

# General Conference

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## Forty-Seventh (2003) Regular Session

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# Plenary

## Record of the Sixth Meeting

*Held at the Austria Center Vienna on Wednesday, 17 September 2003, at 3.05 p.m.*

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

**Later:** Mr. ALANG MD. RASHID (Malaysia)  
Mr. GONZÁLEZ ANINAT (Chile)

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### **Abbreviations used in this record:**

ABACC	Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials
APCs	assessed programme costs
ARCAL	Co-operation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
Assistance Convention	Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency
Basic Safety Standards	International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CRP	co-ordinated research project
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Early Notification Convention	Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
IPPAS	International Physical Protection Advisory Service
IRSRR	Incident Reporting System for Research Reactors
Joint Convention	Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management
MERCOSUR	Southern Cone Common Market
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NSC	Nuclear Safety Convention
Nuclear Safety Convention	Convention on Nuclear Safety
NSF	Nuclear Security Fund
OECD/NEA	Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (earlier CSCE)
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty

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

Quadripartite Agreement	Agreement between the Republic of Argentina, the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Application of Safeguards
RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
SIT	sterile insect technique
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
Tripartite Initiative	IAEA/RF-MINATOM/US-DOE Initiative on Securing and Managing Radioactive Sources
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNMOVIC	United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission
Vienna Convention	Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage (May 1963)

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

1. Mr. PAULINICH (Peru) said that since the previous session of the General Conference his country had made significant progress in using nuclear science and technology to address a number of national problems. With Agency assistance, the Peruvian Nuclear Energy Institute (IPEN) had drawn up and started implementation of its strategic plan, which provided for the peaceful use of atomic energy in such new areas as biotechnology, materials characterization, environmental protection and sustainable water resources management.

2. The Agency was continuing to provide valuable support for the training of human resources through fellowships, scientific visits and expert missions. Of particular interest had been the training in the use of the logical framework methodology. For its part, Peru had continued to organize advanced courses on the use of nuclear techniques in biotechnology, medicine and other areas.

3. With regard to the dissemination and promotion of nuclear science, IPEN and other national institutes had continued to organize events, such as the international scientific meetings held twice a year that provided a forum for discussion and analysis for Peruvian and foreign scientists.

4. Peru was grateful to the Agency for its assistance in two new projects for the 2003–2004 biennium on isotopic techniques in mining and on the establishment of an infrastructure for the application of nuclear techniques for the analysis, conservation and dating of archaeological materials. Peru also appreciated the transfer of technology and knowledge through ARCAL and regional projects enabling successful management of underground water resources in arid zones in the north of the country, and strengthening of the capacities of IPEN and other institutions with respect to the peaceful uses of ionizing radiation. In the area of agriculture, technology transfer had made it possible to introduce a new variety of barley of high nutritional quality. Progress had also been made in the identification of disease-resistant varieties of wheat and of varieties of quinoa suitable for daily consumption.

5. Turning to medicine he said that, in a binational project with Ecuador under Agency auspices, two nuclear medicine centres equipped with modern gamma cameras had recently been opened in the north of Paraguay. To ensure the smooth running of those centres, IPEN was providing training for the medical and maintenance staff. Furthermore, with Agency assistance, the national secondary standards dosimetry laboratory had been completed and was now providing diagnostic and therapeutic services for patients. A gamma irradiator had been installed at the RACSO nuclear centre for tissue irradiation and was ready to be commissioned. He expressed Peru's gratitude to the Government of France for its support for a national and regional project on industrial tracer applications.

6. Peru had chaired the Technical Coordination Board of ARCAL in the previous year, and a number of activities had been organized by IPEN together with the Agency to promote cooperation in the region, including the final coordinators meeting for the project on quality control in the repair and maintenance of nuclear medicine instruments, and the final meeting for the project on the quality system for the production of irradiated sterilized grafts and related documentation. Peru had also received assistance from the Agency for technical and scientific research on such important issues as the control and eradication of foot-and-mouth disease and improvements in the SIT.

7. Conscious of its outstanding commitments to the Agency, including the payment of its APCs, over the previous year Peru had striven to pay back its arrears. It welcomed the Secretariat's efforts to strengthen the central criterion concept as the main indicator of a government's commitment to technical cooperation projects.

8. Underlining the importance of the Agency's verification activities, he said that Peru was proud to have co-chaired the informal consultations that had resulted in consensus on an increase in the Agency's safeguards budget and the adoption of measures to reduce the financial impact on the developing countries while maintaining the balance among the major programmes.

9. Although the Safeguards Implementation Report for 2002 had concluded that all material under safeguards had remained in peaceful uses, he expressed concern about certain developments that could undermine the safeguards system and international stability, in particular the attitude of the DPRK vis-à-vis its safeguards agreement with the Agency. The Agency had not found any discrepancies in the safeguards reports submitted by Peru, nor any evidence of undeclared activities or the diversion of nuclear material in Peru.

10. In the current international environment, it was imperative that Member States sign and implement comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols in order to make the integrated safeguards regime universal and facilitate the Agency's verification tasks. As the first Latin American country to have ratified an additional protocol, Peru had taken part in the International Conference on IAEA Safeguards in Tokyo in December 2002, and was a member of the group of Friends of the Additional Protocol set up at that Conference to promote universality of the additional protocol. In that connection, Peru welcomed Cuba's decision to ratify the Tlatelolco Treaty and the NPT, and to sign a safeguards agreement and an additional protocol.

11. Peru had participated actively in the International Conference on the Safety of Transport of Radioactive Material held in Vienna in July 2003, and welcomed its recommendations and findings. It hoped that a relevant action plan would be developed as a matter of urgency by the Secretariat together with interested Member States. Also, Peru welcomed the Director General's suggestion to convene a group of experts on nuclear liability and to promote dialogue in that regard.

12. Efforts should be made to improve significantly the provisions of some international conventions, such as the CPPNM, and the Early Notification, Assistance and Vienna Conventions. It was also important to increase the number of contracting parties to those instruments and establish practical measures for their effective implementation. It was also vital to review the applicability of the Agency's regulations concerning preparedness and response in the event of a maritime nuclear or radiological emergency. The current regime had been formulated for an emergency occurring on land where the jurisdiction was clear. The Agency should play a key role in establishing mechanisms for consultation, notification and the timely exchange of information — under strict confidentiality — between government authorities concerning international shipments of radioactive material.

13. Mr. VOVERS (Latvia) said his country was fully aware of the importance of the safety and security of radiation sources and strongly supported the relevant action plan approved by the Board of Governors. The issues had been discussed in depth at the International Conference on Security of Radioactive Sources, held in Vienna in March 2003, and some Member States had already allocated additional financial resources to cope with the most urgent problems. He hoped that the draft safety standard for regulatory control of radiation sources would be finalized soon.

14. In 2002, his Government had approved new regulations on the security of radiation sources and facilities, using experience accumulated by other Member States. He thanked the United States of America and Sweden for their help in strengthening Latvia's physical protection systems, particularly its border controls and the security systems at major facilities. Latvia fully endorsed the Code of

Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and called on other Member States to do the same.

15. Having completed a national technical cooperation project on feasibility studies for the use of positron emission tomography (PET), Latvia was planning to submit a full-scale project to the Agency later in the year. The project would not only improve the diagnostic capacity of the country's oncology centres but also provide education in radiation safety and the use of radioisotopes in research. Latvia was also receiving valuable support in that area under regional technical cooperation projects with the Agency.

16. His Government had launched an international call for tenders for decommissioning and spent fuel disposal at the Salaspils research facility, but it had not succeeded in appointing a decommissioning operator. It hoped instead to receive support from a trilateral initiative involving the Agency, the United States of America and the Russian Federation. Although dismantling of the reactor had been postponed for the time being because of budgetary constraints, his Government had allocated approximately €0.65 million for assessment of the environmental impact, preparations for off-site dry storage if necessary, and the dismantling of components that had no impact on radiation safety.

17. Latvia had recently adopted its first radioactive waste management strategy, which aimed to enhance safety at an existing disposal site. Latvia's report to the first Review Meeting of the Joint Convention, to be held in Vienna in November 2003, described the national waste management system in detail. Over the next seven years, the Government aimed to create new long-term storage for spent sealed sources and carry out feasibility studies for a geological disposal site. The latter would pose a challenge even for large countries, and Latvia would support any activities aimed at providing an international solution to the problem.

18. Mr. PÉRÉVET (Cameroon) said the 47th Regular Session of the General Conference was taking place against a background of great international concern over terrorist acts and other atrocities being perpetrated worldwide. Those challenges had ushered in an era of new responsibilities for the Agency. More than ever before it would need the support of its Member States.

19. It was necessary to strengthen the implementation and universality of the NPT through the additional protocol to enable the Agency to verify NPT compliance with greater effectiveness and efficiency. The measures developed within the framework of the Agency's existing legal powers were essential in the fight against proliferation, illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive material, and the risk of nuclear terrorist acts. They aimed, amongst other things, to broaden the range of information States had to provide on their nuclear materials and activities, and to facilitate inspections. That would enhance transparency in the nuclear sphere and strengthen international stability and security. In that regard, and reaffirming its active participation in — and full compliance with — the Agency safeguards system, Cameroon urged all States which had not yet done so to sign a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol thereto.

20. Africa had set a fine example in the area of nuclear non-proliferation, with almost all African countries now party to the Pelindaba Treaty. He expressed the hope that the international community would help to protect that achievement and enable Africa to use its resources for sustainable development in future.

