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# Plenary

## Record of the Fifth Meeting

*Held at the Austria Center Vienna on Wednesday, 17 September 2003, at 10.10 a.m.*

**President:** Mr. TAKASU (Japan)

**Later:** Ms. AL-MULLA (Kuwait)

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### Abbreviations used in this record:

AFRA	African Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ALARA	as low as reasonably achievable
CERN	European Organization for Nuclear Research
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
CTBTO	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EU	European Union
FBR	fast breeder reactor
G-8	Group of Eight [= G-7+1]
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
IPPAS	International Physical Protection Advisory Service
ITER	International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor
Joint Convention	Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management
NDT	non-destructive testing
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
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
PATTEC	Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign
PCR	polymerase chain reaction
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
PHWR	pressurized heavy water reactor
R&D	Research and development
Rarotonga Treaty	South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty
RBMK	High-power channel-type reactor (Soviet Union)
RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)

**Abbreviations used in this record (continued):**

SAGSI	Standing Advisory Group on Safeguards Implementation
SIT	sterile insect technique
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
TranSAS	Transport Safety Appraisal Service
UNMOVIC	United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission

## **6. General debate and Annual Report for 2002 (continued)** (GC(47)/2)

1. Mr. RAMZY (Egypt) said that, at a time when the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the Agency's resources were being stressed to the limit, his country continued to give the organization its firm support. The Agency had never been needed by the international community as much as it was at present.

2. For more than a decade the world had been undergoing major changes and the dust stirred up by the end of the Cold War had still not settled. Some things, however, remained unchanged. Most notably, the nuclear-weapon States were still unwilling to meet their undertakings under Article VI of the NPT. Thus, ironically, those who had been advocating that increased human, technical and financial resources be devoted to preventing and combating the proliferation of nuclear weapons were themselves clinging indefinitely to their nuclear arsenals. Some had even been seeking pretexts to lend new legitimacy to nuclear weapons.

3. Until recently, nuclear weapons and nuclear weapon technology had been possessed by only a very few States. They had been perceived by that elite group as a stabilizing factor that maintained the balance between the two poles of the then world order. With the end of the Cold War, weapons of mass destruction and, in particular, nuclear weapons no longer constituted a stabilizing factor.

4. Quite apart from such sophisticated weapons, the public had now become conscious of the threat that could be posed by a small canister containing radioactive material in reckless hands, or by the smuggling of a small quantity of enriched uranium. Nuclear weapons had proved useless in the fight against terrorism.

5. In addition, all attempts to restrict the possession of such weapons to a limited number of States had only led to more States clandestinely seeking to acquire them. Thus, while the nuclear-weapon States had been devoting massive resources to maintaining thousands of nuclear weapons which it was hoped would never be used, aspiring nuclear-weapon States had been depriving their people of badly needed resources in their attempts to acquire such weapons.

6. Twelve years had passed since agreement had been reached at the General Conference on the need for all States in the Middle East to accept Agency safeguards on all their nuclear installations and activities. Regrettably, that goal had not yet been achieved. While Egypt had expanded its efforts to rid the region of nuclear weapons, Israel and the international community had remained indifferent to the matter. While the mere suspicion of nuclear programmes in Iraq, Iran and North Korea aroused concern and condemnation, there seemed to be little interest in Israel's nuclear activities. As long as such double standards continued to be applied, and the region's political problems and security issues remained unresolved, more countries would seek to redress the military imbalance in the region by acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

7. True and lasting security could only come through peace based on justice and respect for national identities and aspirations. The Middle East needed a security system based on just and mutual commitments that met the legitimate security concerns of all parties in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner and that provided equal security to all. Egypt had been and would continue to be at the forefront of efforts to achieve peace and stability in the region, including the establishment

of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. However, in the absence of an equally strong commitment on the part of all States in the region, those efforts could well prove vain.

8. The level of Agency technical cooperation with Member States, a mechanism provided for under Article IV of the NPT, fell short of expectations. While the blame for that situation had to be shared by Member States, there had been a significant degree of reluctance to promote peaceful applications of nuclear energy owing to the fear that the know-how thus acquired might be used for non-peaceful purposes. Given the potential of those applications, that situation should not be allowed to continue.

9. For more than forty years, Egypt had been cooperating closely with the Agency to expand the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in the country. It had been working to strengthen and modernize its nuclear infrastructure, had commissioned its second 22 MW research reactor, had received assistance from IAEA-funded experts to raise the reactor's efficiency, and had been working towards the optimal utilization of the cyclotron facility set up in cooperation with the Russian Federation to produce medical isotopes for use in medicine.

10. His country appreciated the Agency's efforts to develop and improve the technical cooperation programme and supported the concepts of partnership in development and self-reliance, and the emphasis on projects which brought tangible benefits for end-users.

11. In its own cooperation programme with the Agency, it had concentrated on those kinds of projects and had placed emphasis on the establishment of laboratories for performing radiation measurements and hydrological surveys employing radioisotopes. The work of those laboratories extended to other Arab and African countries. Egypt had also been cooperating with the Agency in the areas of isotope production, irradiation of food and medical instruments, the production of hydrogen for use in medicine, the development of nuclear and environmental monitoring equipment, agriculture and the development of desert areas, the inspection skills of the regulatory authority and the detection of landmines using nuclear techniques. However, the goals of the technical cooperation programme could not be achieved as long as some countries continued not to fulfil their financial obligations towards the TCF.

12. Egypt was looking forward to the 2005 NPT Review Conference which should provide an opportunity for States to reaffirm their commitment to the NPT as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, and to both nuclear disarmament on the one hand and the promotion of the peaceful uses of atomic energy on the other. It hoped that States would renew their commitment to the elimination of nuclear weapons worldwide, and in particular in the Middle East region.

13. Finally, his country continued to support the pivotal role played by the Agency in such areas as the peaceful use of nuclear technology, nuclear safety and the provision of assurances through verification activities that nuclear material was only being used for peaceful purposes.

