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President: Mr AZEEZ (Sri Lanka)

Later: Mr LATORRE (Chile)

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Abbreviations used in this record:

AAEA	Arab Atomic Energy Agency
ABACC	Brazilian–Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials
ABWR	advance boiling water reactor
AdSec	Advisory Group on Nuclear Security
AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ANNuR	Arab Network of Nuclear Regulators
ARASIA	Co-operative Agreement for Arab States in Asia for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARCAL	Regional Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
BSS	International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources
CANDU	Canadian deuterium-uranium reactor
CELAC	Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
CERN	European Organization for Nuclear Research
CNEA	National Atomic Energy Commission of Argentina
CNS	Convention on Nuclear Safety
COG	CANDU Owners Group
ConvEx	Convention Exercise
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
E3+3	France, Germany and the United Kingdom plus China, the Russian Federation and the United States of America

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

ECAS	Enhancing Capabilities of the Safeguards Analytical Services
EEA	European Economic Area
EU	European Union
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
FORO	Ibero–American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies
GRULAC	Latin American and Caribbean Group
GSR	General Safety Requirements
HEU	high-enriched uranium
IACRNE	Inter-Agency Committee on Radiological and Nuclear Emergencies
IARC	International Agency for Research on Cancer
IFE	Integrated Field Exercise
IFNEC	International Framework for Nuclear Energy Cooperation
imPACT	integrated missions of PACT
INIR	Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review
INIS	International Nuclear Information System
INLEX	International Expert Group on Nuclear Liability
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
INSServ	International Nuclear Security Advisory Service
INSSP	Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization
IPPAS	International Physical Protection Advisory Service
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
ITDB	Incident and Trafficking Database
JPA	Joint Plan of Action

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

JPLAN	Joint Radiation Emergency Plan of the International Organizations
LEU	low-enriched uranium
MW(e)	megawatt (electrical)
MYRRHA	multipurpose hybrid research reactor
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NESA	Nuclear Energy System Assessment
NGO	non-governmental organization
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
NSF	Nuclear Security Fund
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group
NSGC	Nuclear Security Guidance Committee
NUSIMS	Nuclear Security Information Management System
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPANAL	Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
P5+1	the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PATTEC	Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
PUI	Peaceful Uses Initiative
RANET	Response and Assistance Network
RCA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

ReNuAL	Renovation of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories
RIDP	Regulatory Infrastructure Development Project
SAGNA	Standing Advisory Group on Nuclear Applications
SESAME	Synchrotron-Light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East
SIT	sterile insect technique
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
TDS	total diet study
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
UK	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
UN	United Nations
USIE	Unified System for Information Exchange in Incidents and Emergencies
VCDNP	Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation
VERTIC	Verification Research, Training and Information Centre
WANO	World Association of Nuclear Operators
WENRA	Western European Nuclear Regulators' Association
WHO	World Health Organization
WOSMIP	Workshop on the Signatures of Medical and Industrial Isotope Production

7. General debate and Annual Report for 2013 (continued) **(GC(58)/3 and Additional Information)**

1. Mr NKANZA (Zambia) said that Zambia had commemorated the 50th anniversary of its independence in 2014 and was celebrating its achievements over the previous 50 years, including those resulting from the promotion of science and technology, in particular nuclear science. Through its fruitful relationship with the Agency over the past 45 years, and under the technical cooperation programme, Zambia had applied nuclear technologies to improve people's livelihoods to boost agricultural yields and to advance cancer treatment.
2. Zambia was at a crucial stage with regard to the management, development and use of nuclear materials. On the one hand, it was harnessing nuclear energy through clinical and other safe uses; on the other, it was grappling with the problem of nuclear waste, in particular from mining and other related sources. It was in those areas that the Agency's technical expertise became invaluable.
3. Since the previous session of the General Conference, Zambia had established its Radiation Protection Authority (RPA). Having operationalized a legal framework for radiation protection through the RPA in 2013, Zambia had established the RPA Board, appointed the Authority's Chief Executive Officer and recruited seven inspectors. The RPA was in the process of recruiting the additional staff needed to ensure efficient operation in the area of radioactive waste management and oversight, ionizing radiation protection and the transport of radioactive materials, which currently presented a challenge to the country.
4. Zambia had also strengthened its Cancer Diseases Hospital with the enhanced application of nuclear medicine and delivery of cancer treatment services. The hospital, which had been operating since 2006, had contributed greatly to improving access to radiotherapy and chemotherapy and building relevant human capacities. Recent upgrades had included the installation of a second cobalt-60 source, and the construction of a 260-bed inpatient facility, which would house an outpatient chemotherapy unit, a nuclear medicine unit and a brachytherapy treatment unit, supported by a dedicated operating theatre.
5. The hospital had also established a programme to train radiotherapists to diploma level. The first set of students had graduated in July 2014 and a second intake had begun. A masters degree in clinical and radiation oncology for medical doctors was also being developed and would commence shortly.
6. In order to increase access to radiotherapy, Zambia had decided to create a radiotherapy centre in each province, to be supervised by the Cancer Diseases Hospital.
7. In 2014, Zambia would complete its national cancer control strategy. Cervical cancer prevention had become a priority and vaccination and screening were currently available in all ten provinces. The Government had also installed nine mammography units in provincial hospitals. The progress made by the Cancer Diseases Hospital would not have been possible without the Agency's timely input under tailored national projects implemented over the years.
8. Lastly, Zambia had conducted radioactive contamination assessments. Under the technical cooperation programme, the Agency was actively assisting Zambia in various projects, including an assessment of the radioactive contamination of surface water, groundwater and other resources in mining areas. Such projects were critical, as they would reveal the true extent of the radioactive waste

management problem in Zambia. The next phase of the projects would focus on surface water and groundwater contamination.

9. As clearly stated in the Director General's opening statement, the importance of science and technology in the post-2015 sustainable development agenda could not be overemphasized. Zambia strongly ascribed to that principle and was positioning itself to take full advantage of science and technology, specifically nuclear science, in the development of that agenda.

