

General Conference

GC(57)/OR.6

Issued: February 2015

General Distribution

Original: English

Fifty-seventh regular session

Plenary

Record of the Sixth Meeting

Held at Headquarters, Vienna, on Wednesday, 18 September 2013, at 3.05 p.m.

President: Ms YPARRAGUIRE (Philippines)

Later: Mr NAJAFI (Islamic Republic of Iran)

Later: Ms PARADAS (France)

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Abbreviations used in this record:

AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARASIA	Co-operative Agreement for Arab States in Asia for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARCAL	Co-operation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
CTBTO	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
ECAS	Enhancing Capabilities of the Safeguards Analytical Services
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
G8	Group of Eight
HEU	high-enriched uranium
imPACT	integrated missions of PACT
INLEX	International Expert Group on Nuclear Liability
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
INSARR	Integrated Safety Assessment of Research Reactors
INSServ	International Nuclear Security Advisory Service
INSSP	Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
Joint Convention	Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management
LEU	low-enriched uranium

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NEA	Nuclear Energy Agency (of OECD)
NPCs	national participation costs
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PATTEC	Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign
PET	positron emission tomography
RANET	Response and Assistance Network
RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
SEANWFZ Treaty	Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone
SIT	sterile insect technique
SSDL	Secondary Standard Dosimetry Laboratory
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund

8 General debate and Annual Report for 2012 (continued) (GC(57)/3 and Supplement)

1. Ms ŽIAKOVÁ (Slovakia) said that a coordinated effort by countries within the European Union and its neighbours was required in order to achieve the decarbonization of the European energy sector and the 80%–95% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 provided for in the roadmap developed by the European Union. Slovakia, for its part, had high energy security standards and respected all the principles of a modern, European low-carbon energy sector. An optimal and well-balanced energy mix, with an emphasis on low-carbon technologies, was one of the most important pillars of her country's energy policy.
2. The aim for Slovakia was to regain its status as a self-sufficient country with regard to power generation. The ongoing construction of Units 3 and 4 of the Mochovce nuclear power plant and the planned construction of a new nuclear source at the Jaslovské Bohunice site were important projects in terms of increasing energy security and progressing to a low-carbon economy.
3. The main priority in the peaceful use of nuclear energy was to maintain a high level of safety in nuclear installations. The process of improving nuclear safety in Slovakia had continued since the 1990s without interruption. As part of the periodic nuclear power plant safety assessment undertaken every ten years, the Nuclear Regulatory Authority had made the further operation of nuclear power plants in the country conditional on the implementation of additional safety improvements, primarily in areas such as seismic resistance, external hazards and protection against severe accidents.
4. Her Government had supported the nuclear power plant stress tests that had been completed in June 2012. The final report of the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group had confirmed a high level of safety in Slovakia's nuclear power plants and recommended the continuation of measures to increase the safety level that had been adopted even before the Fukushima accident, in particular those related to severe accident management. In order to implement the findings and recommendations of the stress tests, Slovakia had elaborated a national action plan, addressed each individual nuclear power plant, including those under construction, and set deadlines for the implementation of further safety improvement measures. Implementation of a number of previously adopted safety measures had been accelerated in light of the Fukushima accident.
5. An emergency preparedness exercise had taken place in Slovakia in October 2012 to practice cooperation and communication between crisis management bodies and the Integrated Rescue System in the event of a radiation accident. A number of areas for improvement had been identified, including the need to refurbish the Integrated Rescue System and to provide the fire and rescue service and the police with special clothing and detection equipment. A specific action plan to address the findings of the exercise containing 11 actions had been adopted by the Government in January 2013.
6. Slovakia participated actively in the Agency's activities to strengthen nuclear security. It recognized the central role of the Agency in facilitating international cooperation in that regard and welcomed the Nuclear Security Series, which provided valuable guidance to Member States. Slovakia's Nuclear Regulatory Authority was working with the Agency and other entities to strengthen the physical protection of nuclear installations and materials and had conducted a national workshop on nuclear security culture in February 2013 in Bratislava. Furthermore, in March, Slovakia had deposited its instrument of ratification to the Amendment to the CPPNM.

7. Slovakia attached importance to technical cooperation with the Agency. During the current cycle, positive results had been achieved in areas including decommissioning, oncology, and nuclear science. As in previous years, Slovakia was ready to contribute to the technical cooperation programme by providing experts and training facilities.

8. Slovakia was particularly grateful to the Agency for the assistance that it was receiving under the technical cooperation programme in connection with the construction of an up-to-date centre for nuclear and accelerator technologies at the Comenius University in Bratislava, enhancing capacity for environmental radionuclide monitoring, education and training. The centre, which had also been financially supported by the European Union, would be focusing on new accelerator technologies.

9. Her country strongly encouraged further support for the International Nuclear Information System (INIS), which continued to play a valuable role in nuclear information management and knowledge preservation, and remained an important resource for Member States.

10. Given the new challenges facing the nuclear energy sector, all platforms and open and transparent dialogue between opponents and proponents of nuclear power, in forums such as the General Conference, was conducive to the maintenance of high quality and professionalism in the nuclear industry.

11. Mr CHIRCHIR (Kenya) said that the Agency's activities continued to have a significant impact on many areas of Kenya's socio-economic development, including human health, food security, water resource management, industrial development, environmental management and nuclear energy. His country welcomed the theme of the 2013 Scientific Forum and recognized the importance of sustaining the marine environment for addressing issues of food security, biodiversity, clean water and marine pollution. Noting that radioisotopes for monitoring and quantifying shellfish poison were used within the framework of AFRA, he pointed out that resource generation through marine and freshwater fisheries were given prominence in Kenya's Vision 2030.

12. Since Kenya had decided to introduce nuclear power to diversify its energy mix, it had undertaken a number of activities to facilitate the smooth and safe realization of that objective, such as the establishment of the Kenya Nuclear Electricity Board in 2013, pre-feasibility studies in line with the Agency's Milestones approach, and the development of national legal frameworks with clear regulatory direction and guidance, including on issues related to radioactive waste management and the decommissioning of nuclear facilities. A draft atomic energy bill providing for the establishment of an atomic energy commission had been submitted to the Agency for legal review and technical input.

13. His country was grateful for the Agency's continued support, in particular the expert missions that had taken place in February and July 2013 and the admission of Kenya as a member of INPRO in 2013. Kenya urged development partners to support its efforts to realize its nuclear power programme.

14. The ever-increasing use of radioactive materials and the corresponding increase in waste stockpiles raised safety and security concerns, especially in the present era of heightened concerns over nuclear terrorism. Global security concerns with regard to unsecured radiation sources had also emerged. Kenya commended the Agency for convening appropriate forums to address some of those challenges, including the recent International Conference on Nuclear Security, and was taking measures to tackle nuclear safety and security challenges effectively. In 2012, it had established a nuclear security coordination centre to coordinate local, regional and international initiatives related to nuclear security. His Government had spent more than \$8 million on developing a central radioactive waste processing facility, which was expected to become operational in the current year. Also in 2012, Kenya had hosted an International Nuclear Security Advisory Service (INSServ) mission, which had initiated the development of the country's INSSP.

15. Kenya continued to use nuclear and isotopic techniques to enhance agricultural productivity in both rainfed and irrigated conditions. Some 1.2 million hectares of irrigated land for crop production had been targeted for development by the year 2030. Appropriate isotopic techniques would provide data for assessing on-farm and area-wide land quality, water and nutrient use, and the efficiency of crop and livestock production systems.
16. Noting the continued relevance of nuclear techniques to address food security challenges, he said that Kenya had started screening lines and hybrids that had shown tolerance or resistance to maize lethal necrosis disease — a major threat to food security in the East Africa region. It had also released two new disease-resistant wheat varieties to counter the threat of wheat stem rust.
17. His country greatly appreciated the Agency's support under PATTEC and welcomed the assistance provided to his Government in the use of novel nuclear techniques to improve the feeding and nutrition of livestock as well as the diagnosis and treatment of livestock diseases.
18. The Secondary Standards Dosimetry Laboratory, established in partnership with the Agency, continued to offer ionizing radiation calibration and measurement services at protection and diagnostic levels. It was planned to develop the Laboratory's capacity for radiotherapy-level measurements.
19. The use of non-destructive testing (NDT) as a quality assurance management tool was relatively well established in Kenya, and his country was looking for ways to introduce NDT training and certification.
20. Kenya appreciated the input from the Agency and other development partners in regard to the development of human resources in the nuclear field, including through the provision of fellowships, scientific visits and training courses, and hoped that such cooperation would continue. Capacity-building efforts through training at local, regional and international institutions would ensure the country was equipped with skilled and well-trained human resources to apply nuclear science and technology.
21. Kenya was grateful for the Agency's continued support under the technical cooperation programme, and pledged to continue to meet its obligations to the Agency in a timely manner.
22. Mr ROSENBERG (Canada) said that Iran's continued non-compliance with its legal obligations remained a stain on the Agency's excellent cooperation with the international community. Based on the Agency's decade-long investigation, Iran's ongoing and excessive enrichment activities could only be seen as an effort to acquire a nuclear weapon capability. The United Nations Security Council and the Agency's Board of Governors had imposed unambiguous legal requirements and obligations on Iran, which that country was wilfully ignoring. Although two years had elapsed since the Board's November 2011 resolution on Iran's nuclear programme, Iran had yet to begin any meaningful cooperation with the Agency.
23. Iran's failure to provide cooperation after so many years of repeated insistence by the Agency completely undermined its claims that its nuclear programme was peaceful. Furthermore, its non-compliance with international law and lack of respect for its safeguards obligations devalued the Agency's work to ensure the safe, secure and, above all, peaceful use of nuclear power. Iran should pursue real, immediate, and effective cooperation with the Agency with the aim of creating international confidence that it was living up to its NPT commitments. Canada took note of the forthcoming discussions between the Agency and Iran on a structured approach, and called on Iran to follow up on recent, more conciliatory statements from its new leadership with concrete, tangible and verifiable action.
24. Canada also condemned unequivocally the DPRK's unacceptable and provocative actions, in particular the third nuclear test, as well as the recommencement of activities at the Yongbyon facility.

The DPRK should adhere immediately and fully to its obligations under the NPT and relevant Security Council and Agency resolutions and should implement its commitments under the 2005 Joint Statement. Only by taking concrete steps towards denuclearization could the DPRK be reintegrated into the international community.

25. In June 2011, the Board of Governors had reported Syria to the Security Council for non-compliance with its NPT safeguards agreement. Canada condemned Syria's continued lack of cooperation with the Agency's investigation into the clandestine construction of a nuclear power plant at Dair Alzour. While the world's focus with regard to Syria might currently lie elsewhere, that country could not continue to flaunt its non-compliance with its nuclear non-proliferation obligations.

26. Canada was very supportive of the Secretariat's continuing efforts to further evolve the implementation of safeguards. The State-level concept would allow the Agency to apply its resources more efficiently and to concentrate its efforts on areas of greater safeguards significance while respecting the fundamental principles of non-discriminatory, technically based and effective safeguards. It was true that the concept was not a new idea — Canada had been implementing a State-level integrated safeguards approach for almost ten years. It encouraged the Agency to pursue State-specific approaches for all States with a comprehensive safeguards agreement in force, and hoped that the clarifications agreed to at the most recent meeting of the Board of Governors' would contribute to that goal.

27. Turning to nuclear security, he said that every effort should be made to ensure that dangerous nuclear and radioactive materials were protected, particularly in light of the grave threat of nuclear terrorism. Canada was working actively to fulfil the commitments undertaken at previous Nuclear Security Summits, and would strive to ensure the success of the 2014 Summit in the Hague and the sherpa meeting to be held in Ottawa the following month.

28. Canada recognized the Agency's important role in helping to implement the Summit commitments. For that reason, it had contributed more than 17 million Canadian dollars to the Nuclear Security Fund since 2004 and welcomed the decision to upgrade the Office of Nuclear Security to a division. Canada had actively participated in the International Conference on Nuclear Security, which would help to ensure that the political impetus necessary for strengthening nuclear security was maintained. It reaffirmed its commitment to other groups and initiatives that were contributing to nuclear security, such as the G8 Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction.

29. Canada had continued to learn lessons from the Fukushima accident and improve the safety of Canadian nuclear installations. All short-term actions required of nuclear power plant operators had been completed. Furthermore, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission had recently published the third status update of its integrated action plan, summarizing the actions taken by the regulatory body and by all licensees of operating nuclear facilities, including to strengthen defences and emergency response, improve the regulatory framework, enhance international cooperation and reinforce communication and public information. The actions undertaken had been benchmarked against the twelve actions of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, and Canada strongly encouraged all Member States to map the measures being taken nationally against the IAEA Action Plan, to ensure that all elements were reflected.

30. Canada continued to strongly support the Action Plan as a tool for strengthening nuclear safety, emergency preparedness and protection of people and the environment. His country welcomed the Agency's second progress report on implementation and noted the significant progress made in several key areas, such as assessing safety vulnerabilities of nuclear power plants and strengthening the

Agency's peer review services. Canada looked forward to the comprehensive report on the Fukushima accident and noted that all work under the Action Plan would be utilized in its preparation.

31. Canada strongly endorsed the principles of openness and transparency and encouraged Member States to place in the public domain the results of international peer review missions and national reports under the Convention on Nuclear Safety. Canada also encouraged Member States to consider favourably the measures being developed by the Working Group on Effectiveness and Transparency to enhance the effectiveness of the Convention on Nuclear Safety and its review process for consideration at the Sixth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

32. The Agency's International Conference on Effective Nuclear Regulatory Systems held in Ottawa in April 2013 had enabled international experts to share their experience on a number of issues, such as regulatory lessons learned, waste management and spent fuel safety, human and organizational factors, and a safety and security culture.

33. Strengthening the international emergency preparedness and response framework was an important element of the Action Plan. Canada had recently updated its Federal Nuclear Emergency Plan and would be carrying out a national exercise in May 2014. His country welcomed the creation of the Emergency Preparedness and Response Expert Group and was working with the Agency and other countries to ensure that lessons regarding emergency preparedness and response were duly taken into account.

34. Recalling that the importance of international assistance in mitigating the public health consequences of a nuclear or radiological emergency had been identified in the Action Plan, he said that Health Canada and Atomic Energy of Canada Limited had registered biological dosimetry laboratory capabilities with the Agency's Response and Assistance Network to support the international response to high radiation exposures that could occur during a radiological or nuclear emergency.