14. Ms. HALL (Canada) said that events over the preceding twelve months had shown that, while new threats might appear, old ones did not necessarily disappear. It was thus of paramount importance that the international community, with the support of the Agency, did everything possible to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons which remained the most serious threat to international peace and security. It had to be made clear to potential proliferators that there would be zero tolerance for non-compliance with international non-proliferation norms and obligations. The Agency and its Member States should be flexible and innovative in adapting to a new and complex reality. The historic budget before General Conference showed that the Member States were able to adapt to a changing international environment and set clear priorities.

15. One serious challenge facing the Agency was the situation in the DPRK. While Canada supported the resumption of multilateral talks, it remained deeply concerned about that country's long record of failure and its flagrant violations of its legal obligations and international non-proliferation norms.

16. The DPRK's commitments under its safeguards agreement had remained unfulfilled for many years and, in October 2002, it had revealed that it had also engaged in further undeclared clandestine uranium enrichment activities for nuclear weapons purposes in direct contravention of its NPT obligations. The reaction of the international community would set the standard for the future. An inability to respond effectively to such blatant examples of non-compliance would not be lost on other potential proliferators. Member States should give their full support to the Agency in its efforts to verify effectively States' compliance with their safeguards obligations and resolve questions of non-compliance.

17. Canada was also concerned about the scope and nature of Iran's nuclear programme which was a potential serious threat to international peace and security. The resolution unanimously adopted by the Board in the preceding week had sent a firm, clear signal to Iran and to the world and had demonstrated that the concerns over Iran's nuclear programme were well founded and broadly shared. That kind of decisive and united action was important for maintaining the Agency's credibility and relevance. Her country urged Iran to conclude an additional protocol promptly and without preconditions, and to implement it as a clear indication of its genuine commitment to nuclear non-proliferation. Continued failure to do so would necessarily result in the Agency referring the matter promptly to the Security Council.

18. Canada supported the Agency's activities in Iraq mandated by the Security Council and regretted that the Agency had not been able to fulfil its mandate prior to the start of hostilities. It welcomed the Security Council's intention to revisit the mandates of the Agency and UNMOVIC and looked forward to the early return of Agency inspectors.

19. It continued to be concerned that India, Israel and Pakistan remained outside the NPT, and it urged those countries to join the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States unconditionally and without delay. That was an essential requirement for the continued sustainability of the multilateral nuclear non-proliferation regime and for full membership in the international community.

20. Over the preceding year, Canada had been closely involved in the work on the Agency's programme and budget for the next biennium. While most of the proposed budget increase was rightly intended to meet the Director General's request for additional resources for safeguards and verification activities, almost US \$6 million had also been allocated to other areas of the Agency's programme which her country believed should have been subject to zero nominal growth. Furthermore, only \$280 000 had been added for the management of the Agency's nuclear security activities to assist the Secretariat in the implementation of the nuclear security action plan. That programme should be included in the Agency's Regular Budget. The continuing trend towards increasing reliance on extrabudgetary contributions might be unsustainable in the long term. Canada would be contributing an additional \$2.9 million to the Agency's security activities, making it the second largest contributor to the Nuclear Security Fund.

21. Her country applauded the fact that the development and implementation of integrated safeguards remained a prime focus of the Agency and it encouraged the Agency to proceed in a timely fashion with the application of integrated safeguards in those Member States with an additional protocol. The additional resources for safeguards and verification included in the 2004-2005 programme and budget should help the Agency determine how to develop and deploy its tools and resources to address more effectively the most serious threats to non-proliferation as part of an

appropriately mandated review of safeguards. During the discussions on the programme and budget, her country had seen the proposed budget increases in Major Programme 4 as a timely opportunity to review safeguards working methods and criteria in order to enhance the flexibility, credibility and effectiveness of the safeguards system. Additional resources for safeguards should translate into better safeguards, not just more. Canada would have serious concerns if, as a result of the substantial increase in the safeguards budget, safeguards activities were to increase significantly in Canada or other countries where there was full transparency. Thus, the forthcoming review should focus on the technical and conceptual aspects of safeguards and verification and should explore and recommend ways for the Agency to ensure that it was doing the right things in the right places. Canada welcomed the Director General's recent request to SAGSI to undertake that vital task.

22. Canada had always been a staunch supporter of an international rules-based approach to addressing threats to international peace and security. However, while it was of the utmost importance for the international community to continue to strive towards universal adherence to the nuclear non-proliferation regime, Member States had to realize that the signing and ratification of international legal instruments alone was not sufficient to ensure the benefits that came with those commitments. Effective implementation, total compliance, full transparency and a strong and sustained political commitment to non-proliferation were also essential for States to have full access to peaceful nuclear cooperation. Thus, the Agency had to be fully equipped to fulfil its mandate under Article III of the NPT if Member States were to share the benefits of Article IV. In that regard, it was important to move quickly to make acceptance of the additional protocol a key requirement for new nuclear supply to non-nuclear-weapon States, and it was time to consider the need for additional verification measures in instances where concerns had arisen about certain proliferation-sensitive nuclear activities.

23. The Agency's safety standards should be the international reference standard in the area of nuclear and radiation safety. They already served that purpose in Canada's regulatory programmes and they should be incorporated or used as much as possible in the legislation, regulations and standards of Member States. Safety was a necessary and important precondition for the sustained use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Canada's national report for the first review meeting under the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management had been submitted to the Agency and it hoped that that meeting would be instrumental in advancing nuclear safety worldwide. She urged Member States which had not yet done so to promptly sign and ratify the Joint Convention.

24. As a firm supporter of the use of nuclear power and nuclear technologies for peaceful purposes, her country believed that the Agency should play a vital role in helping facilitate international cooperation and promote international awareness of the many promising benefits of existing and new innovative nuclear technologies. Innovation was a requirement for the future of nuclear power and Canada looked forward to ongoing progress in both the INPRO and Generation IV initiatives. She stressed the need for beneficial collaboration between those projects.

25. Her country welcomed the successful completion of the third Qinshan nuclear power plant in China. Those two CANDU units had entered into service within the original budget and significantly ahead of schedule thanks to the hard work and dedication of all parties involved, especially in China.

26. As a world leader in the production of radioisotopes for medical and industrial purposes, Canada was committed to seeing those beneficial applications of nuclear technology promoted through the Agency in those countries which could most benefit from them.