10. As Zambia continued on that path, and in the context of its accession to the fifth extension of AFRA, it looked forward to improved communication with AFRA. It was also keen to establish a nuclear science institute dedicated to training young Zambian scientists and technologists in the socially and economically beneficial and safe use of nuclear materials. That institute would complement and enhance the activities of the College of Radiation Therapy and Radiation Oncology. In that respect, his country looked forward to the continued support of the Agency and AFRA.

11. He reiterated his country's resolve in relation to nuclear proliferation, which continued to be cause for great concern. He hoped that the Agency would be supported in ensuring the application of safeguards in the fairest and most comprehensive manner in order to reach a just conclusion for all involved.

12. Zambia would continue to support the Agency and AFRA under its fifth extension and pledged to continue providing its assessed and voluntary contributions to the Technical Cooperation Fund and the AFRA Fund in full.

13. Mr CHOREV (Israel) said that Israel attached great importance to the Agency's objectives and mission and participated in numerous activities in all relevant fields. It used its best human resources for that purpose while benefiting from the Agency's expertise and knowledge. In 2014, an Israeli expert had been selected to take part in the important work of SAGNA, in addition to the country's participation in numerous other activities, including the work of the nuclear safety and security committees and various technical and scientific forums.

14. In addition, in recent years, Israel had concluded several technical cooperation projects in cooperation with the Agency.

15. In October 2014, Israel would conduct an emergency response exercise simulating an accident at the research reactor at the Soreq Nuclear Research Centre, where lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident were being put into practice. Israel had invited the Agency and other foreign observers to participate in that exercise. In that context, the country had recently registered its RANET capabilities.

16. In recent years, the Israel Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC) had enlisted the engagement of the Palestinian Authority through the technical cooperation programme. That engagement included the transfer of equipment related to human health and nuclear safety, knowledge sharing, coordination and specialized workshops in relevant domains. He welcomed the continuation of that constructive professional collaboration.

17. He had wished to elaborate further on his country's activities with the Agency, in particular in the field of nuclear safety and security, which was a primary objective of the IAEC; regrettably, the constant anti-Israel campaign waged by the Arab Group under the theme "Israeli nuclear capabilities" obliged him to do otherwise.

18. The Group's persistent demands to include that item once again on the General Conference agenda were designed to force the Member States to focus on that highly contentious political issue, which impaired the Agency's credibility and clearly fell outside the scope of its Statute and mandate.

The issue was imposed on the General Conference time and again, with complete disregard for the profound challenges existing in the Middle East. That was clearly recognized by the majority of Member States, which had rejected the negative Arab initiative twice in recent years.

19. In the aftermath of the 2013 majority vote against the Arab-sponsored draft resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities, Israel had stated its commitment to sincere and open dialogue with neighbouring countries on all regional security-related issues. Accordingly, it had participated in five rounds of multilateral consultations attended by regional parties in Switzerland: in October and November 2013 and February 2014 in Glion and in May and June 2014 in Geneva. Furthermore, Israel had recently stated its readiness to attend another meeting in Geneva prior to the current Conference, as proposed by the Ambassador of Finland, Jaakko Laajava. Unfortunately, the Arab States had remained silent on that proposal.

20. Questions were raised by the motives behind the divisive agenda item proposed time and again by the Arab States. Did its sponsors want the world to focus on something other than turmoil and terror in the Middle East? Were certain regional parties pursuing nuclear weapons programmes under cover of their NPT membership? Or was it that the Arab League could only appear united through the waging of an anti-Israel campaign? Whatever the motivation behind the draft resolution, it should be rejected by the General Conference.

21. Israel strove to establish mutual confidence, enhance regional security and advance arms-control arrangements, which together constituted a substantial objective, in view of the major impediments posed by regional threats and challenges. A terror campaign had been launched by Hamas and its fellow terrorist organizations in Gaza against Israeli citizens, who had been the targets of thousands of rockets and missiles in recent months. No State would react differently to Israel in exercising its right to self-defence and protecting its citizens.

22. Terror had become the scourge of the Middle East and beyond and had forced the international community to mobilize against it. The terrorists that currently threatened Israel would threaten others in the future.

23. The Hamas and Hezbollah terror organizations, which were motivated, supplied and financed by Qatar and Iran respectively and were constantly challenging the security of Israel, were not alone. Al-Qaida-affiliated terrorist groups and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, which had extended its control in Iraq and Syria, had established themselves on the Syrian-Israeli border and posed a grave threat to Israeli security. The unabated civil war in Syria, which had already cost the lives of 200 000 people and displaced 6 million, had become a magnet for terrorists. A combination of terror and civil war on the Israeli borders underlined the need for regional security arrangements. Those arrangements required the building of trust and confidence through a gradual process prior to the proposal of much more ambitious ideas.

24. The sponsors of the draft resolution certainly did not believe that their repeated anti-Israeli initiative at the General Conference could compensate for the acute regional security deficit. Had they considered a genuine regional dialogue on security and non-proliferation, they would have approached and engaged Israel constructively.

25. Israel had been the first country in the region to agree to participate in the multilateral consultations conducted since October 2013. It viewed those consultations as an opportunity to engage on all regional security concerns and had been represented at senior diplomatic level. That was clearly not a priority for some other regional parties, including Iran and Syria, which had opted to boycott the consultations altogether.

26. Direct dialogue and consensus offered the only way forward. Dialogue between all States of the Middle East was essential for regional security arrangements, including those relating to weapons of mass destruction. It should address a broad range of regional security concerns and be guided by the principle of consensus.

27. Israel stood ready to continue engaging directly with all States of the region in order to reach an agreement on all substantive issues, including the drawing up of an agenda, a concluding document and terms of reference for a possible regional event in Helsinki. Once an agreement had been reached, the regional States could set a date for the event. The repeated efforts to isolate Israel by the sponsors of the draft resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities would certainly have serious implications for the viability and prospects of multilateral consultations and their intended goals. The Arab States' insistent focus on Israeli nuclear capabilities negated dialogue, trust and confidence. A vote against the draft resolution constituted a vote for a regional dialogue, built on trust and confidence.

28. In May 2014, in New York, Mr Laajava had reported that consultations with the States of the region would continue in order to focus on preparations for the conference, including its agenda, modalities, rules of procedure and scheduling. To build on the progress made, the active input and contribution of all States in the region were needed in order to arrive at an early agreement on the arrangements for the conference.