35. Canada was an active member of INLEX and supported the establishment of a global nuclear liability regime. His Government had recently announced its intention to bring forward new nuclear liability legislation in parliament in the autumn of 2013, increasing the liability limit for nuclear operators from \$75 million to \$1 billion. It also intended to put in place measures that would enable Canada to join the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage.

36. Canada commended the Director General's efforts to identify efficiencies in the management of the Secretariat in order to achieve the expenditure restraints promised in negotiations on the next biennial budget. It looked forward to the broad-based adoption of such a culture within the Secretariat and across major programmes in the coming years.

37. Mr CHOREV (Israel) said that his country attached the utmost importance to the Agency's mission and participated in the Agency's activities in all relevant fields. It benefited from the Agency's expertise and knowledge and strove to overcome impediments that it faced through being denied the basic right to belong to a regional group.

38. Earlier in the year, as part of Israel's commitment to the conclusions of the Fukushima Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety, it had requested the Agency to initiate an INSARR mission to the IRR-1 operated by the Soreq Nuclear Research Center. Israel had been satisfied with the Agency's positive assessment regarding the overall safety of the IRR-1 reactor, and the Israel Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC) would be implementing the mission's recommendations in all relevant facilities.

39. Israel invested greatly in the training of nuclear safety experts and held regular preparedness exercises in line with the Agency's recommendations. Israeli representatives participated in and

contributed to the Agency's safety committees, including the Commission on Safety Standards, as well as other Agency professional meetings. Israel also participated in exercises and activities organized by the Agency's Incident and Emergency Centre, and would be actively involved in a major international exercise simulating a nuclear emergency in November 2013.

40. As safety issues were not confined within national borders, Israel called on neighbouring countries to initiate direct professional discussions between regional experts on nuclear safety.

41. Turning to nuclear security, he said that a physical protection assessment of materials originating from the United States in the IRR-1 reactor conducted by a United States inter-agency delegation had demonstrated Israel's strong commitment to nuclear security in all its aspects.

42. Noting that public acceptance of and confidence in nuclear energy had been shaken after the Fukushima accident, he said that the Israel Atomic Energy Commission had recently established, with the support of the Agency's technical cooperation programme, an information centre and exhibition on nuclear energy and applications. It was designed to educate the public, especially young people, on the potential benefits of nuclear energy and Israel believed that it could also become a centre for regional cooperation in nuclear science and education.

43. In recent months, notwithstanding the sombre regional realities, political dialogue between Israel and the Palestinian Authority had been resumed, which Israel hoped might open new avenues towards dialogue and reconciliation. The IAEC was engaging with the Palestinian Authority through the Agency's technical cooperation programme, with the transfer of equipment related to nuclear safety and human health, as well as knowledge sharing, coordination and specialized workshops in relevant domains. Israel looked forward to the extension of that constructive professional collaboration with the Palestinian Authority.

44. By advancing once again an ill-motivated agenda item on Israeli nuclear capabilities, the Arab Group sought to obscure and divert attention from the grave realities and the challenges of the Middle East region. The indiscriminate slaughter by the Syrian regime of its own civilians, including by attacks using chemical weapons, called for urgent action from the international community. Syria was already under investigation by the Agency for its clandestine pursuit of nuclear weapons and rapid action was required to ensure that the many unresolved questions regarding Syria's nuclear weapons programme would not remain unanswered.

45. Noting that over the previous 50 years, chemical weapons had been used on four different occasions in the Middle East and that four out of five recognized cases of the violation of the NPT had occurred in the Middle East, he said that it would seem that the nuclear non-proliferation regime was threatened mostly from within by ostensible parties to the Treaty.

46. The gloomy regional realities, together with the notorious reputation of some Middle Eastern regimes, called for a prudent and gradual approach with regard to security and arms control and the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the region. Israel's vision for regional security and the arms control process in the Middle East identified reconciliation, good neighbourliness, open borders and trust among regional parties as key milestones for the creation of a mutually verifiable zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. Progress towards realizing that vision could not be made without a fundamental change in regional conditions and a significant transformation in the attitude of the region's States toward Israel.

47. Israel had demonstrated all along its sincere desire for a direct regional dialogue among all concerned States. It had reacted positively to recent proposals to participate in multilateral consultations in Geneva among regional parties based upon consensus. However, it had become apparent to all that the idea of direct engagement and security dialogue had not been accepted by the

Arab Group of States. Well-functioning cooperation could not be achieved without mutual trust and the necessary level of confidence between partners; political dialogue and mutual engagement were essential in that regard.

48. No diplomatic and political campaign in international institutions could compensate for the acute deficit created an absence of mutual recognition, trust and confidence over decades. Israel continued to seek a spirit of cooperation, not one of confrontation. It therefore greatly regretted that the Arab Group was not seeking dialogue with Israel but using the General Conference as a platform for repeatedly criticizing Israel.

49. Raising the issue of so-called Israeli nuclear capabilities seriously undermined any attempt to embark on a regional security dialogue and served only to deepen the already existing distrust among States in the region. The practice by members of the Arab Group and their supporters of confronting Israel, while largely denying or ignoring the region's bloodshed, extremism, terror and hostilities, was most regrettable. He therefore called on Member States to condemn the Arab initiative advancing the agenda item on Israeli nuclear capabilities and to decisively defeat the motion.

50. A clear picture emerged from the successive reports of the Director General, not only about Iran's alarming activities, but also about its tactics. Through deception, concealment and the creation of a false impression regarding its status of its engagement with the Agency, Iran was buying more time to make progress in every aspect of its nuclear military programme.

51. Iran's defiant pursuit of nuclear weapons remained the most significant challenge to regional security and stability. Iran's ever expanding uranium enrichment capacity, the construction of a heavy water research reactor designed for the military production of plutonium and multiple activities related to the design and testing of nuclear weapon components all testified to the fact that Iran was determined in its efforts to acquire nuclear weapons.

52. It was very clear that the picture being portrayed by Iranian representatives regarding the openness and transparency of Iran's nuclear programme sharply contradicted Iran's actual actions and the facts on the ground. Deeds and results counted, not words, and the international community should judge Iran by whether that country was addressing seriously, and in a timely manner, the outstanding issues that had remained unresolved for too long.

53. It was highly surprising that Iran, which was doing everything in its power to undermine the due process of the Agency and its Policy-Making Organs, had chosen to put forward an agenda item at the General Conference on the promotion of efficiency and effectiveness of the IAEA decision making process.

54. In the midst of unprecedented regional turmoil, Israel strove to maintain dialogue, cooperation and to ease tensions. Israel would have expected that its Arab neighbouring countries would overcome the temptation to score political points by criticizing Israel. Sombre regional realities called for a different approach, to which Israel was willing to contribute.

55. Mr TAGHIZADA (Azerbaijan) said that his country favoured the continued strengthening of the Agency's role and authority in ensuring the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and strengthening the nuclear safety regime.

56. Through its cooperation with the Agency and the international community, his country was taking the necessary steps to ensure that nuclear energy was used for exclusively peaceful purposes, to prevent illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive material and to combat nuclear terrorism.

57. Azerbaijan greatly valued the Agency's technical cooperation strategy, which reflected national priorities. For the 2012–2013 cycle, national projects had related to strengthening the regulatory

infrastructure, emergency preparedness, nuclear medicine, radiation metrology and the development of waste management technologies.

58. The State Agency for the Regulation of Nuclear and Radiation Activities under the Ministry of Emergency Situations was continuing its work to improve national legislative instruments in order to ensure full compliance with international standards, conventions and other relevant requirements for nuclear and radiation safety.

59. The first technical cooperation project between the State Agency for the Regulation of Nuclear and Radiation Activities and the Agency — on support for the preparation of the national radiological emergency plan — was under way. Progress had been made in the development of a national plan for responding to radiological emergencies, which clearly identified the roles and obligations of all State bodies and organizations.

60. Regional Agency technical cooperation projects played an important role in the development of normative and legal infrastructure in the field of nuclear and radiation safety, and in training of staff. His country was taking part in 42 regional projects addressing important staff training issues. Over the preceding year, 27 specialists from the State Agency for the Regulation of Nuclear and Radiation Activities had attended training courses, professional development courses, seminars and conferences on various aspects of regulation.

61. A broad national effort was being made to improve and develop the legislative framework and regulatory system. The skillful integration of various international instruments governing cooperation with international organizations and bilateral and multilateral agreements facilitated a comprehensive approach to the development of the legislative framework. Together with Lithuanian partners, his Government had undertaken a twinning project financed by the European Union to develop a radiation safety culture, infrastructure and auxiliary services based on best practices in use in the European Union and on international rules, primary those contained in Agency recommendations. As part of that project, and in the light of the conclusions and recommendations of various Agency missions that had visited the country, a review of national legislation in the field of nuclear and radiation safety had been conducted, a Government programme for enhancing nuclear and radiation safety in Azerbaijan for 2013–2015 had been drafted and a new draft of the law on radiation and nuclear safety was nearly completed. Particular attention was being accorded to the inclusion, in the legislative framework and regulatory system, of requirements contained in international conventions and agreements to which Azerbaijan was party, as well as to the identification of other international legal instruments to which Azerbaijan could or needed to adhere.

62. His Government continued to work with the Secretariat to improve the physical protection of nuclear materials. In 2013, specialists from the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security had assisted in a review of the country's integrated plan of action to ensure the physical protection of nuclear materials. The draft document identified the strategy for cooperation between Azerbaijan and the Agency in that field and served as the basis for related national efforts in the context of bilateral and multilateral treaties with other international organizations and donors.

63. As part of the United States Global Threat Reduction Initiative, a series of measures had been undertaken to ensure the physical protection of sources of ionizing radiation, find radioactive sources and re-establish control over them, and strengthen control over movement of nuclear and radioactive materials across the border. Facilities where radioactive and nuclear materials were kept had been equipped with modern high-tech means of physical protection and border checkpoints had been equipped with modern means of detecting and identifying nuclear and radioactive materials.

64. Azerbaijan attached particular importance to projects on environmental remediation. As part of the national programme to improve the ecological situation in the country, and in line with its CPF, a

project had been completed to rehabilitate land contaminated with natural radionuclides at the site of a former iodine plant located on the Absheron Peninsula. Throughout the duration of the project, international experts had, through the Agency's technical cooperation programme, provided assistance with the evaluation of the results of the studies conducted, formulation of recommendations on technology for clean-up operations, transport and storage of waste, development of criteria for clean-up operations, and development of guidelines for ensuring radiation safety during the remediation process. In November 2012, at the end of that project, the rehabilitated lands had been inspected by the Agency's mobile team, and the project had been included by the Agency in its list of 'successful projects'. A park had been built at one of the rehabilitated sites, while a forest was being planted at the other. The experience gained from the project was already being applied to the rehabilitation of the site of an identical plant located near the city of Neftchala. The decision to begin rehabilitation had been taken recently, and the project was expected to be concluded during the first quarter of 2014.

65. At the same time, rehabilitation of the sites of former iodine plants was seen as the first step towards improving the environment in land contaminated with natural radionuclides as a result of oil and gas extraction. A map of background radiation, including all areas with anomalous radiation levels, was needed for the planning and successful continuation of such work. Azerbaijan was grateful to the Agency for assisting with that endeavour and for organizing an advisory mission on airborne gamma ray spectrometry in June 2013.

66. His country was working in close cooperation with the Agency to improve radioactive waste management, which was an important element in efforts to ensure radiation safety of the population and the environment. He was pleased with the progress being made on the technical cooperation project on creation of technology for managing spent radiation sources being carried out at the national radioactive waste management enterprise Izotop. The construction of a process chamber for manipulating closed sources of ionizing radiation, which was the key element of the new technique for preparing radioactive sources for long-term storage, was nearly complete. The Government had funded the construction of a new administrative building and auxiliary structures, and the repair of the industrial buildings, laboratories and facility site. The site as a whole and the buildings were equipped with up-to-date active and passive physical protection systems.

67. Health was one of the highest-priority areas for application of nuclear technologies in Azerbaijan. Projects to improve and develop cancer diagnosis and treatment had always been an important part of Azerbaijan's cooperation with the Agency. In the current technical cooperation cycle, a project was being implemented jointly by the Agency and the National Cancer Centre on the introduction of PET-CT in clinical practice. The construction of a building to house the PET-CT and cyclotron complex of the National Cancer Centre was nearing completion. The State Agency for the Regulation of Nuclear and Radiation Activities was working on licensing the Centre.

68. The Agency's technical cooperation programme had played an invaluable role in the establishment of the Secondary Standards Dosimetry Laboratory at the national metrology centre. Construction of the building for the laboratory had been completed and the laboratory was operational. As part of an Agency project, a gamma dosimetry facility with a caesium source and reference measuring devices had been purchased and commissioned. Laboratory specialists had taken courses to improve their qualifications in the area of radiation metrology and dosimetry and had taken part in an international seminar on interlaboratory intercomparison.

69. Work was continuing on the establishment of a gamma irradiation complex for radiation processing of materials and foodstuffs. A tripartite contract had been signed with the Agency for the supply of an industrial panoramic gamma irradiation facility. The dosimetry and microbiology laboratory building and other elements of the infrastructure of the complex had been designed, and

construction of the bunker was nearing completion. The complex would be used primarily for sterilizing various type of products and for research purposes. The Institute of Radiation Problems of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences was continuing its technical cooperation project with the Agency to establish the dosimetry and microbiology laboratory that would be part of the radiation processing complex. Its specialists had completed the necessary education and training.

70. Areas addressed in the 2012–2013 cycle would continue to be covered during the 2014–2015 cycle, during which his country would also undertake technical cooperation projects for the establishment of a notification and response system for nuclear and radiological emergencies, the introduction of stereotactic radiotherapy in oncology, the establishment of spectrometry and radiochemistry laboratories at the metrology centre and the establishment of a system of radiological monitoring at customs control points as part of its technical cooperation programme with the Agency.

71. His Government greatly appreciated the assistance that it had received under the technical cooperation programme and was firmly committed to meeting its financial, technical and institutional commitments to the Agency.