21. The technical cooperation programme was also an important part of the Agency's activities. Cameroon commended the positive results of cooperation with the Agency within its own strategy against poverty, particularly in the sectors of rural development, health, water resources and the industrial applications of nuclear technology. Thanks to the Agency, Cameroon now had a veterinary reference laboratory in Garoua and a nuclear medicine department equipped with a gamma camera at the Yaoundé General Hospital. The Hydrac company in Cameroon had, with Agency assistance,

ensured much of the monitoring work involved in the laying of the Chad-Cameroon pipeline, thereby setting an example in industrial radiography for the entire subregion. Cameroon's short-term priorities were to improve plant varieties, develop soil improvement techniques, improve productivity in local ruminant breeds, improve access to potable water, improve nutrition for people living with the AIDS virus, optimize its nuclear medicine, radiotherapy and medical physics services, and improve radiation safety and security.

22. Cameroon had a law on radiation protection and had established a national radiation protection agency in October 2002. Cameroon's attendance at the majority of international meetings on nuclear safety and security was testimony to its constant efforts to reinforce its national radiation protection infrastructure in order to meet international standards and also to reassure its partners in the nuclear sector.

23. One of the landmarks of Cameroon's close cooperation with the Agency had been the signing on 16 September 2003 of its CPF. The document would offer a framework for prioritizing technical cooperation activities and elaborating projects. Preparing such CPFs would help African Member States to derive maximum benefit from the technical cooperation programme.

24. The success of the Agency's technical cooperation programme depended on Member States' determination to meet their financial obligations to the Agency and to participate in regional activities. The importance of that cooperation to the developing countries could not be underestimated and his Government urged all Member States to pay their arrears and make their regular contributions.

25. In conclusion, he underlined the Agency's crucial role in the promotion of socio-economic progress and international peace and security.

26. Mr. FRANK (Israel) said that the events of the previous year had demonstrated the central role played by the Agency in the international community at a time when there were threats to global and regional peace and security as a result of proliferation and terrorism, a growing demand for energy and concerns about health and safety.

27. Israel supported the Agency's activities to diminish the threat of nuclear terrorism. The alarming correlation between States currently seeking weapons of mass destruction and those supporting terrorism called for vigorous international efforts to block the spread of weapons of mass destruction to terrorist groups and to States supporting such groups. Israel had made a voluntary contribution to the NSF in the current year and was considering making an additional contribution in kind.

28. To address the current challenges successfully, the Agency required financial resources. Israel therefore supported the budgetary increase to enhance the Agency's safeguards capability.

29. Nuclear energy presented one of the few viable options for meeting the growing energy demand, particularly in the developing countries. However, a new balance had to be struck between further development and improvement of nuclear power generation, on the one hand, and addressing proliferation concerns on the other. The Agency's safeguards system — however pivotal — could not on its own guarantee the effective enforcement of non-proliferation obligations. One possible solution was the establishment of a standard whereby fresh fuel would only be supplied for nuclear power reactors by a recognized vendor on the understanding that the client undertook not to develop indigenous fuel cycle capabilities and that all the spent fuel was returned to the vendor. Such an arrangement would benefit countries planning to use nuclear power as they would not have to develop fuel cycle or storage facilities, and at the same time it would ensure safer and more secure management of the reactors and contain the proliferation risk. His delegation would support the establishment of a group of experts to consider the issue.

30. Turning to the Conference's agenda, he said that two draft resolutions concerning the Middle East stood out as extraneous to the Agency's Statute and mission. Israel had made no secret of its fundamental reservations regarding the language and relevance of the resolution on the application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East, and had formally distanced itself from the modalities of that resolution. However, in the interests of consensus, it would be prepared to endorse the language of the text of the previous year's resolution, recognizing that a nuclear-weapon-free zone could serve as an important complement to overall peace and security in the region. By contrast, it saw no point and considerable danger in the agenda item on Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat. There had been many alarming proliferation developments in the Middle East and other regions, but none of them had involved his country. Israel had neither threatened its neighbours nor acted in defiance of any of its international commitments. Those that had requested the inclusion of the item on the agenda should recognize that there was no substitute for direct negotiation, reconciliation and agreements reached freely between the States of the region. Once good neighbourly relations had been established between all parties in the Middle East, the time would be right to move towards regional arms control and disarmament arrangements in conventional, chemical, biological and missile domains with a view to the establishment of a mutually verifiable nuclear-weapon-free zone. If any action were taken on that agenda item, his delegation would not be in a position to support the resolution on the application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East.

31. Finally, he thanked the Agency for the technical assistance his country had received under a regional project on nuclear technology applications involving Israeli and Jordanian entrepreneurs. Also, the project on upgrading the area-wide control of the medfly using the SIT could serve as an excellent model for future regional cooperation.

32. Mr. GARCIA (Philippines) said the Agency's importance in promoting international cooperation for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy had been universally recognized. Also, it continued to play a crucial role with respect to non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, as explicitly outlined in Article III of the NPT. His country was fully committed to the NPT regime, which was vital to the maintenance of international peace and stability.

33. His delegation welcomed the six-party talks held recently in Beijing to discuss the DPRK's nuclear programme. The current crisis could be resolved peacefully through constructive dialogue with a view to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Nuclear proliferation was a matter of serious concern to the countries of that region, including his own. The Philippines therefore joined the international community in calling on the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons programmes in a verifiable manner and to return to the non-proliferation regime. He expressed support for the Director General's determined efforts to resolve the issue.

34. Referring to the resolution adopted by consensus by the Board of Governors on 12 September 2003 (document GOV/2003/69) on the implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran, he expressed the hope that Iran would cooperate fully with the Agency to resolve all the outstanding problems. All parties to the NPT had the inalienable right to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with the Treaty's provisions. His delegation called on Iran to sign, conclude and implement an additional protocol promptly in order to allay the international community's concerns about its nuclear programme.

35. The technical cooperation projects undertaken between the Agency and the Philippines reflected his country's human development policy objectives. The technical cooperation programme should be driven by the priorities defined by recipient Member States, in accordance with the principles laid down in document INFCIRC/267. The Agency's activities continued to have a positive impact on the life of ordinary people in the Philippines.

36. In the area of agriculture, a four-year project on enhancing agricultural productivity through radiation technology on the island of Mindanao — the prospective food basket of the nation — aimed to develop new mutant varieties of rice and high-yielding fruit crops through the use of radiation-induced mutations and molecular techniques.

37. In the field of human health, an ongoing project on neonatal screening for congenital hypothyroidism aimed to improve infant mortality in the first few weeks after birth. The programme had received substantial Agency support in addition to grants from the Philippine Council for Research and Development and the Canadian International Development Agency. Funding from the Agency over the previous three years had enhanced the capability of the Philippine's Central Laboratory to undertake the project. The legal infrastructure for the procedure was being established by way of a congressional bill. The Newborn Screening Act would save an estimated 10 000 newborn babies annually from potential mental retardation and death.

38. With respect to the environment, a project on nuclear analytical techniques for air quality management was generating data on air pollution sources and pollutant composition, and models for pollutant transport. The national environmental regulatory authorities would benefit from the project by acquiring a scientific basis for the formulation of air quality management plans and policies. Data from the project had already been used to supplement the national air quality status report. Furthermore, the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute had made arrangements for Gent air samplers to be installed at two new sampling stations belonging to the Environmental Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and real-time monitors would be set up under the National Clear Air Act.

39. The Philippines was continuing to work with the Agency to try to find a solution to problems with harmful algal blooms under the project on nuclear techniques to study the red tide problem.

40. The International Conference on Security of Radioactive Sources earlier in the year had produced welcome results that encouraged all States and the Secretariat not only to enhance national and international response arrangements but also to strengthen their mechanisms for the provision of assistance. The Philippines had incorporated those results into its own action plans.

41. The recently revised Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources met the Philippines' need for enhanced security measures and thus had its wholehearted support. In that framework, the Agency was providing assistance in securing disused radioactive sources from three teletherapy units at two hospitals in the Philippines.

42. Another project launched in 2003 on site selection and conceptual design of a near-surface disposal facility involved detailed site investigation, characterization, and evaluation of various nuclear waste disposal vulnerabilities and hazards. The project aimed to establish a disposal concept and repository design, including the completion of a repository safety assessment.

43. The Philippines welcomed the outcome of the International Conference on the Safety of Transport of Radioactive Material, held in Vienna in July, and looked forward to further dialogue on the various issues that required cooperation among Member States.

44. He thanked the Agency for assistance rendered for the project on human resource development and nuclear technology support, which aimed to upgrade and strengthen the skills and capabilities of human resources in the Philippines.

45. The project on gas isotope geochemistry for geothermal resources management was generating primary data on the role of noble gases in water reservoir processes. Since few studies tackled the effects of field exploitation on noble gas composition and isotopic ratios, the findings would be beneficial in planning future reservoir management. Isotope and chemical techniques had led to a

better understanding of the country's aquifer systems. Progress had also been made in determining the relationship between aquifer systems and groundwater/surface water and in assessing aquifer vulnerability to contamination. End-users in Mindanao had already agreed to continue the study of groundwater contamination in support of their own water management efforts, and other districts were expected to follow suit.

46. Mr. ZNIBER (Morocco), reiterating his country's support for the Agency's three pillars, namely verification, safety and security, and technology transfer, underlined the importance of the Agency to global peace and security, as well as to sustainable development. Given the recent problems it had had to face, particularly in the sphere of verification, the Agency needed more than ever the support of its Member States in terms of both personnel and finance in order to accomplish its tasks.

47. The NPT had demonstrated that a strict and universal non-proliferation regime was justified. He urged all Member States that had not already done so to adhere to the Treaty and conclude safeguards agreements with the Agency.

48. He reiterated his country's support for the diplomatic efforts to establish peace on the Korean Peninsula. That objective could be obtained only through dialogue and within the framework of international law. He appealed to the DPRK to review its decision to withdraw from the NPT and to resume talks with the Agency and the other parties concerned with a view to full compliance with its safeguards agreement with the Agency.