29. On that occasion, the Russian Federation had stated its belief that, if the participants of the process had enough political will, they would be able to successfully complete the necessary preparatory work and agree on the agenda, modalities and draft outcome document for the conference.

30. The United States of America had stated that direct engagement by the parties in the region was an essential step forward and that the fact that three rounds of consultations had been held over a six-month period, and that the statements made in the small room in Glion had been more positive than those heard at the current meeting in New York, was itself a confidence-building measure that had helped advance the process considerably.

31. No better proof of the Arab States' preference for a political campaign against Israel over dialogue could be found than the decision of the Arab League of 7 September 2014. That decision set as the primary goal the destructive draft resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities and did not mention the constructive path of regional consultations and dialogue.

32. As the attention of the international community was increasingly focused on the unprecedented events in the Middle East, it was important not to lose sight of the Iranian nuclear programme, the foremost regional impediment and threat. At the previous session of the General Conference, he had quoted the Israeli Prime Minister in stating that, it was not words that counted, but the deeds and results. One year later, those words were doubly relevant as the window of opportunity offered by the international community had been grossly abused by Iran. The façade of more welcoming diplomatic vocabulary and the portrayal of a spirit of cooperation were negated by its uncompromising positions and lack of cooperation with the Agency.

33. Almost a year had elapsed since Iran had committed itself to cooperating with the Agency to resolve all outstanding past and present issues, including those relating to the military dimensions of its nuclear programme. The Director General's report clearly indicated, however, that no substantive progress had been made. Traditional Iranian tactics of stonewalling, delays, disruption and concealment were resurfacing. The gap between the country's statements and its practices was very wide. In that context, he drew attention to clean-up operations in Parchin, the refusal to issue visas to Agency inspectors and the major disruption of investigations. The burden of proof rested solely on Iran.

34. In the absence of a clear picture of Iranian activities in the context of military dimensions, it would not be possible to draw a systematic conclusion on the nature of the country's nuclear programme. That was why Iran was so persistent in its refusal to cooperate with the Agency. Israel was under no illusion regarding the nature of Iranian cooperation with the Agency: Iran would continue to provide false explanations while hiding the true nature of its nuclear activities. While Iran had rejected the credible evidence levelled against it, it had refrained from providing the Agency with full access to information, documents, sites, equipment and individuals.

35. Iran continued to enrich uranium, contrary to UN Security Council resolutions, and to conduct research and development work related to more advanced centrifuges. The level of enrichment was less significant owing to the scope of the programme and its breakout capability. Moreover, the Agency was still unable to provide credible assurances of the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran.

36. The international community had not yet seen any sign that Iran had abandoned its strategic goal to acquire nuclear weapons, which remained the most defining challenge relating to regional security and stability.

37. The Middle East was at a crossroads. The international community was also at a crossroads in its relations with that region, which was currently witnessing critical events. Only a concerted effort involving all regional Member States could prevent the region from sliding deeper into chaos. Significant efforts were required to forge a better future for countries and populations. Constant Israel bashing had never been part of the solution to address the ills of the region, despite the brazen assertions of some at the General Conference. He therefore called again on all delegations to reject the negative Arab initiative against Israel and to vote against the proposed draft resolution as it had done in 2013.

38. Mr GRIMES (United Kingdom) said that the UK remained committed to safe nuclear power as part of a secure, low-carbon energy mix. In October 2013, the Government and the Electricité de France (EDF) Group had agreed on the key terms of a proposed early contract for difference for a new European pressurized water reactor (EPR) nuclear power station at Hinkley Point, which was currently being considered by the European Commission. He was confident that it had addressed all the material concerns raised by the Commission's Directorate-General for Competition as part of its State aid investigation and was optimistic that the Commission would reach a positive decision, paving the way for the construction of the first new nuclear power station in the UK in a generation.

39. The national regulatory framework had recently been improved by means of changes to the status of the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR), which had been an independent statutory body since 1 April 2014. Its functions covered civil nuclear safety, security, safeguards implementation, radioactive materials transport, and health and safety on nuclear sites, and it provided a model for an independent, effective, open and transparent regulator.

40. One of the current tasks of the ONR was to undertake a generic design assessment of a reactor that was new to the UK — the advanced boiling water reactor (ABWR) that Hitachi had proposed for its sites at Wylfa and Oldbury-on-Severn. That process involved the comprehensive pre-approval of potential reactor designs before applying for site-specific authorizations and was beneficial in terms of cost, time frames and risk. The UK had also reached an agreement with Westinghouse to recommence the assessment of the AP1000 reactor design.

41. Clearly, nuclear safety must remain a top priority. Recent events had shown that a nuclear accident anywhere in the world had the potential to affect all States, either on a radiological level or by adversely affecting public confidence in nuclear power as an energy source. He was pleased to note that an OSART mission would be held at Sizewell B nuclear power station in 2015.

42. With regard to the Fukushima Daiichi accident, there had been much activity at the international, European and national levels to ensure that lessons would be learned and safety would be enhanced in a duty proportionate manner. The UK had eagerly contributed to such efforts, including the strengthening of the processes under the Convention on Nuclear Safety. It would continue with the aim of making continuous improvements to nuclear safety — a common goal that benefited all States. The UK was making publically available details about how it was working to address the findings of the EU stress test exercise and its own reviews of national safety arrangements. It had provided the Secretariat with a report on its progress in implementing the Agency's Action Plan on Nuclear Safety and urged other States that had not yet done so to provide such reports. Openness and transparency were key to maintaining public confidence in States' ability to deliver safe nuclear power, learn from one another and work towards their common goal. States had much to learn from one another on issues relating to public communication.

43. The UK had implemented a new national emergency planning and response programme and the Government continued to work closely with the nuclear industry, the regulator and local authorities to ensure that emergency planning arrangements at all levels were robust and fit for purpose.

44. International cooperation on nuclear emergency planning had also been strengthened. For example, the UK had worked closely with its French colleagues on the preparation of a joint nuclear emergency planning and response framework to further strengthen practical cooperation between the two countries.

