IAEA
Atoms for Peace

General Conference

GC(55)/OR.3
Issued: January 2012

General Distribution
Original: English

Fifty-fifth regular session

Plenary

Record of the Third Meeting

Held at Headquarters, Vienna, on Tuesday, 20 September 2011, at 10.05 a.m.

President: Mr FERUTA (Romania)
Later: Mr BERDENNIKOV (Russian Federation)

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[1] GC(55)/25.

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The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(55)/INF/9/Rev.1.

Abbreviations used in this record:

AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EU	European Union
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
INIR	Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
IPPAS	International Physical Protection Advisory Service
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
Joint Division	Joint FAO/IAEA Division of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture
NGO	non-governmental organization
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review and Extension Conference	Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
RCA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
SCART	Safety Culture Assessment Review Team
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
UN	United Nations

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

UNSCEAR	United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation
VUCCnet	Virtual University for Cancer Control and Regional Training Network
WWER	water cooled water moderated reactor (former USSR)

7. General debate and Annual Report for 2010 (continued) (GC(55)/2)

1. Mr YASEEN (Iraq) said that the current session of the General Conference was particularly important for Iraq since it was taking place after the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 1957 (2010), which lifted the restrictions imposed on Iraq pursuant to resolutions 687 (1991) and 707 (1991). Those resolutions had prevented Iraq from using nuclear technology for peaceful purposes for two decades.

2. Since 2003 the Government of Iraq had been cooperating closely with the international community and rebuilding confidence through the implementation of its obligations under Article 9.I.E of the 2005 Constitution, which required the Iraqi Government to respect and implement Iraq's international obligations regarding the non-proliferation, non-development, non-production and non-use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and to prohibit associated equipment, material, technologies and delivery systems for use in the development, manufacture, production and use of such weapons.

3. Iraq had taken many important steps, including: the signing of an additional protocol to its comprehensive safeguards agreement and application of the protocol on a voluntary basis since early 2010 pending its ratification; the signing of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which the parliament was expected to ratify by the end of 2011; the signing of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its submission to the parliament for ratification; and the signing of the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. In addition, the parliament was enacting legislation on a national regulatory authority with a view to ensuring Iraq's compliance with its obligations under treaties concerning disarmament, non-proliferation and control of dual-use materials and equipment.

4. The Iraqi Government had also adopted numerous measures aimed at ensuring maximum use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and at organizing relevant regulatory activities. They included: the establishment of the Iraqi Atomic Energy Commission, which was attached to the Ministry of Science and Technology; the establishment of a radiation monitoring authority attached to the Ministry of the Environment; establishment of the Higher Disaster Management Authority, composed of representatives of all relevant ministries and institutions; finalization of the national radiation and nuclear emergency plan in light of Agency guidelines and with the participation of governmental bodies and civil society organizations responsible for response; the establishment by the Ministry of the Environment of a national early warning and radiation monitoring network; the establishment of a national data centre in line with the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; and the adoption by the Council of Ministers of a paper setting out a vision for future peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

5. Iraq had drawn up a comprehensive plan for the decontamination of destroyed Iraqi nuclear installations in cooperation with the Agency. It was currently devising a strategy for the management and treatment of radioactive waste resulting from the process, including the training of human resources in cooperation with the Agency, the United States of America and the EU.

6. Iraq stood in need of Agency support under PACT for the early detection and treatment of cancerous tumours in order to reduce mortality rates, especially among children.

7. Iraq also required assistance under the technical cooperation programme for the management of water resources, agriculture and the environment. In particular, it required greater support for the elimination from the environment of all destructive radioactive contaminants and for the use of nuclear technology to detect landmines, which prevented the cultivation of a large proportion of the country's agricultural land and took a heavy human toll each year. Also, Iraq was introducing nuclear technology such as electron and ion accelerators for use in scientific research and for medical, environmental and agricultural applications. During the past two years, the Government had been training specialists in those fields in cooperation with the Agency and the Arab Atomic Energy Agency. It hoped to receive increased support for such activities from the Agency in the future.

8. The establishment of NWFZs was a necessary step towards the achievement and maintenance of international peace and security. Iraq therefore strongly supported all efforts to establish an NWFZ in the Middle East. Israel must first, however, get rid of its nuclear weapons, accede to the NPT and place its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards. In addition, all States in the region should subject all their nuclear installations to Agency control and comply with the provisions of the United Nations resolutions concerning the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East, with Security Council resolution 487 (1981) and with paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991). All States, including the five nuclear-weapon States, should comply with the decisions of the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences and take practical steps to ensure the success of the 2012 conference. Iraq urged the Agency, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and other relevant organizations to prepare background documents concerning the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems for that conference.

9. The Fukushima accident in Japan and other similar accidents in the past had undermined confidence in the use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes to meet the growing energy demand. It was therefore essential to adopt additional preventive measures to protect nuclear installations and power plants that were at risk of being affected by natural disasters, especially those in coastal areas and close to earthquake fault lines. National radiation and nuclear emergency response plans should be updated, and international and regional cooperation should be enhanced by means of exchanges of information through early warning networks and radiation and nuclear monitoring networks. Staff employed in nuclear facilities should receive training in nuclear safety and security, and monitoring centres should be provided with the equipment and expertise required to predict natural phenomena and ensure that appropriate measures were taken as speedily as possible.

10. Mr VEJONIS (Latvia) said that events in Fukushima and the discussions that had followed had demonstrated the importance of nuclear safety for all Member States. Latvia fully agreed with the Director General that public confidence in the safety of nuclear power had been badly shaken. However, in light of the fact that nuclear power would remain important for many countries, it was imperative that the most stringent safety measures be implemented everywhere. The issue of public anxiety was particularly pertinent for his country as several nuclear power plants were at the planning or commissioning stage near its borders.

11. The Fukushima accident had proven that the nuclear renaissance should go hand in hand with a long-term commitment to improving nuclear safety; unfortunately, that was not an area where 'learning by doing' was an acceptable approach. Therefore, Latvia urged all Member States to pay greater attention to nuclear safety, bearing in mind its transboundary implications. In that connection, a commitment by Member States to apply the Agency's safety standards was vital.

12. Having underlined the importance of technical cooperation, he said that cooperation was the only way to find the best solutions, ensure the exchange of experience and provide optimal assistance to those who needed it. Latvia commended the Agency's Department of Technical Cooperation for the support it provided to Member States and its efforts to make constant improvements.

13. In 2011, Latvia had defined four national mid-term priorities for technical cooperation, namely: radioactive waste management; strengthening regulatory infrastructure via knowledge management; improving radiation security; and developing a safety culture among operators. His Government was aware that there was a need for improvement in the aforementioned areas and the priorities identified had been approved by its Radiation Safety Board. Regarding safety culture, more emphasis needed to be placed on stakeholder involvement in order to ensure effective, instead of one-way, communication.

14. As regards radioactive waste management, he said that a new EU directive had been adopted in 2011 establishing a Community framework for the responsible and safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste (Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom), which set up a legal framework based on acknowledged safety principles. Its adoption meant that the Agency's Fundamental Safety Principles had been brought into law, thereby preventing any interpretations at the national legislative level. The directive emphasized the importance the EU attached to radioactive waste management. Latvia urged every Member State to follow suit for the sake of future generations.

15. The discourse surrounding nuclear safety had seen a shift in emphasis since the previous General Conference. Whereas in 2010 there had been enthusiastic rhetoric about the nuclear renaissance and knowledge management, 2011 had brought the realization that safety and emergency preparedness and response were crucial. As indicated at the IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety in June 2011, several Member States had decided to stop their nuclear programmes and seek alternative energy sources. The Fukushima accident had highlighted the fact that even countries with a high level of nuclear safety and a well developed infrastructure were vulnerable. The paradigm shift that had taken place had resulted in calls for stress tests and a review of safety standards and emergency preparedness systems.

16. In closing, he emphasized the crucial role played by the Agency in ensuring the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

17. Mr SHOOGUFAN (Afghanistan) expressed appreciation for the Agency's continued efforts to increase its technical cooperation activities at the bilateral, regional and international levels with a view to enhancing the living conditions of its Member States. Those activities were particularly important for his country, which had nine ongoing projects and eight new projects for the 2012–2013 biennium. Afghanistan's draft Country Programme Framework, drawn up in 2010, was still under review and its Country Programme Note would shortly be entered into the Programme Cycle Management Framework.

18. An Atomic Energy High Commission had now been established in Afghanistan. Notwithstanding certain technical and financial difficulties, the Commission had, with the assistance of Agency legal experts, drafted a national nuclear law that was now before parliament. The Commission was currently drafting regulations on radiation protection, transport of nuclear materials, and waste management. His country welcomed the Agency's continued and important efforts to strengthen international cooperation in nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety.

19. Recent events, including the catastrophe in Japan and major terrorist attacks in various parts of the world, had highlighted the need for specific measures to enhance the safety and security of nuclear technology, materials and installations. Since nuclear safety had implications that extended beyond national boundaries, developing Member States commissioning new nuclear facilities should seek cooperation with the Agency, and all Member States utilizing nuclear technology must apply the highest safety standards and address issues related to disaster management such as secure containment structures and rapid response capacities.