49. Morocco shared the international community's concerns regarding the continued threat of the deployment of nuclear weapons in the Middle East. It was disappointed at the lack of progress following the adoption of resolution GC(46)/RES/16 on the application of IAEA safeguards in that region. Israel still refused to submit all its installations and nuclear activities to Agency safeguards. That constituted a serious obstacle to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. He therefore urged Israel, as a confidence-building measure, to adhere to the NPT and to accept Agency verification of its nuclear installations. Morocco supported the Director General's efforts to set up a forum with the participation of all the countries of the region to discuss the experiences of other regions in establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Security in the Middle East would not be achieved through the use of force, terror or nuclear threat.

50. The Secretariat should increase its efforts to inform the public about the advantages of the application of nuclear techniques in the agricultural, health, hydrology and energy sectors. At the same time, the public should be made aware of the need for appropriate levels of safety and security. The Agency should do more to support countries in preparing emergency action plans in the event of a nuclear accident.

51. The threat of nuclear terrorism must be taken very seriously. For that reason, all States should benefit from cooperation in putting nuclear safety and security infrastructures in place. Most of the Agency's budget for the fight against nuclear terrorism should be allocated to that objective.

52. With the help of the Agency, Morocco intended to draw up a national nuclear strategy aimed at establishing the necessary legislative and regulatory infrastructure and strengthening its regulatory authorities. Morocco was grateful for the bilateral cooperation it had received, which would soon lead to the official inauguration of the National Centre for Nuclear Energy and the siting of a nuclear reactor.

53. Within the framework of its cooperation with the Agency in 2003, Morocco had organized a post-graduate course on radioprotection for specialists from French-speaking Africa and a second course would be held in Rabat in October 2004. Morocco had decided to extend cooperation with the Agency in that area to include English-speaking African countries.

54. In September 2003, in collaboration with the Agency and other organizations, Morocco had hosted the International Conference on National Infrastructures for Radiation Safety. That Conference had recommended assistance be given in the establishment of national infrastructures for radiation safety and the security of radioactive sources and had also emphasized the importance of training personnel in that regard. He urged the Director General to prepare an Agency action plan based on the conclusions of that Conference.

55. The consensus obtained on the Agency's programme and budget for 2004–2005 would contribute to a better balance between the Agency's verification and technical cooperation activities. Although some matters remained unresolved, he was sure that the Secretariat's efforts would ensure that any difficulties could be overcome. He encouraged all Member States to increase, where possible, their voluntary contributions to the TCF.

56. Morocco needed more Agency cooperation in the application of nuclear techniques for water resource management to combat drought and desertification, by which it was particularly affected, and also in the health sector.

57. The amendment to Article VI of the Statute had still not entered into force although it had been adopted at the 43rd Regular Session of the General Conference in 1999. To date only 36 countries, including Morocco, had deposited their instruments of acceptance. That slow rate of acceptance was damaging democratization within the international institutions and so he proposed that the matter be included on the list of priority texts for the United Nations.

58. Mr. BARIIEV (Belarus) said that transition to sustainable development was of vital ecological importance in the modern world. Continued population growth and the growing needs of the developing world would certainly mean an increasing energy demand and Belarus had not ruled out the possibility of developing its own nuclear energy programme. With a view to the possible construction of a nuclear power plant in 2005, site selection, a feasibility study and a safety assessment of various types of modern reactor had already been carried out.

59. His delegation shared the Agency's concerns with regard to the decreasing number of qualified nuclear energy specialists and the potential loss of nuclear knowledge as a result of the ageing nuclear workforce. Belarus was doing everything within its powers to remedy the situation by participating in expert meetings on nuclear knowledge management and was implementing training programmes jointly with the Agency, including three-month regional postgraduate courses on radiation protection and the safe use of ionizing radiation sources.

60. Belarus scientists were continuing research in the nuclear field within the framework of cooperation with the International Science and Technology Center (ISTC), and those endeavours were supported by the Government.

61. Recognizing that the safe management of spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste remained very much a topical issue worldwide, Belarus had acceded in 2002 to the Joint Convention.

62. Reconstruction of the Ekores radioactive waste disposal facility was still in progress, and substantial improvements to the national regulatory requirements for waste management were needed. Belarus hoped that it could count on Agency support in resolving outstanding problems.

63. He reiterated his country's interest in participating in the Tripartite Initiative, not only for the return of spent research reactor fuel given the lack of scope for long-term storage or reprocessing in Belarus, but also for dealing with the radioactive waste disposal sites that still remained in areas of Belarus where Soviet troops had been deployed and for which no technical documents were available.

64. Nuclear and radiation security were key Agency's activities and presented a challenge to all States. The March 2003 International Conference on Security of Radioactive Sources had underscored the importance of international cooperation to ensure the security of sources and prevention of unauthorized trafficking in them in the context of the war on terrorism.

65. In 2003 the Government of Belarus had passed a decree requiring that provision be made for the return of spent radiation sources to the manufacturer. Like many other countries, Belarus faced the problem of locating orphaned sources in order to avert the threat to public health and possible economic damage. Forty-six orphaned sources had been found in Belarus in 2003 alone.

66. The physical protection of nuclear material was crucial to ensuring nuclear and radiation safety and the security of nuclear material, and to combating international terrorism. Belarus welcomed the Agency's efforts in that area, including the process to amend the CPPNM. Belarus had been an active participant in that process and looked forward to the convening of a diplomatic conference to adopt the amendments.

67. Belarus' own physical protection system was set up in 1996 with the support of Japan, Sweden and the USA. The assistance of donor States was still needed to support its continued operation.

68. In connection with nuclear non-proliferation, Belarus had voluntarily renounced nuclear weapons and ensured their withdrawal from national territory. Also, it had signed the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State party and an agreement for the application of safeguards. In June 2003, the President of Belarus had passed a decision to initiate negotiations on the text of an additional protocol to that agreement, which would hopefully be submitted to the Board of Governors in the near future.

69. A significant hindrance to the development of nuclear power was public concerns about the possible consequences of accidents. The Chernobyl disaster had had a significant impact in that regard and it was important for the international community that its consequences be thoroughly investigated and that practical approaches to overcoming them be found. His delegation welcomed the recent creation of an International Scientific Forum on Chernobyl, an initiative proposed by the Director General during his visit to Belarus in August 2001. The Forum had an important role to play in assessing the radioecological and medical consequences of the Chernobyl disaster. That assessment would serve as the basis for an action plan to mitigate the negative effects on mankind and the environment of what had been the worst incident in the history of the nuclear industry. Belarus hoped that an international conference would be convened in 2004 to draw together the conclusions of the Forum's work, with a view to developing a clear strategy for future action and to mobilizing the financial resources needed to rehabilitate the affected territories and achieve economic revival and sustainable development. The work of the Forum should be conducted in a spirit of constructive cooperation with the International Chernobyl Research and Information Network (ICRIN) under the aegis of the United Nations.

70. Belarus was developing and implementing new Chernobyl initiatives, one of which was the Cooperation for Rehabilitation Programme, begun in 2003. It envisaged a comprehensive and integrated solution to problems relating to radiation protection, health care, environmental protection, economic development in the affected areas and education. It had broad support from European countries and international organizations, including UNESCO and the OSCE. Belarus hoped that the Agency would also take part in the Programme.

71. Stressing the importance of technical cooperation between the Agency and Belarus, he said that his country's CPF had been approved in March 2003.

72. Finally, he said that in 2003 Belarus had met its financial obligations to the Agency in full and would strive to do so in future.

73. Mr. OLMOS (Bolivia) underlined the importance his country attached to its ties with the Agency, particularly with regard to technical cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. Two projects were being implemented in 2003–2004 on radiotherapy and water contamination, with an allocated budget of more than \$400 000. He expressed the hope that the Agency would be able to contribute funds towards implementation of a third project relating to the control of pesticide residues, to which the Bolivian Government had made an extrabudgetary contribution of \$22 000. The total estimated budget for the project was \$150 000.

74. Despite Bolivia's difficult economic situation, it continued to make its assessed contributions to the Regular Budget in full and on time. As part of its contributions to the TCF it had recently allocated \$100 000 for the acquisition of a cobalt machine for a project to upgrade radiotherapy services (BOL/6/024). In addition, during the previous programme cycle, it had paid \$80 000 to a project supporting the nuclear medicine centres in Cochabamba and Sucre (BOL/6/022). His delegation commended the innovative approach of the Latin America Section in the Department of Technical Cooperation to strengthening project management and had proposed that the city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra host a regional seminar for the submission of projects proposals for the 2005–2006 cycle using that methodology. In the same context, the recent workshop on the planning and design of technical cooperation projects with the Agency using the logical framework methodology had been a great success. It would not only facilitate project planning, selection and implementation but also optimize the use of resources.

75. To avoid the accumulation of debts as had occurred in the past, the Bolivian Institute for Nuclear Science and Technology had been instructed, as the national regulatory authority, to transfer responsibility for meeting those obligations to the institutions or bodies benefiting from cooperation projects.

76. Within the framework of ARCAL, Bolivia was participating in 13 projects, related primarily to nuclear chemistry, nuclear medicine, agriculture and radiation protection.

77. The Office of Nuclear Security was to be commended for its active promotion of a regional seminar for representatives of MERCOSUR, Chile and Bolivia on the detection and control of radioactive materials at border crossings, to be held in Ciudad del Este, Paraguay, in October 2003. The goal of the seminar was to discuss illicit trafficking in radioactive materials, to optimize detection methods and to coordinate control and security mechanisms. Bolivia had offered to host a similar event in collaboration with the Agency and with the involvement of the Andean countries, possibly in the first quarter of 2004.