45. With regard to nuclear security, the UK continued to attach great importance to understanding and countering the threat posed by those seeking to acquire and use nuclear and other radioactive material or information for terrorism and other malicious purposes. The Government had already made an extrabudgetary contribution of £3.4 million to the Nuclear Security Fund in 2014, making the UK the second largest Member State contributor. It was considering making a further contribution in the coming months.

46. The UK sought to contribute fully to a range of international discussions on nuclear security. To that end, the Prime Minister had attended the Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague in March 2014.

47. He called on States to adhere to the amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and welcomed planned Agency activities aimed at promoting its early entry into force. In June 2013, the UK had deposited with the Agency an updated report outlining national laws and regulations that gave effect to the Convention and its 2005 amendment. He encouraged all Parties to the amendment that had not deposited such a report with the Agency to do so.

48. Peer reviews by international experts played a key role in nuclear security. The Agency had been invited to send another IPPAS mission to the UK in 2016 to review security arrangements, further to the successful mission in 2011.

49. Nuclear forensics had attracted increasing attention internationally over the previous year. It offered a valuable tool for identifying the origin of nuclear and other radioactive material that was found to be outside regulatory control, known as 'orphan' material. In January 2014, as an active member of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, the UK had hosted a nuclear forensics workshop entitled 'Blue Beagle'. That event had brought together the scientific, law enforcement and policymaking communities to work on nuclear forensics. He commended the Agency on its co-organization in July 2014 of the International Conference on Advances in Nuclear Forensics.

50. The UK recognized the increased efficiency and effectiveness that digital technologies could provide to the nuclear industry but was also acutely aware of the risks inherent to computerized systems, including from malicious actors. He welcomed and supported the work of the Agency and the

wider international community to develop common guidance on cyber protection and called on States to act against the risks inherent in digital technologies.

51. The UK looked forward to the Agency's continuing implementation of its Nuclear Security Plan. The country continued to promote international cooperation in a practical way, bringing together Member States with project ideas and those with resources and expertise in order to encourage collaboration. Further partnerships could be achieved if States that required assistance and had an INSSP in place authorized the release of relevant parts of their plan.

52. With regard to the regulation of civil nuclear security, the ONR had adopted a more goal-setting, outcome-based approach with far greater responsibility placed on dutyholders to propose and justify security arrangements that met the defined security objectives of the ONR. In addition, it was focusing on enhanced security assurance underpinned by robust security performance indicators.

53. The Agency played an essential role in verifying States' compliance with their safeguards obligations. The UK called on all non-nuclear-weapon States that had not yet done so to bring into force a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol and, where relevant, to amend their small quantities protocol. The comprehensive safeguards agreement and the additional protocol represented the current verification standard.

54. It was, however, essential that Agency safeguards should develop continuously, both to address new challenges and to learn from experience gained. The UK joined the clear majority in strongly supporting the State-level concept, which made greater use of the Agency's existing ability to consider the State as a whole. He welcomed the supplementary document presented to the Board of Governors the previous week, which clearly affirmed that the State-level concept was consistent with existing safeguards agreements and, where applicable, additional protocols. There were no new obligations on States to provide greater access or additional information. The State-level concept was a robust, objective, common-sense and optimal approach to safeguards that would strengthen effectiveness and increase efficiency.

55. It was vital to address nuclear safety, security and safeguards in order to ensure the safe growth of nuclear energy in future. The UK was strongly committed to the action plan agreed at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. One issue that underpinned many of the actions under that plan was the commitment to cooperate with other States parties or international organizations in the further development of nuclear energy. The UK continued to promote formal and informal cooperation agreements on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. By exploring bilateral cooperation opportunities, it was possible to establish a strategic framework for collaboration in many areas relating to civil nuclear energy, to the benefit of both parties.

56. The UK was committed to supporting the technical cooperation programme and was a keen advocate of results-based management. He encouraged the Agency to ensure results-based management, sustainable outcomes, accountability, transparency and synergies in the technical cooperation programme.

57. A key component of the commitment to further enhance the safety, security and efficiency of nuclear energy was targeted research. Over the previous five years, there had been a ten-fold increase in research funding with continued emphasis on excellence. Having always believed that an outward-facing research programme was crucial, the UK had strengthened its international cooperation. Its collaboration with India, for example, involved over 150 researchers. The results of that work were available in open literature. More recently, the Japanese Ministry for Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and the UK Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council had established a collaborative research programme, the first projects of which would start in November 2014. The country's new collaborative programmes extended to many other partner

countries and would continue to grow. In working to meet the challenge of research excellence it was possible to attract the best and brightest future technical and policy leaders.

58. The resolution of issues relating to the Iranian nuclear programme remained a top priority for the UK. Talks in 2014 had been productive and the E3+3 and Iran had agreed to extend the JPA until 24 November. A comprehensive agreement was possible but would be challenging. There was broad consensus on the framework for the agreement and the elements to be included. However, differences remained on key details. While the Agency negotiating track was separate from the talks between the E3+3 and Iran, there were linkages. It would not be possible to reach a comprehensive agreement unless Iran demonstrated that it was cooperating fully with the Agency and making genuine progress towards resolving all issues relating to possible military dimensions.

59. It was almost three years since the Agency had first highlighted its concerns about the possible military dimensions of the Iranian programme. The Director General's latest report described limited cooperation from Iran in relation to the issue but progress was not being made fast enough. Iran must make rapid and substantive progress on all outstanding issues related to possible military dimensions, including by ensuring that the Agency had regular access to the right individuals and providing the requested access to information and sites. The UK also called on Iran to schedule technical meetings at which the right experts could address such topics with the Agency and to agree on further topics related to possible military dimensions for discussion.

60. He also urged Iran to implement the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the Board, to implement modified Code 3.1 of the Subsidiary Arrangements to its comprehensive safeguards agreement and to bring into force its additional protocol.

61. Full cooperation by Member States was essential in supporting the Agency's important safeguards work. That was why, three years after the Board's resolution on the non-compliance of Syria with its comprehensive safeguards agreement, the UK continued to urge Syria to give the Agency full disclosure and cooperate as promised.