20. Afghanistan welcomed the outcome of the June 2011 IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety and believed that the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety would significantly strengthen global nuclear safety. Afghanistan encouraged all Member States to work towards the swift implementation of the recommended measures. His country also welcomed the cooperation between the Government of Japan and the Agency to assess the Fukushima accident and the Japanese Government's intention to organize, in cooperation with the Agency, an international conference on nuclear safety in 2012.

21. In the area of nuclear security, all Member States should continue to implement the enhanced international legal regime and identify any new measures required. He commended the Secretariat's efforts in developing Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plans and emphasized the importance of the Nuclear Security Summit to be held in the Republic of Korea in 2012.

22. Afghanistan attached great importance to the fight against terrorism and his Government supported all measures aimed at preventing terrorists and other criminals from acquiring nuclear, radiological, biological or chemical weapons. As global demand for nuclear technologies increased, it was essential to ensure that the nuclear material supplied could not be diverted to non-peaceful purposes.

23. Afghanistan appreciated the Agency's efforts to assist Member States in enhancing the physical protection of nuclear facilities and preventing illicit trafficking. The highest possible levels of nuclear safety, security and safeguards must be assured for all nuclear and radiological applications.

24. Agency safeguards were critical to the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and Afghanistan commended the Agency's verification activities. To fulfil its tasks in that area, the Agency needed administrative, technical and political assistance, and he called on all Member States to support and cooperate with Agency inspectors. His Government fully endorsed the Agency's activities aimed at resolving outstanding issues relating to the nature and scope of Member States' nuclear programmes.

25. Turning to nuclear disarmament, he said that the Government of Afghanistan supported the dismantling of strategic warheads and the vision of a world free of nuclear dangers. In that context, it commended the efforts of the Governments of the Russian Federation and the United States of America concerning plutonium disposal.

26. Lastly, he emphasized that the Agency must have sufficient financial and human resources to carry out its statutory functions. Afghanistan, for its part, would continue to cooperate fully with the Agency in addressing the challenges that lay ahead.

27. Mr NAMBURETE (Mozambique) said that an environment of political stability and a worldwide commitment to peace and welfare were preconditions for mutual trust and the peaceful use of nuclear technology. Mozambique joined those who defended the right of all countries to develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and for social and economic development. It was opposed to the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the use of nuclear technology for military purposes by any Member State of the Agency or any other country.

28. Mozambique had joined the Agency in 2006, had established its National Atomic Energy Agency in 2009 and had brought the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the IAEA into force in 2011. It had signed an NPT safeguards agreement and an additional protocol thereto in 2010. He appealed to those Member States that had not done so to accede to that important instrument.

29. Mozambique was strongly committed to working closely with the Agency with a view to achieving national development. Although not yet the case for Mozambique, there was considerable evidence that technical cooperation in the field of nuclear technology was making a difference in the lives of many people the world over. Technical cooperation was helping to change the widespread

perception of the Agency as simply the world's 'nuclear watchdog' and promoted an awareness of its extensive activities in such fields as nuclear energy and nuclear science and applications.

30. Mozambique welcomed Agency assistance through coordinated research projects and technical cooperation in the areas of radiotherapy, nuclear medicine, agriculture, mineral resources, and animal health and production, including the fight against the tsetse fly and trypanosomosis. Mozambique was now finalizing its Country Programme Framework for the period 2012–2017, to be signed by the end of the year. The programme set priorities in areas where technical cooperation could make a substantial contribution, including energy planning, water resources, environmental management, industrial applications, radioactive waste management and radiation protection.

31. His delegation congratulated the Director General on the PACT programme, which had proven to be one of the Agency's most successful activities. Also, it was encouraging to note that, in response to the UN focus on the need for better water management, the Agency was assigning priority to technical cooperation projects in that area. His delegation would like to see the Agency play an active role in efforts to combat malaria, which continued to take millions of lives, particularly in Africa.

32. Training helped to build professional capacity in developing countries. The ultimate goal would be to assist developing countries in establishing and fostering a sustainable, highly trained human resource base in all activities related to nuclear science and applications.

33. The Fukushima accident had posed a serious challenge to nuclear technology. The manner in which the Government of Japan, with the support of the international community, had dealt with the accident highlighted the need for transparency, collaboration and further strengthening of safety measures at nuclear power plants. Only then would nuclear technology continue to be a preferred option for power supply. Mozambique expressed its appreciation to the Agency for immediately providing assistance and mobilizing support in the aftermath of the Fukushima accident. Close cooperation among the Member States was essential to rise to the challenge of ensuring safe nuclear power.

34. Mozambique was concerned about the illegal practice of dumping radioactive waste in developing countries, in particular in Africa, because of the serious risk to public health it posed. It appealed for greater assistance in order to bring that practice, which was an obstacle to social and economic development and constituted a flagrant violation of human rights, to a halt.

35. Mozambique much appreciated the continuing support that it had been receiving from the Agency under the technical cooperation programme and reiterated its commitment to supporting the Agency in its efforts to promote nuclear safety and the peaceful use of nuclear technology.

36. Mr OTTO (Germany) said that events in the field of nuclear energy in recent months had been dominated by the incident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in March 2011. One consequence of the incident had been an invitation to Member States from the Director General to attend the IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety in June, which had focused on lessons learned for the Agency in both structural and legal matters. It would, of course, take more time to fully assess the impact of the accident.

37. In the aftermath of that accident, Germany had reconsidered the role of nuclear energy in the context of its national energy policy. The legal framework in its Atomic Energy Act had been amended and electricity generation at German nuclear power plants would be completely phased out by the end of 2022. That meant an acceleration of nuclear plant shutdown and of restructuring of the country's energy system. The challenge ahead encompassed more innovation and faster progress towards energy efficiency and renewable energy.

38. Germany assured its neighbours and partners, who were wondering what effect that decision would have on European electricity markets and grids, that it would organize the necessary changes in full transparency and close dialogue. It remained committed to the highest safety and security standards for nuclear power plants and would continue to be an active partner in all relevant forums and institutions.

39. Together with its EU partners, Germany had repeatedly confirmed its commitment to full implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. The 2010 NPT Review Conference had underlined the importance of moving ahead in that regard. Progress had been made in the seminar organized by the EU in Brussels in July 2011. Also, the Agency had planned a forum on experience of possible relevance to the creation of an NWFZ in the Middle East in November 2011. The international community should now refrain from doing anything that could jeopardize the planned 2012 Conference.

40. After long and difficult negotiations, the Board of Governors had reached a decision at its June 2011 session on the Agency's Regular Budget for 2012. The 4% increase did not reflect his country's well-known position but, in the spirit of Vienna, it had not blocked consensus.

41. Continuing global and financial uncertainties and additional burdens on national budgets, in combination with across-the-board austerity measures, required a zero growth policy in all international organizations, including the Agency. The Secretariat and Member States must therefore continue to find additional mechanisms to increase the Agency's efficiency and effectiveness. The system of integrated safeguards within the framework of the additional protocol was one way of streamlining costs. Germany would welcome initiatives from the Secretariat that could lead to cost savings for the Secretariat, Member States and the private sector.

42. In that context, he emphasized Germany's continued general intention to support the Agency when specific needs arose. Germany was in the process of donating €5 million to the Nuclear Security Fund for various projects that had been selected in close cooperation with the Office of Nuclear Security. It had already contributed €3.4 million in 2011 to the project on Enhancing Capabilities of the Safeguards Analytical Services (ECAS) at Seibersdorf and would give a further €1.6 million to that project by the end of the year.

43. Germany was gravely concerned about the nature of the Iranian nuclear programme. Iran had not taken the necessary steps to dispel international doubts as to whether its programme was exclusively for peaceful purposes. On the contrary, installing centrifuges in the underground Fordow facility and announcing the tripling of its 20% enrichment production only served to increase concerns. The Agency's latest report again stated that it was unable to verify the absence of undeclared activities and that questions concerning possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear programme remained unanswered.

44. Full implementation by Iran of its international obligations was not only mandatory; it was in Iran's own best interests if it really wanted to re-establish confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme. Germany reaffirmed the offer made in 2008 by China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States, along with the proposals made in Istanbul in January 2011. It expected Iran to demonstrate a constructive attitude and to respond positively to those proposals and to the six countries' openness to dialogue and negotiation.

45. Germany was also gravely concerned about the DPRK nuclear weapons programme. The complete and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula was his country's goal. Unfortunately, the latest events had only increased doubts about whether the DPRK was truly willing to renounce its nuclear weapons programme. It would be a positive sign if the DPRK readmitted Agency inspectors. Preventing nuclear proliferation to and from the DPRK remained a priority and he

called upon all States to comply strictly with their obligations under Security Council resolution 1874 (2009).

46. In June 2011, the Board of Governors had found the Syrian Arab Republic to be in non-compliance with its safeguards agreement and the Security Council had taken up the issue on 14 July 2011. Germany called on the Syrian Arab Republic to cooperate fully with the Agency in order to clarify all open questions concerning its nuclear programme.