78. He thanked the Agency for its help in dealing with incidents involving radioactive materials which had been reported in Bolivia over the past year.

79. In August 2003, Bolivia had deposited its instruments of accession to the Assistance Convention and the Early Notification Convention, a further demonstration of the importance it attached to strengthening its relations with the Agency.

**Mr. Alang Md. Rashid (Malaysia) took the Chair.**

80. Mr. SAHİNBAŞ (Turkey) congratulated the Agency on its achievements during the preceding year. Projects on new generation nuclear reactors and fuel cycles, such as INPRO — which aimed to support safe, sustainable, economic and proliferation resistant use of nuclear technology to meet 21st century energy needs — would provide significant help to countries retaining nuclear energy as a long-term option. The Agency should continue those activities, finding synergies between INPRO and the Generation IV International Forum, and encourage cooperation between Member States under the framework of INPRO.

81. Turkey supported the Agency's efforts to strengthen the non-proliferation regime and verification mechanisms. It was gratifying that the Agency had concluded that all the nuclear material and other items placed under safeguards had been accounted for, with the exception of the nuclear material in the DPRK. The developments of the past year had shown there was a need to take further concrete measures to strengthen the non-proliferation regime.

82. Universal adherence to the additional protocol was essential and Turkey, which had ratified an additional protocol, supported all Agency initiatives to that end. He called on all Member States that had not yet done so to ratify and implement such a protocol without delay.

83. Concerned that the Agency had been unable to verify the DPRK's nuclear programme, his delegation supported the Director General's efforts to negotiate with the DPRK requirements and modalities for compliance with its NPT safeguards agreement. It welcomed the six-party talks held recently in Beijing and supported diplomatic efforts to find a peaceful solution to the DPRK nuclear issue.

84. While the Islamic Republic of Iran had shown increased cooperation in providing information to the Agency, full and unconditional cooperation on its part, as spelled out in the resolution contained in document GOV/2003/69, was needed for prompt resolution of the outstanding issues. Iran should conclude and bring into force an additional protocol as soon as possible, thereby demonstrating its commitment to non-proliferation.

85. He commended the work of the Director General and the Secretariat in implementing the Security Council resolutions relating to Iraq. However, more needed to be done for a full and complete verification of Iraq's nuclear programme. The Agency should remain ready to resume its verification activities and await further guidance from the Security Council.

86. Nuclear security and protection against nuclear terrorism were high priorities for Turkey. As part of its continuing efforts to enhance its capability to combat the threat of nuclear terrorism, Turkey had invited the Agency to carry out an IPPAS mission in July 2003 and would duly consider the recommendations of that mission.

87. The safety of nuclear and radioactive materials was crucial to the credibility of nuclear technology. He welcomed the progress made in recent years with respect to nuclear, radiation, waste and transport safety, and in the revision of safety standards. The revised action plans for the safety and security of radioactive sources and on occupational radiation protection should be implemented widely. The adoption of the revised Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources had also been a positive step. All those measures would enhance the global safety and security culture and would provide a basis for cooperation in that field.

88. Another priority was the safe transport of nuclear and radioactive materials and Turkey welcomed the progress made in that field as envisaged in resolution GC(46)/RES/9B. A TranSAS mission had visited Turkey in March 2003 and its recommendations would benefit future work on transport safety, including the possible modification of national legislative and institutional structures. TranSAS was the best mechanism to assess the degree of implementation of internationally recognized standards by Member States and its reports would have a positive impact on international efforts to establish an overall transport safety culture. The International Conference on the Safety of Transport of Radioactive Material, held in July 2003 in Vienna, had examined all aspects of the topic and had served as a platform to develop ideas and recommendations for future work. Turkey was willing to participate in the preparation of an action plan based on the findings and recommendations of that Conference.

89. Turkey had supported the recent consensus on the Agency's budget, believing that it would enable the Agency to carry out its activities in a balanced manner. He hoped that in future all of its core programmes could be funded from the Regular Budget. His delegation was confident that the Secretariat would continue to find ways of achieving efficiency and effectiveness in all of its activities, especially safeguards.

90. The Agency's technical cooperation activities were an essential part of the sustainable development process. Turkey was pleased with the achievements of its national and regional cooperation projects in 2002. Work remained to be done to increase project implementation rates. His delegation supported the central criterion approach, and felt that the new technical cooperation strategy was key to programme planning, a crucial part of the technical cooperation programme.

91. Mr. MURPHY (Ireland) said that the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction had acquired new urgency and the associated challenges needed to be addressed and resolved. Common challenges were best met by a common response and Ireland was firmly committed to the principle of shared responsibility with respect to global peace and security.

92. Nowhere was the multilateral approach more important than in the area of nuclear non-proliferation. The NPT, as the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime, was essential in the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. The Agency played a vital role in that regime and it was essential that it received the fullest and broadest support from its Member States.

93. The NPT had faced several critical challenges from within and without, namely the DPRK's defiance of its NPT safeguard obligations, the unresolved questions over Iran's nuclear programme, the effort to verify Iraq's nuclear capabilities, the failure of some countries to conclude and bring into force NPT safeguards agreements, and stagnation as regards nuclear disarmament and universality. Efforts must be redoubled to resolve those matters and to strengthen the non-proliferation system.

94. The DPRK nuclear issue demonstrated the need for the multilateral verification system provided by the Agency. Ireland welcomed the recent six-party talks in Beijing and hoped that progress would be made in resolving the issue. His delegation urged Iran to provide accelerated cooperation with the Agency and full transparency in relation to its nuclear programme. As for Iraq, the Agency continued to have responsibilities under the terms of that country's NPT safeguards agreement; he hoped it would be in a position to discharge them soon.

95. The relationship between nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament lay at the core of the NPT and those two concepts were mutually reinforcing. The right to develop atomic energy for peaceful purposes brought with it certain responsibilities regarding the need to ensure that nuclear material and equipment intended for peaceful use were not used for the production of nuclear weapons and regarding the need to follow best practise in relation to security, safety and transport matters.

96. Ireland had benefited considerably from its 30-year membership of the Agency, and valued the Agency's research and publications and the opportunity to participate in its work. Specialists from Ireland's Radiological Protection Institute had participated in training courses, both as contributors and participants. His country supported the Agency's efforts to share and transfer nuclear technology, particularly where it could provide safe, sustainable and long-term solutions in such areas as agriculture, human health and water resources.

97. Ireland's policy vis-à-vis nuclear energy and associated activities, such as reprocessing, was unambiguous. Nuclear energy could not provide a sustainable energy resource and its benefits were significantly outweighed by the risks it posed to public health and the environment. Despite the threat of global warming, there were no grounds for a re-evaluation of the nuclear energy option. The problems associated with nuclear energy and greenhouse gas emissions were two distinct

environmental challenges. Not all countries shared those views, but all Member States had a joint interest in managing and reducing the risks associated with nuclear energy. A global approach was necessary in view of the transboundary and international issues raised by its use.

98. Ireland was concerned about the fact that nuclear energy continued to be promoted although the matter of nuclear waste management remained unresolved. It was wrong for radioactive waste to be discharged deliberately into the terrestrial and marine environment.

99. The transport of radioactive materials through a shared marine environment was another cause for concern. Thus, the International Conference on the Safety of Transport of Radioactive Material, held in Vienna in July 2003, had been timely. Ireland, which had participated actively in that Conference, welcomed as one of its outcomes the creation of an international expert group on nuclear liability. Further, it supported the Conference's recommendation that informal discussions should continue on communication between governments with the involvement of the Agency. Also, it endorsed the finding that further discussion was needed to develop an international response capability. Those outcomes provided a platform on which to build the mutual confidence needed between nuclear and non-nuclear States. He therefore encouraged all States to participate constructively and proactively in those activities.

100. Ireland continued to support the TCF and acknowledged the important role the technical cooperation programme played in upgrading safety in recipient States. That programme's main focus should be on nuclear safety and radiation protection, and not the development of nuclear power. Ireland had paid in full its share of the TCF target for 2003 and had also made a contribution to the NSF.

101. Ms. MELIN (Sweden) said weapons of mass destruction remained one of the greatest threats to international peace and security and there was also a risk of their proliferation. Chief amongst current concerns were the DPRK's announcement that it intended to withdraw from the NPT and its repeated threats to develop nuclear weapons; the continued refusal by India, Israel and Pakistan to accede to the NPT; the serious questions raised regarding the intention behind Iran's ambitious nuclear programme; the lack of progress in nuclear disarmament and the failure to bring the CTBT into force; and the risk of nuclear materials falling into the hands of terrorists.

102. Those were common threats and as such required common solutions. A strong multilateral framework with strong international cooperation to implement it was necessary, as well as the creativity to envisage new situations. The European Union had recently adopted a set of basic measures and an action plan to combat the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Sweden had initiated an independent international commission on disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to be chaired by Dr. Hans Blix.

103. Universal adherence to the NPT and its full implementation, including additional protocols in force in all States, would increase global safety. She called on all States that had not yet done so to conclude and bring into force additional protocols. That would give the Agency the enhanced authority it needed and build trust within the international community. In that context, she welcomed the agreement that had been reached on the Agency's budget providing additional resources for verification.

104. Security Council resolution 1483 (2003) expressed the intention to revisit the mandates of the Agency and UNMOVIC. Sweden felt that should be done as soon as possible. Agency inspections still needed to be completed to resolve the remaining questions about Iraq's nuclear programme. Irrespective of the Security Council resolutions, the Agency had a continuing responsibility under Iraq's NPT safeguards agreement to ensure that Iraq had declared all its nuclear activities and that they were all for peaceful purposes.