72. Natural and human-induced disasters had caused transboundary nuclear and radiation accidents and could do so again. In that connection, Azerbaijan had repeatedly drawn the attention of the international community to the condition of the Metsamor nuclear power plant. The situation was aggravated by the fact that Armenia was located in one of the planet's most seismically-active regions and sat atop four major active fault lines. The people of his country were concerned by the geographic proximity of the Armenian nuclear power plant to borders with neighbouring States, which put the entire South Caucasus region at risk. The entirety of Azerbaijan was located within a 550 km radius of the operating Metsamor nuclear power plant and would surely be severely affected by radiation in the event of a major accident.

73. Furthermore, it was not possible to ignore the risks posed by Armenia's plans to build a new nuclear reactor without due transparency.

74. For its part, Armenia claimed that it conducted safety and security checks, including seismic and operational safety checks, at the nuclear power plant every year. Unfortunately, the reports from those and earlier Agency review missions were still restricted or classified and therefore unavailable to the Member States, especially to those neighbouring Armenia.

75. One of the central aims of nuclear safety was to enhance the transparency of nuclear activities. Ensuring transparency in all aspects of nuclear safety through the timely and consistent exchange and distribution of impartial information was of particular importance in order to raise the level trust and safety in the South Caucasus region. His Government hoped that the Member States understood its concerns and would call on Armenia to bring greater transparency to its nuclear policy.

76. Mr NKANZA (Zambia) said that nuclear proliferation remained an issue of great concern, particularly in light of recent developments. Zambia therefore hoped that the Director General and his staff would be assisted in ensuring that safeguards were applied in the fairest and most comprehensive manner in order to come to a just conclusion for all.

77. The Fukushima accident had provided a sharp reminder of the need for an increased focus on safety. The Agency's response in developing a complete legal framework and its focus on assisting Member States, especially developing countries, in the safe use and handling of nuclear and radioactive materials, could not have come sooner.

78. Zambia welcomed the measures that the Agency had been putting in place to strengthen its technical cooperation activities, which remained important for the development process of Member States, such as his own. Zambia appreciated the assistance it received under the technical

cooperation programme and continued to build on past achievements. Since the preceding General Conference, several developments had taken place: a framework for radiation protection had been made operational through the radiation protection authority, and the authority would enhance its oversight of the implementation of regulations and enforcement of a number of legislative provisions. The Cancer Diseases Hospital had been strengthened, through the provision of human resources training and equipment, which had facilitated the development of a national cancer control programme. In addition, radioactive contamination of surface, groundwater and other sources was being assessed – an activity of critical importance as his country increased activities in the mining sector.

79. His country supported the Agency's technical cooperation activities within the framework of AFRA. It recognized the importance of human resources development in all priority areas of nuclear science applications and hoped that the Agency would, through AFRA, assist in the development of a nuclear science institute in Zambia. The institute would train young Zambian scientists and technologists in the socially and economically beneficial and safe use of nuclear materials, and would complement activities at the existing radiation therapy and radiation oncology college.

80. Zambia intended, in line with the Agency's stand on cost sharing, to access technical assistance in connection with the regulation of activities related to uranium mining. It also hoped that the assistance received from the Agency in radiation protection and cancer treatment would continue under the same cost-sharing arrangement.

81. His country continued to receive expert missions from AFRA member States, in particular on radiotherapy applications, radiation protection and isotope hydrology, and hoped that they would be enhanced in terms of support for human capital development.

82. In concluding, he reiterated Zambia's support for the Agency and AFRA, and noted that his country pledged to continue to pay its full share of the TCF and the AFRA Fund.

83. Princess Bajrakitiyabha MAHIDOL (Thailand) said that, in an uncertain world, international organizations such as the Agency had a meaningful role to play to ensure that the use of atomic energy for peace, health and prosperity was enhanced and secured. Thailand sought to continue to play a constructive role in upholding those underlying principles of the Agency, whether in the General Conference or through its participation on the Board of Governors.

84. At the international level, Thailand participated seriously in efforts to strengthen nuclear safety, security and safeguards. It had taken part in the International Conference on Nuclear Security convened by the Agency in July. Thailand was committed to attending the 2014 Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague and would be hosting a sherpa meeting in Bangkok in advance of that Summit.

85. At the regional level, Thailand was pleased that tangible progress had been made in 2013 in the establishment of the ASEAN Network of Nuclear Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (ASEANTOM). The terms of reference had been finalized at the technical level at the first ever formal meeting of the Network held earlier that month and formally endorsed at the ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting the previous week. Thailand was confident that the Network would enhance regulatory activities and further strengthen nuclear safety, security and safeguards within ASEAN in compliance with Agency standards and guidelines. It also hoped that ASEANTOM would support and help to preserve the common purpose of the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone.

86. As an ardent supporter of all regional nuclear-weapon-free zones, Thailand had been dismayed to hear of the postponement of the conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, scheduled to be held in 2012. It called on

all parties concerned, including the Agency, to work together in a constructive manner and with good faith in order to bring about the convening of that important conference as soon as possible.

87. Thailand had also been working to strengthen nuclear safety and security at the national level. It would expand its early warning environmental radiation monitoring stations to 17 ambient and three underwater stations and planned to share the data collected with the Agency and ASEAN member States. Her country had also established a marine radioecology laboratory to protect against radiation.

88. Thailand and the Agency would be hosting a national nuclear security workshop on the INSSP in November, which aimed to increase awareness of nuclear security issues among organizations responsible for nuclear security and to discuss further implementation of the Plan in Thailand. Thailand had also joined the International Network for Nuclear Security Training and Support Centres and the International Nuclear Security Education Network.

89. Her country welcomed the Network of Excellence for Nuclear Forensics in the South East Asia Region that had been established with support from the Thai Government and the EU CBRN Centre of Excellence project, and sought to upgrade regional nuclear forensics capabilities and technologies and methodologies for assessing radioactive and nuclear materials.

90. In the area of higher education, a special management master's project had been initiated at Chulalongkorn University. It was intended to improve the skills of students enrolled on the nuclear non-proliferation master's programme in nuclear safety, security and safeguards as well as to promote networking in the region on those issues and non-proliferation activities. The project would be run in close collaboration with the European Union, the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory and Thailand's Office of Atoms for Peace and Institute for Nuclear Safety, Security and Safeguards Studies.

91. Thailand had recently convened an inter-agency meeting in order to finalize its atomic energy policy, which was expected to be implemented as of 2014, with the objective of strengthening Thailand's legal framework and reaffirming the country's commitment to nuclear safety, security and safeguards, and the ratification of relevant international legal instruments.

92. Thailand had been working closely with the Agency on several technical cooperation projects in various areas, especially medical applications of atomic energy. Cooperation over the previous year had included training courses, long-term projects and capacity building. Investments from the Thai Government in PET/CT and cyclotron technology would lead to the establishment of the first PET/CT and cyclotron facility outside Bangkok, enabling the provision of a high standard of health care technology to an increasing number of people.

93. For countries like his own embarking on an exploration of the peaceful uses of nuclear technology, the Agency had played a central role in providing valuable assistance. Thailand sincerely appreciated the long and continuous cooperation it had received from the Agency and would continue to support the achievement of the Agency's objectives.

94. Mr DIMIDIS (Greece) said that his country remained committed to fully supporting the Agency's role in promoting the effective application of safeguards, the universality of the non-proliferation regime, and the Agency's programmes on nuclear safety and security, technical cooperation and science and technology.

95. His country took a keen interest in the Agency's programmes on nuclear safety and security and in the Agency's central role in assisting Member States and other regional or international organizations to enhance the global safety and security framework.

96. Greece, which had a history of long and successful cooperation with the Agency in the fields of nuclear safety and security, attached high priority to nuclear safety and had ratified a number of relevant international instruments, such as the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Joint Convention, the CPPNM and its amendment. The Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and the European directive on the control of high-activity sealed radioactive sources and orphan sources had been incorporated into national legislation.

97. Greece had already submitted its national report for the Sixth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety and fully supported the efforts of the Working Group on Effectiveness and Transparency.

98. Greece attached particular importance to a high level of nuclear security at the national, regional and global levels and fully supported the recommended actions in the Nuclear Security Report 2013. It welcomed the Nuclear Security Plan 2014–2017 and the decision to upgrade the Office of Nuclear Security to division status. Greece noted the Agency's nuclear security recommendations on physical protection of nuclear material and nuclear facilities and looked forward to the preparation of further guidance on the implementation of such measures, including during the construction and maintenance of nuclear facilities.

99. Greece had been honoured by the Director General's decision to invite a recognized Greek expert to serve as a member of the Advisory Group on Nuclear Security for the period 2013–2015 and had made available an expert for the Nuclear Security Guidance Committee.

100. In the field of education and training in nuclear safety and security, the Greek Atomic Energy Commission was already functioning as a regional training centre in Europe for nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety, and had been rendered a regional training centre for nuclear security through a set of new Practical Arrangement agreements, signed by Greece and the Agency during the International Conference on Nuclear Security in July. A regional training course on nuclear security detection architecture had already been conducted in Athens.

101. Greece was continuing to upgrade radiation detection installations at the country's entry and exit points, analyse acquired data, participate in European Research Programme research projects and share lessons learned.

102. Turning to safeguards, he said that Greece supported the Agency's efforts to develop and implement the State-level concept and evaluate further the conceptual framework for safeguards implementation. International confidence in the non-proliferation and Agency safeguards regime depended mainly on political support at the national, regional and international levels, and he called upon all Member States to adhere to the additional protocol and set the standard for a successful non-proliferation and safeguards regime.

103. Greece urged the Islamic Republic of Iran to cooperate fully with the Agency in order to resolve all outstanding issues, including possible military dimensions. To that end, Iran should comply with the resolutions of the Security Council and the Board, bring into force an additional protocol and implement modified Code 3.1. Greece sincerely hoped that the forthcoming meeting between Iran and the Agency would produce tangible results so that the structured approach could be agreed upon as soon as possible.

104. Greece was concerned that the Agency had not received any new information from Syria concerning unresolved issues. It therefore urged the Syria, notwithstanding the critical situation in the country, to improve its cooperation with the Agency.

105. His country was gravely concerned by the intensification of the DPRK's nuclear programme and strongly urged the DPRK to abandon its activities, including its uranium enrichment programme

in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. The DPRK must comply fully with relevant Security Council resolutions, return to the NPT and renew its cooperation with the Agency. Greece appreciated the readiness of the Agency to resume its verification activities in the DPRK.

106. Greece highly appreciated the Agency's technical assistance and cooperation activities as the primary mechanism to support the development of Member States, and looked forward to the 2014–2015 cycle of regional projects. Technical cooperation activities should focus on strengthening safety and security in all areas of the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies, as well as on building capacity in the fields of health, food and agriculture, the environment, industry and water resources.

107. Lastly, Greece welcomed the holding of the International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st century, which had provided an opportunity for the international community to discuss important issues such as the synergy between nuclear safety and security, and reaffirm its commitment to strengthening nuclear safety and improving emergency preparedness.

108. Mr EL-KHOURY (Lebanon) encouraged the Agency to continue to put emphasis on the inalienable right of all States parties to the NPT to the development and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without any discrimination, and furthermore to seek to achieve a balance between the three pillars of its activities in terms of financing and programmes. His country had come to appreciate the increasing importance of the application of nuclear technology in food security, health, water resources management and the environment, and acknowledged the efforts made by the Agency in those areas.

109. There was a growing need for the Agency's services as demand for nuclear energy was forecast to increase by between 23% and 100% by 2030; it was therefore important for the countries concerned to respect the guidelines and criteria set by the Agency with regard to capacity building, assurance of supply, and infrastructure inspection missions. The principle of common and shared responsibility had to be observed, and Lebanon called on large companies operating in the field to be transparent and not to be driven solely by considerations of economy and finance.

110. Lebanon attached great importance to the Agency's Nuclear Security Plan 2014–2017, and looked forward to the full report on the Fukushima Daiichi accident to be submitted in 2014. When it came to nuclear security, all Member States were on an equal footing in terms of their obligations, and were called upon to respect the relevant international conventions and criteria established by the Agency.

111. There was a close link between disarmament and nuclear security, in terms of criminal and terrorist groups gaining access to nuclear weapons and materials. The Agency's nuclear security guarantees should apply to all States without politicization or foreign interference. The Additional Protocol remained voluntary so could not be considered the only criterion for measuring a State's transparency and commitment with regard to the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme. States that were not signatories of the NPT and had not signed comprehensive safeguards agreements were not held accountable yet still benefited from the Agency's services, which was an outright negation of the principle of justice.

112. The technical cooperation programme was one of the most important programmes in the Agency's history. It helped to enhance the reputation of nuclear energy and improve its image in the world. It also contributed to the sustainable development of countries, and any attempt to marginalize that programme should and would be rejected. It was very important that the resources of the TCF were sufficient, assured and predictable, and no support should be given to attempts to apply to the TCF the same principles in terms of increased funding as applied to the Agency's Regular Budget. Lebanon thanked the Department for Technical Cooperation for the close cooperation and transparency that had enabled his country to develop its programmes to the full. Lebanon welcomed

the Co-operative Agreement for Arab States in Asia for Research, Development and Training related to Nuclear Science and Technology (ARASIA) and its work in promoting and coordinating activities for training, research, development and applications of nuclear science and technology, and hoped that it would be renewed, with the Agency's support, for a further six years, up to July 2020.

113. Lebanon's aspirations with respect to nuclear disarmament had not been met in past years. The decisions of the 2010 NPT Review Conference had not been implemented and the disarmament consultation process in Geneva had made no progress. Nuclear arsenals remained a threat to humanity, and weapons of greater and greater destructive power were being developed. There was also no prospect of the CTBT entering into force in the near future. It was a rather gloomy picture, and as far as the Middle East was concerned his country was firmly of the belief that every opportunity should be taken in international forums to describe the situation in clear and unambiguous terms. In the 1950s Israel had launched a nuclear programme whose declared objective was peaceful. However, that objective changed and the programme became military, undercover and supported by certain large States, enabling Israel not to adhere to the NPT and to develop a large nuclear arsenal that had become a real source of serious threat to the Middle East region. Given the current situation in the Middle East, every possible effort should be made to reduce tensions in the region, yet no progress was being achieved. Certain great powers, in order to serve their geopolitical interests and international alliances, were flouting resolutions and decisions of the international community, including the Agency and its General Conference, calling on Israel to adhere to the NPT, submit all its nuclear facilities to the safeguards regime, and engage in negotiations to make the Middle East an NWFZ.