47. The aforementioned developments underlined the need for an effective and efficient safeguards regime. Germany considered a comprehensive safeguards agreement together with an additional protocol to be the verification standard.

48. The Board of Governors had recently approved three different models for multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle. Such efforts strengthened the reliability of the already well-functioning nuclear fuel market. Germany had submitted its own model, the Multilateral Enrichment Sanctuary Project (MESP). While it had not yet sought Board approval, Germany remained in bilateral contact with interested Member States and would submit the project to the Board in due course.

49. Since the accident at Fukushima in March 2011, nuclear safety had been the subject of numerous national and international meetings. In June, the IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety had requested that the Secretariat prepare and present a draft action plan on nuclear safety, building on the Ministerial Declaration and the conclusions and recommendations of its working sessions.

50. He expressed appreciation for the action plan the Secretariat had prepared, which reflected the various views on nuclear safety held by Member States, but said that Germany would have preferred one that defined priorities and time frames for implementing the measures it set out. Furthermore, transparency in all aspects of nuclear safety, in particular with regard to the sharing of information, had not been sufficiently taken into account. Germany understood the action plan to be a living document that would require further development. It provided a framework; the crucial questions were what it would contain and how effectively it would be implemented. In that context, safety research was of key importance within the framework of international cooperation.

51. The Agency and all its Member States must live up to their joint responsibility to ensure that nuclear technology was used safely and securely. It was incumbent on all countries using nuclear energy to be aware of their responsibilities, which did not end at national borders. The continuous improvement of safety to ensure the highest standards must be a universal goal. Countries planning to build new nuclear power plants should apply the best available safety technologies from the outset and be capable of managing core meltdown and preventing major releases with respect to any new nuclear power plant.

52. Germany greatly appreciated the Agency's valuable technical cooperation. Such cooperation with the countries concerned and with other international organizations was leading to noticeable improvements in important areas like health, especially cancer treatment, water management, agriculture and environmental protection. Germany would continue to support the Agency's efforts in that regard to the fullest extent possible.

53. Germany, a founding member of INPRO, established under the auspices of the Agency more than ten years previously, commended the INPRO team for its work over the past year. In coordination with other international initiatives, it was a crucial forum for discussions on innovative approaches to nuclear infrastructure. Germany would continue to support its efforts towards ensuring the safe and secure use of nuclear energy.

54. Germany supported the topic of water management chosen for the 2011 IAEA Scientific Forum as it was a truly global challenge. Access to clean water had been declared a human right by the General Assembly in 2010 and his Government, together with the German research community and industry, stood ready to play an active and constructive role in tackling the issue.

55. Nuclear energy and related technologies required intensive international collaboration and the Agency played a central role in that regard. Maintaining the Agency's ability to do so remained an issue of the highest priority for his country. Germany looked forward to continued constructive cooperation with the Agency and all its Member States.

56. Mr TOUKAN (Jordan) expressed his Government's sincere condolences to the people of Japan over the loss of life and destruction caused by the earthquake and tsunami. He also commended the Japanese Government and institutions on the action they had taken to address the consequences of the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power station.

57. He thanked the Agency for organizing the IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety in June 2011 and involving the international community in efforts to meet the challenge presented by the Fukushima accident, which had created an entirely new situation and undermined the confidence of the general public in the safety of nuclear energy. Countries must now join forces in laying the basis for a new nuclear safety regime, guided by the lessons learned from the accident and building on relevant international standards. At the same time, emphasis should be placed on national responsibility to promote a culture of nuclear safety and corresponding practical action. The Agency should also move ahead with its Action Plan on Nuclear Safety covering all major aspects of nuclear safety as well as the protection of public health and the environment.

58. The Jordanian Government and the institutions involved in implementation of the country's nuclear programme hoped to ensure strict compliance with nuclear safety standards by opting for safe modern technology. Jordan was in the final stages of the process of selecting nuclear reactor technology. The Atomic Energy Commission was currently assessing competing bids from the Russian Federation (AES-92 WWER-1000), Canada (Enhanced CANDU-6), and France and Japan (ATMEA1). The Commission planned to apply Agency standards and rigorous selection criteria in choosing technology that was appropriate and safe for Jordan.

59. Also, the Commission was completing site selection studies for the construction of a nuclear power plant, which it hoped would be in operation by the end of 2012. The two candidate sites were close to water sources, one being treated waste water.

60. Jordan possessed natural uranium ore reserves and had signed agreements on exploration, drilling and mining and on the creation of joint investment ventures with specialized companies, including the French AREVA company. It was hoped to complete the economic feasibility studies in the central region of the country in 2012. Uranium exploration work was also proceeding in other parts of the country.

61. Jordan was aware of the importance of ensuring public acceptance of nuclear energy as a prerequisite for the success of the nuclear programme and so the Jordan Atomic Energy Commission was devising a strategy aimed at disseminating a sound nuclear culture. For instance, it had published a white paper on nuclear energy in Jordan in order to inform public opinion in a transparent and scientific manner about all aspects of the nuclear programme.

62. The use of nuclear energy called for a highly qualified work force and Jordan had taken successful action to that end. The first group of students attending the nuclear engineering course at the Jordan University of Science and Technology had graduated in 2011. In November 2010, King Abdullah II had laid the foundation stone of the Jordan Nuclear Research Centre to be built on the

University campus. Work on the Centre, which would be equipped with a 5 MW nuclear research reactor, was being conducted by the Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute (KAERI)/Daewoo consortium. The reactor would be used to train future generations of nuclear researchers, scientists and engineers, and also to produce the radioisotopes required by the Jordanian medical, agricultural and industrial sectors. The reactor would begin operating in 2015.

63. Plans for the creation of a centre of excellence in Jordan specializing in nuclear energy and major projects were being drawn up in cooperation with the French Government. The centre would provide training courses in basic and advanced science to meet the needs of the Jordanian nuclear programme and would also offer regional training courses. Courses in nuclear energy project management and nuclear safety as well as advanced courses focusing on specialized work in nuclear power plants would be inaugurated in autumn 2012.

64. Jordan attached special importance to bilateral cooperation and had signed 12 nuclear cooperation agreements with States that ranked among the world's leading nuclear suppliers. Jordan had also taken advantage of 37 opportunities offered under nuclear cooperation agreements with France, China, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Korea and Japan for higher studies in nuclear science and engineering. He warmly thanked the Governments concerned for offering such opportunities to Jordanian students.

65. Jordan had benefited from numerous national, regional and interregional projects under the Agency's technical cooperation programme. The visit to Jordan by the Deputy Director General for Technical Cooperation in May 2011 had provided an opportunity to obtain advice about potential Agency support in areas such as health, education and the nuclear energy infrastructure. Jordan was also looking forward to a visit by the Director General in October 2011, which would further consolidate the country's cooperation with the Agency and confirm the transparency of its nuclear programme and its ongoing compliance with international standards.

66. Jordan appreciated the technical advice offered in the context of the 2009 INIR mission to review and assess its nuclear energy infrastructure. It looked forward to a second mission during the last quarter of 2011. As a member of INPRO, Jordan would benefit from long-term strategic planning of nuclear power generation.

67. Jordan welcomed the proposals to establish a mechanism for the assurance of nuclear fuel supply. It would be appropriate to engage in a constructive and substantive dialogue in that regard to assist States that were endeavouring to implement sustainable civil nuclear programmes and to broaden the options available for an assured nuclear fuel supply covering the complete nuclear fuel cycle. Jordan therefore encouraged positive discussion of the proposals and emphasized the need for an in-depth study of all the relevant legal, political and technical implications.

68. Jordan had reaffirmed its resolve to expand its options by purchasing nuclear fuel from global markets without prejudice to its rights under Article IV of the NPT to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty.

69. Jordan attached great importance to the safeguards regime and considered it to be a basic element of international efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to limit nuclear energy to peaceful applications for the benefit of States and peoples. In accordance with its obligations under the NPT, Jordan had signed a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the Agency and an additional protocol thereto to strengthen the comprehensive safeguards regime.

70. Jordan was firmly convinced that nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction posed a threat to global peace and security and especially to peace and stability in the Middle East region,

which continued to suffer from the failure to implement resolutions aimed at ridding it of nuclear weapons.

71. Jordan stressed the need for Israel to accede to the NPT and to place all its nuclear installations under Agency safeguards, thereby achieving universality of the Treaty in the region. That would not only pave the way for the creation of an NWFZ in the Middle East and help to achieve international peace and security, but also act as an incentive to States in the region to focus on socio-economic development instead of an arms race, which hindered development and confidence-building and exacerbated tensions.

72. In that connection, Jordan supported the decision to convene an international forum in November 2011 to be attended by the States of the region and other interested parties with a view to taking advantage of the experience of existing NWFZs. It was to be hoped that the forum would contribute to the success of the international conference to be held in 2012 on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the States of the region, and with the full support and engagement of the nuclear-weapon States.

73. Jordan reaffirmed its confidence in the Agency's effective role in supporting the contribution of nuclear technology to socio-economic prosperity through the provision of technical assistance to Member States and in promoting international peace and security through its action in the areas of nuclear safety and non-proliferation.