62. The UK remained deeply concerned by the continued lack of cooperation by the DPRK with the Agency, particularly in light of that country's most recent nuclear test in February 2013 in violation of Security Council resolutions and recent observations of activity at the Yongbyon site consistent with the reactor's operation. He called on the DPRK to resume cooperation with the Agency, comply immediately with all relevant Security Council resolutions and refrain from further provocative actions. The UK continued to view the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula as vital for peace and stability in the region and beyond.

63. Mr OSAISAI (Nigeria) said that current global security realities had imposed additional responsibilities on the international community in its endeavour to ensure a sustained global nuclear security regime. Nigeria called for renewed commitment to joint efforts to prevent nuclear material from falling into the wrong hands, in particular those of terrorists and non-State actors.

64. The international community's commitment to strengthening the global nuclear security architecture had been demonstrated by heads of governments at the biennial Nuclear Security Summits. The respective declarations of the three summits, which had taken place in Washington DC, in 2010, Seoul in 2012 and The Hague in 2014, articulated global concerns and the need to take appropriate action, both individually and collectively, to prevent nuclear terrorism.

65. At the summits, world leaders had consistently reaffirmed the fundamental responsibility of States to maintain the security of all nuclear and radioactive materials, including for military purposes, and associated facilities under their control. Furthermore, the Agency's important and central role in

operationalizing the summit declarations through the requisite global nuclear security frameworks had been extensively underscored, in particular at the Hague Summit in March 2014.

66. He urged the Agency to maintain its leadership role in that regard and to form partnerships with Member States and other relevant stakeholders to build on existing capacity to prevent, detect and respond to terrorism or other malicious acts, such as illegal possession, use, transfer and trafficking, to protect nuclear installations and to prevent the sabotage of transported nuclear material. The INSSP framework should be further strengthened for enhanced effectiveness. He commended the Agency on its organization of the International Conference on Nuclear Security in Vienna in July 2013 and hoped that appropriate follow-up actions would be taken to implement its outcomes.

67. In its awareness that the responsibility for creating and sustaining a nuclear security regime for the protection of nuclear and other radiological materials clearly fell to the State, Nigeria had taken steps to establish an operational national nuclear security centre at its Nuclear Technology Centre in Sheda, Abuja, further to the commitment entered into by the country's President during the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit. The primary role of the nuclear security centre would be to develop and provide technical and scientific support at several levels and facilitate the development of human resources for the long-term sustainability of nuclear security in the country.

68. In its efforts to stem the tide of the traffic in radioactive sources and nuclear materials, Nigeria had restricted the import and export of radioactive sources to four airports and two seaports at which additional radiation portal monitors were being installed. Nigeria currently operated a miniature neutron source research reactor fuelled by some 1 kg of HEU. The reactor, which had been supplied through a technical cooperation project and had become critical in 2004, was used for training and other applications in neutron activation analysis, soil fertility mapping and nuclear safety. Owing to nuclear security considerations and in line with the final declaration of the first Nuclear Security Summit, Nigeria had agreed to convert the reactor core from HEU to LEU under the Global Threat Reduction Initiative.

69. The conversion, which would be implemented under a cooperative framework involving the Agency, the United States Department of Energy through the Argonne National Laboratory and the China Atomic Energy Authority, which had supplied the reactor, further underscored his country's commitment to the safe and secure application of nuclear technology. It also illustrated its commitment to implementing the INSSP in full.

70. The theme of the Scientific Forum, "Radioactive waste: meeting the challenge — science and technology for safe and sustainable solutions" was of particular interest to Nigeria, since, notwithstanding significant global efforts, many people and major stakeholders remained sceptical about the safety of radioactive waste management practices. The forum would offer Member States an opportunity to discuss progress made in science and technology in dealing with that challenging issue and offer solutions to guide policy decisions and mechanisms for their implementation.

71. He expected that the outcomes of the forum would also aid national efforts to assure Nigerian citizens of the international frameworks for and technological feasibility of the effective management and containment of hazards arising from nuclear waste. In particular, they would address some of the public's waste-related concerns surrounding the country's nascent nuclear power programme. He also expected that the outcomes would underscore the importance of public safety and further engender public confidence in and support for national programmes. He hoped that the forum would consider the full import of the scientific and technological advancements made by Member States in meeting their obligations under the Joint Convention on Radioactive Waste Management and the Management of Spent Nuclear Fuel.

72. In addition to developing a policy framework and national strategy to establish a stable regulatory regime for the maintenance of nuclear and radiation safety, Nigeria had also finalized a national policy for radioactive waste management and a strategy for its implementation. The policy expressed the Government's intention to manage radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel in a safe, secure and sustainable manner to safeguard public health and the environment.

73. To achieve that objective, a set of strategies had been developed for radioactive waste management, including transport and storage. The general principle was to reduce associated risks to practicable and justifiable levels through the appropriate processing, shielding, containment and eventual disposal of processed waste. While the policy described the Government's intent, the strategy described the mechanisms involved and provided a framework for policy implementation. It included organizational, administrative and infrastructure requirements, provisions for process development, the requisite competencies and appropriate channels of communication with both the public and Government authorities. Nigeria had also recently drawn up its draft national energy sector environmental regulations aimed at preventing or minimizing pollution and encouraging energy efficiency in all energy operations and ancillary activities to achieve sustainable economic development in the country.

74. Nigeria would continue to work in partnership with the Agency for the effective and optimal deployment of nuclear science and technology for its national social and economic development. It had continued to harness opportunities and benefits within the framework of the technical cooperation programme and had identified priority areas of engagement with the Agency. Its Country Programme Framework (CPF) for 2012–2017 highlighted six major areas of collaboration: energy planning and nuclear power infrastructure development; human health; food and agriculture; nuclear safety and radiation protection; water resources and the environment; and education and training to support the nuclear power programme.

75. Cooperation between Nigeria and Agency had strengthened over the years, as exemplified by the recent visit to Nigeria by the Deputy Director General and Head of the Department of Technical Cooperation from 30 June to 3 July 2014. During that visit, the Government had reiterated the country's continued commitment to deepening its relationship with the Agency. He commended the Agency's efforts and hoped that the visit would lead to a broader acceptance of the use of radiation and nuclear techniques in advancing the development of various sectors, particularly the key sectors covered by the CPF.