105. Her delegation supported the Agency's activities aimed at protection against nuclear terrorism, which complemented national efforts. Her Government had decided to make an additional contribution of 200 000 Swedish krona to the Agency's NSF.

106. Sweden supported the proposed amendment to expand the scope of the CPPNM, agreed in March 2003, and hoped that the amendment would enter into force soon.

107. The organizational meeting of the Joint Convention, held in April 2003, had been successful. The Swedish national report had been submitted in May and preparations were progressing well for the first Review Meeting under that Convention. Her country was confident that the meeting would bring about safety improvements comparable to those achieved under the Nuclear Safety Convention.

108. Global nuclear safety needed to be continuously improved through exchanges of experience between countries. Sweden was a strong supporter of the Agency's programme to develop safety standards and to provide for their application as they formed a solid basis for national safety regulations.

109. Inadequately protected radioactive sources were a potential cause of fatal accidents and were prone to theft, illicit trafficking and other malevolent acts. Sweden welcomed the recent approval by the Board of Governors of the Action Plan for the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and the revised Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

110. The Agency's greater focus on protection of the environment from the effects of ionizing radiation was another step in the right direction. An international conference on that topic would be held in Stockholm in October 2003 in cooperation with the Swedish Radiation Protection Authority. Sweden hoped that it would achieve significant results.

111. The final disposal of radioactive waste would be the subject of the Stockholm International Conference on Geological Repositories to be held in December 2003. Hosted by the Swedish Nuclear Fuel and Waste Management Company in conjunction with the Agency, the OECD/NEA and the European Commission, it would provide a forum for the discussion of issues relating to geological disposal.

112. Sweden was completing the design of an encapsulation plant for spent nuclear fuel and aimed to finish work on the design of the major components in the next few years. It was participating in the Agency's work to develop a safeguards approach for an encapsulation plant and for a final repository for spent nuclear fuel. An early outcome of that work was essential if Sweden, and other Member States, were to incorporate that approach in its final design.

113. Sweden and Canada were about to hand over a digital Cerenkov viewing device (DCVD) to the Agency. It had been developed within the safeguards support programme and would enable inspectors to identify spent fuel that had been cooled for 40 years and to store the information for future analysis.

114. In conclusion, she said that Sweden had pledged its full share of the TCF target for 2004 in recognition of the importance it attached to the Agency's technical cooperation activities.

115. Monsignor BOCCARDI (Holy See), having expressed appreciation for the Director General's leadership in the past important year for the Agency, said there was an increased sense of precariousness and fear in society due, among other things, to terrorism, to the current situation in Iraq and the Holy Land, and to some dangerous trends in nuclear safety and security. The Agency, which had always been dedicated to the "Atoms for Peace" vision, was facing new challenges and opportunities. In the global pursuit of a culture of peace, it was essential to foster a climate of trust, cooperation and respect between all States and to maintain a readiness for dialogue

116. Highlighting the professionalism of the Agency's safeguards inspectors, he called on all parties to facilitate their mission by providing them with enough time, material assistance, intelligence information and scientific support. A strengthened safeguards system would increase the likelihood of detecting any clandestine nuclear weapons programme. Agency verification was crucial to the international community's efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Verification must be done through impartial, international inspections in order to guarantee credibility. Verification on its own was, however, not enough; the nuclear disarmament process needed to be invigorated.

117. The increase in poverty, which was caused in part by the lack of access to drinking and other water supplies, called for new and innovative solutions in water resource management. He commended the Agency's chairmanship of UN Water, an inter-agency coordination committee for fresh water, for the period 2002–2004. The Agency had held its first international symposium on water resources 40 years previously, and since then had organized some 150 projects in 60 countries to improve water management using isotope hydrology. Also, he urged the Agency to continue its nuclear seawater desalination activities in cooperation with interested Member States.

118. Nuclear installations were getting older every day and the decommissioning of nuclear plants and facilities was becoming a significant global activity. Open questions remained and there was a lack of agreement on some of the key 'end points' for decommissioning, in particular criteria for recycling or the disposal of large amounts of very lightly contaminated construction materials and for the release of decontaminated land or buildings for general reuse. He urged the Agency to take an active part in the international negotiations under way in that regard, offering its vast experience and excellent human resources to bring them to a successful conclusion.

119. Ms. SIMOPOULOU (Greece) said the Agency's nuclear safety activities were of paramount importance to her country. Greece had always played an active role in that regard, joining the IRSRR, ratifying the Convention on Nuclear Safety and participating in its third Review Conference, which had brought considerable progress on a number of very important issues. Nevertheless, work remained to be done and greater cooperation and transparency were required. To promote nuclear safety, the Greek Atomic Energy Commission would be signing a bilateral agreement with the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission on the exchange of technical information and cooperation in nuclear safety matters.

120. Greece supported efforts aimed at developing and strengthening the safety standards for fuel cycle facilities, especially the Agency's efforts to establish and maintain a global safety regime through the adoption of a number of action plans. In that connection, it was regrettable that as yet no draft action plan on the safety of decommissioning of nuclear activities had been submitted by the Secretariat. She encouraged the Secretariat to increase its efforts to ensure the implementation of its standards by all States in close cooperation with other international and regional organizations.

121. Greece also supported the drafting of an international action plan for occupational radiation protection, the revision of the Action Plan for the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and establishment of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, as well as the Board's decision to establish safety standards on site evaluation for nuclear installations and on remediation of areas contaminated by past activities and accidents.

122. In 2003, the Greek Atomic Energy Commission had hosted an Agency postgraduate educational course on radiation protection and the safety of radiation sources, and was in the process of becoming a regional postgraduate educational centre in radiation protection to serve the needs of Member States in Europe.

123. Her Government also attached great importance to nuclear security issues and had provided financial and in-kind voluntary contributions to the NSF. In July 2003, it had agreed to a

comprehensive cooperation programme in the field of nuclear and radiological security, including a project focusing on the forthcoming 2004 Olympic Games in Athens. The first international mission to Greece under that project had recently been completed and others were scheduled to follow.

124. A strengthened safeguards system, with the universal application of the additional protocol, adequate amendment of the CPPNM and an export control regime — properly adapted to current conditions — that was applied and respected by all would help prevent potential terrorist threats. Her country hoped that the amendment to the CPPNM would be finalized and that a diplomatic conference would soon be convened in that regard.

125. Greece, which was strongly committed to the universal non-proliferation regime and the Agency's verification role in it, welcomed completion of the conceptual framework for integrated safeguards. What was required now was the rapid conclusion of additional protocols, which unfortunately had been concluded by only some 35 countries to date. Greece had concluded its additional protocol and had taken the appropriate steps for its implementation.

126. The evaluation of information about a State's nuclear programme was becoming an important part of the safeguards conclusions process and her delegation also noted the progress made in increasing the Agency's remote monitoring system.

127. The universal application of the safeguards system remained one of the basic components of international nuclear security, holding nuclear terrorism at bay, providing assurances and re-establishing faith in the peaceful uses of atomic energy in accordance with the NPT and the Agency's Statute. Greece supported the recent resolution on the Islamic Republic of Iran, contained in document GOV/2003/69, and encouraged Iran to conclude an additional protocol without delay.

128. As both a donor and recipient country of technical assistance, Greece fully appreciated the contribution of technical cooperation to the promotion of the scientific, technological and regulatory capabilities of participating Member States. It had contributed its full share of the TCF target for 2002 and 2003 and intended to do so for 2004 and 2005. Greece offered training places in laboratories for Agency fellows, provided experts to participate in Agency activities, and hosted and supported events under the technical cooperation programme. For example, the Greek Atomic Energy Commission would be co-financing the upcoming meeting on subregional projects for the European Mediterranean countries addressing environmental issues. She commended the staff of the Department of Technical Cooperation, in particular the Europe Section, on their outstanding efforts.

129. Mr. MOREJÓN-ALMEIDA (Ecuador) underlined the Agency's increasingly important role with respect to global security. In controlling nuclear materials it helped prevent the possible consequences of their accidental or malicious use, and in transferring nuclear technologies for peaceful uses it helped encourage global development.

130. Since the previous General Conference, many significant world events had occurred. In view of the great challenges facing the international community, it was more vital than ever that States participated actively in all the relevant forums to promote peaceful co-habitation, cooperation between States, firm commitment to encouraging the development of all of the world's populations, and efforts to preserve multilateralism in international relations.

131. Ecuador endorsed the need for the Agency to maintain a reliable verification system as an integral part of the security of Member States. Security was also linked to development and the Agency played a significant role in the struggle against poverty, in sustainable development and in the areas of health, agriculture, energy, nutrition and the environment. Ecuador therefore unconditionally supported the Agency's activities under its three pillars: the transfer of technology, safety and verification.

132. With regard to the Agency's programme and budget, particular attention should be paid to strengthening the TCF, which had a direct impact on developing countries.

133. Ecuador was a pioneer in upholding the rights of coastal States. It was co-founder of and provided the seat for the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS) and made every effort to preserve the sea both as an integral part of the environment and as a resource for future generations. His delegation had welcomed the International Conference on the Safety of Transport of Radioactive Material held in Vienna in July 2003. Ecuador encouraged the Agency's efforts regarding the transport of radioactive material, in particular on maritime routes and concerning liability and communication between States. The establishment of a group of experts by the Director General to explore and advise on issues related to nuclear liability was a step in the right direction.

134. His country was a co-sponsor of the resolution on strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of the safeguards system and application of the Model Additional Protocols, which was an essential tool to ensuring greater security. It also supported other resolutions, especially those related to strengthening the Agency's technical cooperation activities, and strengthening its activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications.