74. Ms HAINGURA (Namibia) said that her country's Vision 2030 set forth the country's long-term strategies for development and served as a vehicle to bring about meaningful results to its ideas. Although the country had made steady progress, enormous challenges remained, which could nevertheless be overcome with the selfless collaboration from all partners and Agency support. The Agency provided important contributions to Namibia's priority goals, which included productive utilization of the country's natural resources, environmental sustainability, development of productive and competitive human resources and institutions, improving quality of life, and promoting peace and security. The General Conference provided an opportunity to enhance cooperation, strengthen existing relations and find common ground on contentious issues.

75. The Agency's safeguards regime was an important tool in ensuring international peace and security. Namibia was firmly committed to the peaceful use of nuclear energy and was about to bring into force the additional protocol to its safeguards agreement and also to ratify the Pelindaba Treaty. She called on all Member States to adhere fully and unconditionally to the NPT and facilitate equitable access to nuclear technologies for peaceful purposes.

76. The Agency's technical cooperation programme was an important means of advancing national developmental goals. The agricultural sector was crucial to food security and employment creation. The Agency provided excellent support to the sector, especially in the areas of crop production and the management of livestock diseases. Its commendable support in the water sector had facilitated a better understanding of groundwater resources and improved management systems. Namibia was pleased that the 2011 Scientific Forum was dedicated to the application of nuclear techniques for water management, which would add value to ongoing technical cooperation initiatives.

77. The Agency's PACT programme had been instrumental in creating the necessary awareness and operational capabilities in developing countries for cancer control. Welcoming the emphasis placed on PACT, she said that significant resources should be committed for the development of nuclear medicine and radiation therapy capabilities. The Agency should take an integrated approach to the various issues involved in cancer control when working with Member States. Namibia currently sought to strengthen and expand its nuclear medicine and radiotherapy services, with Agency

assistance. Namibia appreciated the support provided by the Agency and partners, including the Government of India, in the past and looked forward to even greater support in future.

78. Nuclear energy played a vital and meaningful role in socio-economic development. Namibia continued to aspire to develop a nuclear power programme as an important contribution to meeting its national energy needs. Each State had the sovereign right, and should be provided access, to development and use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Namibia, as a major player in the uranium production industry, must ensure that its people benefited equally from that resource. The Government was therefore seeking to create the necessary conditions for encouraging value addition or full participation in the nuclear fuel cycle. That would help meet national energy demands, stimulate industrial development and create much needed jobs and skills. Namibia welcomed cooperative arrangements at the multilateral and bilateral levels in developing a policy and an enabling framework for full exploitation of the nuclear fuel cycle.

79. She extended her country's sincere sympathy to the people of Japan and commended that country and the Agency for their management of the Fukushima accident. Despite its desire to pursue a nuclear power programme, Namibia was mindful of the risks associated with the use of nuclear energy and the need for a rigorous national regulatory framework to ensure high levels of safety and security at nuclear installations. Technology providers should collaborate closely with the Agency to ensure that the available technology offered a high standard of performance and a high level of safety.

80. Namibia's regulations for protection against ionizing radiation and for the safety of radiation sources had been finalized, paving the way for the full implementation of the Atomic Energy and Radiation Protection Act, which provided the regulatory framework for the safe and secure use of radioactive and nuclear material. The current legislation and regulations conformed to Agency standards and recommendations. Namibia was committed to regular self-assessment of the regulatory infrastructure to ensure best practices. It was a strong proponent of regional networks and encouraged the strengthening of bilateral partnerships within regional frameworks. Her Government supported the Forum of Nuclear Regulatory Bodies in Africa and looked forward to reinforcement of that approach at the subregional level, with the support of the Agency.

81. Human resources were vital to the successful development of her country's priority initiatives and her Government greatly appreciated the Agency's support in building teaching and research capabilities at higher education institutions in Namibia. The Agency had been instrumental in supporting the development of expertise in specialized areas of nuclear technology and her delegation looked forward to such support continuing.

82. The challenges ahead were not insurmountable and a multilateral approach in which all parties enjoyed equal status and mutual benefit would help secure a good future for all people around the world.

Mr Berdennikov (Russian Federation) took the Chair.

83. Mr MOVSISYAN (Armenia) thanked the Agency for its constant support, particularly in the fields of nuclear power and nuclear medicine.

84. In the aftermath of the disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in Japan, there was a need for strengthened and more in-depth safety analysis of existing and planned power plants and it was essential to develop new and more conservative approaches to nuclear power plant safety criteria. At the same time, it was vital that NPT safeguards be ensured through international agreements and strengthened domestic legislation.

85. Armenia, for its part, was continually upgrading its national legislation and conscientiously complied with its international responsibilities, including the regular submission to the Agency of

reports under its additional protocol. It was grateful for the valuable assistance of the Department of Safeguards in that respect.

86. Nuclear power was a key element of Armenia's energy strategy since it was essential if the country was to be self-sufficient in energy. An international conference, scheduled for April 2011, on investment in the proposed new Armenian nuclear power unit had been postponed following the earthquake and tsunami at Fukushima. The delay had enabled Armenia, together with the international nuclear community, to consider possible changes to the design safety requirements for the new unit.

87. From 2008 to 2010, a re-assessment of the seismic, volcanic and geophysical situation of the site had been conducted and the results submitted to Agency experts in 2010. The final report, incorporating those experts' recommendations, had been sent to the Agency for evaluation in early July 2011. The Agency's advisory assistance had been invaluable in ensuring the seismic safety of the existing unit and for the future development of nuclear power in Armenia. Modelling of various types of incidents and emergencies had shown that the reactor met the design standards for seismic resistance.

88. An assessment of the environmental impact of the new unit, available on the website of the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, had been completed and transmitted to the Ministry of Environmental Protection for evaluation. The latter Ministry had organized public hearings in a number of Armenian cities and the final expert evaluation would soon be forthcoming. Armenia met all its obligations under the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention), and the environmental impact study for the new unit had been conducted in strict compliance with the procedures foreseen in that instrument.

89. Armenia had declared its readiness to conduct stress tests on the operating unit of the Armenia nuclear power plant with the assistance of the EU and had already begun relevant preparations.

90. Every year, Armenia welcomed up to ten Agency safety missions, as well as seismological and operational safety missions. The OSART mission conducted in May 2011 had made a thorough review of operational safety and had submitted recommendations and proposals in many areas. The mission had also recorded examples of good practice which would be disseminated to all countries which used nuclear power for their possible application. All the mission's recommendations would be implemented in Armenia as soon as possible. He expressed thanks to the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security for assisting his country in its efforts to enhance the level of safety at the Armenian nuclear power plant.

91. In 2010, his Government had adopted a concept for the management of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel, which would be used as the basis for developing a strategy on the same subject in the near future with the assistance of EU experts. It was important to have such a strategy in place before Armenia's operating reactor was decommissioned.

92. He expressed regret at the repeated attempts of Azerbaijan to use the Agency as a platform to pursue its unscrupulous political aims. Azerbaijan regularly contacted the Secretariat with absurd claims that Armenia was disposing of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel on the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. Armenia had always declared its readiness to welcome an Agency expert group, including experts from Azerbaijan, to investigate the allegations in situ.

93. At the IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety in June 2011, Azerbaijan had claimed that Armenia had refused to publish the report on its OSART mission, showing that it knew nothing about the Agency rules of document management. Armenia, which had always behaved correctly and with restraint, considered it unacceptable that the Agency should be used for such unprofessional exchanges.

94. His Government kept a close eye on the safety of its operating nuclear power unit. The 12th meeting of Armenia's Nuclear Energy Safety Council comprising internationally recognized experts and scientists, would be held on 6 December 2011. The Agency, for its part, coordinated international assistance to raise safety levels at the Armenian nuclear power plant. The fifth Technical Meeting on that topic was scheduled to take place in Vienna on 13-14 October 2011. He thanked the Department of Technical Cooperation for its technical assistance in that regard.

95. He reiterated his country's interest in participating in INPRO projects, particularly those related to the development of nuclear power in small countries and the development of small and medium sized reactors. Also, Armenia was ready to enter into discussions on its possible accession to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management and had informed the Secretariat accordingly.

96. In closing, he expressed Armenia's support for the Peaceful Uses Initiative proposed by the United States Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, at the NPT Review Conference in May 2010.

97. Mr BA (Senegal) conveyed the sympathy and solidarity of the Senegalese people to the Government and people of Japan for their courageous, disciplined and responsible management of the Fukushima accident's dire consequences.

98. The IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety held in Vienna in June 2011 had made considerable progress towards strengthening safety and security and the management of radiological and nuclear information. He was convinced that the Agency would take its conclusions and decisions into account and support their efficient and rapid implementation in order to minimize the potential risks that could undermine the major benefits of peaceful nuclear applications.

99. He expressed his country's satisfaction with the Agency's commitment to peaceful nuclear technology, nuclear safety and security, and strengthened safeguards. By way of demonstration of its commitment to the transparent, safe and sustainable use of nuclear energy, Senegal had ratified and was implementing the principal international legal instruments on nuclear safety and non-proliferation under the Agency's auspices. Also, it had adhered to the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and intended to strengthen its cooperation as regards international security to monitor transport and to combat nuclear terrorism and illicit trafficking involving nuclear and other radioactive materials.