27. It also continued to believe that nuclear knowledge management remained a high-priority international issue and it planned to introduce a follow-up resolution on nuclear knowledge which it hoped would enjoy as much support as the previous one in 2002, if not more.

28. Mr. KAKODKAR (India) said that, although the world had made impressive strides in increasing the share of nuclear electricity in total electricity production and in expanding non-electricity applications of nuclear technology, the barriers to increased use of nuclear technology for the benefit of the larger part of humanity were yet to be addressed. Unless action was taken soon, the threat to the global climate and the tensions stemming from inequality could assume unmanageable proportions.

29. He welcomed the fact that the Agency was giving due attention to the new threat of malevolent use of nuclear and radioactive material by unscrupulous and terrorist elements. India had recently held an international training course on security of nuclear installations in cooperation with the Agency. The feedback had been encouraging and it could serve as a model course. India was prepared to run more such courses on a regular basis.

30. Welcoming the G-8 statement on the safety and security of radioactive sources, he noted that India had actively participated in the discussions on the amendment of the Agency's code of conduct on that issue and had put in place an adequate legislative and regulatory infrastructure to achieve the objectives of the code of conduct.

31. Within about four years, India would have an installed generating capacity of around 6800 MW(e) as against the current capacity of 2720 MW(e). The Government had recently approved the construction of a 500 MW(e) prototype fast breeder reactor. That indigenously developed technology could boost the installed power generation capacity to well above 300 000 MW(e). In 2002–2003, the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited had achieved an annual overall capacity factor of 90%, which was among the best in the world. Its three PGWR units had been among the five best-performing units in the world in 2002.

32. The fast breeder test reactor at the Indira Ghandi Centre for Atomic Research had been performing excellently without any fuel failure. The irradiation of uranium-plutonium mixed oxide fuel, using uranium-233 as an additional fissile supplement to achieve the required linear heat rating, had begun in July 2003. To close the fuel cycle for the reactor, a facility for reprocessing the carbide fuel had been commissioned and the reprocessing campaign had begun.

33. The second waste immobilization plant for the vitrification of high-level waste had been commissioned. The uranium-thorium separation facility for the separation of uranium-233 from irradiated thorium fuel had gone operational.

34. Growth of nuclear energy in the developing countries should be a matter of global interest, if the earth was to be protected from irreversible climate changes. Where there were no genuine concerns, barriers to the deployment of nuclear energy technology needed to be examined and brought down using a pragmatic approach. Mindless controls that failed to take account of the development aspirations of the needy did not help. The Agency's INPRO project had the potential to address that problem. The development of an advanced heavy water reactor in India, which would more than meet the INPRO objectives in terms of sustainability, economy, safety and proliferation resistance, was progressing according to plan and would lay the basis for large-scale energy production using thorium. India was conscious of its responsibility to assist in preventing proliferation. However, it was important, in moving forward to the development and use of proliferation-resistant technologies, to remove restrictions on the flow of equipment and technology related to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

35. A recent study had shown that India would need to achieve an annual electricity availability of around 5000 Kw·h per capita to provide its more than a billion people with a quality of life consistent with modern norms. That would only be possible if the nuclear power share was at least 25%. R&D programmes were already under way to develop an FBR fuel cycle with a shorter doubling time, uranium-233 clean-up, accelerator-driven systems to achieve a better doubling time with thorium fuel cycles and for waste transmutation, and a compact high-temperature reactor. At the Institute for Plasma Research, one of the world's first super-conducting steady-state tokamaks with elongated divertor plasmas and 1000-second operation capability was being constructed and commissioned. India had been watching developments in the ITER project and was keen to participate. Various Indian institutions were participating in the STAR experiment at the relativistic heavy ion collider at the Brookhaven National Laboratory in the United States and in the large hadron collider experiments at CERN.

36. India would continue to share its experience with other countries under the technical cooperation programme. In 2002, it had trained 33 Agency fellows, hosted 8 Agency and RCA events and sent 50 experts on Agency assignments. He hoped that the agreement reached on linking growth in the Regular Budget with the volume of the TCF would enhance the resources available for technical cooperation. India consistently paid its share of the TCF in full.

37. India was also in a position to contribute to global efforts to manage and preserve nuclear knowledge and intended to participate in the recently established World Nuclear University. It had also participated in the establishment of the Regional Asian Network for Higher Education in Nuclear Technology, and Indian scientists had been among the leading contributors to scientific publications on PHWRs.

38. He welcomed the compromise reached on the programme and budget for 2004–2005. The move away from zero real growth provided an opportunity to rectify certain imbalances and remove some procedural complexities that had crept in over the years. The Director General's one house concept should be fully realized and not remain a mere slogan. Technology should be the key driving force behind it, linking together the Agency's programmes. India was willing to participate in the studies proposed by the Board to streamline procedures and make economies.

39. Thanks to the green revolution in agriculture, the doomsday scenarios of famine and starvation had not materialized in densely populated developing countries. A revolution in nuclear power technology would also help address residual issues facing the developing and developed world alike. A two-pronged strategy that safeguarded developmental aspirations while preventing the malevolent use of nuclear technology was needed to bring that about.

40. Mr. BEKOE (Ghana) said that the *Annual Report for 2002* clearly showed how the Agency had actively continued to promote R&D on innovative nuclear reactors and fuel cycles. It had invested considerable resources in the establishment and improvement of safety criteria to cover all kinds of nuclear activities. Through technology transfer and capacity building, it had forged strategic technical cooperation partnerships which were needs-driven and therefore focused on the demands of Member States.

41. Through its Atomic Energy Commission, Ghana was trying to encourage and promote the commercialization of R&D results by aligning the Commission's research activities with the country's needs. That required close collaboration between the Commission and industry, and other production and social sectors. Under the auspices of three main operational institutes set up by the Commission, a number of research activities had been undertaken with the aim of making a positive socio-economic impact.