114. The Secretary-General of the League of Arab States had recently informed the Director General of the concern of Arab countries regarding the decision to leave the Dimona nuclear reactor outside international control in spite of the fact that it was fairly old and a potential source of leaks of radioactive materials in the region. It was not clear from Agency reports to what extent Israel had abandoned the production of HEU and LEU in its research reactors in accordance with Agency policy and the demands of major nuclear powers.

115. Lebanon firmly believed that no State had the right to consider itself beyond accountability and ignore international resolutions. His country associated itself with all other Arab States in urging the reintroduction of the draft resolution on Israel's nuclear capabilities, and raised its voice in international forums in defence of its legitimate concerns.

Mr Najafi (Islamic Republic of Iran), Vice-President, took the Chair.

116. Mr DAAG (Sweden) said that, since the preceding General Conference, the Agency had organized three ministerial conferences, which had highlighted areas of great importance, namely: the need to continuously review and improve the safety of nuclear installations; the importance of the safe management of spent fuel and disposal of radioactive waste; and the need to strengthen nuclear security worldwide.

117. Sweden had welcomed the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference. It was necessary to build on the successful outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and to implement the agreed action plan with regard to all three pillars of the NPT.

118. Welcoming the 2014 safeguards symposium, he said that the Agency's safeguards system was a fundamental part of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The additional protocol and the comprehensive safeguards agreement constituted a robust and effective system that should be considered as the current verification standard, and Sweden encouraged all States that had not yet done so to conclude and bring into force an additional protocol without delay. Sweden welcomed the

Director General's report on safeguards implementation at the State level and supported the Agency's efforts to adapt its safeguards activities in an ever-changing environment.

119. Sweden urged Iran to cooperate fully with the Agency and fulfil its international obligations, including the requirements imposed by resolutions of the Security Council and the Board. Iran needed to address the legitimate concerns of the international community and make every effort to establish confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its programme. Sweden took note of the remarks by the Iranian President related to greater transparency, which it hoped would be translated into concrete actions.

120. Sweden regretted Syria's non-compliance with its NPT safeguards agreement and the lack of progress in resolving outstanding issues. His country called on Syria to cooperate with the Agency and remedy its non-compliance.

121. It was deeply regrettable that the Agency had not been able to implement any safeguards measures in the DPRK since April 2009. Sweden condemned the nuclear test carried out by the DPRK in February, which constituted a grave challenge to the non-proliferation regime and a violation of the norm established by the CTBT. Sweden called on the DPRK to engage with the international community and to comply with its international obligations fully, unconditionally and without delay.

122. Sweden reaffirmed its support for the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery in the Middle East, and for the preparation of a conference on that issue. It encouraged all Member States to support those efforts and reiterated its call to all States in the region to engage constructively and in good faith to that end.

123. His country called for further action concerning the establishment of an Agency LEU bank. Work on the development of multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle should continue and Sweden encouraged further steps to develop mechanisms for assurances of fuel supply.

124. Sweden strongly supported the Agency's technical cooperation programme in areas such as human health, food security and water management. His country contributed to the programme both on a bilateral basis and through the financial instruments of the European Union. The Swedish Government had made a second financial contribution amounting 2 million kronor towards the Agency's Peaceful Uses Initiative in support of the Agency project on integrated and sustainable management of the shared aquifer systems and basins in the Sahel region .

125. Noting that almost half of the nuclear power reactors in the world had been in operation for over 30 years, he said that the challenge was to manage an ageing nuclear reactor fleet. According to Agency safety standards, a set of design extension conditions should be developed for the purpose of further improving the safety of nuclear power plants. Only reactors that fulfilled the extended design requirements should be allowed to operate beyond their original design lifetime.

126. The Fukushima accident had shown that further policy development and international advice were needed to cover emergency exposure situations. The revised International Basic Safety Standards and the review and update of international requirements for emergency preparedness and response would, when finalized, constitute important up-to-date standards for radiation safety and emergency preparedness activities.

127. Sweden was convinced of the important role of the Convention on Nuclear Safety and took part in the working group on effectiveness and transparency that would present a set of actions to the Sixth Review Meeting in April 2014.

128. Sweden welcomed the Joint Statement on liability for nuclear damage issued by France and the United States, which constituted a step forward in fulfilling the call in the IAEA Action Plan for the establishment of a global nuclear liability regime.

129. Cooperation between the Nordic countries was of special importance in the establishment and use of operational intervention levels and for the effective deployment of resources in emergency situations. Sweden supported the Agency's Response and Assistance Network. It had registered capabilities for use in accident situations abroad and highlighted the need for planning and practical coordination when receiving help from other countries.

130. The Agency's review services, ranging reviews of specific areas to full-scope IRRS missions, needed to be performed efficiently and to a high standard.

131. The International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century had reiterated the importance of the safe management of spent fuel and the disposal of radioactive waste. When decisions to embark on nuclear power programmes were taken, he said that issues relating to the back end of the fuel cycle and spent nuclear fuel required special attention, as did planning and estimates related to radioactive waste activities. After several decades of research and development, Sweden was currently reviewing the application for a final repository for spent nuclear fuel.

132. While the responsibility to protect nuclear and other radioactive materials and nuclear facilities rested with the individual State, international cooperation was necessary, and Sweden was participating in international efforts to strengthen nuclear security and prevent nuclear terrorism. Over recent years, the Agency had significantly developed its capacity to support Member States in that connection, and the 2013 International Conference on Nuclear Security had been an important milestone. Sweden encouraged Member States to make use of Agency advisory services, participate in the Agency's work to develop standards and guidance, ratify the 2005 Amendment to the CPPNM and promote its entry into force. While acknowledging the distinctions between security, safety and safeguards activities, Sweden encouraged the Secretariat to continue its efforts to coordinate standards and policy-making in those areas to enable efficient implementation of measures and effective use of resources. Sweden supported the upgrading of the Office of Nuclear Security to division status.

133. His country participated in the Nuclear Security Summit process and looked forward to the 2014 Summit in The Hague. Sweden was also a partner in other international and regional forums, including the G8 Global Partnership and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. Through the Swedish Radiation Safety Authority, Sweden had supported some 50 bilateral projects the previous year.

134. Sweden attached great importance to strengthening gender equality in the Agency and called for the full and equal participation of women, including at the highest levels. While his country appreciated the progress made in achieving a gender balance in the Secretariat, it considered that further efforts should be made, as a matter of priority.

135. Mr VAN WULFFTEN PALTHE (Netherlands) said that non-proliferation and disarmament had always been and would remain firm cornerstones of his country's foreign policy, with the NPT as a basis and the 2010 action plan as a road map. His country, whose commitment to contributing to multilateral initiatives on non-proliferation was an essential part of its broader endeavour to strengthen international law and security, called upon States that had not yet done so to join the NPT as soon as possible as non-nuclear-weapon States.

136. Agency safeguards were a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the Netherlands appreciated the way in which the Secretariat was implementing its mandate in that field. His country considered a comprehensive safeguards agreements, together with an additional

protocol, as the international verification standard. The Netherlands commended the Agency on its work regarding the State-level concept, which would provide a more focused approach. The Netherlands also supported further developments in safeguards and verification directly through its Member State Support Programme and was supporting the universalization of the additional protocol through a contribution of €100 000. The Netherlands called on States that had not yet signed or ratified an additional protocol to do so.

137. The Agency's reports in 2013 on situations in countries with issues of compliance had been impartial, technical and factual, as expected. The Netherlands hoped that Iran would follow up on the new chapter of constructive engagement to which that country had referred in the Board's discussions the previous week and cooperate fully with the Agency and the United Nations.

138. His country condemned the third nuclear test, conducted by the DPRK in February, which constituted a clear violation of international obligations and a serious threat to regional and international peace, stability and security. Also of concern was the DPRK's uranium enrichment programme and the ongoing construction at the light water reactor at Yongbyon.

139. The Netherlands urged Syria to remedy its non-compliance with its safeguards agreement, resolve all outstanding questions and bring into force an additional protocol as soon as possible.

140. Non-compliance clearly demonstrated the need for a robust, effective and legally binding non-proliferation regime. In that respect, he reiterated the significance of the early entry into force of the CTBT and called upon all States that had not signed or ratified that important instrument to do so without delay, in particular the Annex 2 countries.

141. The Netherlands welcomed the creation of the division for nuclear security and considered that the Agency's excellent work in the area of nuclear security should be consolidated and expanded. It had pledged a new and unearmarked contribution of €1 million to the Nuclear Security Fund at the International Conference on Nuclear Security in July. However, the Agency's important work on nuclear security should not be dependent on extrabudgetary contributions: it should be fully funded through the Regular Budget. His country therefore very much supported the budget increase for nuclear security for the period 2014–2015.

142. The Netherlands was helping to promote nuclear security through various forums, such as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. In 2014, it would be hosting the Nuclear Security Summit, as well as the Nuclear Knowledge Summit and the Nuclear Industry Summit. An overarching goal of those conferences was to help strengthen the Agency's essential role in the global nuclear security architecture.

143. During his official visit to the Netherlands in April, the Director General had launched the first master's programme in nuclear security at the Reactor Institute Delft of the Delft University of Technology and officially renewed the designation of the Reactor Institute Delft as an Agency Collaborating Centre.

144. The Netherlands supported the Agency's IRRS missions, which were a useful tool to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of a State's national regulatory infrastructure. While ultimate responsibility for nuclear safety and security lay with Member States, the peer review system proved to be an effective way to assess and optimize national regulatory infrastructure. He called upon all States that had not yet done so to join the Convention on Nuclear Safety, which sought to achieve higher levels of nuclear safety through peer review meetings held at the Agency.

145. The Netherlands was an active member of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative and welcomed the addition of two new members. At the ministerial meeting held in The Hague in April,

members of that Initiative had agreed to step up their efforts to achieve universal accession to the additional protocol and the CPPNM.

146. The Agency's role in strengthening nuclear non-proliferation, guaranteeing the safety and security of nuclear energy and advancing nuclear technology for the benefit of all could not be overestimated. It was therefore crucial to ensure that the Agency had the material and financial resources it needed to fulfil its mandate. In that regard, his country welcomed the agreement on the new budget for 2014–2015.

147. The Netherlands was a strong supporter of the technical cooperation programme, through which the Agency was able to make a unique contribution to sustainable national and international development, including in the context of the Millennium Development Goals. His country had pledged its full target share to the TCF for 2014, part of which it would endeavour to pay in the current fiscal year. Rigorous implementation of safety, security and safeguards measures in the technical cooperation programme was essential to prevent unnecessary health risks and to ensure that nuclear material did not end up in the hands of terrorists or other malicious individuals and organizations. The Netherlands welcomed the Agency's clear commitment in that regard.

148. The Netherlands remained committed to multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle. It valued transparency regarding the planned IAEA low enriched uranium bank and wished to see clear progress with regard to the conclusion of the host State agreement, and all other outstanding issues related to that project with Kazakhstan. The Secretariat should regularly update stakeholders on the situation.

149. Mr BATJARGAL (Mongolia) said that the international community needed to make greater efforts to eliminate weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons. The Agency's mandate therefore needed to be strengthened to address current non-proliferation challenges.

150. Mongolia welcomed the establishment of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. It remained essential for the international community to promote the physical protection of nuclear material, combat illicit trafficking in nuclear materials and other radioactive sources, and protect nuclear facilities against acts of terrorism and sabotage as well as natural disasters.

151. Mongolia, which had celebrated its 40th anniversary as a Member State of the Agency in 2013, had been cooperating with the Agency in the field of nuclear energy applications. The Agency had made an invaluable contribution to Mongolia's socio-economic development and the technical assistance provided had given a noticeable boost to the development of scientific research. A nuclear research laboratory, affiliated to the National University of Mongolia, had been established and a radiation protection and dosimetry laboratory had also been set up with Agency assistance to provide for the application of up-to-date isotope and radiation methods applied in medicine, mineral exploration, and other sectors of the economy. Furthermore, as part of Mongolia's cooperation with the Agency, substantial work had been done to train professional scientific staff through national training courses.

152. Mongolia's joint work with the Agency covered a wide range of areas, such as human and animal health, agriculture, industry and environmental protection. Mongolia had become a PACT Model Demonstration Site country and extended its appreciation to the Governments of Japan and Monaco for their financial contributions to the Programme.

153. With the number of uranium reserves discovered in Mongolia increasing, his country was planning to establish several uranium mines in the near future. It was well aware that the exploitation of uranium would pose a number of challenges and had begun to work closely with its partners to prevent the risks associated with uranium mining. His country was cooperating with the European

Union within the framework of the Nuclear Safety Cooperation Instrument on a regulatory regime for nuclear and radiation safety and safeguards as well as a regulatory framework for uranium mines and milling operations. Mongolia also hoped to extend its cooperation with the Agency in order to ensure safety and security and to strengthen the legal framework in that regard, and noted that the Nuclear Energy Agency of Mongolia had hosted a meeting in 2013 in collaboration with the Agency to facilitate the development of the INSSP.

154. Mongolia's initiative to declare its territory a nuclear-weapon-free zone had been widely recognized and supported by the international community. His country strongly supported the consolidation of existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and the establishment of new ones in order to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime as well as regional stability and security. Based on its unique geopolitical location, it strove to make its modest contribution to that cause.

155. The nuclear test conducted by the DPRK in February, in clear breach of the relevant Security Council resolutions, was regrettable, and Mongolia hoped that the DPRK would engage more actively with the international community.

156. Mr GARCÍA REVILLA (Peru), noting the progress made over the previous year in implementing the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, said that Peru was committed to strengthening nuclear safety at the international level in light of the lessons learned at Fukushima and eagerly awaited the completion and publication of the Fukushima report. While Peru acknowledged that the primary responsibility for nuclear safety lay with States, it considered that the Agency played an important role in the promotion of international cooperation and the coordination of global efforts to strengthen the global nuclear safety regime by virtue of its mandate, technical expertise and broad membership.

157. Peru noted the initiatives to strengthen nuclear security at the global level. It had closely followed the process of security summits, started in Washington in 2010 and continued in Seoul in 2011. It commended the holding of the International Conference on Nuclear Security in Vienna in July 2013 and had welcomed the important declaration adopted.

158. Although the use of nuclear energy in Peru was limited largely to research activities and applications in agriculture and human health, his country was focused on implementing adequate nuclear safety standards. It was working with the Agency on activities related to the INSSP, safeguards, and compliance with nuclear-related international instruments. He was pleased to report that Parliament had completed the internal procedures for approval of the CPPNM, and noted that the Peru looked forward to receiving an expert mission in November to promote accession to international legal instruments adopted under the auspices of the Agency.