100. In the interests of nuclear safety, the President of Senegal had decided to abandon nuclear power in favour of using innovative and renewable energy in its energy diversification policy. Since no nuclear power project was viable without a proper safety policy, Senegal had strengthened the independence of the National Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Authority.

101. Senegal appreciated the Agency's technical cooperation, which covered such essential areas as training, technology transfer, expert exchanges, the provision of modern medical and nuclear safety equipment, as well as support for research into water resource management, improved agricultural and livestock productivity, radiation protection and malnutrition. Senegal would do all it could to enhance its excellent cooperation with the Agency and use nuclear science and technology for socio-economic development.

102. Reaffirming Senegal's full adherence to the Agency's peace and development ideals, he said that his country would do its utmost to promote the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and strengthen the Agency's non-proliferation and verification regime. Accordingly, Senegal supported and would take part in the second Executive Committee meeting of the International Framework for Nuclear Energy Cooperation (IFNEC) in Warsaw, on 29 September 2011. It hoped that agreement could be reached on IFNEC's future activities to reduce proliferation risks, on comprehensive nuclear

fuel services, on financing civilian nuclear power projects and the development of robust infrastructures. His country was fully committed to working with the international community for peace and global stability.

103. Senegal hoped for the adoption and extensive application of the Agency's safety standards, the fundamental safety and security conventions and agreements, and safeguards. His delegation expected the General Conference to reach positive and constructive conclusions by consensus on the peaceful use of nuclear energy for sustainable development.

104. Mr POTTS (Australia) expressed sympathy to the people of Japan as they continued to cope with the aftermath of the disasters of March 2011. The courage of the emergency workers striving to overcome the effects of the Fukushima Daiichi accident was humbling.

105. The accident, coinciding with the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster, had reminded the world of the importance of nuclear safety. Welcoming the Director General's prompt action and initiatives in that regard, he said his country had been pleased to participate in the IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety in June 2011 and to have some of its proposals for improving nuclear safety and securing public confidence reflected in the Ministerial Declaration and the resulting draft Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. Australia welcomed the consensus approval of that action plan by the Board of Governors the previous week and urged the General Conference to endorse it, thereby sending a message of unity and purpose concerning the priority the Agency attached to achieving the highest possible standards of nuclear safety.

106. The events of 2011 had demonstrated that more must be done to improve nuclear safety. His country looked forward to reports on the effective implementation of the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety by the Secretariat and Member States and to further opportunities to reach agreement on measures for enhancing safety and ensuring transparency. While Australia strongly supported the Action Plan, it did not consider it an exhaustive list of actions on nuclear safety. Thus, he encouraged States to be proactive in undertaking additional measures relevant to their own circumstances and to ensure that adequate resources were made available.

107. Use of the range of international peer review missions available to Member States through the Agency, including the IRRS, OSART and SCART, should be promoted. Also, Australia emphasized the need for the international community to support international fact-finding missions and asked the Agency to develop mechanisms by which such missions could be deployed rapidly and efficiently.

108. The Agency's role and capacity to fulfil its obligations in regard to emergency preparedness and response must also continue to be strengthened.

109. Noting that the Agency safety standards were being reviewed, he stressed the importance of the IAEA Safety Series in guiding efforts to improve nuclear, transport, radiation and waste safety worldwide.

110. Australia supported close cooperation between the Agency and UNSCEAR in assessing the consequences of the Fukushima accident. Australia was pleased to coordinate the assessment of public health and environmental effects through its safety regulator, the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA).

111. Noting that safety measures were not the only elements required to protect people and the environment properly, he emphasized the close connection between safety and security related measures.

112. Turning to the issue of safeguards and verification, he said that all Member States must work to ensure an effective safeguards system that provided assurances of the correctness and completeness of

a State's declarations concerning the peaceful nature of its nuclear activities — a system in which all could continue to have confidence. Such a system provided the basic foundation for nuclear trade and cooperation, security, and a basis for continuing progress on nuclear disarmament.

113. To be effective, a safeguards system must have universal coverage. He called upon all those NPT States which had yet to fulfil their obligation under the Treaty to conclude a comprehensive safeguards agreement to do so without delay. To achieve the important goal of universalization, all States that had not signed and ratified the Treaty should do so as soon as possible. Full compliance with safeguards on all peaceful nuclear activities was an essential step towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

114. Australia was honoured by the nomination of Ambassador Peter Woolcott to chair the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference, to be held in 2012, and looked forward to working with all States party to the NPT to ensure that the meeting was a success.

115. Australia welcomed the efforts to promote Agency safeguards and would continue to work with the Secretariat in using regional and bilateral opportunities to encourage all countries to implement effective safeguards.

116. The Asia-Pacific Safeguards Network (APSN), of which Australia was chair, had held its second plenary meeting in the Republic of Korea in July 2011. He thanked the Agency for contributing to the meeting. To improve and strengthen safeguards implementation and the overall non-proliferation regime in the Asia-Pacific region, Australia was working with the APSN to draft a paper on fundamentals and good practices for State systems of accounting for and control of nuclear material. It would include lessons learnt by the community of Asia-Pacific nations that made up the Network and would complement the work of the Agency on safeguards implementation guidelines. The APSN's Statement of Principles had been published as document INFCIRC/769/Rev.1.

117. Safeguards support programmes were an important means whereby Member States could support the Agency in developing safeguards techniques and approaches. The Australian programme, which had been in place since 1980, had made valuable contributions to such areas as analytical services for environmental sampling, remote monitoring, training, and analytical and concepts work. A new task that Australia had recently taken on under that programme was qualification of the University of Western Australia's large-geometry ion microprobe for isotopic analysis of uranium-bearing particles in order for it to become a member of the Agency's Network of Analytical Laboratories.

118. The major technical challenge facing the safeguards system was the need to ensure credible verification, thus providing confidence that safeguards were effective in detecting both the misuse of declared facilities and the existence of undeclared facilities.

119. Australia had been the first State to sign and ratify an additional protocol. The combination of a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol assisted States in assuring others of the peaceful intent of their nuclear activities. Every State stood to benefit from a safeguards system that was as effective as possible, and the additional protocol was an essential component in ensuring the maximum effectiveness of that system. Australia strongly encouraged those States that had yet to sign, ratify and implement an additional protocol to do so as soon as possible.

120. Further, States must comply with their safeguards obligations. Agency safeguards obligations were not voluntary. Such obligations included those under the NPT, whereby non-nuclear-weapon States had made a commitment to each other to use nuclear energy for exclusively peaceful purposes. That commitment must be kept and States must be held accountable for any violations.

121. It was a matter of continuing regret that certain States continued to be in breach of their safeguards obligations. The Islamic Republic of Iran continued to defy binding Security Council resolutions and the requirements of the Board of Governors. Australia shared increasingly serious concerns about the mounting evidence regarding possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear programme. Australia looked forward to the Director General setting out in greater detail the basis for the Agency's concerns in that regard and, once again, encouraged Iran to comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions, engage with the Agency to resolve all issues and demonstrate conclusively the peaceful intent of its nuclear programme.

122. Australia urged the Syrian Arab Republic to act quickly to implement the resolution adopted by the Board on 9 June 2011 (GOV/2011/41). It welcomed Syria's offer to cooperate with the Agency to resolve all outstanding safeguards issues and asked it to engage positively and substantively with the Agency on those matters. Australia requested that the Director General continue reporting to the Board as appropriate.

123. The DPRK continued to be in non-compliance with its safeguards obligations and to act in defiance of Security Council resolutions. Australia urged the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons and its nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner and to comply with its obligations under the NPT and Agency safeguards. His country supported the Agency in maintaining its readiness to play an essential role in verifying the DPRK's nuclear programme.

124. Australia had long supported the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Full compliance by all States in the Middle East with their non-proliferation obligations was critical to building mutual confidence and security in the region. It was important to continue to build on NPT Review Conference outcomes, including the agreement to convene a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

125. In addition, Australia welcomed the Director General's initiative to convene a Middle East forum on the issue in November 2011. Australia would work with others both to ensure the success of the forum by sharing its experiences relating to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty and to ensure that the forum was a positive step towards the broader goal of such a zone in the Middle East. In the meantime, Australia encouraged all States to avoid any actions that might disrupt progress towards reaching that important goal.

126. Australia continued to work closely with the Agency and its regional neighbours with regard to nuclear safety and security. As a major producer and exporter of uranium, holding around one third of the world's uranium resources, it was committed to the safe and environmentally sound mining, processing and transport of uranium and had a strong record in those areas. To that end, Australia had established an informal Vienna-based contact group for existing and prospective uranium mining countries, the Friends of Responsible Uranium Mining (FoRUM), as a means of exchanging views and experience with regard to best practices in mining uranium. For the fourth successive year, Australia had hosted a side event during the General Conference on integrated approaches to effective controls for uranium mining by government and industry.

127. Australia valued its cooperation with the Agency in the Radiological Security Partnership for South-East Asia. Over the past eight years, the Partnership had strengthened the security of radioactive sources in the region. Australia was looking forward to the biennial review meeting to be held in the Philippines in January 2012.