135. As a country benefiting from Agency technical cooperation, Ecuador was grateful to the Secretariat for its efforts in that regard. He hoped there would be an increased focus on assistance in the fields of radiation safety, nuclear medicine and training. The Agency was also carrying out valuable work under ARCAL.

136. Ecuador had requested and received assistance in the past year relating to the security of radiation sources under the Assistance Convention. As a result of that emergency, the Ecuadorian Government had taken immediate steps to strengthen its regulatory and control mechanisms for radiation sources. He commended the Agency on its dynamic efforts in that regard, in particular in organizing the International Conference on Security of Radioactive Sources in March 2003 and in revision of the relevant Code of Conduct.

137. His country had also adopted measures to strengthen the Ecuadorian Atomic Energy Commission, including making progress in preparing the national radiological emergency plan, in identifying potential areas for nuclear applications such as in water management, and in strengthening national capabilities through the training of specialists.

138. Mr. DJEKSHENKULOV (Kyrgyzstan) said that, since joining the Agency the previous year, his country had ratified a law adopting the Agency's Statute and had sent its ratification papers to New York. As a full Member State of the Agency, he hoped that Kyrgyzstan would contribute to the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and help strengthen global peace and stability.

139. Since becoming an independent State, Kyrgyzstan's atomic energy policy had always been in line with the Agency's basic principles, giving particular importance to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Kyrgyzstan had also taken measures to prevent the illicit trafficking of nuclear materials in Kyrgyzstan.

140. His country was working actively towards the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. That would constitute a major positive step at both the regional and subregional level. With the help of the international community, the Central Asian countries had established a group of experts from their region, which had been working hard to attain consensus on the text of a treaty on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. He was confident that those joint efforts would bring the matter to its logical conclusion.

141. Kyrgyzstan had been experiencing grave ecological problems, which had a serious impact on Central Asia as a whole. Uranium mining in Kyrgyzstan in the 1960s during the Soviet era had

left 35 tailings dumps containing radioactive waste and 25 mining waste dumps containing unprocessed uranium ore which, if nothing were done, threatened to contaminate the Fergana Valley, the most densely populated valley in Central Asia, affecting not only Kyrgyzstan but also Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. His Government was taking all possible measures to resolve the situation. It had established a legislative basis for the rehabilitation of the tailings dumps and mining waste dumps, had compiled design, technical and operational documentation, had drawn up preliminary maps of the transboundary ecological risk posed by the tailings dumps, and had carried out emergency repair work. Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan were collaborating in a joint work plan to rehabilitate the tailings dumps in the town of Majлуу-Suu, which included inspections, monitoring and the development and implementation of plans for rehabilitation and recultivation of the sites.

142. During its ten years of independence, Kyrgyzstan had participated in numerous international forums and had initiated several expert meetings, conferences and seminars relating to ecological problems resulting from uranium waste.

143. Kyrgyzstan could not solve the problem alone; it was in need of urgent international help in terms of resources and expert assistance. His delegation hoped that the Agency would offer its assistance in that regard.

144. Mr. ARIYAPRUCHYA (Thailand) said that over the previous year the Agency had made considerable progress in the three pillars of its work. The benefits gained by Member States would enhance global security and promote sustainable development.

145. The Agency's verification efforts in Iraq had been commendable. The security situation there must be stabilized as soon as possible to ensure the safety of ground personnel working in Iraq and for the Iraqi people to live a normal life. With regard to the situation in the DPRK, Thailand commended the six-party talks held in Beijing in August 2003. As for the Islamic Republic of Iran, he hoped that that country would continue to cooperate with the Agency with a view to full clarification of its uranium enrichment programme.

146. Thailand supported the Agency's strengthened safeguards system. It was taking appropriate steps to ratify its additional protocol and was grateful to the Agency for the helpful activities it had undertaken in that regard, particularly the international seminar on strengthened safeguards held in December 2002, and the national workshop on the additional protocol and the regional workshop on the same topic held in March and April 2003, respectively.

147. The Agency had made substantial progress in nuclear safety and security and his delegation welcomed the initiatives on codes of conduct and action plans. Thailand was prepared to fully cooperate with the Agency and its Member States in the implementation of Agency activities, especially on capacity building and preparedness in the Southeast Asia region. Thai experts had participated in the International Conference on Security of Radioactive Sources, held in Vienna in March, and the International Conference on National Infrastructures for Radiation Safety, held in Morocco in September 2003.

148. At a national level, changes in government structure had resulted in the former Office of Atomic Energy for Peace (OAEP), Thailand's counterpart institution with the Agency, being renamed the Office of Atoms for Peace (OAP). Its new mandate was to act as the regulatory authority for nuclear and radiation safety and safeguards. Research and development in the field of nuclear science and technology would be transferred to a new entity.

149. Thailand had participated actively in model projects on upgrading radiation protection infrastructure, which had been instrumental in developing an effective regulatory authority. The OAP was carrying out its regulatory function in line with the Basic Safety Standards and with the guidance

of those model projects. Furthermore, those projects had contributed to the drafting of new nuclear legislation.

150. He called on the Agency to continue working closely with Member States to develop their national safety regulatory infrastructure and to strengthen international cooperation in nuclear radiation, transport and waste safety. Thailand was grateful to the Agency for the support and expertise it had provided in that regard.

151. Sustained development of atomic energy safety regulations in developing countries required the support of the political and technical authorities in those countries, as well as from various United Nations organizations. He urged the Agency to make its activities in safety more well known and suggested that the Director General make an annual statement at the General Assembly on safety, and not just verification, achievements.

152. Thailand had benefited from the Agency's technical cooperation programme in the areas of human health, agriculture and industrial development through both national and regional projects, including those under the RCA. The Agency should continue providing tangible and sustainable technical cooperation to developing Member States and said that projects should be geared to supporting the economic development of such States.

153. Specific areas in which Thailand had obtained Agency assistance were nuclear medicine; research and development on nutrition through food fortification and the bio-availability of indigenous food; the use of the SIT in mango crops; and industrial radiation technology for sterilizing medical supplies and for industrial gauges. In addition, a number of Thai research contract holders were learning about new areas of application in priority areas. He thanked the Departments of Technical Cooperation and of Nuclear Sciences and Applications for their cooperation.

154. He commended and supported the Agency's programme on fellowships and scientific visits for on-the-job training in agriculture and medicine, particularly under the long-standing concept of TCDC.

155. Thailand attached high importance to the promotion of a global safety culture and encouraged the Agency to promote safety in its technical cooperation programmes especially in the areas of health, education and training. There was also a need for the Agency to identify specific projects on radiation protection infrastructure, quality assurance in medical applications, food safety, the application of isotopic and nuclear techniques in nutrition research and water resource development, public information and knowledge management as part of its core activities.

156. Finally, he announced that Thailand wished to pledge \$209 300 to the TCF for 2004.

157. Mr. CABELLO SARUBBI (Paraguay) said that the reasons underlying the creation of the Agency fifty years previously were still valid, namely the desire to control nuclear weapons and the need for all nations to benefit from the peaceful applications of nuclear energy. The Agency's security and cooperation missions had continued to grow and the needs of Member States had still not been completely fulfilled. Given the limited resources available, especially in poorer countries, a constant debate about priorities was unavoidable. However, there was also a minimum level of resources below which any organization would not be able to work effectively. In the past, the Agency had maintained a balance between its core activities. Now, however, Paraguay was concerned that that balance could be affected and there would be a negative impact on the promotion of peaceful applications of nuclear energy.

158. Paraguay acknowledged that there were serious challenges to global security from the possible use of radioactive sources or nuclear weapons by terrorist organizations or from governments influenced by fanatics or ideological extremists.

159. The International Conference on Security of Radioactive Sources, held in Vienna earlier in the year, had highlighted the possible illicit uses of radioactive sources by people with malicious intentions and the accidents that could occur when using such sources. His delegation therefore supported any measures aimed at better control of radioactive sources. The recently established NSF, to which Paraguay was willing to contribute, would encourage good practices and agreed procedures for enhancing security in countries with few financial and technological resources.

160. Paraguay was grateful to the Agency for its assistance in the convening of the first regional seminar on the control and detection of radioactive material at border crossings. By hosting that seminar, it was clear that his Government was committed to global security and that it hoped that Paraguay and its neighbouring countries would not be used for the illicit transport or handling of radioactive sources.

161. He expressed concern that some States possessing advanced nuclear technology could avoid, or wilfully not comply with, their Agency safeguards agreements, therefore casting doubt on the intended purpose of their nuclear programmes.

162. The growing threat of terrorism in recent years and the possibility that terrorist organizations could obtain mass destruction technologies was alarming. The Agency's security activities should enjoy the full support of all the Member States and adequate resources.

163. However, that should never be to the detriment of each State's need to acquire nuclear energy for health, food, or conservation of its vital resources. Although consensus had been reached on the budget by the Board of Governors and a seeming balance was being maintained, Paraguay was concerned that growing inroads were being made on the limited resources of the developing countries on account of the real growth of the Agency's budget. That gradual growth would become more difficult for developing economies to sustain. An additional factor was payment in euros for countries whose national budgets were tied to the United States dollar.

164. The assistance provided by the Agency in previous decades had been vital for promoting the peaceful use of atomic energy and its concomitant benefits, notably in the fields of medicine and agriculture. As such, it was an activity that should be strengthened. The results of the research work carried out at the Agency's laboratories in Seibersdorf in the context of CRPs and the training opportunities offered should be accessible to all nations and benefit all humanity.

165. He thanked the Secretariat for the efforts being made to encourage the peaceful uses of nuclear technology in the crucial areas of health, agriculture, and quality assessment and control of such natural resources as water. Also worth noting was the role played by the regional model project on upgrading radiation protection infrastructure in developing and implementing Paraguay's national safety regulations. His delegation hoped that the project would be extended for at least two years to consolidate the progress made and to enable Paraguay and other countries to meet all the milestones.