159. Peru supported the Agency's work in the area of nuclear security evaluation through inspection missions, as well as the organization of training events. During the year, Peru had hosted events including a regional course on nuclear security culture, an international forum on irradiation technology for agricultural export, and a workshop on occupational radiation protection programmes.

160. Turning to technical cooperation-related issues, especially nuclear energy applications and regional cooperation programmes, he said that, in order to address the needs of developing countries adequately and promote achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, the Agency should focus on a number of areas. The first was fighting cancer, since there was an urgent need to build national capacities through the training of professionals and provision of equipment for diagnosis and treatment. His Government had declared that the provision of comprehensive cancer care and improved access to oncological services were of national interest and thanked the Agency for having scheduled an impACT mission to the country in May 2014.

161. The second area was the improvement of food availability through nuclear applications in agriculture, and Peru welcomed the implementation of the project on improving and strengthening industrial irradiation techniques with an emphasis on agro-industrial applications.

162. The third area was support for Member States deciding to start planning a nuclear power programme, in the form of technical, economic and legal advice, and the fourth was improvement of water resource studies using isotope techniques for water purification and in agriculture or groundwater management.

163. In addition to its active technical cooperation projects, projects planned for the 2014–2015 cycle related directly to Peru's sustainable development plans. They sought, inter alia, to provide for the development of tissue grafts in medicine through the use of radiation, improve the security and use of the RP-10 nuclear research reactor, and develop human resources and support for nuclear technology.

164. Peru thanked the Agency's Incident and Emergency Centre and the Governments of the United States, France and Chile for the valuable and continued assistance they had provided to mitigate the consequences of a radiological accident that had occurred in Peru in January 2012. At the request of the Peruvian Institute of Nuclear Energy, the Agency's Response and Assistance Network had been activated and the most seriously affected patient was still being treated in hospital in Chile.

165. Peru thanked the Agency for its ongoing support in modernizing and improving the operation of the RP-10 reactor. It had worked with Agency to acquire a new load of fuel elements for that reactor, which had been in operation since 1988. Peru requested the support of the Agency for the negotiation and signature of the Project and Supply Agreement.

166. Under its CPF for 2012–2016, Peru was helping to design national cooperation projects and other regional initiatives aimed at addressing highly important thematic areas such as nuclear safety, radiological protection and the strengthening of regional cooperation, including under the ARCAL. In addition, Peru had joined the Ibero-American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies in 2010 and had been working actively on the harmonization of national legislation, benefiting from the valuable experience of regulatory bodies of countries more advanced in nuclear development.

167. Ms BUJÁN FREIRE (Spain) said that her country advocated the universality of the NPT and the non-proliferation regime as a central element in the promotion of international peace and security. It therefore supported the implementation of all points of the action plan adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, including the convening of a diplomatic conference for the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Her delegation urged the facilitator, Mr Laajava, and all the interested parties to maintain a constructive dialogue so that such a conference could be held in the near future, as everyone hoped.

168. Universalization of the NPT, safeguards agreements and additional protocols, were the framework for maintaining confidence in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Spain joined the Director General in calling on countries that had not yet concluded comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols with the Agency to do so without delay.

169. She commended the Director General and the Secretariat on their impartiality, objectivity and authority in carrying out their verification mandate – a task her Government firmly supported. Spain also provided financial support for safeguards support programmes, the Clean Laboratory Extension at Seibersdorf and the new Nuclear Material Laboratory.

170. Spain was seriously concerned about developments relating to the Iranian nuclear dossier since the preceding General Conference and the failure to achieve concrete results in successive rounds of negotiations with regard to dispelling doubts about the possible military dimension of the Iranian

nuclear programme and other substantive issues, such as the ratification of the additional protocol, the application of the modified Code 3.1 and Iran's continued failure to comply with its obligations under various resolutions of the Security Council and the Board of Governors.

171. Spain hoped that the message of openness from the new Iranian President would lead to success in the diplomatic efforts under way and that a new approach of cooperation and transparency would make it possible to dispel the international community's doubts about the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. Spain was also confident that the diplomatic efforts of the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy together with China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States of America would have a positive impact on the Agency's work.

172. Spain shared the concerns expressed in the latest report of the Director General on the development of the DPRK's nuclear programme. It regretted the nuclear test conducted in February 2013 and urged the DPRK to restart the Six-Party Talks with a view to achieving stability and denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula.

173. With regard to Syria, her Government was concerned about the failure of the Syrian Government to fulfil its obligations to the Agency. It called on Syria to cooperate in order to resolve outstanding issues, in accordance with the resolution adopted by the Board of Governors in June 2011.

174. The threat of nuclear terrorism had made it necessary to put in place actions, initiatives and mechanisms at both the national and the multilateral levels, and to gradually develop a global nuclear security framework for the prevention and detection of, and possible response to, potential unlawful acts by non-State actors. Spain had participated actively in such activities from the beginning, on the basis of two convictions: that international coordination and cooperation were essential, and that the Agency must play a central role in the coordination of efforts and the facilitation of international cooperation, as reaffirmed in the Ministerial Declaration of the International Conference on Nuclear Security held in July 2013, at which commitments had been entered into to provide the Agency with the necessary resources. Spain was contributing €400,000 to the Nuclear Security Fund and had also launched a bilateral cooperation programme with Morocco, in which the Agency was an essential partner. It was confident that such a cooperation model could be extended to other countries.

175. Between 2010 and June 2013, Spain had served as coordinator of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, which was a flexible, voluntary mechanism, whose activities were aimed at complementing those of the Agency in three main areas: forensic techniques, detection mechanisms and methods for responding to and mitigating the impact of intentional radiological and nuclear incidents.

176. Spain had been working in recent years to improve its national system for the security of nuclear facilities, material and radioactive sources, which had required the input and collaboration of various national competent bodies. As part of that improvement process, the Nuclear Safety Council had incorporated the recommendations of the IRRS mission to Spain and the Ad Hoc Group on Nuclear Security of the Council of the European Union, and the lessons learned from its involvement in many Agency working groups, courses and missions relating to the security of facilities.

177. Guaranteeing the highest level of nuclear safety and radiation protection required maximum collaboration between institutions at the international level. The Nuclear Safety Council was therefore maintaining its commitment to appointing high-level technical experts to participate in IRRS missions, where required by the Agency, and in the planning, drafting and revision of international standards, which reflected its best working practices. Spain was earmarking part of its voluntary contribution for the translation of Agency standards into Spanish in order to promote the establishment and improvement of regulatory capacities in Spanish-speaking countries.

178. Verification missions following accidents, and the working groups set up to review the lessons learned, were also essential. Experts from the Spanish national regulatory body had taken part in the preparation of the detailed report on the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant.

179. Another area of work in which Spain was involved was nuclear emergency response. The International Workshop on Crisis Communication, held in Madrid in cooperation with OECD/NEA, had highlighted the need for regulatory bodies to continue working to improve their plans for communication in such situations and the fact that public confidence was largely dependent on the credibility of the national regulatory body.

180. In the Ibero–American region, the Ibero–American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies (FORO) had been developing a solid and rigorous programme of technical projects in the field of nuclear and radiation safety through cooperation between experts from the Forum and the Agency. One example was the joint FORO-IAEA publications on the results obtained from risk analysis in radiotherapy.

181. FORO had also implemented the regulatory practices on ageing and life extension of nuclear power plants and the resistance evaluation of Ibero–American nuclear power plants. Both had had a significant impact on the expert community, had been studied by other regulatory bodies and had been recognized at the Ibero–American Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Cádiz in November 2012.

182. FORO had recently completed the development of a computer tool to facilitate the application of risk analysis in radiotherapy, based on the risk matrix method. Its use in member countries had demonstrated its contribution to a higher level of radiation safety. Spain reiterated its support for that regional regulatory initiative and urged FORO and the Agency to continue their fruitful cooperation and to disseminate the results.

183. The technical cooperation programme was an essential pillar of the Agency's work. The Spanish regulatory body would continue its collaboration in that regard, particularly with those projects aimed at improving regulatory infrastructure in Latin America and North Africa, which it would continue to support financially and through the provision of experts.

184. Spain greatly valued ARCAL, in which it was a strategic partner, and had helped to develop the Regional Strategic Profile for Latin America and the Caribbean, aimed at identifying and prioritizing the region's needs with regard to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

185. In 2012, nuclear power had made a substantial contribution to the country's energy, with 21% of electricity having been produced by its eight nuclear reactors. It was to be hoped that that trend would continue in the future, since her Government believed that none of the available energy sources should be disregarded, particularly bearing in mind the extent to which the country depended on foreign energy.

186. Since the preceding General Conference, Enresa, the public company responsible for the management of spent nuclear fuel and highly radioactive waste, had laid the groundwork for the construction of a centralized temporary store and associated technological centre. The establishment of the store and of the El Cabril Storage Centre for low and medium level waste would provide Spain with the necessary capacity and infrastructure to manage all the spent fuel and radioactive waste generated in the country over the coming decades.

187. Her Government commended the Director General's commitment to continued efforts to improve efficiency in the management of the Agency's resources at a time of financial difficulties for all. Spain trusted that the commitment would be manifested in a higher level of transparency and

dialogue with States, so as to preserve the integrity of the Agency's mandate and the implementations of its priorities.

188. Ms ŠIMONOVIĆ (Croatia) said that her country was fully committed to the right of every country to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, as provided for in the NPT. It supported the full implementation of safeguards measures as a key element of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

189. Croatia contributed actively to joint efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and a special focus had been given to the responsible export control of dual-use goods as one of the main instruments for countering and preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

190. Current activities focused on implementing the recently adopted national strategy and action plan for countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which sought to develop a coherent approach to threats and crises associated with those weapons and placed special emphasis on integrated activities with clear procedures and defined authorities. Croatia was ready to share its experience with other countries of the region.

191. As a new European Union member State, Croatia was making the necessary preparations to sign the trilateral agreement between Croatia, the European Atomic Energy Community and the Agency on the application of safeguards, which would replace her country's current safeguards agreement with the Agency. Croatia continued to implement integrated safeguards and all nuclear material was used exclusively for peaceful activities.

192. Croatia had become a State party to all the major international treaties and conventions relating to nuclear safety and security. It was already preparing to take an active part in the Sixth Review Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety in 2014. Croatia was actively engaged in various international actions related to nuclear and radiological safety, and the State Office for Radiological and Nuclear Safety — the regulatory body for radiological and nuclear safety and security — was preparing to host an IRRS mission in 2015.

193. Croatia attached great importance to bilateral cooperation in the field of nuclear safety and security. The State Office for Radiological and Nuclear Safety had signed an arrangement with the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the exchange of technical information and cooperation on nuclear safety matters, and a protocol on communication with Bosnia and Herzegovina's State Regulatory Agency in the event of cross-border illicit trafficking.

194. Croatia greatly appreciated the Agency's work on strengthening international nuclear security, which was indispensable for the successful prevention and effective response to nuclear terrorism, and had participated actively in the International Conference on Nuclear Security held in July.

195. Croatia highly valued the Agency's work on the peaceful applications of nuclear technology in Member States and would be hosting an imPACT mission in 2014 for the assessment of its national cancer control programme.

196. Cooperation between Croatia and the Agency at the national and regional level within the framework of the Agency's technical cooperation programme had been successful over the years. In the current 2012–2013 project cycle, four national technical cooperation projects had been implemented covering improvements in radioactive waste management infrastructure, the feasibility of introducing nuclear energy in a small economy, quality assurance in radiotherapy and radiation applications in medicine. One regional and four national project designs had been approved for the 2014–2015 cycle and would be financed jointly by the Agency and Croatia. Her country had also begun to revise its CPF.

197. Croatia fully supported the work of the Agency and called for all Member States to approve the proposed budget for 2014–2015. It encouraged further efforts by the Director General to increase the number of women employed at the Agency.

198. Mr STRITAR (Slovenia) said that his country was still focused on applying the lessons learned from the Fukushima accident. The Slovenian Post-Fukushima National Action Plan developed in 2012 had been peer-reviewed by European Union regulators and found to contain proactive measures. The short-term improvements provided therein had already been implemented, and activities were now centred on the safety upgrade programme at the Krško nuclear power plant, which sought to minimize the probability of a severe accident. Those measures were scheduled to be completed during the period 2016–2018.

199. An important step forward in strengthening the national nuclear legislative regime had been taken in 2013 with the adoption of the resolution on nuclear and radiation safety, which had been developed in collaboration with civil society and specific groups with the extensive support of experts and sought to ensure that the commitment to prioritizing nuclear and radiation safety remained a fundamental principle for the use of nuclear technologies and ionizing radiation.

200. Emergency preparedness and response was of great importance not only at the national level but also internationally. A robust radiological emergency plan was invaluable in the event of an incident escalating beyond a facility's design basis. Slovenia — a member of RANET — regularly carried out national exercises and also participated in ConvEx exercises.

201. During the previous year, an INSARR mission had taken place at Slovenia's TRIGA research reactor and had concluded that the reactor was well managed in accordance with international standards and accepted practices. Recommendations had been made on areas such as updating the safety report, ensuring the allocation of adequate resources for safe operation, timely finalization of the periodic safety review and changing the focus of inspections to operational limits and conditions.

202. The Krško nuclear power plant was an important producer of electricity in Slovenia and its continued safe operation remained his country's utmost priority. Preparations were being completed for an extensive refuelling outage involving major modifications, including of the primary water temperature measurement system.

203. Unfortunately, not all activities in Slovenia were running as smoothly. There had been further delay to the planning of the future repository for low and intermediate level waste at the approved site at Vrbinja. The Agency for Radwaste Management was still working on the investment plan for that repository and the land had yet to be purchased. However, although final remediation of a former uranium mine was going more slowly than expected, the decommissioning work at the Jazbec mine tailings repository was complete.

204. Slovenia supported the Agency's efforts in the area of nuclear security and recognized the need for international cooperation to tackle the threat of nuclear terrorism. The results of the International Conference on Nuclear Security had provided important input for the Agency's Nuclear Security Plan 2014–2017, which needed to maintain the Agency's commitment to nuclear security.

205. The International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century held in St Petersburg had been convened to learn about the future of nuclear energy. Its message was that nuclear energy could be a competitive energy source. Slovenia's minister responsible for energy had informed that Conference that nuclear power — a reliable and low-carbon energy source — would maintain its share in Slovenia's energy mix.