42. The gamma irradiation facility was used for the commercial sterilization of medical products and the preservation of agricultural produce and food items. It helped enhance food safety and security and would also be a great source of income to support the development efforts of the Commission. Efforts were being made to upgrade the facility to a 500 kCi source with a conveyor system.
43. Ghana's research reactor was used for a variety of activities, including analysis of traditional plant medicines, pesticide and pollution studies, and the development of radioisotope applications for the petroleum industry. It had generated 20% of the Reactor Centre's annual budget, and that figure was expected to increase as customers became aware of the Centre's importance.
44. In animal, nutrition, production and health research, studies had been conducted of the efficacy of some common drug treatments for helminth infestations in dogs, and *Mycobacterium bovis* in milk and milk products had been detected using PCR techniques.
45. Even though Ghana had trained personnel offering NDT services, the lack of a functioning NDT society made it difficult to establish a national qualification and certification body, which the Agency was encouraging all countries participating in the AFRA NDT project to do.
46. The radiotherapy centre in Accra was treating cancer patients from Ghana and other West African countries. The equipment provided by the Agency for the second radiotherapy centre in Kumasi had been successfully installed and tested. In view of the difficulty of retaining trained personnel, Ghana was strongly committed to the development and implementation of the AFRA project on education and local training of medical physicists, technicians and radiographers.
47. As part of its efforts to harness nuclear and biotechnology techniques to promote socio-economic advancement and self-reliance, Ghana had set up a business development unit at the Commission which was responsible for planning and coordinating all capital mobilization activities, introducing nuclear technologies to the public, negotiating the sale of technologies, and arranging partnerships with the relevant stakeholders.
48. Within the framework of AFRA, facilities and equipment belonging to the Commission had been used to train students from Ghana's universities and researchers from Ghanaian and other African institutions, through the regular training programmes sponsored by the Agency.
49. He thanked the Agency for the technical assistance it had provided and looked forward to further cooperation in the future. He also urged all Member States and donor organizations to pay their contributions on time so that the Agency would be financially able to pursue its much needed and highly appreciated technical cooperation programme.
50. One of the more urgent challenges currently facing the Agency was the need to strengthen the safeguards system in order to increase the likelihood of detecting clandestine nuclear weapons programmes. The adherence of all States to strengthened safeguards was a crucial component in that endeavour. The Ghanaian parliament had recently ratified a number of Agency-related instruments, but even before that the country had been complying fully with the provisions of the NPT and its additional protocol. He encouraged all Member States that had not yet done so, especially those in Africa, to conclude safeguards agreements and additional protocols.
51. Nuclear disarmament remained a priority issue in contemporary international relations. The slow progress in that area was cause for concern. Nuclear weapons were weapons of mass destruction and, as such, should be decommissioned in the interests of a peaceful and safer world. Nuclear-weapon-free zones should be increased in all regions, and non-nuclear weapon States should be given assurances that they would not become the victims of nuclear weapon strikes. Ghana could not support the view that some States deserved to have a monopoly on nuclear weapons. That

standpoint undermined the NPT and the safeguards regime. Nuclear technology should be used to improve life, not to destroy it.

52. Though the primary responsibility for nuclear safety rested with national governments, international cooperation was vital and the Agency was to be commended for its continued efforts in that area. He welcomed the Agency's attempts to help Member States reinforce their nuclear safety infrastructure and improve related laws and regulations, and also the preparation of the code of conduct on the safety of research reactors. The Agency's safety standards should be applied universally and incorporated into national rules and regulations.

53. With the ever increasing threat of nuclear terrorism, it was right that attention should be given to concrete and practical steps that would ensure enhanced protection of nuclear material and its safe and secure storage. In particular, he welcomed the development of an Agency action plan to combat nuclear terrorism. However, equal emphasis should be given to all three main pillars of the Agency's activities. Efforts to curb the threat of nuclear terrorism should be matched by those promoting non-proliferation and the Agency's development activities.

54. Mr. NGANDAJINA (Angola) said that every effort was being made to ensure that the climate of peace established in his country after a lengthy armed conflict lasted, and to create the conditions for political and socio-economic stability. Technical assistance and nuclear science and technology could help promote sustainable development in Angola and the well-being of its population.

55. His country was very grateful to the Agency for the technical assistance it had received, in particular with the establishment of a national radiation protection infrastructure and staff training, and with the setting up of a nuclear physics teaching laboratory. Other important projects related to the establishment of a radiotherapy centre, modernization of laboratories for the diagnosis of animal diseases, and work on marine pollution.

56. Angola's Country Programme Framework covering the period 2004–2009 took account of his Government's priorities and the Agency's activities in such areas as health, agriculture and water resources. It should help the country meet its requirements for specialized staff and equipment. In that connection, he emphasized the importance of technical cooperation for the mutual evaluation of progress made in the development and application of new technologies and of the results achieved in the fight against famine in Angola.

57. His country was totally committed to the Agency and its objectives and intended to establish a regulatory authority and promulgate an atomic energy law as soon as possible. Despite the difficulties his country faced, his Government had always met its financial obligations to the Agency.

58. Angola supported AFRA and hoped to be able to accede to that agreement in the near future.

59. Finally, in the interests of humanity, all those who promoted and produced nuclear weapons should renounce their nuclear weapons programmes. Moreover, all States should respect the Charter of the United Nations in resolving conflicts and punishing those who did not respect international law.

60. Mr. DAINIUS (Lithuania) said that the terrorist attack on United Nations Headquarters in Baghdad in the preceding month had been a painful reminder that the war on international terrorism was far from over. Lithuania offered its sincere condolences and deepest sympathies to the families that had lost loved ones in the attack and strongly condemned those brutal acts. Any attempts to destabilize and disrupt the restoration of peace, security and stability in Iraq would be quashed by the concerted efforts of the international community.

61. His country supported fully the Agency's efforts to clarify cases of possible non-compliance with non-proliferation obligations. A stringent nuclear security framework for nuclear installations and

material was needed in order to prevent sensitive nuclear material and technology from falling into the hands of terrorists.

62. Nuclear energy played an important role in the Lithuanian economy. In 2002, Lithuania had been the country with the world's highest nuclear share in its energy production — around 80%. In October 2002, the Lithuanian parliament had adopted a revised national energy strategy setting out the terms and conditions for the closure of the Ignalina nuclear power plant, in line with the timetable for Lithuania's accession to the European Union. Every effort was being made to ensure the highest safety standards at the Ignalina plant until its closure. Plant safety during the transition period from operation to decommissioning would be given top priority. The Lithuanian Government looked forward to continued cooperation with the Agency, whose assistance during the preparatory phase had been much appreciated.

