the country until such time as Iraq recovered its sovereignty. As the Agency's mandate in Iraq remained unchanged, the Director General should pursue his efforts to enable the Agency's inspectors to complete their mission and submit a final report.

91. Malaria was the foremost killer disease in Africa in general and in Sudan in particular. The Agency had provided valuable technical assistance to his country with the eradication of malaria-transmitting mosquitoes using the SIT. Sudan looked forward to broader donor participation to ensure the success of projects in the areas of radiotherapy and nuclear medicine.

92. The technical cooperation programme was also making a welcome contribution to enhancing food security. As the tsetse fly was one of the major impediments to development in Africa, the Agency's efforts to eradicate it using the SIT were greatly appreciated. Sudan was particularly grateful for the Agency's sponsorship of the bilateral agreement between Sudan and Ethiopia on control of the tsetse fly. It hoped that the Agency's technical support in that regard would be expanded to include southern Sudan in its entirety, and that the Agency would continue to assist Sudan with the management of scarce freshwater resources for consumption and agriculture.

93. He called for support for the efforts aimed at enhancing and developing cooperation among States party to conventions on nuclear and radiation safety, and at harmonizing regulations and legislation governing cooperation in the radiation protection field and in capacity-building to implement such regulations, with a view to developing a model project. The progress achieved by the Agency and Member States in science and technology projects under the AFRA agreement was commendable and he urged all parties concerned to support projects aimed at tackling major regional problems. With technical support provided through AFRA, Sudan had been able to devise a spent source treatment and management programme ensuring the collection and secure storage of such sources or their disposal.

94. With a view to addressing the issue of scarcity and migration of trained manpower, Sudan was in the process of establishing a high-level research institute focusing, inter alia, on nuclear techniques. It hoped to benefit from the Agency's programmes in that connection.

95. In conclusion, he announced that Sudan intended to settle its arrears in contributions to the Agency.

96. Mr. ABDENUR (Brazil) said that, as a founding Member State of the Agency, Brazil had always devoted its best efforts to supporting the Agency in its statutory mission of accelerating and enlarging the contribution of nuclear energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world. Consistent with its commitment to the use of nuclear energy for exclusively peaceful purposes — a fundamental principle of its foreign policy which was enshrined in its Constitution, Brazil remained convinced of the potential benefits to be derived from the responsible use of nuclear technologies in implementing the national development policies of the developing countries. In that context, international cooperation was of great importance and the Agency had a unique role to play. He reaffirmed his country's support for the Agency's activities and acknowledged its outstanding contribution to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and to the use of energy in the context of sustainable development.

97. The Agency had a special mission, namely to promote the peaceful uses of atomic energy while at the same time preventing its diversion for the production of nuclear weapons. As discussions on non-proliferation efforts had assumed a central position on the international agenda, it was important not to lose sight of the equally pressing need for effective action to achieve full implementation of the nuclear disarmament commitments enshrined in Article VI of the NPT. The main objective of the NPT was to avoid the spread of nuclear weapons and to eliminate them, not to restrict their possession to the few countries that had already acquired them when the Treaty was signed. Thus, forceful appeals should be made for clear disarmament measures at the next meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 NPT Review Conference. Although the nuclear-weapon States had committed themselves unequivocally to the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals at the 2000 NPT Review Conference, they had yet to show real readiness to achieve that goal. Some even seemed to be considering developing new nuclear weapon systems and revising nuclear doctrines, which his country could only view with concern.

98. Over the preceding year, no progress had been made in other fundamental areas of the multilateral nuclear disarmament scenario: the deliberations of the Conference on Disarmament had stagnated, and there had been no significant progress with the ratification of the CTBT by Annex II countries. He therefore appealed to all nations to step up their efforts and reverse the current negative trends with respect to the upholding of disarmament and non-proliferation agreements, commitments entered into by consensus at international level and other important initiatives in the disarmament field. On the positive side, he welcomed Cuba's decision to accede to the NPT, sign a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the Agency and ratify the Tlatelolco Treaty; those decisions contributed to the universality of the NPT and had the important effect of bringing all Latin American and Caribbean countries under the umbrella of the Tlatelolco Treaty, which had established the world's first nuclear-weapon-free zone. He also noted with satisfaction that Cuba had decided to sign an additional protocol.