128. His country, which attached great importance to capacity development in nuclear security — particularly nuclear forensic science, would continue to support international efforts in method standardization, the development of nuclear forensic libraries, a common lexicon, and training. In that

regard, it looked forward to hosting an Asia-Pacific training workshop on radiological crime scene management and nuclear forensics in February 2012.

129. Australia also continued to attach great importance to the safe, timely and reliable transport of radioactive materials that were essential to industry and to medical, scientific and industrial applications. That was a key issue and Australia continued to support international efforts to address it. It was looking forward to the October 2011 International Conference on the Safe and Secure Transport of Radioactive Material.

130. Through the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO), Australia continued to expand production of molybdenum-99 for nuclear medicine through its fully low-enriched uranium based Open Pool Australian Light Water (OPAL) Reactor fuel and targets. In so doing, Australia was contributing to the worldwide supply of radiopharmaceuticals while, at the same time, promoting global nuclear non-proliferation efforts through practical advances towards minimizing the civilian use of high-enriched uranium.

131. In relation to nuclear applications, Australia underscored the right of Member States to enjoy the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in accordance with their international obligations. Through ANSTO, Australia shared its scientific research base with other Member States and facilitated the use and exchange of equipment and personnel in relevant fields. In that regard, he noted that the state-of-the-art neutron beam facilities at the ANSTO OPAL Reactor were a designated IAEA Collaborating Centre for neutron scattering applications.

132. In addition to sharing skills and materials, Australia consistently ranked among the top contributors to the TCF and it continued to play a leading role in the RCA, including on projects covering radiation protection and health care.

133. In that context, and in the spirit of the Peaceful Uses Initiative, Australia had contributed 100 000 Australian dollars to the Agency for the marine benchmark study on the possible impact of the Fukushima radioactive releases in the Asia-Pacific region, approved by the Board in June 2011, and had recently hosted the initial project meeting for the study.

134. The General Conference provided an annual opportunity to take stock of the Agency's work and to evaluate its contribution to maintaining international peace and security. The Agency would be facing many challenges over the coming year, including the Fukushima aftermath, and Australia was confident that it had the capacity and resilience to meet its statutory objectives.

135. Mr ZNIBER (Morocco) said that the Fukushima accident had again raised serious questions about nuclear safety. His delegation commended the Director General for convening the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety, which had underscored the Agency's fundamental role concerning the safety of nuclear installations and activities. Morocco welcomed the efforts to elaborate an action plan, which would launch a process of strengthening the global nuclear safety framework. Also, Morocco was pleased that the question of nuclear safety was being addressed at a high-level meeting in New York on nuclear security and safety convened by the UN Secretary-General, which was being held in parallel with the General Conference. Morocco, convinced of the importance of nuclear safety and security, was participating in both events. His Government had taken steps to put an effective regulatory capacity in place in Morocco in the fields of nuclear and radiological safety and security.

136. Although nuclear safety and security were a national responsibility, their transboundary nature meant that there was also a collective responsibility. Morocco had always encouraged international efforts to strengthen safety and security systems worldwide. As a partner State in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, it had participated actively in activities in that context.

137. Through its engagement in that international effort, Morocco understood the importance of the exchange of information. An international exercise on rapid response to malicious acts involving radioactive materials, attended by many experts and scientists from partner States, had been organized in March in Rabat. Morocco's National Centre for Nuclear Energy, Sciences and Technology had been the central body responsible for the simulation exercises — a practical reflection of the principles of the Initiative. He expressed his Government's appreciation to all countries as well as to the Agency for the support they had given to Morocco in that exercise.

138. As part of preparations for the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, Morocco had been asked to chair the working group on management of and response to radiological and nuclear emergencies, in recognition of its active leadership role in that sphere. In that connection, Morocco would host a coordinating meeting in early 2012 and would organize an outreach activity before the end of 2011 for the benefit of African countries.

139. By verifying compliance with NPT non-proliferation obligations, the Agency played a unique role in maintaining international peace and security. His delegation reiterated its support for the Agency's verification activities in that context and commended it for the impartiality and professionalism it had shown in fulfilling its verification mandate.

140. Morocco, which had consistently called for a strengthening of the Agency's verification capacities, had once again demonstrated commitment to its verification obligations by bringing its additional protocol into force in April. He called on all Member States to help strengthen the Agency's verification system so that the Agency could conduct its activities in that area in conformity with its mandate under the NPT.

141. The credibility of the verification system was vitiated by continuing resistance. The Middle East continued to be a source of concern because of the failure of one country in the region, Israel, to accede to the NPT and submit its installations to Agency verification. In that connection, Morocco welcomed the convening by the Director General of a forum on the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East, which was a tangible contribution to the holding of the 2012 conference on the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East decided upon at the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

142. As a developing country, Morocco attached particular importance to the role of the Agency's technical cooperation programme in transferring nuclear technology and sharing expertise in order to promote socio-economic development. Morocco always paid its contribution to the TCF target and its national participation costs in full and on time. The technical cooperation programme had enabled Morocco to put into place major infrastructure and to develop human capacities. Morocco had benefited in particular from nuclear applications in the fields of agriculture, health, water resources management, the environment and nutrition.

143. The African dimension had an important place in Morocco's foreign policy. His country sought to make its human resources and expertise available to African experts and scientists by hosting training courses on various nuclear technology disciplines at its institutions.

144. As a party to AFRA, Morocco contributed to activities in the field of nuclear science and technology. It had recently been selected to serve as a regional designated centre in the area of isotope hydrology and was in the process of being selected as a centre for training and education in radiation protection.

145. Morocco welcomed the decision to devote the 2011 Scientific Forum to the topic of water. The continuing rapid growth in the developing world and the inevitable impact of global warming made the question of water a major international concern. As a semi-arid country, Morocco was alive to the need for long-term planning in the area of water resources management. Thus, it had diversified its

approaches and solutions to each specific case. That had been reflected by the publication in 2010, in cooperation with the Agency and the National Centre for Nuclear Energy, Sciences and Technology, of a national isotope hydrology atlas, which had been prepared in response to the need for rational assessment and management of that increasingly scarce resource. He expressed appreciation for the work of the Agency and national experts in that regard and said that Morocco was prepared to share its experience in that area.

146. The Agency played an important role in promoting international cooperation by endorsing the priorities of Member States while respecting the diversity of their needs and in so doing strengthened the bonds of belonging and ownership of all Member States. To that end, the Agency should democratize its governing bodies, in particular the Board of Governors, to reflect a balanced representation of its Member States.

147. Mr DUJANGA (Uganda) expressed condolences and sympathy to the people and Government of Japan for the great losses suffered as a consequence of the natural disaster compounded by the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident. He commended Japan and the Agency for their rapid and well coordinated interventions aimed at minimizing the impact of the nuclear crisis. The lessons learnt should be implemented effectively to enhance global nuclear safety.

148. Uganda was grateful for the continuing support from the Agency in the health, water, agriculture and industrial sectors, where the peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology were vital.

149. In view of the increasing incidence of cancer, especially cervical cancer, his country welcomed the Agency's assistance as regards radiotherapy and nuclear medicine services. The selection of Uganda as a PACT pilot country would make an important contribution to building human resource capacity in comprehensive cancer control in the African region.

150. Access to drinking water remained a major problem in many developing countries, including his own. He commended the Agency for its support in use of the isotope hydrology technique for assessing groundwater resources, which facilitated the development and implementation of comprehensive water supply plans and strategies in rural and urbanization areas. Uganda was pleased that water had been made the theme of the 2011 Scientific Forum and looked forward to continuing its cooperation with the Agency in that area.

151. The research conducted by the Joint Division with a view to developing disease and drought resistant crop varieties and improving animal production had greatly improved the food basket in developing countries. Improved crop varieties could also help in addressing population growth and climate change.

152. Despite the tremendous impact of the Fukushima accident on the future of the nuclear industry, nuclear power remained one of the cleanest sources of energy and would be needed to drive the economic engines of the world. As a growing economy, Uganda needed a sustainable energy system to meet its development needs. In 2006, it had therefore decided to develop a nuclear power programme. The accident at Fukushima would not deter it from that goal, but had shown the need for correct implementation from the outset. Uganda would seek out highly experienced suppliers, ensure that it followed robust international nuclear and radiation safety standards, and would learn from States with significant operating experience.

153. Stronger, more independent national nuclear regulatory authorities were needed and his delegation welcomed the recommendations of the recent IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety in that regard. Having recognized the importance of an effective regulatory infrastructure, Uganda had established its Atomic Energy Council in 2009 and developed atomic energy regulations

which had been approved and were ready for publication in its official gazette. The Atomic Energy Council had procured and commissioned land in April 2011 for the construction of a facility that would house a storage bunker for spent and orphan sources, laboratories, offices for its secretariat and a new training centre. It had received 500 thermoluminescent dosimeter badges from the Agency, which were currently being distributed to workers exposed to radiation. An additional 1000 badges would be procured in 2012.