63. The Ignalina plant and all nuclear material in Lithuania had been placed under comprehensive Agency safeguards. Having signed an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement, Lithuania urged other States to do likewise as soon as possible. Following the verification of spent fuel by Agency inspectors in December 2002, it was hoped that integrated safeguards would be applied in Lithuania in the near future.

64. In cooperation with the Agency and other Member States, Lithuania was undertaking all necessary measures to improve its national physical protection regime. A follow-up IPPAS mission had visited Lithuania in 2002 and the Agency experts had expressed a favourable opinion with regard to the implementation of the recommendations made by the 1999 mission, and had suggested further improvements to upgrade the physical protection infrastructure taking into account the forthcoming decommissioning process. In 2002, the Lithuanian Government had approved new regulations on physical protection of the Ignalina plant.

65. He noted the fact that the group of legal and technical experts charged with preparing a draft amendment to the CPPNM had completed its work and he thanked the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs for initiating the amendment process.

66. Lithuania attached great importance to technical cooperation with the Agency and particularly valued the assistance the latter provided in such areas as nuclear and radiation safety, radiotherapy and waste management. In view of the challenges posed by the decommissioning of nuclear facilities, waste management and the threat of nuclear terrorism, further improvement of nuclear safety, radiation and physical protection infrastructure should be Europe's greatest priority.

67. His country was constantly upgrading its radiotherapy equipment and treatment methods. A national cancer control programme had been launched for the period 2001–2010 with a view to bringing Lithuanian radiotherapy services and equipment in line with EU and international standards. Lithuania appreciated the Agency's positive response to the launch of a national project on improvement of radiotherapy under the 2003–2004 technical cooperation programme. With the Agency's assistance, it intended to acquire and commission a second dual energy accelerator in order to enhance the capacity, reliability and standards of the radiotherapy service at the Lithuanian Oncology Centre.

68. He commended the Agency's efforts to assist Member States in formulating adequate, affordable and environmentally friendly energy policies, thanks to which Lithuania had developed substantial expertise in the field. The successful implementation of the national project on energy supply options had provided significant input for the updated national energy strategy. The Europe Section of the Department of Technical Cooperation and the Planning and Economic Studies Section of the Department of Nuclear Energy had made an outstanding contribution to the successful implementation of that project. The competence and capabilities acquired by the Lithuanian Energy

Institute would be utilized to assist counterparts in Latvia and Estonia in carrying out energy studies which would later be incorporated in the Baltic region energy study.

69. Lithuania strongly supported the efforts of the Agency and Member States to resolve the critical issues of proper management and safe disposal of spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste, which were of vital importance to the future of nuclear energy. Steps were being taken to facilitate the ratification of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, and in 2002 the Lithuanian Government had approved a strategy for radioactive waste management. The Lithuanian radioactive waste management agency had initiated preparatory work to set up a near-surface repository for low- and intermediate-level short-lived radioactive waste, with assistance from Sweden. The site selection process was under way.

70. Spent fuel reprocessing was prohibited in Lithuania by law and spent fuel was viewed as radioactive waste. Apart from a national deep geological repository, the radioactive waste management strategy included the option of a regional repository constructed in collaboration with other countries. Under the 2003–2007 national research programme, it was planned to specify the inventory and characteristics of the waste to be placed in such a repository.

71. The successful future development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes was dependent on the adherence of all States to internationally accepted nuclear safety standards. The services offered to Member States through the Agency's safety missions were highly valued and regional technical cooperation projects in that field facilitated the exchange of experience. In 2002, Lithuania had welcomed an expert mission on assessment of the human factor and had hosted two successful regional workshops on nuclear power facility licensing and RBMK reactor safety issues. Activities in the near future would focus on the implementation of safety improvement measures at the Ignalina nuclear power plant.

72. In cooperation with the Agency and the European Commission, his country was allocating substantial resources to strengthening its regulatory infrastructure for the control of radiation sources and exposure to radiation. It was hoped that the Agency would provide assistance with the establishment of a national radiation protection training centre. Through the regional project on enhancing occupational radiation protection at nuclear power plants, Lithuania had been able to share experience and, through effective implementation of the optimization principle, occupational exposure at the Ignalina nuclear power plant had been reduced significantly.

73. He commended the Agency for embarking on the revision of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and requested that it continue to provide the training and equipment needed for State border control, customs departments and other State institutions responsible for the detection and control of illicit trafficking in radioactive material. Lithuania was actively involved in the activities of the information system on occupational exposure. In that connection, the implementation of quality systems in hospitals was vitally important to control medical exposure. He also welcomed the Agency's support for the Central and Eastern European ALARA network.

74. Recognizing the importance of timely and full payment of contributions to the Agency's technical cooperation programme, the Lithuanian Government was prepared to pledge and pay its recommended target share of the TCF.

75. Mr. BONOU (Burkina Faso) welcomed the measures taken since the preceding session of the General Conference to protect against nuclear terrorism and illicit trafficking in nuclear material and radiation sources.

76. Burkina Faso had signed a safeguards agreement and an additional protocol in 2003 and urged other States that had not yet done so to follow suit.

77. He welcomed the agreement concluded between the Agency and the African Union on joint programmes to eradicate the tsetse fly using the SIT. African Heads of State and Government, at their 36th and 37th summits held in 2000 and 2001, had reaffirmed the priority status of such programmes and, at the July 2003 summit in Maputo, the African Union had integrated activities related to PATTEC into NEPAD. He noted with particular satisfaction the implementation of the Agency's regional technical cooperation programmes on use of the SIT to control malaria-transmitting mosquitoes and to create tsetse-free zones in Africa. He urged all Member States to support the programmes in question.