76. Through the provision of a laser spectroscopic water isotope analyser and the implementation of training programmes and workshops, the Agency had facilitated the acquisition of national capacities for the effective application of isotope hydrology in studying shared aquifer systems and basins. Nigeria was one of the 13 countries participating in the four-year regional project on water resource management for the Sahel region, the Integrated and Sustainable Management of Shared Aquifer Systems and Basins of the Sahel Region.

77. He welcomed the assistance of the Agency in upgrading national structures to develop human capacities and strengthen infrastructure for the early detection, control and management of cancer. That was a particularly demanding area of technical assistance and his country aimed to fast-track its human capacity development efforts. To achieve that objective, it was designing a new technical cooperation project aimed at establishing a national postgraduate nuclear medicine college under the 2016–2017 technical cooperation cycle. That would complement national efforts to train clinical medical physicists through a national residency programme supported by the Agency.

78. Recent research indicated that toxic and nutritionally important chemicals had a far greater impact on human health than previously thought. Toxic chemicals could affect all major organs,

causing serious health outcomes like cancer, birth defects and brain damage. The laboratories of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control had achieved ISO17025 accreditation with the support of the Agency and other development partners. That had contributed significantly to building the requisite capacity to carry out a total diet study (TDS) as a complementary public health tool to determine people's dietary exposure to chemicals such as pesticide residues, veterinary drug residues, environmental contaminants and naturally occurring toxins in food.

79. Since a TDS was a large-scale and relatively expensive study that required careful organization and planning in order to provide high quality data in a reasonable period, it would entail considerable effort. Nigeria looked forward to working in partnership with the Agency to carry out the study after the successful completion of a pilot study that had been initiated in Lagos and that targeted food bought after preparation for direct consumption. That stage of the TDS would help to verify the quality of all the procedures and activities involved and validate analytical methods, including the nuclear techniques and procedures associated with sampling and sample preparation.

80. Nigeria welcomed the Agency's continued assistance in strengthening the national capacities of developing Member States to plan and implement streamlined activities in energy planning, and supporting infrastructure development for the introduction of nuclear power. He acknowledged the Agency's valuable support in helping Nigeria build and train a competent and experienced human resource base for the successful and sustainable implementation of its nuclear power programme.

81. Nigeria was strongly committed to accelerating the development of that programme and was intensifying activities to achieve its targets. He acknowledged the positive feedback from the Agency and other partners on the planned development and sustainable implementation of the programme. He reiterated his country's commitment to implementing a programme with a sense of responsibility, bearing in mind safety and security implications and adherence to safeguards and non-proliferation obligations.

82. In order to prepare for the eventuality of damage resulting from a nuclear accident, Nigeria had hosted an INLEX mission in February 2014. As a result, and as part of the country's obligation to the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage, a framework for the establishment of a national nuclear insurance policy and scheme to adequately address the civil liability component of the nuclear power industry had been finalized for approval. That framework was in line with the 1997 Protocol to the Vienna Convention.

83. Nigeria was determined to introduce nuclear power into the national energy mix and, as a newcomer country, fully appreciated the enormity of the task of successfully implementing a national nuclear power programme in a sustainable manner. It counted on the continued support of the Agency and other development partners in implementing mutually beneficial cooperation and well-meaning partnerships, ensuring that the country's aspirations were fully supported and accelerated. In that regard, Nigeria had planned to host a phase 2 INIR mission in October 2014. Owing, however, to logistical challenges resulting from the Ebola outbreak in some parts of West Africa, the mission had been postponed. The country looked forward to successfully hosting the mission in the first half of 2015. Thus far, the Ebola outbreak had been fully contained in Nigeria and he hoped that it would not affect the Agency's future activities.

84. While commending the good work of the Agency in stimulating social and economic development in Member States through the proper application of nuclear technology, he noted that the benefits of that application could only be realized in a world that was at peace. Like many other peace-loving Member States, Nigeria was concerned about the slow pace of progress towards a world free of nuclear weapons. Countries must redouble their efforts to reinforce the Agency's key role in and commitment to ensuring a world free of nuclear weapons.

85. As a committed signatory to the NPT and the Pelindaba Treaty, Nigeria urged Member States to renew their commitment to considering the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all regions of the world, which constituted a viable option for nuclear disarmament. The realization of that goal remained feasible but would require the collective commitment of all States of each region. Accordingly, he called for the early convening of the proposed conference hosted by Finland to discuss the modalities for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

86. He welcomed the continuing discussions between the Agency and Iran to resolve outstanding issues relating to Iranian nuclear activities and called for positive and constructive engagement by all parties to the discussions to ensure an amicable and successful resolution.

87. Nigeria joined other delegations in working together with the Agency to engage the international community and to foster and deepen cooperation to enhance the peaceful use of nuclear science and technology, while adhering to the highest standards of safety. The strengthening of the global nuclear safety framework was paramount and the Agency's Nuclear Security Series and lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident should continue to serve as points of reference in preventing nuclear accidents and strengthening national response capabilities and emergency preparedness. He urged the Agency to continue to build on and accelerate the progress made under the Agency's Action Plan on Nuclear Safety to ensure a strengthened global nuclear safety regime.

88. He commended the Agency on its continued commitment to leading global efforts efficiently to harness cutting-edge research and innovation for the effective application of nuclear science and technology for social development. He also expressed appreciation for the assistance and support that his country continued to receive in applying nuclear technology for its social and economic development and hoped that its partnership with the Agency would be further strengthened in future.

89. Ms GEELS (New Zealand) said that the Agency's ever increasing membership sent a clear signal that its work continued to be valued as relevant and important by the international community.

90. Noting that the current session of the General Conference was the last before the 2015 NPT Review Conference, she said that, while the 2015 Review Conference would be challenging, its fate had not yet been determined and remained in the hands of the NPT States parties. In order to ensure the success of the Conference — and indeed the NPT itself — States would require evidence that satisfactory progress was being made with regard to all three fundamental elements of the Treaty.

91. New Zealand was dedicated to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons and continued to encourage all efforts, both traditional and innovative, to achieve that goal. It welcomed the fact that the next Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons would be taking place in Vienna in December and looked forward to participating in what it expected would be another lively discussion on that very important issue.