**Mr. González Aninat (Chile) took the Chair.**

166. Ms. STOKES (Australia) expressed her country's appreciation for the Director General's leadership of the Agency in the previous year. She commended the Agency for the progress that had been made so far in tackling the increasing concerns over the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the threat of nuclear or radiological terrorist attacks. However, the Agency and its Member States still had a lot of work to do in that regard.

167. Australia continued to prioritize rigorous implementation of export controls and had joined the Proliferation Security Initiative, which was developing practical ways to prevent illicit trafficking in weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems and related materials. Australia was confident that States committed to non-proliferation would lend their support.

168. The global implementation of effective strengthened safeguards would bring universal security benefits. The long-term viability of nuclear science and technology was inextricably linked to the Agency's ability to provide the international community with credible assurances that it was inhibiting the spread of nuclear weapons. That credibility was under scrutiny. Any perceived lack of credibility would have severe consequences for international security, the nuclear industry and the Agency's role in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear technology.

169. The Agency's verification and promotional activities were mutually reinforcing. Strengthening the credibility of the former promoted confidence in nuclear science and technology, while widening nuclear applications to address environmental, health and other developmental issues promoted acceptance of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The concept of balance between verification and promotion was not appropriate; the relationship was rather one of mutual interdependence.

170. The wide application of the Agency's additional protocol was a priority for Australia. Strengthened safeguards was the latest stage in the evolution of the Agency's verification system. Three-quarters of comprehensive safeguards States with significant nuclear activities had now ratified or signed an additional protocol.

171. Australia had been the first State to ratify an additional protocol and was one of only three countries in which integrated safeguards were being applied. The Agency had gained practical experience in Australia through implementing such measures as unannounced inspections, complementary access and managed access, which would be invaluable as integrated safeguards were extended to other countries. Australia was pleased that its certified laboratories had been used by the Agency to deliver innovative environmental analyses. She hoped that Australia's experience would demonstrate the increased efficiency and effectiveness of the integrated system. She urged those States that had not yet done so to sign and ratify an additional protocol as soon as possible.

172. She expressed concern that the DPRK had given notice of withdrawal from the NPT and had removed its nuclear facilities from Agency safeguards. That was a direct challenge to the non-proliferation regime and had resulted in serious security concerns on the Korean Peninsula and beyond. The continued pursuit of nuclear weapons would only isolate the DPRK further from the international community and from the economic and other benefits it desperately needed. Her delegation urged the DPRK to reconsider and allow Agency inspections of its nuclear facilities to resume. Dialogue was the key to a peaceful resolution and Australia appreciated the role being played by China in the six-party talks.

173. Her country commended the Agency's cooperation with the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq to ensure the physical protection of Iraq's nuclear material inventory.

174. Iran's nuclear programme was potentially destabilizing for regional and international security. Iran had however said it was committed to full NPT and Agency safeguards compliance. The credibility of that commitment was now at stake and she encouraged Iran to cooperate fully with the Agency in complete transparency and to conclude an additional protocol without delay or precondition.

175. The Agency had a central role to play in nuclear and radiological security, particularly in responding to the threat of nuclear and radiological terrorism. That was a natural extension of the Agency's work in nuclear safeguards and the security and physical protection of such material and facilities. Australia had been pleased to contribute to the development of international guidance and research into enhanced methods of detection.

176. She commended the Agency for its swift response to the threat of nuclear terrorism, including the creation of the NSF. She urged all Member States which had not done so to contribute to that

Fund, financially and in kind. Australia did not share the view of some Member States that nuclear security projects should not be given priority over traditional technical cooperation. Security projects should have precedence given the widespread use of nuclear materials in industry, agriculture and medicine, and the reality that terrorism knew no borders.

177. Australia had been pleased to chair the expert group which had developed and revised the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, considering that Code to be an important step in protecting against radiological terrorism. It welcomed the Agency's plans to assist Member States in implementing the Code. She encouraged the Agency to continue cooperating with manufacturers, regulators and users to enhance control over radioactive sources throughout their life cycle.

178. Australia also supported early revision of the CPPNM now that the open-ended group of legal and technical experts had submitted its final report.

179. Having played an extensive role in the development of the Agency's safety standards, Australia supported efforts to have them accepted and implemented worldwide as the global reference for protecting people and the environment. Australia had also contributed to regional and international efforts to enhance the understanding of how to achieve a positive safety culture in nuclear organizations. It looked forward to finalization of the code of conduct on the safety of research reactors in the near future.

180. Australia continued to promote dialogue on the safe transport of radioactive material and had chaired the International Conference on that topic held in Vienna in July 2003. The transfer of nuclear technology and development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy depended on the global transport of radioactive material. Such transport had an excellent safety record underpinned by the Agency's regulations. Aware of the concerns of coastal States, her delegation welcomed more dialogue between shipping and coastal States and the transparency shown by the shipping States.

181. Nuclear science and technology applications were assisting the social and economic development of many countries and Australia fully supported the Agency's technical cooperation programme. The Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organization played an active part in Agency CRPs. Her country supported the Agency's efforts to strengthen partnerships with other development organizations and to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the technical cooperation programme. It had contributed experts to international projects and also strong financial and technical support to the RCA, and supported the moves aimed at increased management and ownership of the programme by Member States. Australia had exceeded the target rate of attainment for the voluntary TCF in 2003 and was likely to do so in 2004.

182. Mr. ARÉVALO (Colombia) said his country firmly believed in the peaceful use of nuclear energy and the application of nuclear science and technology for development. Colombia supported nuclear non-proliferation and was committed to the NPT and the Treaty of Tlatelolco as well as to the establishment of a reliable integrated safeguards regime.

183. Colombia was convinced of the need to strengthen multilateral cooperation in the three pillars of the Agency's activity. Non-proliferation efforts should be a global priority with a view to the implementation of disarmament commitments, in particular those under the NPT. Colombia was committed to reversing the spread of weapons of mass destruction and ensuring that nuclear science was not used for terrorist purposes. His country supported the Agency's efforts to identify needs relating to strengthening the physical security of nuclear installations and radiation sources, including technical and legal evaluation and training.

184. Since joining the Agency in 1960, Colombia had benefited from many national and regional technical cooperation projects, primarily in human health, mining, radiation protection, agriculture and nuclear medicine. Colombia now provided experts in nuclear applications and doctors specializing in nuclear medicine for Agency projects at both the national and regional level.

185. Colombia had enhanced its institutional capacity and in recent years had restructured its nuclear regulatory and operational entities, thereby raising awareness of the benefits of using nuclear science and technology.

186. Aware of the importance of good management of technical cooperation with the Agency, Colombia had strengthened its National Liaison Office. Several projects begun in 2003 included training in management tools for both project executors and Liaison Office staff, which would ensure optimum use of funds. Colombia had been chosen to pilot a self-evaluation project in the area of technical cooperation, the results of which would be presented in October 2003. Project monitoring and evaluation would be an invaluable tool for Member States in the appropriate management of their resources.

187. Complying with its constitutional duty to protect the health of its citizens and its environment and its commitments as an Agency Member State, Colombia had continued to create a regulatory framework for the safe use of radioactive and nuclear material in accordance with national legislation and international recommendations. The Colombian Government had also taken the necessary legal steps to accede to the Assistance Convention.

188. The safety and security of radioactive sources was a national priority in view of concerns about the lack of control over such material. There was a need to strengthen control mechanisms, national regulations and international cooperation structures in order to reduce to a minimum the risk posed by radiation sources. Another area of concern was the transport of radioactive waste. Colombia had therefore welcomed the International Conference on the Safety of Transport of Radioactive Material, held in Vienna in July 2003. It was important that the action plan based on the Conference's conclusions be elaborated in consultation with all interested States, and Colombia was co-sponsoring the draft resolution currently being drawn up on that issue. In addition, he emphasized the importance of international cooperation, the exchange of information between shipping States and coastal States, and of the Agency's role in promoting those activities. Dialogue and consultation were crucial to achieving better mutual understanding, greater confidence and improved communication with regard to the safe maritime transport of radioactive material.

189. His Government was concerned about the continued imbalance between the Agency's verification and technology transfer activities. The latter were fundamental for developing countries. He emphasized the need to maintain a balance between the Agency's three pillars.

190. Mr. MAZI (Albania) said that the many important events of the previous year had raised the Agency's profile and prestige on the international stage. Albania fully supported all Agency efforts under its three pillars of activity. Albania had signed and ratified most of the Agency's conventions and was about to sign an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement. It was confident that parliamentary ratification would follow soon. The Albanian Government would continue to fulfil its obligations to the Agency, including its contributions to the TCF and the NSF.

191. Over the years Albania had participated in and benefited from both national and regional technical cooperation programmes, for which it was extremely grateful. Areas of cooperation had included a wide range of sectors: industry and oil exploration, agriculture, hydrology, environmental monitoring, medicine and radiopharmaceutical production. Under the current cycle the focus was on emergencies, waste and medicine. Albania needed a proper waste management service to ensure the safe disposal of radioactive waste in view of the expansion in the use of sealed sources. It hoped that the national project on waste management would be completed during the current cycle. The priority

would then shift to human health, in particular radiotherapy services and nuclear medicine, where upgrading was essential. Albania was counting on the Agency's assistance in that regard, and hoped that the country's other needs, especially with respect to environmental monitoring and emergencies, would not be forgotten.