78. His Government was grateful to the Agency for its technical cooperation activities in the areas of food and agriculture, human health, animal production and health, radiation protection, radiological safety and radioactive waste, which were helping enhance human capacity in Burkina Faso through training in the peaceful use of nuclear technology and nuclear techniques. A large number of fellowships were being granted under both national and regional technical cooperation programmes. The Country Programme Framework that was currently being elaborated would provide an opportunity to refocus cooperation activities in the light of the national anti-poverty strategy which gave priority to education, health, potable water, agriculture and stockbreeding. His country was committed to establishing a legal and regulatory framework for radiation protection and radiological safety as soon as possible, which would allow a nuclear medicine and cancer treatment centre to be set up. With the Agency's assistance, food quality and drug control facilities were gradually being introduced at the National Public Health Laboratory. The Applied Biochemistry and Chemistry Laboratory at Ouagadougou University was also developing a drug against fowl pox based on plant extracts.

79. Like many other countries, Burkina Faso suffered from a severe shortage of renewable water resources. Judging from current trends, those resources would decline by half by 2005, potentially jeopardizing all socio-economic activity in the Niger River basin. His country therefore attached special importance to the Agency's water resource management activities and actively supported its strategy in that area. It also urged the Agency to pursue its regional anti-desertification programme and to make available increased human, financial and material resources for its implementation.

80. Lastly, he suggested that the Agency should examine ways isotope techniques could be used in the fight against AIDS.

**Ms. Al-Mulla (Kuwait) took the Chair.**

81. Mr. O'SHEA (United Kingdom) said that, although his country recognized value in all areas of the Agency's work, it considered the most important aspect thereof to be the Agency's contribution to the worldwide campaign against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In an uncertain world where the risks of nuclear proliferation were changing and increasing, it was more important than ever that the Agency had the tools it required to carry out its verification activities effectively. It was also essential that the Agency addressed whatever challenges arose with rigour and determination and that the Board of Governors provided real leadership and direction.

82. The United Kingdom was grateful to the Department of Safeguards for another year of valuable work and it attached the highest importance to the assurances the Agency was able to offer about the non-diversion of nuclear material. It was only the combined implementation of comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols that provided the basis for the Agency to make statements about the absence of undeclared nuclear material or activities. It was therefore imperative that both comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols become the norm for

safeguards, particularly for those States with significant nuclear programmes that included or provided for the development of enrichment or reprocessing capabilities. The United Kingdom was pleased to be able to assist the Secretariat in its efforts to help Member States implement the additional protocol by hosting a technical meeting in London in October on the revision of the additional protocol guidelines. It would also help fund the integrated safeguards information system re-engineering project, in addition to the consultancy support it already provided for safeguards.

83. Iraq, the DPRK and Iran demonstrated the importance of the Agency's role in preventing proliferation. The deployment of inspectors in Iraq to investigate claims of widespread looting of nuclear material highlighted the need for the Agency to be able to respond to events at short notice. The analysis results had shown that the quantity and type of uranium compounds dispersed were not sensitive from a proliferation point of view. The United Kingdom continued to support the multilateral talks aimed at the peaceful settlement of the situation on the Korean Peninsula and deplored the statement by the DPRK following the latest round indicating that it had no further interest in the talks. The Agency should have a role in verifying the transparent, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement of the DPRK's nuclear programmes, as called for by a large part of the international community. In addition, his country welcomed the resolution regarding Iran adopted by the Board in the preceding week and expected Iran to comply with all of its provisions.

84. It was because of the importance of the Agency's verification work that the United Kingdom had been one of the Member States that had taken the lead in supporting a substantial justified increase in funding for the work of the Department of Safeguards, and it was delighted that agreement had been reached on a budget package incorporating such an increase. It was essential that the full increase, to be phased in over four years, was implemented in future budget decisions.

85. The Agency's work in the area of nuclear security also contributed to non-proliferation. The international community had to cooperate to reduce the risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to prevent terrorists from acquiring nuclear or radioactive material or sabotaging nuclear facilities or material, and to deal with the consequences of any such attacks. In that connection, he called on Member States to continue to provide funding to sustain the nuclear security programme, pending the proposed review of the funding mechanism in which his country intended to participate actively. The United Kingdom had pledged £750 000 to the Nuclear Security Fund over three years, two thirds of which had already been paid.

86. The United Kingdom welcomed the work undertaken to revise the draft action plan for the safety and security of radioactive sources. It had also played a key role in the negotiation of the revised code of conduct on that subject which would strengthen significantly international cooperation and control in that area when it was implemented.

87. The Agency's efforts to promote high and consistent levels of nuclear safety were welcome. His country's Government and civil nuclear industry took their responsibilities for ensuring safety at nuclear installations very seriously, both with regard to the workforce and the wider public. It was also a top priority for his country to ensure that very high standards of safety were developed and applied to the transport of radioactive material. People had to be informed of the facts regarding transport activities, particularly transport of nuclear material by sea, in order to allay their concerns. The United Kingdom had therefore welcomed the recent International Conference on the Safety of Transport of Radioactive Material which had reached clear and reassuring conclusions. It hoped that, in addition to the extensive international research undertaken on the safety of transport of nuclear material, the positive conclusions of the recent TranSAS mission to the United Kingdom would serve to reassure people that the shipments carried out by his country posed no significant risk.

88. The United Kingdom had again shown its commitment to technical cooperation by paying its full share of the TCF target. In the *Technical Co-operation Report for 2002*, concern had been expressed about the declining level of actual payments being made by Member States. The Agency's technical cooperation activities should not be hampered by a lack of financial commitment from Member States. He therefore urged all Member States to pay their shares of the TCF target in full and on time and, where appropriate, to pay back arrears in assessed programme costs as soon as possible.

89. For the Agency to achieve its objectives, it had to be an effective, efficient and forward-looking body. His country had been actively involved in efforts to identify the scope for internal efficiencies and managed change within the Agency and had been one of the countries to contribute to the cost of the management consultancy study undertaken. It was pleased that the Agency was taking account of the recommendations made and it was prepared to offer an amount of up to \$100 000 by March 2004 for further consultancy work, on receiving specific proposals from the Secretariat.

90. The preceding year had been a difficult one for the Agency and it should be congratulated on the way in which it had risen to the challenges before it. The United Kingdom welcomed the Director General's ideas about future developments in counter-proliferation techniques, including the suggested new approaches to the design and management of the nuclear fuel cycle which deserved further study.