92. The imperative to achieve nuclear disarmament was relevant to the work of the Agency, not least given its statutory requirement that it should conduct its activities in conformity with policies of the UN furthering the establishment of safeguarded worldwide disarmament and in conformity with any international agreements entered into pursuant to such policies. At the same time, New Zealand recognized the Agency's central role in advancing the other two pillars of the NPT — non-proliferation and peaceful uses — and would continue to focus its efforts within the Agency forum on making progress in those areas.

93. New Zealanders continued to contribute to and benefit from advances in nuclear science in fields as diverse as human health, water management and food quality. New Zealand was pleased to be playing a role in furthering such advances, including as the current Chair of the Regional Cooperative

Agreement (RCA) for South and South-East Asia, the Pacific and the Far East, the annual general meeting of which it had been proud to host in Wellington earlier in 2014.

94. Her country also continued to support the PUI. In 2014, it had made a financial contribution to promote the integrated management and sustainable development of shared groundwater resources in the Sahel, and to support an ocean acidification workshop with the United States in the margins of the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States held in Samoa in August 2014. In the light of the success of the PUI, it would welcome a decision by the United States to extend the initiative for a further five years.

95. New Zealand did not intend to use nuclear energy to generate electricity but recognized that nuclear power formed part of the existing or planned energy mix for a number of countries. All countries that were developing and using nuclear energy must apply the highest standards of safeguards, safety and security in all stages of the nuclear fuel cycle, including transport and waste management.

96. Even though New Zealand had not chosen nuclear power for itself, it was still susceptible to damage as a result of a nuclear accident elsewhere, in particular during the maritime transport of nuclear material near its waters. It therefore welcomed the adoption in September 2013 of best practice guidelines for systematic, timely and confidential voluntary communication between the governments of shipping and coastal States, which built on years of informal consultations between interested States under the auspices of the Agency. It welcomed the implementation of those guidelines by a number of States in advance of shipments made in 2014 and looked forward to their further implementation in future.

97. New Zealand also remained committed to efforts to improve the international nuclear liability regime so that it might address the concerns of States suffering damage as a result of an accident involving nuclear material, including a maritime transport accident. Through constructive engagement with interested partners, New Zealand was focused on ensuring that the concerns of coastal States, in particular non-nuclear States, were taken into account as part of those efforts. She welcomed the INLEX recommendation that nuclear power countries that had ratified the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage should extend coverage to victims in non-nuclear, non-contracting parties and looked forward to the promotion and implementation of that recommendation.

98. New Zealand considered the Agency's work on nuclear security to be indispensable. It continued to contribute regularly to the NSF, providing NZ \$150 000 in 2014, and looked forward to hosting an IPPAS mission in 2015. Its support for the Agency's central role in strengthening the global nuclear security framework complemented its active participation in the Nuclear Security Summits and a range of voluntary initiatives, including the Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.

99. New Zealand was committed to helping prevent the spread of nuclear weapons through the implementation of safeguards under the NPT. Fundamental to that objective, and to providing the assurances sought by New Zealand that States undertook nuclear activities solely for peaceful purposes, was the continued integrity of the Agency's verification activities.

100. She welcomed the Secretariat's supplementary report on the State-level concept, which further increased her country's confidence in the Agency's implementation of its verification mandate. As the global nuclear landscape changed and verification challenges increased, the State-level concept provided a valuable tool for customizing safeguards to a specific environment, taking into account broader information about a State's nuclear programme beyond traditional accounting and inspections but not involving any additional rights or obligations beyond those already agreed to by the State.

101. New Zealand urged those States remaining outside the NPT safeguards system to remedy the situation as a matter of priority. She also encouraged all countries that had not yet done so urgently to conclude and bring into force an additional protocol, which formed the contemporary NPT verification standard and should always feature as a condition for new supply arrangements.

102. New Zealand was continuing its efforts to strengthen safeguards in the country and was pleased to have adopted the modified small quantities protocol to its comprehensive safeguards agreement in 2014. She thanked the Agency for its continuing support as the country moved from the adoption of the modified small quantities protocol to its implementation.

103. The international non-proliferation regime continued to face a number of complex compliance challenges. New Zealand had welcomed the progress made by Iran over the previous year in implementing the Framework for Cooperation with the Agency and the JPA with the E3+3. It was also pleased to have provided financial support for the Agency's implementation of relevant aspects of the JPA and extended JPA and remained hopeful that a comprehensive agreement could be reached between Iran and the E3+3 by the 24 November 2014 deadline. New Zealand remained concerned, however, about the slow progress in resolving outstanding issues relating to the possible military dimensions of the Iranian nuclear programme and urged Iran to meet all its obligations under the resolutions of the Security Council and the Board.

104. She reinforced the calls of the international community whereby Syria should comply urgently with its safeguards agreement and provide the Agency with the access and information needed to provide credible assurances that its nuclear programme was exclusively peaceful in nature.

105. New Zealand also called on the DPRK to abandon its nuclear programme, which it pursued in breach of the resolutions of the Security Council and the Board and which represented a significant threat to peace and security in the region.

106. She expressed deep disappointment that, despite the concerted efforts of many, it had not been possible to convene a Conference on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The agreement to convene that conference was a core element of the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and it was regrettable that the failure to do so would increase the challenges facing the 2015 Review Conference.

107. New Zealand was committed to achieving a constructive outcome on the broad range of complex and important issues on the current Conference agenda. It looked forward to working with all Member States to achieve their shared objectives relating to nuclear safety, security, safeguards and peaceful uses.

108. Mr ALMEIDA (Portugal) said that the growing number of Member States was proof of the Agency's credibility and its contribution to peace and stability in the challenging modern world. He appealed to all States that had not yet done so to adhere fully to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States. The forthcoming Review Conference would offer an opportunity for them to move towards that goal and their full participation under the framework of the NPT could only enhance peace.

109. The standard model of safeguards comprised a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol. The fact that some countries, owing to their limited quantities of nuclear material, had a small quantities protocol did not exclude them from their obligations. Furthermore, those that had not yet ratified the revised small quantities protocol should do so promptly. In addition, Portugal remained committed to the development of a State-level concept that was applicable to all States, in particular those in which proliferation risks were higher.