206. The Agency's technical cooperation activities were becoming increasingly important as many countries, including in the third world, were facing recession. Slovenia was convinced of the added

value of the Agency's technical cooperation programme and noted with satisfaction that the highest proportion of technical cooperation projects related to health and nutrition. His country commended the Agency for its active role and diligent work to make the technical cooperation programme efficient and ensure that it met Member States' needs. In the preceding year, Slovenia had hosted five Agency regional workshops, training courses, meetings and seminars, and had helped to train Agency fellows from different developing countries.

207. Mr OSMAN (Bangladesh), having thanked the Director General and Agency officials for their excellent management of the situation after the Fukushima disaster, said that Bangladesh had always done its part to promote international peace and security and pursued general and complete disarmament in accordance with its Constitution. His country had been a pioneer in South Asia in adhering to all multilateral disarmament treaties, and its contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security through participation in United Nations peacekeeping and peace-building efforts had received widespread recognition. Bangladesh reaffirmed the need for the speedy establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

208. Bangladesh believed that a balanced approach must be taken in addressing the three pillars of the NPT, and recognized the inalienable right of State Parties to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination, as provided for in Article IV of NPT. The peaceful use of nuclear energy under comprehensive Agency safeguards could help to address key development challenges. The economic and ecological advantages of nuclear power electricity production, more than fifty years of successful operation, worldwide experience in improving nuclear safety, security and safeguards as well as the development of a nuclear safety culture made nuclear energy a sure choice for clean power generation.

209. Bangladesh's Constitution acknowledged the State's responsibility to ensure food, health and energy security for its people – a task which had proved very difficult for a country with little land and a huge population. His country's efforts were gaining momentum every day and the Government was working towards the implementation of Vision 2021, with the aim of transforming Bangladesh into a knowledge-based, technology driven, digitized middle-income country. It recognized the use of science and technology and the expansion of the role of nuclear technology to that end.

210. Bangladesh, which appreciated its cooperation with the Agency in the peaceful applications of nuclear technology, had decided to implement the Rooppur nuclear power project. The plant would have a minimum capacity of 2000 MW by 2021 and supply 10% of the country's total energy. Parliament had passed a resolution concerning project implementation and signed relevant cooperation agreements for construction with the Russian Federation. The plant would be constructed with modern and proven technology capable of tolerating any severe human-induced or natural events. A feasibility evaluation, environmental impact assessment and site evaluation for the project were being undertaken and Bangladesh was assigning top priority to radiological protection, nuclear safety and security.

211. His Government was committed to strengthening the independence and effectiveness of national regulatory authorities in order to regulate and oversee the safety and physical protection of nuclear material and installations, safeguards, import and export control, the State system of accounting for and control of nuclear material, transport and waste safety, and emergency preparedness and response. Civil liability for nuclear damage in connection with the nuclear power programme would be regulated by Bangladesh's domestic law. Legislation had been enacted to strengthen the national nuclear regulatory infrastructure, and the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Regulatory Authority had already been formed. The Agency codes, guidelines and other internationally recognized standards would be made mandatory for all phases of the nuclear power plant's design, construction, operation and maintenance. Bangladesh looked forward to the assistance from the Agency in building capacity at the national nuclear regulatory authority, and sought cooperation from the Agency, bilateral partners and

experienced nuclear power plant operators or countries on construction of the appropriate nuclear power infrastructure.

212. Through its technical cooperation programme, the Agency had been assisting Bangladesh in human resources development and capacity building for the introduction, development and peaceful use of nuclear techniques in various economic sectors. His country hoped that such support from the Agency would continue in future.

213. Bangladesh was confident that the RCA would continue to be a powerful tool for the promotion of regional capabilities and expertise in different thematic areas, such as health, agriculture, industry, environment, radioactive waste management and radiation protection.

214. Mr EL MHAMDI (Morocco) reiterated his Government's support of the inalienable right of States parties to the NPT to develop nuclear power programmes and research and use nuclear applications and technologies for peaceful purposes. The ability of Member States, and especially developing countries, to exercise that right should be promoted by all possible means.

215. Several Member States, including Morocco, had made use of the Agency's assistance and expertise in that regard. The goal was to establish a nuclear power generating system that could serve as a reliable alternative and a viable and affordable option for meeting growing energy needs, while reducing reliance on polluting fossil fuels, combating climate change and preventing the associated deterioration of ecosystems.

216. The scope and impact of the Fukushima accident had shaken the confidence of the international community in nuclear power. The Agency needed to raise awareness of the need to strengthen the reliability of and the global framework for nuclear security and safety in the light of the lessons learned from that tragedy in order to regain lost confidence. The IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety in June 2011, which had led to the drafting and subsequent approval of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, was a timely response to that need.

217. The tragic accident at Fukushima had taught the international community the importance of maintaining the highest standards of nuclear safety and security, developing the necessary infrastructure in that regard and pursuing effective international cooperation.

218. Morocco encouraged the Agency to offer greater assistance to Member States in the implementation of durable and efficient nuclear safety and security systems, while working toward universalization and the entry into force of applicable international legal instruments.

219. For its part, his Government had already ratified the CPPNM, and ratification of the 2005 Amendment was nearing completion. It had also signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and had taken the steps necessary to establish an effective regulatory capacity for nuclear and radiological safety and security, including the adoption, with Agency assistance, of legislation setting out the necessary legal framework, instituting a system for ensuring the safety of sources of ionizing radiation and establishing an autonomous monitoring agency and a national mechanism for the physical protection of material at nuclear installations.

220. Although nuclear safety and security were a national responsibility, they were increasingly acquiring a transboundary dimension. Global threats required global, regional and subregional response strategies, and the international community must take the appropriate measures to prevent individuals and groups from acquiring radioactive and nuclear material for use in terrorist acts.

221. For that reason, his Government had always advocated effective regional and international cooperation and a united effort to strengthen safety and security systems around the world. It had hosted a number of events in that connection, including the first meeting of the International Global

Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism in 2006, an international exercise for responding to malicious acts involving radioactive materials in 2011, the biannual meeting of the Initiative's Implementation Assessment Group in 2012, and jointly with the Agency, an international conference on secure management and effective use of research reactors.

222. Morocco had also participated in the 2010 and 2012 Nuclear Security Summits and had been an active participant at the Ministerial Conference in Vienna in July 2013. Those conferences had confirmed the role and stature of the Agency in promoting the importance of and need for a culture of nuclear safety and security.

223. The Agency's verification mandate under the NPT had been powerfully bolstered by the action plan that resulted from the 2010 Review Conference and by the work of the Preparatory Committees of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference planned for 2015. Morocco welcomed the impartiality, expertise and professionalism with which the Agency performed its role and verification mission.

224. His country had always encouraged all actions and initiatives that promoted total disarmament and the implementation of a credible verification system under the auspices of the Agency. His Government had therefore been an active contributor to the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty — an important and much-needed instrument in the multilateral non-proliferation process.

225. Lasting peace would not be achieved in the Middle East until all States in the region, without exception, had acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. It was therefore regrettable that the call from Sixth NPT Review Conference in 2000 for Israel to place its nuclear installations under comprehensive Agency safeguards and the call in the 1995 resolution for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East remained unfulfilled. As a party to the NPT, Morocco also deplored the fact that no progress had been made to date in the implementation of the United Nations resolution concerning the application of safeguards in the Middle East.

226. His Government had contributed to the positive outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and welcomed the efforts of the Director General to organize the Forum on the Experience of Possible Relevance to the Creation of an NWFZ in the Middle East in November 2011. The creation of such a zone was an important step towards fostering a climate of trust among the States in the region, which was essential for the establishment of a just and enduring peace.

227. His delegation welcomed the efforts of the facilitator in launching the preparatory process for a conference on that issue, initially scheduled for 2012. Although that process had been negatively affected by the international events unfolding in the Middle East, the differences among the Member States with regard to the modalities of organizing the conference did not appear to be insurmountable.

228. His Government called upon the international community to consider seriously the major concerns and legitimate fears concerning the deployment of nuclear weapons in the Middle East. It was convinced that the Agency, on the basis of its mandate under the NPT, could help to breathe new life into the facilitator's efforts and foster dialogue among the States in the region, so as to ensure that the Conference would not be put off indefinitely.

229. The Agency's technical cooperation programme was invaluable for the transfer of nuclear applications and technologies in vital areas such as water, agriculture, nutrition the environment and safety and security. Cooperation in the field was made even more effective since the Agency was able to coordinate its actions with other United Nations organizations, such as the FAO and the WHO.

230. His Government, which contributed regularly to the TCF and paid its NPCs, was pleased with the development of its bilateral cooperation with the Agency, which had enabled Morocco to benefit from nuclear applications in fields such as agriculture, health, water resources management, the environment and food.

231. As a result of the Agency's scientific and technical support, Morocco had been designated as an AFRA regional centre and was, within the framework of regional triangular cooperation, providing support to sub-Saharan countries by training managers and experts from several African nations. It remained open to sharing its modest experience and further developing its partnership with all interested francophone African nations.

232. His country also took part in several interregional and regional projects initiated by the Agency in Africa concerning various nuclear technology applications and shared problems such as radiation protection, responding to radiological emergencies and protecting the marine environment.

233. As a member of AFRA, Morocco hosted each year, jointly with the Agency, several introductory and advanced training courses and workshops in a variety of fields for scientists and technicians, particularly from countries in Africa. In September 2012, its partnership with the Agency had been given new impetus through the signing of a CPF, and Morocco stood ready to sign a long-term agreement with the Agency to ensure the continuation of the postgraduate educational course in radiation protection and the safety of radiation sources serving francophone countries in Africa.

234. His country was working to convince all members of the international community to give the necessary support and resources to the Agency so as to enable the organization to fulfil its role properly and carry out its steadily growing mission, which was critical, not only for international peace and security but for humanity itself.

235. Mr BUDIMAN (Indonesia) said that more robust measures were required to protect nuclear material and facilities and prevent nuclear and other radioactive materials from falling into the wrong hands and being used for malicious acts.

236. Indonesia was in the process of ratifying the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and was also drawing up legislation on the security of nuclear and other radioactive materials outside regulatory control. The draft legislation would not replace existing legislation on nuclear security but would strengthen the prevention capacities of law enforcers and enhance the authority of the Indonesian Nuclear Energy Regulatory Agency.

237. Indonesia had also been collaborating with the Agency to install radiation portal monitors at the country's four main seaports in order to detect nuclear material and radioactive sources. In addition, his country regularly carried out national nuclear emergency exercises on combined nuclear safety and security aspects.

238. Efforts were also being made to develop a nuclear security culture in Indonesia. The National Nuclear Energy Agency had recently conducted a self-assessment of nuclear security culture at three of its research reactor facilities using methodology being developed by the Agency. The results would contribute to better human resources management for the promotion of effective nuclear security at nuclear facilities and to improvements in the Agency's self-assessment methodology.

239. Nuclear technology was important in addressing aspects of Indonesia's national development programmes, particularly in the areas of health, food and agriculture, water resources management, environmental protection, and industry.

240. In order to ensure food security and improve people's living standards, Indonesia had been applying the radiation-induced mutation technique and other nuclear and isotopic techniques to increase crop quality and productivity. The application of irradiation technologies was also being enhanced.

241. The Agency played an important role in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology, especially in developing countries. In that regard, Indonesia reaffirmed its support for the Agency's plan to renovate the nuclear applications laboratories at Seibersdorf to ensure they continued to provide high quality services to meet Member States' needs.

242. Indonesia commended the work of the PACT in assisting Member States in the area of cancer control management, which the Agency should continue to prioritize. His country welcomed the decision to upgrade the PACT Office to division status within the Department of Technical Cooperation and encouraged the Secretariat to continue its efforts to find new, innovative ways to strengthen the capacity of PACT and the delivery of its services, including through partnerships with other relevant international institutions.

243. The technical cooperation programme was the main vehicle for the Agency to fulfil its mandate to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear technology, especially in developing regions of the world, and therefore deserved continued support. His country welcomed the agreement reached on the TCF target for 2014. It had consistently paid its annual share of the target and called on other countries to do likewise.

244. Indonesia supported the Agency's Peaceful Uses Initiative (PUI), which aimed to raise \$100 million by 2015. Indonesia had also contributed €88 000 to the Initiative to help support the implementation of several Agency technical cooperation projects in developing countries in the fields of agriculture and research reactor utilization.

245. Nuclear power was a renewable energy source that could be developed to ensure long-term energy security, and Indonesia intended to introduce it into the country's energy mix. The size of the plants would depend on the specific energy demand in a given region. Three potential sites for the first nuclear power plant had been identified and one feasibility study had already been completed.

246. Indonesia was committed to continuously improving its regulatory infrastructure for nuclear safety and had requested an IRRS mission for 2014 to assess progress in the implementation of Agency safety standards. In addition, as part of its post-Fukushima nuclear accident measures, Indonesia had conducted a comprehensive review of the safety of research reactor sites and had revised government regulations on the safety of radioactive waste management and on the safe transport of radioactive materials.

247. Turning to regional cooperation, he said that Indonesia continued to cooperate with other countries with regard to safeguards, and would be hosting the fourth meeting of the Asia-Pacific Safeguards Network in November. It welcomed the establishment of the ASEAN Network of Nuclear Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (ASEANTOM), which it hoped would work with existing cooperative networks in the region. Furthermore, his country remained firmly committed to preserving and strengthening the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and hoped that all nuclear-weapon States would sign its Protocol and related documents in the near future.

248. The issue of security in the region of Middle East remained of great importance to the international community. Indonesia looked forward to the convening of the conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East at the earliest opportunity, attended by all States of the region, as provided for in the 2010 NPT action plan.

249. In closing, his country reiterated the importance of the Agency's role in fostering international cooperation regarding the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology, nuclear safety and security. As all ten ASEAN countries were now members of the Agency, his country looked forward to exploring possible short-term and long-term cooperation between the Association and the Agency.

Ms Paradas (France), Vice-President, took the Chair.

250. Mr ROSENBERG GUERRERO (Ecuador) said that the challenges associated with nuclear security were increasing and nations had to work collectively, through the Agency, to find ways to prevent the unauthorized or criminal use of nuclear and radiological materials. Ecuador was working closely with the Agency to contribute to activities that could help to combat nuclear terrorism at the national and regional level and supported the Agency's Nuclear Security Plan.