91. In the coming year, a significant increase was to be expected in the number of Member States with additional protocols in force. The United Kingdom's own additional protocol, which his country had followed in practice for some time, would formally come into force. The Agency would therefore be in a better position to provide assurances about the non-diversion of nuclear material. His country looked forward to the Agency becoming even more effective in its work to prevent nuclear proliferation, and also to continued internal change that would enhance the effectiveness of all its activities.

92. Mr. BENDJABALLAH (Algeria) said that the international community was currently facing multiple challenges and would need to find the necessary political determination and resources to deal with them.

93. The third conference to facilitate the entry into force of the CTBT had recently been held in Vienna and had provided an opportunity for several countries to reaffirm the importance of that Treaty. Algeria had deposited its instruments of ratification with the United Nations Secretary-General on 11 July 2003 and it urged all other States whose ratification was necessary for the Treaty to enter into force to do the same. His country was also playing an active role in the work of the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO, especially with respect to the establishment of the verification regime provided for by the Treaty.

94. The Agency needed to play an objective role in the implementation of the non-proliferation regime and in the prevention of illicit activities involving the use of nuclear material for non-peaceful purposes. His country was a party to all international instruments relating to the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear non-proliferation and, even before it joined the NPT in January 1995, it had opened its nuclear facilities to Agency inspections. For almost ten years all its nuclear activities had been subject to Agency monitoring and it had recently concluded Subsidiary Arrangements to its safeguards agreement. Having fulfilled its obligations, Algeria reaffirmed its legitimate right to access nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and wished to see international cooperation strengthened in that area.

95. Algeria had always given its full support to Agency activities in the fields of safety and security, as demonstrated by its ratification of the CPPNM in April 2003. It had also made significant progress in the ratification process for the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency.

96. The Agency's efforts to strengthen safety and security were justified in the light of the unprecedented growth of international terrorism. Algeria supported the measures taken by the Agency to combat nuclear terrorism, especially the establishment of instruments related to nuclear safety and the security of nuclear installations and material, and the action plan for the prevention of nuclear terrorism approved by the Board of Governors in 2002. A firm commitment by all Member States was needed to achieve that goal.

97. The Agency continued to achieve important results in the area of technical cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, despite the lack of resources for that statutory activity. It should try to ensure that the necessary balance between its various activities was maintained and that funding of technical cooperation activities was assured.

98. Algeria attached considerable importance to the strengthening of technical cooperation activities, particularly those aimed at promoting socio-economic development through the effective use of nuclear techniques. It welcomed the fact that efforts in the fields of health, agriculture and water resources enjoyed permanent Agency support. His country's projected needs and activities in those areas had been identified in the preliminary draft of its Country Programme Framework. Areas of particular importance to Algeria were combating of desertification and integration of isotope techniques in water resource management.

99. His country, which had held the Chairmanship of AFRA since September 2002, had carried out a number of activities under that agreement. In particular, it had contributed to the evaluation of the African human resources development programme in the field of nuclear science and technology and had held consultations with NEPAD managers with a view to establishing an effective partnership. On the national level, it had cooperated closely with the Agency on the organization of several regional AFRA scientific events in such fields as nuclear security, information and communications technology, and nuclear cardiology. It continued to provide the regional programme with specialist and expert services in such diverse areas as radioactive waste management, the development of nuclear medicine techniques, use of isotope hydrology techniques to detect dam leaks, and nuclear instrumentation. It also participated actively in the management programme run by the AFRA Field Management Committee. He urged all Agency Member States and regional and international organizations to strengthen their support for AFRA and to continue contributing to the funding of programmes developed on the African continent with a view to improving its socio-economic development.

100. The threat to international peace and security arising from the situation in the Middle East was a source of profound concern for Algeria and the international community. Israel's refusal to adhere to the NPT and submit its nuclear installations to Agency safeguards had exacerbated the situation. It was regrettable that progress had still not been made on the important issue of Israel's nuclear capabilities and threat which had been on the agenda of the General Conference for several years.

101. Israel's refusal to submit to international law had also prevented the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region, which was essential for regional as well as international security. Such zones, which had already been established elsewhere by the Tlatelolco, Rarotonga and Pelindaba Treaties, constituted a significant step towards nuclear disarmament on a global scale. It was therefore of the utmost importance for the Agency to ensure that Israel joined the NPT and submitted its nuclear installations to Agency safeguards.

102. Algeria supported the efforts undertaken by the Agency since 1994 to find a balanced solution to the DPRK nuclear crisis. Any diplomatic step aimed at finding a peaceful solution to the situation was to be encouraged and he called on all parties concerned to persevere with the dialogue that had been initiated.

103. Algeria welcomed the Agency's decision to include an additional item in the agenda on the amendment of Article VI of the Statute and thanked the Republic of Korea for initiating that action. Algeria had been the first country to request the amendment in question with a view to achieving more balanced representation of developing countries on the Board of Governors. Furthermore, it was during Algeria's presidency at the 43rd regular session of the General Conference that a consensus solution had been found and the amendment voted on. Algeria had already deposited its instruments of ratification for the amendment and called upon all Member States that had not yet done so to follow suit.

104. Ms. ESPINOSA (Mexico) said that concern over the preservation and strengthening of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime was growing and her country supported the measures that had been taken by the Agency to ensure that the international safeguards system was effective, efficient and universally applied. It also valued the Agency's efforts to carry out the tasks assigned to it by the Security Council as well as its statutory verification functions and urged all States to support those efforts.

105. During the preceding year, the Agency had continued to carry out safeguards inspections in Mexico pursuant to the country's safeguards agreement and had drawn satisfactory conclusions. Mexico was implementing the necessary technical and legal measures to enable it to sign an additional protocol.

106. The Laguna Verde nuclear power plant had continued to operate in accordance with the Agency's safety standards and had supplied 4.07% of the country's total electricity output in 2002.