192. Albania had been one of the first countries to sign a CPF and had already benefited from it. CPFs enhanced dialogue on technical cooperation between the Member State and the Agency, helped to identify high-priority areas and focus on real problems and needs, promoted a better understanding of those needs and priorities, and helped Member States to think nationally thereby ensuring better long-term commitment from governments. Also, the CPF process strengthened technical cooperation programme planning, project design, formulation and implementation. Albania urged all Member States receiving assistance to complete their CPFs.

193. Albania was also participating in projects under the European regional programme. That programme reflected the needs of the countries of the region and, despite the fact that there was no formal regional agreement, it was both efficient and effective and allowed ownership by States of their programmes.

194. The Department of Technical Cooperation had a very high workload and he suggested that the Director General consider involving Member States in assessment of it and of work processes. That would create a better common understanding, avoid possible inequalities, increase efficiency and ensure good and reliable results.

195. The Agency would continue to play a vital role in all its core competences and he expressed his country's appreciation for the work it did to benefit its Member States and in ensuring a better future for the international community as a whole.

196. Mr. TABIBIAN (Armenia) said that the international community was facing new challenges and that the past year had been crucial for the United Nations and in particular for the Agency. In view of the Agency's important role, he urged Member States to continue to support its activities so that it could accomplish its long-standing aims. He particularly supported further improvements in the non-proliferation regime and in nuclear verification, and accordingly also the proposed budget increase.

197. Armenia was a recipient country and had benefited significantly from the Agency and its Member States. However, it had also tried to share the financial burden by presenting a payment plan to cover its arrears, and the first payment had been made. He appreciated the support of Member States for Armenia's request to have its voting rights restored.

198. It had been fifty years since President Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" speech on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Armenia still considered nuclear energy to be vital for its socio-economic development, and its commitment to the NPT and the non-proliferation regime remained strong. Armenia had been one of the first to sign the additional protocol and was in the process of ratification, delayed only by the volume of new legislation.

199. In Armenia's cooperation with the Agency, priority had been given to nuclear safety and verification. The Armenian nuclear power plant had benefited from many missions and consequently had succeeded in improving its safety, although he understood that the improvement process would never end. Armenia also attached great importance to bilateral cooperation and wished to thank the countries that were providing the Armenian nuclear power plant and Nuclear Regulatory Authority with continuing assistance.

200. Combating threats of nuclear terrorism should be a priority for the Agency, so he welcomed the creation of the NSF and the related action plan. Armenia had invited the Agency to start a new programme on the physical protection of the Armenian nuclear power plant and was awaiting an

IPPAS mission. In response to concerns expressed by neighbouring countries about that plant, he said that Armenia was committed to the safety of the plant and the protection of its own people and others. It was open to expert visits and missions from other countries, under the auspices of the Agency, to investigate and assess the plant's safety.

201. He regretted that one delegation had raised the issues of trafficking in nuclear material and the possible use of such material by terrorists, because that implied a lack of trust in the Agency. It was naïve to believe that such acts would affect only local territories or people.

202. Many projects financed from the TCF had been implemented and completed to the deep satisfaction of Armenia, which had signed a CPF covering national projects for 2004–2005 in nuclear safety, legislation, and regulation, physical protection, radioactive waste management and nuclear medicine. Regional and subregional projects also allowed for experience to be shared between professionals.

203. The Agency had assisted Armenia in preparing an energy strategy up to 2020; although refinements still needed to be made, it was clear that nuclear energy was essential for Armenia's further socio-economic development, and so he wished to suggest that one of the 700 new 1000 MW reactors which the Director General had said would be needed by the year 2050 should be constructed in Armenia, which would seek to operate it to the highest technological, regulatory and professional standards.

204. Mr. KING'ORIAH (Kenya) said that his country's new Government was strongly committed to fighting all forms of terrorism and would continue to support bilateral and multilateral efforts in that area. An anti-terrorism bill had been published for debate by Parliament and two anti-corruption bills had been passed.

205. The Government was in the process of concluding a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol with the Agency. Kenya had acceded to the CPPNM and had ratified the CTBT; it continued to support the establishment of the latter's global verification regime and encouraged Member States that had not done so to conclude comprehensive safeguards agreements.

206. Nuclear disarmament must be seen as the ultimate goal for the safety of mankind and the environment. The Agency had continued to play a leading role in the implementation of the NPT, in particular through its safeguards system. He joined other Member States in supporting the safeguards programme and called for its expansion through the establishment of regional nuclear safeguards inspection centres. That would enhance the efficiency of the existing programme, thereby reducing the risk of illicit trafficking in nuclear materials and other radiation sources.

207. Kenya was committed to surveillance activities to identify radioactive and nuclear materials entering or leaving the country illegally. It had formulated a comprehensive national project to identify and secure orphaned sources under the Agency's technical cooperation programme for 2005–2006. In order to cope with increasing threats of illicit activities, there was a need for continued training and the acquisition of appropriate equipment.

208. Kenya appreciated the benefits it had received from the use of nuclear techniques in science and technology and supported the implementation of a pro-nuclear-safety society, with the aim of educating and informing the public of the benefits of nuclear techniques. The Government's priority was to revitalize the primary economic base, and there were many important sectors in which safe nuclear techniques could have a positive impact.

209. The Agency's technical cooperation programme was of global importance and had benefited his country specifically. Kenya had hosted two regional events in collaboration with the Agency and had offered local expertise and resources to ensure their success. Kenya had been pleased with the success

of the regional model projects. There had been a significant improvement in technical capabilities among Member States and a balance in resource allocation to them. He therefore supported that approach to technical cooperation while still seeing a need for individual national projects. The Kenyan Government was committed to meeting its financial obligations to the Agency and had increased allocations to technical cooperation projects. It was formulating a CPF for the period 2004-2009.

210. Recognizing the need for regulation to control the use and advancement of nuclear technology, Kenya had already passed a law on radiation protection, and a bill on the control of illegal use of nuclear material was to be presented to Parliament shortly. There was also a competent authority to deal with the registration and licensing of practices involving the use of ionizing radiation. The number of inspectors attached to that authority had been doubled and the facilities of the Radiation Protection Inspectorate were being upgraded. The authority had been involved in the Agency's model project on development of technical capabilities for sustainable radiation and waste safety, which he believed should be considered for support in the next funding cycle. Also, a facility had been constructed at the Kenya Bureau of Standards with a view to establishing a secondary standards dosimetry laboratory, and technical cooperation would be sought from the Agency to make the facility operational. The Government further continued to promote the peaceful use of nuclear techniques through the National Council for Science and Technology and other agencies, and there was specific legislation to that effect, in addition to the radiation protection law.

211. Kenya had five active national projects, some of which would have a far-reaching positive effect in the East African region. They were therefore particularly important in terms of overall efficiency and cost-effectiveness. He proposed that regular regional meetings should take place to discuss transboundary projects.

212. Kenya was involved in a project to make the Lambwe Valley tsetse-free using the SIT, and the success of that project would have an impact on the Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign. Kenya hoped to extend that project to encompass the country as a whole. Another project — in crop improvement and management through the application of nuclear techniques and biotechnology — was under way which would assist Kenya in providing food security and alleviating poverty. Treatment of cervical cancer — which was the leading cause of morbidity among young women in Kenya — and collection of relevant statistics had also been made possible by technical cooperation with the Agency. Finally, the Government was preparing a strategy paper with a view to providing comprehensive radiotherapy and nuclear medicine services throughout the country and hoped for the Agency's assistance in preparing a feasible programme.

213. Mr. ESTEVES DOS SANTOS (ABACC) recalled that in 1991, the Brazilian and Argentine Governments had signed the Agreement for the Exclusively Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy, continuing a history of cooperation of more than one hundred years. The economic, political, technological and cultural integration of the two countries was an important step for the peace and prosperity of the region, and ABACC was proud to be a part of that process.

214. The achievements of ABACC in its mandate to safeguard 76 nuclear facilities and all nuclear material in both countries had been made possible by the work of technical officers, inspectors, consultants and laboratories in Brazil and Argentina. Considerable efforts had been made by ABACC to ensure proper inspections and verification activities were carried out. It could therefore guarantee that all nuclear material was being used exclusively for peaceful purposes or was otherwise accounted for. No indication had been found of the existence of undeclared nuclear materials or activities in either country.

215. As new fuel cycle installations came into operation in both countries, ABACC expected an increase in inspection, accounting and control efforts. It was committed to improving efficiency and effectiveness to maintain the high standards and quality of its work and to avoid unnecessary budget increases.

216. In Brazil and Argentina, 126 inspections had been carried out and 2 training courses had been held in collaboration with the Agency in the areas of containment and surveillance and unannounced inspections. Autonomy had been attained in non-destructive measurements and in containment and surveillance equipment through the expenditure of more than \$250 000 on latest-generation equipment.

217. ABACC had cooperated with the Agency, the US Department of Energy and Euratom in the areas of non-destructive analysis, containment and surveillance, training courses and safeguards approaches. The cooperation for the application of safeguards under the Quadripartite Agreement also deserved mention. ABACC had been working with the Agency to develop guidelines for joint safeguards activities, procedures for unannounced inspections and common use of safeguards equipment, safeguards approaches, modern and secure communication systems, and inspector training. Much had been achieved, although improvements were still needed in all areas.

218. Brazil and Argentina had both stressed the importance of cooperation between ABACC and the Agency and of coordination to achieve cost-effectiveness in safeguards activities by avoiding duplication of effort. ABACC was committed to improving itself in all areas to preserve the confidentiality of safeguards information in a way that was transparent for both countries and for the international community. It understood its commitment to non-proliferation as the best way to pay tribute to the late Dr. Dan Beninson, who had been one of the most influential personalities in the nuclear sector for decades and had encouraged and supported ABACC's work for over six years as a member of its Commission.

**The meeting rose at 7.45 p.m.**