251. Ecuador welcomed progress made with respect to nuclear science and technology over the previous year, including the efforts under PACT to combat cancer. His country continued to work closely with PACT staff and noted that the Director General's visit to Ecuador in 2011 had acted as a catalyst for implementation of the Programme in the country.

252. Ecuador welcomed the progress made regarding the use of isotope hydrology for water resources management and was grateful for the Agency's assistance in strengthening and improving capacity in the use of isotopic tools for the integrated management of coastal aquifers.

253. Ecuador attached great importance to the Agency's technical cooperation activities and reiterated that funding for the programme must be sufficient, assured and predictable. Cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear technology could play a decisive role in achieving economic and technological development in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals and the future post-2015 development agenda, and Ecuador welcomed the significant progress achieved in the Latin American region under ARCAL.

254. Although Ecuador did not have a nuclear power programme, it had always, in accordance with its principled policy, defended the inalienable right of all countries to develop a nuclear programme for peaceful purposes. Ecuador categorically rejected the use of unilateral military force against the territorial sovereignty and integrity of a State in order to restrict that right. However, the use and enjoyment of the benefits of nuclear technology must be predicated on the utmost respect for the Agency's safeguards regime.

255. Ecuador called for respect for the sovereignty of Member States, trust in the transparency and good faith of governments and promotion of respectful dialogue on an equal footing to deal with the matters entrusted to the Agency under the Statute.

256. The issues of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation had always formed a significant part of Ecuador's foreign policy agenda, and he recalled that the declaration on nuclear disarmament adopted by the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States a few days previously had called for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

257. Ecuador hoped that the Agency would increasingly become a medium for promoting cooperation and understanding with a view to making nuclear technology a development tool rather than a source of confrontation among nations.

258. Mr TIENDREBEOGO (Burkina Faso) said that concern over nuclear security and safety was causing the world to question its belief in humanity's ability to master nuclear technology.

259. Burkina Faso welcomed the progress made in implementing the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety in such areas as assessment of the vulnerability of nuclear power plants, improvement of States'

capacity to respond to a nuclear emergency, radiation and transport safety, radioactive waste management and the review of international nuclear safety standards, which demonstrated the importance of the Agency's role in promoting the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear energy, science and technology.

260. He welcomed the international community's efforts in the area of nuclear safety and security and actions to address the risks associated with radioactive sources and other nuclear material, notably in regard to public health, the environment and States' territorial security. The international meetings held throughout the year had provided a useful framework for the exchange of experience on the prevention and management of nuclear accidents.

261. Nuclear terrorism was a concern for all States, including in the Sahel region. Every effort must be made to prevent terrorist groups from gaining access to radioactive sources. It was imperative to do everything possible in order to prevent access to and use of radioactive sources by terrorist groups, and he trusted that the efforts of the States of the region in that connection would be supported.

262. His country supported the efforts of the international community with regard to the application of safeguards. It had undertaken to strengthen its legislative and regulatory framework with a view to supporting the growing number of projects involving nuclear technology. A law concerning nuclear safety, security and safeguards had recently been passed and an action plan on nuclear security had been adopted with the Agency's support. His country was also working on implementation of the principles of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

263. Welcoming the modernization of the laboratories at Seibersdorf, he highlighted the important role of the technical cooperation programme in promoting socio-economic development. His country had benefited from national and regional projects in such areas as agriculture, livestock, health and water resources, and noted that Burkina Faso expected to broaden its use of the SIT to combat pests, particularly mango flies. It particularly appreciated assistance under PACT, which had contributed to the finalization of the national cancer control programme. A strategic cancer control programme for the period 2013–2017 had been drawn up providing for the establishment of a cancer institute with a nuclear medicine and radiotherapy centre and an initial budget of US \$3 million. The Agency's technical assistance would make a significant contribution to building the appropriate infrastructure.

264. He welcomed the technical and financial support provided by the Agency and the West African Health Organization in finalizing the curriculum for the specialized diploma in nuclear medicine. That training provided would help to resolve problems associated with recognition in the region of the qualifications of nuclear physicians trained with financial assistance from the Agency.

265. In closing, he said that Burkina Faso appreciated the quality of its cooperation with the Agency. He called on all Member States to continue to support the Agency urged them to adhere to its relevant legal instruments.

266. Mr TIBINYANE (Namibia) said that his country valued the Agency's unique role and had worked for many years with the organization to establish the necessary regulatory framework to ensure the safe and secure use of nuclear technology. Although substantial progress had been made in that regard, Namibia was committed to improving and maintaining its systems and capacity in order to conform to the standards recommended by the Agency.

267. Namibia had always been a forthcoming and cooperative partner in regard to nuclear non-proliferation and safeguards matters. It had ratified relevant instruments to facilitate compliance with its obligations under the NPT regime and remained committed to demonstrating to the Agency and other partners that its use of nuclear-based technologies was and would continue to be for

exclusively peaceful purposes. He called on those States with nuclear weapons capabilities to make concrete efforts to demonstrate their commitment to creating a world free of nuclear weapons.

268. Namibia's national agenda was to create a prosperous and industrialized nation, with the help of its human resources, and to enjoy peace, harmony and political stability. The fourth National Development Plan, which had recently been approved, identified three priority issues: employment creation, increased income equality and enhanced economic growth. Namibia was creating the necessary policy framework for the development of the appropriate institutional environment, better quality health services and the building of necessary national capacity. It hoped that, with the continued support of the Agency and through collaboration with other partners, nuclear technology would play a greater role in those national development efforts. To ensure success, the research programme should focus on the viability of the technology and its relevance and in addressing national priorities. Namibia therefore hoped to invest in viable projects by creating a national infrastructure and human capacity to ensure the meaningful, sustainable and enlarged contribution of nuclear science and technology to social and economic development. It sought strong and robust relations with its partners and invited dialogue and collaboration in that connection on a mutually beneficial basis.

269. Noting that Agency's global figures on cancer had shown an alarming increase in cancer incidence, he said that efforts should redoubled to ensure that national infrastructures were strengthened to respond to that emerging challenge.

270. Long-term solutions were required to address the shortage of clean and high quality water in his country. The Agency's efforts, while welcome, needed to be strengthened and particular attention should be paid to the development of drought-resistant crops. Furthermore, increased resource allocation and improved national capacity were required for research and development of nuclear applications for food security, food safety and efficient utilization of water resources.

271. Namibia faced the challenges of unemployment, low skill capacity and a low level of industrialization. It had adopted an industrialization policy and was keen to build national capacity to investigate options for adding value to its exports and increasing its production capabilities. Namibia looked forward to working with the Agency and its partners in order to achieve that objective and eagerly awaited the Director General's visit in December.

272. Mr AZZOPARDI (Malta) said that non-proliferation and disarmament were at the heart of his country's foreign policy. As a State party to the NPT, Malta, which recognized the right of every State to develop, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in accordance with that instrument, was a vocal supporter of its universalization and called on States that had not yet done so to accede to the Treaty.

273. The Agency had the difficult task of ensuring that nuclear power was used only for civilian purposes and offered the opportunity for States to adopt a common approach to global challenges. Its comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols served to build confidence and develop a stronger verification regime.

274. The maintenance of thorough safety and security standards at an international level was also central to Malta's position on nuclear energy. The tragic accident at Fukushima had served as proof of the need to ensure that safety measures were enforced and the highest security standards maintained, and his country had taken part in a number of international conferences in that connection over the previous year.

275. The concept of safety and security should not be limited to nuclear power plants but should also be applied to transport networks, in particular maritime transport. As an island State and leading maritime flag State, Malta had a particular interest in ensuring that States transferring radioactive

material engaged in adequate communication and adopted strict measures in order to ensure that the highest safety standards were maintained and prevent potentially hazardous accidents.

276. Malta had been following the events in the southern Mediterranean and strongly believed that the region would benefit from the establishment of a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction. Such a zone would make an important contribution to strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime, in particular the NPT, and Malta looked forward to the holding of a conference on that topic as soon as possible. It extended its full support to the work of the facilitator.

277. Malta remained concerned about Iran's nuclear programme and that country's failure to fully cooperate with the Agency. It urged Iran to implement fully its legally binding international commitments, in particular the relevant United Nations Security Council and Board of Governors resolutions, Agency safeguards and the additional protocol in order to build international confidence that country's nuclear programme

278. Malta was also concerned about the DPRK's nuclear weapons and missile programme. It condemned the nuclear test undertaken by the DPRK in February, which was a clear violation of its international obligations, under Security Council resolutions. Malta urged the DPRK to resume cooperation with the Agency and refrain from any further provocative actions in order to regain the trust of the international community.

279. Malta remained deeply concerned about Syria's nuclear programme and that country's non-compliance with its safeguards agreement. It was regrettable that Syria had not yet cooperated fully with the Agency in order to resolve all outstanding issues and brought into force an additional protocol.

280. With regard to the Agency's technical cooperation programme, Malta was participating in several regional programmes and was currently carrying out a national project to support the establishment and operation of specialized equipment to maximize the expertise, efficiency, quality of research and education in the field of conservation science and its application to cultural heritage. The conservation of cultural heritage remained very important to Malta and the assistance provided by the Agency in that regard was indispensable.

281. Mr DABIK (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) said that the role of the Agency was of crucial importance, particularly in a world where the threat of nuclear terrorism was a reality. Aware that the primary responsibility for security rested with Member States, his country had joined the most important instruments embodying international efforts to strengthen non-proliferation, nuclear verification and export controls and fulfilled its reporting commitments. His country encouraged those Member States that had not yet done so to ratify those instruments in the near future and called for consistent efforts to secure negotiated peaceful solutions to urgent problems.

282. In view of his country's ambition to join the European Union, it had developed and implemented a wide range of measures to strengthen its nuclear regulatory framework and infrastructure over the previous decade. Effective instruments had been put in place to protect its border against illicit trafficking in radioactive and nuclear materials. His country would continue to build capacity in order to achieve further improvements regarding the physical protection of nuclear applications, border control management and regulatory infrastructure.

283. The law on ionizing radiation protection and safety, which regulated cooperation between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the European Commission in the field of nuclear safety and radiation protection, would be further amended to bring it into line with International Basic Safety Standards. The Radiation Safety Directorate, established pursuant to that law in 2002 as an independent regulatory body, had made significant progress assisted by the Agency in building

national capacities for effective radiation protection and nuclear safety. It had adopted several volumes of rules that were aligned with European Union legislation, thus further harmonizing national legislation in the field of nuclear safety and radiation protection. The Directorate's strategic plan for 2014–2016, which set out objectives based on the Government's strategic priorities for integration into the European Union and NATO, had recently been adopted.

284. His country strongly supported strengthening Agency technical assistance, which was indispensable, primarily for developing countries. The Agency's expertise, training, education, and provision of necessary equipment were crucial for achieving goals in the fields of nuclear safeguards, safety and security, regulatory infrastructure, radiation medicine and diagnostics, agriculture.

285. His country thanked the Agency for its assistance under the technical cooperation programme. Its forthcoming CPF would be implemented through both national and regional technical cooperation projects and would be driven by the progress of existing programmes and plans addressing priority sectors of development. The projects selected in the 2012–2013 cycle were fully consistent with the CPF for 2013–2017, which was in the process of being signed. They were focused on building capacities in human health, food safety and cultural heritage protection. His country also attached great importance to regional projects to address common needs and goals.

286. Recognizing the importance of nuclear technologies in medicine, his Government would be supporting the project for establishing a PET centre with a national contribution of €4 million. Agency support in that connection, in accordance with the adopted project work plan, was of crucial importance.

287. A national project concerning preparation activities for making a decision on entering into new nuclear energy had been preliminarily approved by the Agency for the 2014–2015 cycle, and final acceptance was expected by the end of November 2013. His country had prepared a national strategy for energy development for the period 2008–2020, with a vision up to 2030, and one of the options for meeting electricity demand in 2030 and beyond was the use of nuclear power in addition to other energy sources. Financial and technical assistance from the Agency were required to properly implement all the steps for that work, to perform assessments of the work plan and results, and to ensure that the programme was in compliance with international and Agency guidelines and requirements in all necessary areas.

288. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia fully supported the Annual Report for 2012 and the budget planned for 2014–2015. It would continue to be an active partner of the Agency in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for the benefit of all nations.

289. Mr FAROSS (Euratom), speaking on behalf of the European Commission, welcomed the role that the Agency played in the field of nuclear safety and emergency preparedness, in particular its commitment to implementing the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety.

290. Ensuring and continuously improving nuclear safety constituted an absolute priority for European Commission. Immediately after the Fukushima accident, the European Union had decided to reassess the safety of all nuclear power plants within its territory and had invited neighbouring countries to participate. In 2011, operators of all nuclear power plants in the European Union and in Switzerland and Ukraine, had thoroughly assessed their installations. National regulators had verified those self-assessments and had compiled national reports, which had been subjected to peer reviews. Fact-finding visits had been conducted at selected power plants. All national safety regulators had submitted plans for concrete actions concerning safety improvements, and a timeline for their implementation. The Commission would follow the progress made, which would be assessed in 2014 in collaboration with nuclear safety regulators.

291. After the Fukushima accident, the European Council had also called on the Commission to review the European Union's legislative nuclear safety framework and propose any necessary improvements. The Commission had proposed a revised safety directive, which was currently under discussion with European Union member States. It contained new legal provisions that would further enhance the role and independence of national regulators, improve the transparency of regulatory decisions, and set ambitious safety objectives for all types of nuclear installations with a view to avoiding, as far as possible, the release of radioactivity outside the containment of nuclear power plants in the event of an accident.

292. With regard to off-site emergency preparedness and response, European Union member States should consider expanding cross-border nuclear risk management plans, and the Commission would put forward its proposals in that regard in a communication later in the year.

293. The European Union strongly believed that nuclear safety had to be promoted beyond its borders at a European, international and global level. Neighbouring countries that operated or owned nuclear installations or had nuclear power development plans including Armenia, Belarus, Croatia, the Russian Federation and Turkey, had associated themselves with the stress test process, and Switzerland and Ukraine had participated fully in that process.

294. Under the European Union's Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation, over €500 million had been allocated over the period 2007–2013 to promote nuclear safety, spent fuel and radioactive waste management, radiation protection and the application of efficient and effective safeguards on nuclear material in third countries.