107. With regard to the action plan to combat nuclear terrorism, Mexico supported all measures aimed at improving the security of nuclear material and installations. International cooperation was the most effective way to combat nuclear terrorism, based on the Charter of the United Nations and other instruments of international law, and maintaining full respect for human rights. Mexico therefore appreciated the Agency's evaluation and advisory services and congratulated the Agency on its efforts to improve the detection of, and response to, illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive material. An IPPAS mission to Mexico was scheduled for December 2003. Mexico would also be hosting a regional training course on physical protection of nuclear material and facilities in November 2003.

108. Her country had participated actively in the working group of legal and technical experts convened by the Director General to prepare a draft amendment to the CPPNM. A consensus needed to be reached on all outstanding issues before a diplomatic conference was convened to amend the Convention.

109. The three basic tools of the Agency's Technical Cooperation Strategy — the central criterion, Country Programme Frameworks and thematic planning — had helped improve project design and Government and institutional commitment. The plans to extend thematic planning to cover such areas as food irradiation, management of rainwater basins and control of transmissible diseases were welcome. By strengthening its efforts in priority areas such as the use of isotope and nuclear techniques in agriculture and the food industry, human health, water resources and environmental protection, the Agency could make a significant contribution to realizing the commitments made at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development. Mexico also supported the measures taken by the Secretariat to find additional financial resources for the technical cooperation programme and to establish partnerships with other specialized agencies and international bodies.

110. The Mexican Secretary for Energy was developing, in collaboration with the Agency and major national nuclear institutions, an integrated public opinion programme on the peaceful applications of nuclear energy. As in many other countries, the general public in Mexico was playing an increasing

role in the decision-making process. The aforementioned programme was designed to provide the public with objective and truthful information on the nuclear industry.

111. In May 2003, the XIX Congress of the Latin American Association of Societies of Biology and Nuclear Medicine (ALASBIMN) had been held in Mexico. The Agency had organized a regional training course on paediatric nuclear medicine and had held the first project coordinators meeting for the establishment of a regional telemedicine network in Latin America.

112. After difficult negotiations, the Board of Governors had approved a programme and budget package for 2004–2005 in July. Looking to the future, while it was clearly desirable that as many States as possible sign an additional protocol, that would bring with it additional financial burdens. The expansion of the nuclear industry would also have financial implications for the Agency. Experts should therefore continue to analyse the application and funding of safeguards in order to ensure fair and equal distribution of the financial burden, taking into account the benefits reaped by each State from its nuclear industry. The shielding mechanism would continue to be necessary for developing countries.

113. Mr. HOANG VAN HUAY (Vietnam) commended the achievements of the Agency over the preceding year. In the current complex international situation, the Agency's efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the safeguards system and create an effective verification regime for the NPT were welcome. His country remained committed to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

114. A strong national regulatory infrastructure was essential for the safe and peaceful utilization of nuclear energy. His country was grateful to the Agency for the assistance it had received with the implementation of its national programme on radiation protection and nuclear safety through the Model Project on upgrading radiation protection infrastructures. It hoped that that Model Project would be expanded to enable his country and others to reach the project milestones.

115. Vietnam attached great importance to technology transfer and capacity-building through the Agency's technical cooperation programmes. Its technical cooperation projects, which received adequate funding from the Government, had made a significant contribution to the spread of nuclear applications in such areas as food and agriculture, human health, management of water resources and the oil and gas industries. He expressed the hope that the Agency would continue to devote adequate resources to the technical cooperation programme.

116. Nuclear power continued to expand in Asia where the energy demand was expected to increase greatly in the coming decades. The Agency's INPRO project and the Generation IV Initiative of the United States Department of Energy had made remarkable progress. Vietnam had carried out a study on the introduction of nuclear power and had been encouraged by the priorities declared by the Director General in his opening address.

117. Mr. HOFFMANN (Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization) said that the CTBT was becoming increasingly universal in its status, having been signed by 168 States and ratified by 104. With Algeria's recent ratification, the ratifiers now included 32 of the 44 States whose ratification was required for the Treaty's entry into force.

118. The Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty held in early September 2003 had adopted a final declaration that had stressed the importance of a universal and effectively verifiable comprehensive treaty as a major instrument for all aspects of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The Conference had reiterated that the cessation of nuclear weapons tests and other nuclear explosions, by constraining the development of nuclear weapons in

general and ending the development of advanced new types of nuclear weapons, constituted an effective nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation measure.

119. The Preparatory Commission and its Provisional Technical Secretariat were actively continuing to prepare the effective implementation of the CTBT. As a primary obligation, each State party undertook not to carry out any nuclear weapon test explosion or any other nuclear explosion and to prohibit and prevent any such explosion at any place under its jurisdiction or control. The Treaty provided for the establishment of a global verification regime consisting of an international monitoring system, a consultation and clarification process, on-site inspections and confidence-building measures. Data from monitoring system stations around the world were analysed by the International Data Centre in Vienna. The monitoring data and the products of the International Data Centre were made available to Member States. They had the final responsibility for analysing the data.

120. The programme budgets for establishing the international monitoring system approved by the Commission since 1997 included the cost of site surveys, the purchase of equipment, installation, final certification, and operation and maintenance of the facilities. The installation of the monitoring network was proceeding steadily.

121. The International Data Centre supported the verification and civil and scientific interests of Member States by providing products and services needed for effective global monitoring through the establishment and testing of facilities to receive, collect, process, analyse, report on and archive data received from monitoring system stations. To date, about 85 such stations had been included in the Centre's operations. The Centre's work on the design, implementation and management of information security was progressing. About 70 secure signatory accounts had been established, with over 490 users authorized to access monitoring system data and the products of the International Data Centre and to receive technical support from the Centre. The global communications infrastructure transferred monitoring system data to the Centre and disseminated the data and products to signatory States. The Provisional Technical Secretariat operated the global communications infrastructure as a worldwide closed and secure satellite communications network. Once it was fully operational, the network was expected to carry some 11 gigabytes of data daily.

122. The elaboration of the draft on-site inspection operational manual remained a priority task. The ninth on-site inspection workshop hosted by Japan in Hiroshima from 30 June to 4 July 2003 had discussed lessons learned from the 2002 field experiment in Kazakhstan.

123. The Provisional Technical Secretariat currently had about 270 staff members from 70 countries, some 175 of them in the Professional category. The representation of women in Professional positions had increased to 27.6%.

**The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.**