154. In addition to the capacity building programme implemented in the framework of the Agency's technical cooperation programme, the Ugandan Government had sponsored young graduates in the Nuclear Energy Unit and the Atomic Energy Council to obtain master's degrees in a range of nuclear fields.

155. As the peaceful uses of nuclear energy expanded worldwide, so did the challenges to ensure security and safety. The main concern for developing countries was illicit trafficking of nuclear and radiological materials, which put the lives of many people at risk. He thanked the Agency's Office of Nuclear Security and the United States Global Threat Reduction Initiative for their efforts to ensure nuclear security in Uganda.

156. Atomic energy was vital to global development and the Agency's technical cooperation programme played an important role in that regard. His Government would continue to support the Agency and its activities to enable it to fulfil its mission and contribute to achieving global prosperity.

157. Mr OSAISAI (Nigeria) commended the Director General for taking decisive and positive steps in the aftermath of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident and for his timely action in convening the IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety in June 2011. His delegation expected the outcome of the Conference to lead to the development of appropriate mechanisms to assess and strengthen national, regional and international emergency preparedness and response capabilities.

158. Although there had been initial concerns about the potentially dampening effect of the accident on global nuclear power development, global commitment to continuing with the safe utilization of nuclear power had not waned. Notwithstanding the safety questions raised by the accident, the factors which influenced the decisions by individual countries to embark on a new nuclear power programme or expand an existing one had not changed.

159. Emphasizing the need to strengthen nuclear security, he said the Agency had a key role to play in working for a world free of all nuclear weapons. The Agency's current effort to establish an NWFZ in the Middle East was a welcome initiative and Nigeria would continue to support the attainment of that objective.

160. Nuclear safety and nuclear security were inextricably linked and so the development of a stronger global nuclear safety framework might also entail a tighter nuclear security regime. An international commitment to the enforcement of an effective nuclear safety and security regime could be achieved through effective national legislation and the enhancement of bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation among Member States.

161. Nigeria was committed to full compliance with its international obligations in ensuring and enforcing nuclear safety, security and safeguards and had acceded to and ratified the relevant treaties and conventions in preparation for bringing nuclear power plants into operation. Noting that the Pelindaba Treaty had entered into force in July 2009, he said Nigeria expected that more African States would be invited to attend the second Nuclear Security Summit to be held in the Republic of Korea in 2012.

162. As a newcomer country, Nigeria had started implementing a nuclear power programme as part of its strategy to diversify its power generation base and ensure long-term energy self-sufficiency and

security to meet the energy needs of its large population. The decision to introduce nuclear power into the national energy mix had been taken after a long and meticulous process over several years using analytical and planning tools with Agency assistance. The Fukushima Daiichi accident would pose additional obstacles to Nigeria's efforts to implement its nuclear power programme, but in the medium and long term, nuclear energy would play an important role in ensuring national energy self-sufficiency and security.

163. It was necessary to have an adequate and skilled human resource base to sustain a nuclear power programme over time and ensure an effective nuclear safety regime. Accordingly, the implementation strategy for Nigeria's nuclear programme envisaged comprehensive manpower training, capacity building and research infrastructure development.

164. The Nigeria Atomic Energy Commission and participating national universities were cooperating closely on organizing degree and professional programmes in nuclear technology and nuclear security. The facilities at the five university nuclear research centres and at the central training facility in Sheda-Abuja were being upgraded to ensure high standards of education and training in nuclear science and engineering. Nigeria was counting on support through the Agency's technical cooperation programme and the assistance of other development partners to build the necessary human resource base.

165. The existence of strong national institutions was critical to the planning and successful implementation of a nuclear power programme. Thus, Nigeria had decided to strengthen its national institutions in the sector so that they could implement their mandates effectively. The Nigeria Atomic Energy Commission (NAEC), the national focal agency for atomic energy development, had been reconstituted as an independent and self-accounting agency.

166. Continued cooperation and support from the international community for the sustainable implementation of Nigeria's nuclear power programme must be based on adherence to the culture of nuclear safety. For a newcomer like Nigeria, the establishment of an effective regulatory regime was essential and entailed the adoption and enforcement of internationally accepted safety standards by an independent regulatory body. Appropriate practical steps had been taken in that regard to strengthen the Nigeria Nuclear Regulatory Authority (NNRA).

167. Planning for the effective management of nuclear waste was a precondition for the success of any national nuclear power programme, particularly with regard to public acceptance. The attendant technology, methods and processes must be learned over time. Consequently, Nigeria had embarked on the development of facilities for the management of low and intermediate level radioactive waste at the Nuclear Technology Centre in Sheda-Abuja. The Agency was providing a wide range of technical support for project design and delivery.

168. Nigeria was currently implementing Milestone 2 activities in the development of a national infrastructure for nuclear power. It looked forward to fruitful partnerships to advance its national programme, including with other Member States that had the necessary technological base, such as the Russian Federation.

169. The theme of the Scientific Forum of the Conference, "Water Matters – Making a Difference with Nuclear Techniques", was of particular interest to Nigeria in view of the world's diminishing water resources and the role nuclear techniques could play in ameliorating the problem. The discussion came at a time when drought had brought untold hardship to the Horn of Africa. Nigeria hoped that the Forum would identify appropriate scientific tools and opportunities for effective water resources exploitation and management.

170. The Agency had provided welcome support in the assessment of Nigeria's water resources, in particular studies of the hydrodynamics, origin and recharge of aquifers in the Chad and Iullemeden basins in the Benue Trough and south-eastern parts of the country using isotope hydrology techniques. It was planned that the isotope hydrology facility at Zaria, for which the Agency had donated critical analytical infrastructure, including a mass spectrometer, would become fully operational by the end of 2011.

171. In the health sector, cooperation between the Agency and Nigeria was being stepped up in order to make use of modern techniques in nuclear medicine and radiotherapy as effective tools for cancer control. Modern nuclear medicine facilities were being developed under a memorandum of understanding between Nigeria and the Agency. Ten nuclear medicine facilities were being built and equipped in tertiary hospitals across the country, with a national cost sharing of $37 million over eight years starting from 2010. To date, $9 million had been paid to speed up programme implementation.

172. In addition to enhancing early cancer detection and management, the technical cooperation projects with the Agency aimed to promote human capacity development and infrastructure expansion in nuclear medicine facilities and radiotherapy centres. Upon completion, scheduled for 2016, those activities would significantly enhance the integration of radiotherapy and nuclear medicine into the national cancer plan and further broaden the practice of radiotherapy and nuclear medicine for cancer management.

173. To consolidate those achievements, Nigeria would like to continue working with the Agency to develop such areas as: human capacity building in palliative care, oncology nursing, cancer screening and colposcopy; management of a cancer registry and training of radiologists for interventional radiotherapy; improvement of information technology facilities to enhance participation in the VUCCnet programme; and technical assistance for monitoring and evaluation of the national cancer control plan under PACT. His delegation hoped that Nigeria's national programmes would continue to benefit from PACT.

174. His delegation welcomed the significant gains achieved under various nuclear technology application projects in Nigeria through partnership with the Agency and other Member States. Nigeria appreciated the Agency's technical support in finalization of the 2012-2015 integrated work plan for the national nuclear power infrastructure development programme and for the funding provided by the Agency through the United States Peaceful Uses Initiative.

175. Nigeria reaffirmed its commitment to the basic tenets of the NPT. Its nuclear power programme was consistent with the country's established position that its nuclear science and technology activities were purely for peaceful purposes and would remain within the safeguards framework.

176. Nigeria expressed its deep appreciation for the assistance it continued to receive from the Agency and reiterated its commitment to the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology for sustainable development.

177. Mr HAMER (Netherlands) said that the past year had been overshadowed by the tragic consequences of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan on 11 March 2011 and the tragic accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. He expressed the deeply felt sympathy and support of the Netherlands for the people of Japan and paid tribute to the courage and fortitude of the personnel at Fukushima, as well as the Japanese authorities, in handling the crisis.

178. With consensus having been reached among the NPT parties for the first time in many years at the 2010 Review Conference, there had been significant progress on non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament over the past year. The result had been a bold new action plan, which would be a road map towards the next Review Conference in 2015. What was now needed was initiatives to

continue in the spirit of the 2010 Review Conference and to remove the nuclear shadow under which the world still lived.

179. Times were challenging for the non-proliferation regime. The continuing defiance of the international community by the DPRK regarding its nuclear weapons programme, Iran's lack of cooperation in allowing the Agency to verify the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme, outstanding questions about Syria's nuclear programme, and the danger of nuclear material falling into the hands of terrorists and other non-State actors were all matters of grave concern.

180. The Netherlands would continue to make innovative, practical proposals to implement the 2010 action plan. Non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control had always been and would remain cornerstones of the Netherlands foreign policy, with the NPT as its basis and the action plan as its road map. That was an essential part of the commitment of the Netherlands to strengthen international law and security. For the Netherlands, non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control were all facets of the same diamond.

181. The Netherlands was one of ten countries that had launched the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), which linked those issues. At the NPDI ministerial meeting held in Berlin on 30 April 2011 the decision had been taken to press for greater transparency in the way nuclear-weapon States reported their disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation efforts. At the same time, efforts had been stepped up for universal accession to the Agency's additional protocol, which was vital in order to ensure that nuclear activities remained peaceful.