295. Following the adoption in 2011 of a directive on the responsible and safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste, the Commission was focusing on assisting member States with the drafting of national spent fuel and waste management programmes. It was also monitoring funding regimes in member States regimes with a view to applying properly applying the 'polluter pays' principle.

296. Since the adoption of the first basic safety standards directive over 50 years previously, a significant body of Union legislation regarding radiation protection had been established and regularly updated. A new directive consolidated European radiation protection legislation offering basic safety standards for radiation protection in a single document, which took account of the most up-to-date science and technology.

297. The Fukushima accident had demonstrated the importance of effective rules and procedures to ensure that, in the unlikely event of a nuclear accident, adequate compensation for the victims was readily available. The Commission had been closely following all international developments in that field, and welcomed the recent joint statement made by France and the United States. While remaining committed to the fundamental principles of the existing liability regimes, the Commission now stood ready to take initiatives at the European level.

298. Nuclear safety and security had been given increased emphasis in Euratom research programmes, and new Euratom fission training schemes had been launched in collaboration with the Agency. That approach was expected to be continued under the Horizon 2020 research programme.

299. The first Senior Officials' Meeting, bringing together officials from the Commission, the European External Action Service and the Agency, had taken place in January 2013 to discuss enhanced cooperation and common goals in such areas as nuclear safety, security, technical cooperation, and safeguards. It had been agreed to hold such valuable exchanges on an annual basis.

300. The Commission and the Agency had signed a memorandum of understanding concerning cooperation in the nuclear safety field the previous day. It cooperated closely with the Agency on the

implementation of safety projects in third countries and provided considerable support for technical cooperation programmes and the implementation of the IAEA Action Plan.

301. The Commission welcomed the Agency's organization of IRRS missions to European Union member States as foreseen in the Union directive on nuclear safety. It would welcome services by the Agency covering spent fuel and waste management in connection with the directive concerning management of spent fuel and radioactive waste.

302. The Commission supported all measures to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the Agency's safeguards system, including the State-level concept. The role of regional safeguards organizations in the implementation of that approach should increase.

303. The European Commission continued to provide important technical support continued to the Agency through its safeguards support programme. It recognized the need to strengthen the Agency's capability to provide credible and timely analysis of safeguards samples, and the European Union had committed more than €10 million to the ECAS project since 2010.

304. The European Union remained a key donor to the Nuclear Security Fund, having contributed more than €30 million since 2004, and new funding for the Agency was under discussion. The Union and the Agency had closely coordinated their support to third countries in the security field, mainly through the border monitoring working group, and practical arrangements had recently been signed with the Agency on combating illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive materials.

305. In concluding, he said that the Commission would be interested in putting forward the European Union's safety framework as a model for other countries, particularly those embarking on the development of nuclear power as an energy source.

306. Mr MAHJOUB (Arab Atomic Energy Agency) said that his organization had succeeded in achieving many of the objectives for which it had been created two decades previously, one of which was to build the capacity of human resources by organizing training conferences and other activities.

307. In 2011 the AAEA had begun to implement the Arab strategy for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy until 2020, which had been adopted by the Arab League Summit in 2009. The strategy relied to a large extent on international and regional cooperation and cooperation with international organizations. To that end, the AAEA had concluded a cooperation agreement with the Agency, under which a number of activities aimed had been conducted to promote the safe use of nuclear energy for the integrated economic and social development of the member States of both organizations.

308. The 10 joint activities implemented in 2014 had focused on developing basic infrastructure in the Arab States with a view to building research reactors and nuclear power plants, establishing legislative and regulatory frameworks, developing preparedness and response for nuclear and radiological emergencies, managing radioactive waste, and using diverse nuclear techniques in areas such as medical diagnosis and treatment and industrial applications.

309. As the Arab region was dry or semi-arid, the AAEA had organized training courses on the use of isotopes and radiological techniques to improve water management, and the use of neutron probes in agriculture. The AAEA had also organized training in the development of gamma-radiated agricultural mutants capable of high productivity and of resisting pests, salinity and aridity. Many training activities had been organized in the area of health for Arab technologists and physicians, to acquaint them with the latest techniques used in radiotherapy and nuclear medicine and with methods for the early detection of tumours. The AAEA, in cooperation with the Agency, was implementing programmes to improve animal production by means of hormonal immunity assessment and breed selection. In the area of environmental protection, the AAEA trained participants in the collection and

measurement of maritime and agricultural environmental samples and use of the latest analytical devices, and in the use of nuclear techniques to treat environmental pollution.

310. Industrial applications of nuclear science required a high degree of productive capacity and product enhancement in order to compete internationally and thereby achieve increased economic growth and financial resources for the Arab States. It was also necessary to coordinate cooperation among the Arab States so as to develop their capacities and to take advantage of the expertise acquired by some Arab countries. The aim was to promote the application of nuclear and radiation technology in the sterilization of pharmaceutical materials and medical products, in improving the properties of polymeric materials and in training specialists in various fields, such as the use of electronic and ionizing accelerator technology and the use of nuclear research reactor applications in areas such as archaeology, the environment, health, electronics and material science. It was important to promote integrated production of radioisotopes among the Arab countries for use in the aforementioned applications. Mention should also be made of non-destructive testing of nuclear applications, since the AAEA had undertaken to train specialized Arab staff in that area.

311. Preparations were under way for a number of activities to be undertaken in the months ahead. The AAEA was engaged in consultations on the cooperation programme for 2014. In that context, he thanked the Secretariat for its cooperation with the Arab Group and its assistance to the Arab States through the AAEA.

312. His organization hoped that advanced countries would assist the Arab States in building their human resources capacity by providing education and training courses. He extended thanks to the Republic of Korea for the assistance that it had been providing to the Arab States for a number of years in peaceful uses of nuclear energy through the Korea Institute of Nuclear Safety. A workshop had been held in Jordan in 2013 and preparations for a training course at the aforementioned Institute were currently under way.

313. The AAEA also had cooperative relations with the Department of Energy, the State Department and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission of the United States. A number of joint activities, focusing on the strategy for peaceful uses of nuclear energy, had been implemented. He thanked the European Union for its cooperation in the area of nuclear safety and security. In addition, cooperation between the AAEA and China had been launched in 2014. The joint programme currently under preparation would further consolidate the Arab-Chinese cooperative relationship. He called on other States to follow suit and assured them that the AAEA was willing to consider all forms of cooperation.

314. His organization considered that the issue of nuclear and radiation safety and security was of vital importance at the international level. It called for cooperation, coordination and mutual assistance among all countries to ensure that the highest possible degree of safety and security was observed in the area of nuclear energy. The Arab Network of Nuclear Regulators had been created with that end in view.

315. Some Arab States were planning to build nuclear power reactors for the purpose of electricity generation because of their output potential, the unprecedented rise in oil and gas prices, and the need to ensure the sound use of such resources, safeguarding the rights of future Arab generations. Moreover, such reactors afforded major benefits in many other fields such as medicine, industry, agriculture, the environment, water and livestock. The Arab States required the Agency's support and scientific and technical assistance from countries with expertise in the nuclear industry and its applications.

316. The increasing attention that was being given to nuclear safety and security, and the major steps that were being taken to prevent nuclear accidents, especially through improvements in reactor design, supported the firm belief that a new generation of reactors capable of eliminating unjustified public

fears would be invented in the years ahead. The AAEA endeavoured as part of its strategy, and in cooperation with the Agency, to build the capacity of Arab States that wished to build nuclear power reactors.

317. The use of nuclear energy for non-peaceful purposes, terrorist nuclear acts and the smuggling of nuclear material were sources of great concern to the Arab States and posed a threat to national security. He referred in that connection to Israeli nuclear capabilities, which constituted a major threat to the countries of the Middle East. The AAEA called for pressure to be brought to bear on Israel to place its installations under Agency safeguards and to accede to all nuclear non-proliferation instruments. That would contribute not only to peace and security but also to aspirations to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, along the lines of those created in Africa, Asia and South America. The AAEA called on all States in the Middle East region to take the necessary steps to establish such a zone, thereby building confidence and promoting the safety of the peoples of the region.

318. Mr LI (Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization) said that, under the multilateral security framework, the CTBTO Preparatory Commission and the Agency continued to share responsibilities for creating a global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

319. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation rested on a number of principles: increased transparency between States, enhanced cooperation on and equal participation in verification activities and the implementation of security and confidence-building measures. The CTBT and its verification regime embodied those principles both in letter and spirit. It remained a unique platform for measuring progress towards multilateralism in arms control and international relations.

320. Noting that the Treaty was essential for maintaining international peace and security, he said that there had been only a handful of nuclear tests since 1996 when it had been opened for signature, as compared to some 400 explosions every decade during the Cold War. The Treaty had been signed by 183 States and ratified by 159. However, there were eight States whose ratifications were required for entry into force. The forthcoming eighth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in New York would provide a timely opportunity for the international community to consolidate support for the Treaty and to urge those States that had not yet signed and ratified it to do so as soon as possible.

321. The Treaty and its verification regime also constituted a key part of the legal framework contributing to nuclear security and safety worldwide. When the on-site inspection component was complete, the system would represent the most sophisticated verification regime ever envisaged. The next field exercise, to be held in Jordan in 2014, would involve all-inclusive testing and training of the organization's on-site inspection capabilities.

322. Although the Treaty had not yet entered into force, it was already applied as a de facto international norm. Within an hour of the DPRK announcing its tests in February, Member States of the CTBTO had received information about their location, magnitude, depth and time.

323. The activities of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission demonstrated that politically and scientifically complex multilateral verification was possible, and did work. The benefits of technical cooperation and the scientific applications of the International Monitoring System were not confined only to the test ban, as the Great East Japan Earthquake and the Fukushima accident had shown. In 2012, the CTBTO Preparatory Commission had become a member of the Inter-Agency Committee on Radiological and Nuclear Emergencies as well as a co-sponsor of the Joint Radiation Emergency Management Plan of the International Organizations, which would help to increase communication

among organizations and with the public and enhance overall international emergency preparedness and response.

324. If the CTBT was to remain high on the international agenda, the current momentum for raising awareness of the Treaty needed to be sustained. Action should also be taken to promote dialogue and cooperation among governments, experts, scientists, media and civil society; educate future generations of men and women in technical and scientific areas; and strengthen political and scientific networks in order to promote understanding in the nuclear field overall and build the prospect of a world free of nuclear weapons.

325. Mr GRANSER (Sovereign Order of Malta) said that the Sovereign Order of Malta was committed to supporting the Agency's efforts in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear technology, particularly in the fields of agriculture and health, to improve the lives of the less privileged. The Sovereign Order of Malta, which commended the Director General's efforts to place cancer high on the Agency's agenda, had signed a practical arrangement with PACT that focused primarily on PACT Model Demonstration Sites, notably in Albania, and would help to support the advancement of comprehensive cancer control in low- and middle-income countries.

326. The Order was one of the oldest humanitarian organizations in the world and had a unique sovereign status. It had diplomatic relations more than 104 countries, multilateral relations with the European Union and permanent observer status at the United Nations. On the occasion of the 900th anniversary of the establishment of the legal basis for the Order's sovereignty and independence, the United Nations Secretary-General had thanked the Order of Malta for its constant and indefatigable commitment to serving the poor and needy, and for its efforts to facilitate achievement of the MDGs.

327. The Sovereign Order of Malta appreciated the theme of the 2013 Scientific Forum, which was relevant to protecting and preserving the ecological balance for coastal regions and the marine environment. The overarching Millennium Development Goal of poverty eradication would remain meaningless if it did not address the issues of ecological balance and elimination of hunger among the poor, which was also one of the main concerns of the Sovereign Order of Malta.

328. In concluding, the Order expressed appreciation of the Agency's significant role in fostering peace and in promoting the development of the most marginalized members of society.

329. Mr ABDEL SHAFI (Palestine) conveyed his country's appreciation to the Agency for its efforts to play a strengthened role in promoting the contribution of nuclear energy and its peaceful uses for development, science, health and the environment.

330. Palestine attached great importance to technical cooperation, as one of the pillars of the Agency's activities, which played a significant role in capacity-building, technology transfer and supporting cooperation between developed countries and countries aspiring to develop nuclear capabilities for the benefit of their people.

331. In that context, it expressed gratitude to the Agency for its help in developing scientific infrastructure enabling Palestine to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in agriculture, health and legislation. Palestine hoped to widen that cooperation in the future to include advanced applications provided by the Agency for cancer control.

332. It was particularly grateful to the Agency for ensuring the delivery of medical equipment for the purpose of constructing a gamma-ray spectroscopy laboratory and quality measurement systems for radiography devices. That delivery had been blocked for years, pending approval by the Israeli authorities.

333. Palestine wished to gain the maximum benefit from the technical cooperation programmes in developing its human resources. To that end, it had participated in training and study programmes offered by the Agency at universities in Jordan and Syria in the fields of medical physics, radiation protection and nuclear medicine. Palestine was also an active member of the SESAME project to construct a synchrotron radiation research centre.

334. Palestine continued to live under occupation by a State with nuclear facilities that had not been submitted to the comprehensive safeguards system. According to all specialist reports on the matter, that country possessed nuclear weapons, posing a direct and flagrant threat to the security and safety of the people of Palestine and of the entire region. Palestine was deeply concerned about Israel's growing nuclear capabilities, coupled with its continued refusal to join the NPT and submit its nuclear programmes and facilities to the comprehensive safeguards system, unlike the other countries in the region, which had all joined the Treaty.

335. Israel's inflexibility in that regard was all the more troubling in the light of reports that its facilities were deteriorating. Palestine had no protection agencies capable of helping its national institutions to deal with the consequences of a nuclear accident.

336. Those apprehensions were justified by the experience of certain developed States that had suffered nuclear accidents. The world had seen the immense challenge faced by the Japanese authorities over the previous two years in dealing with the consequences of the Fukushima Daiichi accident, which highlighted the importance of the Agency's role and the safeguards regime in strengthening nuclear security in all States without exception.

337. The international community, in particular the five nuclear-weapon States, had the responsibility of ensuring the universality of the NPT and pressing ahead with the creation of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Palestine therefore regretted the failure to convene the conference on the establishment of a zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, which, under the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, had been scheduled for 2012. Palestine believed that Israel's maintenance of its position as the only State not subject to the NPT posed a threat to both regional and international peace and security and an ever growing impediment to the achievement of peace for all the peoples of the region.

The meeting rose at 8:55 p.m.