99. Brazil remained committed to international efforts to combat all forms of terrorism, including possible malicious acts involving nuclear material. It also fully shared the concerns regarding the risk of nuclear weapons falling into the hands of terrorists, which reinforced the need to work towards nuclear disarmament. However, the discussion of measures to combat such eventualities should not be allowed to provide even implicit justification for States' indefinite retention of nuclear weapons.

100. The negotiations on the programme and budget of the Agency for 2004–2005 had resulted in the approval by the Board of a package which included agreement on a revised level of the Regular Budget and other measures of fundamental importance for the future of the Agency. The overall increase in the level of the Regular Budget that had been approved represented a drastic departure

from the policy of zero real growth and was heavily biased towards Major Programme 4. Throughout the negotiating process, Brazil, as the Chair of the Group of 77 and China, had made it clear that it was imperative to preserve a balance between the Agency's various statutory activities. Nevertheless, the package was a successful achievement, providing a sounder basis for enhancing the Agency's role as a major organization in the United Nations system. Brazil looked forward to further interaction with the Secretariat on the implementation of the package and would seek to ensure that the spirit in which the package had been negotiated and approved was honoured.

101. The Agency's safeguards system was a major element of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, whose universality his country strongly supported. Brazil welcomed the substantial progress achieved in the development of integrated safeguards, as well as the increased cooperation between the Agency and the ABACC. It attached high importance to such cooperation and hoped that it would continue in order to prevent unnecessary duplication of effort and achieve cost-effectiveness in safeguards activities.

102. While his country was pleased that the Board had approved a resolution regarding Iran's nuclear activities without a vote, it was disappointed that it had not proved possible to achieve the highest possible level of agreement. He urged Iran to ensure that the required cooperation was provided and full transparency achieved by providing all the information deemed necessary and granting unrestricted access to any location and installation the Agency might wish to inspect. The progress towards a satisfactory conclusion of the issue should not be disturbed by a lack of transparency on the part of the Iran, nor by premature conclusions which were not based on a clear and definitive assessment by the Agency of Iran's fulfilment of its obligations.

103. In the technical cooperation area, the Agency should concentrate its efforts on projects where nuclear and ionizing radiation applications played a vital role, thereby sharpening the focus of the programme and improving its overall quality. Brazil supported regional cooperative approaches such as ARCAL.

104. The safe operation of nuclear facilities was of key importance to public acceptance of nuclear energy, and Brazil appreciated the quantity and quality of the safety standards and guides issued by the Secretariat in 2002. The second Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, in which his country had actively participated, had shown that the Convention was meeting its objective. Brazil also appreciated the Agency's efforts to foster the safety culture concept and drew attention to the success of the International Conference on Safety Culture in Nuclear Installations held in Brazil in December 2002.

105. His country supported the Agency's work aimed at developing national capacity to respond to radiological emergencies arising from accidents and deliberate acts. The Agency's emergency response system should be strengthened.

106. In view of the potential risk to coastal populations and the marine environment in the event of an accident during maritime transport of radioactive material and nuclear waste, Brazil had supported initiatives aimed at strengthening the relevant international norms. The findings of the TranSAS mission carried out the preceding year in Brazil had acknowledged that Brazil already had a sound transport regulatory system in place. Recommendations had been made to streamline and improve regulatory practices, and good practices had been identified to serve as a model for other competent authorities in the radioactive material transport sector. He welcomed the results of the International Conference on the Safety of Transport of Radioactive Material held in Vienna in July 2003. The General Conference should continue to promote dialogue and build upon agreed concepts and guidelines in order to address the legitimate concerns of coastal and transporting countries.

107. The scope of the Agency's activities in the area of preservation of nuclear knowledge should be broadened to address other issues such as nuclear science and its applications and nuclear safety. Nuclear technology could only develop in a positive manner if the vast existing repository of knowledge was kept active through constant use and continuous evolution. Brazil welcomed the creation of the World Nuclear University in that regard.

108. Referring to the Director General's remarks concerning possible critical choices to be faced in the future in the area of fuel cycle design and operation in order to address proliferation concerns and waste management, he said that some of the ideas he had put forward would have far-reaching implications for national programmes for the peaceful use of atomic energy. The international community's concerns with respect to non-proliferation, safety, security and the technical challenges facing nuclear power should always be addressed in such a way so as to take full account of the principles of universality, transparency and the inalienable right of all peoples to derive benefit from the peaceful application of nuclear energy.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.