182. The Agency's safeguards system was a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and as such played an indispensable role in the implementation of the NPT. The Netherlands greatly appreciated the way in which the Secretariat was implementing its mandate. Safeguards were being evaluated and improved with a view to making them more effective and efficient through, for example, the introduction of novel technologies and the State-level approach. The Netherlands supported safeguards on a bilateral basis through its Member State Support Programme (MSSP). Recently its Foreign Minister had announced a new voluntary contribution of €100 000 towards the Agency's efforts to universalize the additional protocol.

183. The Agency's reporting on situations in countries had, as expected, been technical and factual. The situations that were cause for grave concern had rightly been referred to the Security Council. The Netherlands had noted with deep concern the latest report on Iran by the Director General, which confirmed that that country was in violation of its obligations and continued to expand its enrichment activities, including by increasing its enrichment capacity to 20%. The Agency was increasingly concerned about the possible existence in Iran of past or current undisclosed nuclear related activities involving military related organizations, including activities related to the development of a nuclear payload for a missile, about which the Agency continued to receive new information. Iran's cooperation was still insufficient for the Agency to provide credible assurance about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran, and therefore to conclude that all nuclear material in Iran was in peaceful activities. The Netherlands urged Iran to address all the Agency's outstanding concerns and to respond positively and through concrete actions to the Agency's request for engagement and by granting prompt access to relevant locations, equipment, documentation and persons.

184. The Netherlands thanked the Director General for his comprehensive report on the situation in the DPRK, which also remained of great concern.

185. Recalling the Board's resolution of 9 June 2011 (GOV/2011/41) urging Syria to remedy urgently its non-compliance with its safeguards agreement, he said the Netherlands hoped that Syria

would respond positively and without delay to the Director General's request, resolve all outstanding questions and bring into force an additional protocol as soon as possible.

186. He commended the Secretariat for its energetic approach to nuclear security. That was a very important albeit relatively new field, which his country was helping to promote through various forums, such as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) and the nuclear security summit process. The Agency's role remained pivotal and, for that reason, the Netherlands had pledged a new contribution to the Nuclear Security Fund of €750 000 at the end of 2010. Those funds were not earmarked. The Netherlands believed that the Agency's nuclear security work should not be dependent on extrabudgetary contributions; it should be fully funded through the Regular Budget. In addition, the Netherlands supported the Agency by hosting events such as training courses for physical protection. For its part, the Netherlands had recently ratified the amendment to the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials (CPPNM) and had received IPPAS missions in all its nuclear installations. It strongly encouraged other Member States to do likewise.

187. The Netherlands was a strong believer in peer review because it held up a mirror to national review mechanisms and provided assurances to the international community. That was especially true in the area of safety, which was why in the aftermath of the Fukushima accident the Netherlands had so strongly advocated the mandatory nature of safety peer review missions in the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. The Netherlands considered that document to be a starting point for the process of enhancing nuclear safety worldwide. The Netherlands had taken good note of the Director General's words that further lessons remained to be learned and that the Action Plan would be updated accordingly. The Netherlands hoped that the Action Plan would be the starting point for a process whereby future lessons learned would be incorporated and actions expanded. For now, it was important for the Agency, as well as those Member States with nuclear power plants or embarking on a nuclear power programme, to do their utmost to promote prompt and effective implementation. The Netherlands would follow those issues closely in the lead-up to the extraordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety in August 2012.

188. His Government believed that nuclear energy had an important role to play within the Netherlands' energy mix because of security of supply and carbon dioxide reduction. It was a major bridging technology to a future with more renewable energy. The disaster in Japan had strengthened the country's resolve that safety must come first. In the Netherlands, the electricity market had been liberalized and the Government would not itself invest in new power generation facilities. Instead it would set conditions and leave it to the private sector to decide whether or not to invest in nuclear power. Two private companies had so far submitted a notification of intent to build a new nuclear power plant.

189. The events at Fukushima had occurred after the conditions imposed on new nuclear power plants had been presented to the Netherlands parliament, and lessons learned would be included in his country's nuclear policy. The European decision concerning the application of a stress test to nuclear power plants affected, in the case of the Netherlands, the plant in Borssele. The Government had decided to subject the research reactors in Petten and Delft to a stress test also.

190. The Agency's role in strengthening nuclear non-proliferation, in guaranteeing the safety and security of nuclear energy and in advancing nuclear technology for the benefit of all could not be overstated. It was crucial for the Agency to be equipped with the resources required to fulfil its mandate. In that regard, the Netherlands welcomed the agreement on the new budget for 2012–2013 and the adoption of the new Medium Term Strategy. The latter addressed the Agency's challenges and priorities and contained a clear commitment to carry out the Agency's tasks effectively and efficiently in the years ahead.

191. The Netherlands remained a strong supporter of the Agency's technical cooperation programme and had pledged its full target share to the TCF for 2012. Through its technical cooperation programme the Agency could make a unique contribution to sustainable national and international development, including the Millennium Development Goals. He stressed, however, the importance of rigorous implementation of safety, security and safeguards measures in the technical cooperation programme to prevent any unnecessary risk to the health of citizens, workers, patients or the environment or the possibility that nuclear materials might end up in the hands of terrorists or other malicious individuals and organizations. The Netherlands welcomed the Agency's clear commitment in that regard.

192. The Netherlands would, as a member of the Board of Governors, continue to take an active part in shaping the future of the Agency and how it dealt with the challenges and opportunities before it.

193. Ms TUTWILER (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that the eradication of rinderpest was an exceptional accomplishment. Rinderpest was only the second disease worldwide, after the human disease smallpox, to be eradicated and elimination of the rinderpest virus marked the first time in history that an animal disease had been successfully eradicated. It was the end of a scourge which, over the course of a thousand years, had spread from Asia to Africa and Europe, with two incursions into the Americas and Australia in the 1920s. Rinderpest had destroyed millions of animals, taken a heavy toll on biodiversity and undermined the livelihoods of people. It had had a devastating effect on food security, nutrition and agricultural development.

194. Many Agency Member States had benefited directly from the global rinderpest eradication programme and the technical cooperation projects in which the Agency, FAO and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OlE) had invested. All countries across the globe had benefited from the fact that rinderpest no longer posed a daily threat to people's livelihoods and the survival of millions of head of cattle and wildlife.

195. That success in leadership and cooperation should serve as a lesson to make inroads into other animal diseases that affected production or were threats to human health and food security. The means and commitment existed and, with the support of Member States, great things could be accomplished. The basis for action established during the rinderpest campaign should be used to address other animal and human health threats.

196. FAO's efforts in rinderpest control dated from its creation in 1945. Starting in the early 1990s, FAO had overseen the Global Rinderpest Eradication Programme (GREP), working in close cooperation with partners such as the Agency, OIE, governments, NGOs and regional institutions like the African Union's Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources. The global efforts had leveraged regional programmes involving people, countries, institutions and donors and had resulted in a winning combination of technical excellence, partnerships and collaboration.

197. FAO and its partners had fostered the concept of coordinated regional programmes, such as the Somali Ecosystem Rinderpest Eradication Coordination Unit, where the rinderpest virus had last been reported in circulation. Veterinary services, laboratories, researchers and donors had also contributed. The support of all partners and donors had been indispensable.

198. The GREP had worked closely with the Agency's Joint Division. Critical to its success had been the availability of tested and proven diagnostic and surveillance tools and access to an effective heat-stable rinderpest vaccine that had been developed in partnership with the Joint Division. Particular recognition should be given to the FAO/OIE World Reference Laboratory for Rinderpest in the United Kingdom, the International Cooperation Centre of Agricultural Research for Development-Department of Livestock and Veterinary Medicine in Tropical Countries (CIRAD-EMVT) in France, the United States Department of Agriculture and Tufts University, among others.

199. The international community had learned some important institutional and operational lessons from the campaign. Open dialogue, good coordination and trust between partners were indispensable. The partnerships had translated into networks of experts and country clusters working towards the same goal. The partnerships with countries, scientists, individual community leaders and donors had been crucial.

200. With rinderpest eradicated, the battle had been won but not the war. The new priority was rinderpest sequestration and the safekeeping of rinderpest viruses in 20 laboratories to prevent possible escape or re-emergence of the disease. The Joint Division laboratory at Seibersdorf would be an indispensable source of knowledge and expertise in that regard.

201. Further investments were needed to ensure that: laboratories holding the virus kept it safe or destroyed it; generations of veterinarians had the knowledge to recognise rinderpest and act accordingly if they encountered an unexpected outbreak; laboratories had the capability to test for suspect cases; and governments and industry had contingency plans if rinderpest or other high impact livestock diseases threatened livelihoods. The lessons learnt during the rinderpest campaign should inform efforts to tackle other livestock diseases, and Member States should maintain their support for the Joint Division.

202. She commended all those countries which had taken action, invested and involved their institutions and communities in the eradication programme. FAO, working in partnership, would continue to ensure that the success achieved through collective efforts to eradicate rinderpest would result in lasting benefit to all.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.