110. As the Director General had stated in his report, the situation in the DPRK was a matter of serious concern and all States should place pressure on that country's authorities to abide by the

resolutions of the Board and the Security Council. Regarding Syria, Portugal remained concerned about its persistent delay in cooperating with the Agency. With regard to Iran, Portugal fully supported the negotiations between that country, the Agency and the E3+3 and regretted that it had not yet been possible to conclude those negotiations. There remained some unanswered questions that hindered the process.

111. Portugal had always been a strong supporter of the efforts by the coordinator, Mr Laajava, to set up a conference on a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. It remained engaged in the process and appealed to all States in the region and joint co-conveners to move forward with the conference as soon as possible.

112. With regard to the 2015 NPT Review Conference, all States should work hard to ensure a successful conference and a consensus outcome, without which the world would be much less safe.

113. The importance of the role played by physics and nuclear engineering in the current and future world was beyond question. Accordingly, States should invest collectively in those two areas so that industry and laboratories could proceed with their commendable work with the help of trained personnel. In the health sector, the role of nuclear science in diagnosis and therapy was becoming increasingly important and that should remain a priority for all States.

114. Portugal had recently ratified the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, an instrument fundamental to the security of its own citizens and to harmony among different States.

115. Regarding safety issues, and considering the sheer size of the maritime area under the sovereignty and jurisdiction of Portugal, he highlighted his country's full engagement in the negotiations of coastal and shipping States, emphasizing the relevance and effectiveness of such dialogue for the purpose of addressing concerns relating to transport safety, security and emergency preparedness.

116. The safety of nuclear power plants should be carefully considered and States should ensure that the lessons learned from past events were not forgotten but used to improve current safety methods and technologies. Their approach to safety should include the new generation of nuclear fission power plants and the prototype of the first nuclear fusion power plant.

117. The Swiss proposal to amend the Convention on Nuclear Safety deserved support but it was important to be practical and prioritize the implementation of the commitments set out in that Convention.

118. Since Portugal had signed a new CPF in 2013, it had been working with its African partners to boost relations in the field of science and technology.

119. Lastly, he also noted that, in line with Article II of the Agency's Statute, and in particular the Revised Guiding Principles and General Operating Rules to Govern the Provision of Technical Assistance by the Agency, each Member State or group of Member States was eligible for technical assistance.

120. Mr LATORRE (Chile) said that his country had always recognized the inalienable right of all States to the peaceful use of nuclear energy and actively promoted the general and complete disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Accordingly, it was a party to relevant international conventions relating to safety, disarmament and non-proliferation.

121. Chile shared with other Latin American and Caribbean countries a common vision relating to the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear energy, as demonstrated by its signature and ratification of the

NPT and the Tlatelolco Treaty, under which the region had consolidated its position as the world's first densely populated area that was free of nuclear weapons.

122. Chile continued to support the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in other regions and all efforts to promote and achieve that goal, which was a step towards the ultimate goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. For that reason, it was participating decisively in the GRULAC initiative to proclaim an International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

123. His country was also committed to developing a humanitarian approach to nuclear weapons and would therefore be participating actively in the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. He hoped that the conference would be attended by a broad range of both nuclear-weapon- and non-nuclear-weapon States, since that global challenge could only be solved with the cooperation of all.

124. Consistent with its promotion of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, Chile favoured a strengthening of the international legal regime under the NPT review process. For that reason, it advocated the implementation of the measures set out in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and hoped that the forthcoming conference could finally achieve real progress on all outstanding issues, in particular in the field of nuclear disarmament.

125. Along with other delegations involved in the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative, Chile was preparing proposals for the 2015 Review Conference.

126. Safeguards faced increasingly complex challenges and the Agency should continue to explore ways to increase efficiency and make financial savings. For that reason, Chile recognized the value of developing the State-level concept and supported its implementation on the understanding that it strengthened the system for forming safeguards conclusions. Chile had both a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol; the universalization and adoption of those instruments as a global parameter was fundamental to the strengthening of the safeguards system and verification regime. The State-level concept could contribute to that process by taking into account State-specific factors.

127. With regard to verification, Chile was following with interest the application of NPT safeguards in Iran. He hoped that all parties involved would maintain a constructive spirit and that the additional commitments made by Iran would enable it to make real progress in clarifying all outstanding issues, including those relating to the possible military dimensions of its nuclear programme.

128. Much remained to be done on that front and Iran should further broaden its cooperation with the Agency and the international community to help restore confidence without affecting its legitimate right to benefit from the peaceful use of nuclear energy. That cooperation should include the implementation of commitments under the Framework for Cooperation and the JPA, and also of its international obligations under its safeguards agreement and the relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council and the Agency.

129. Chile had expressed regret about the non-application of safeguards in the DPRK and strongly condemned that country's third nuclear test. The DPRK should rejoin the NPT promptly and unconditionally as a non-nuclear-weapon State, submit its facilities and materials to Agency safeguards and adhere to the CTBT. It should stop defying the international community and its legal system and definitively implement relevant Security Council resolutions.

130. Chile had promoted the development of a nuclear safety culture by incorporating the components of a comprehensive approach to security, including a legal framework, measures to control illicit traffic and standardized principles, and was fully committed to maintaining, promoting and strengthening security infrastructure in that area. That position was consistent with its

participation in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and other forums that addressed nuclear safety, reflecting its commitment to strengthening the global nuclear safety regime.

131. In 2013, Chile had hosted an INSServ mission relating to nuclear security in the country and evaluating border controls to detect the illicit traffic of nuclear and radioactive material, which was a national requirement under the current INSSP. The recent official approval of that project would allow Chile to strengthen its infrastructure using equipment provided by international donors.

132. Chile strongly supported the activities of the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security and, in that context, welcomed the first Nuclear Security Information Management System workshop for the Latin American region in Santiago, aimed at training Member States in the use of that important approach. Chile was working at the national level to implement the system and strengthen coordination mechanisms between the various institutions involved.

133. Chile appreciated the significant contribution of certain initiatives aimed at exploiting synergies and fostering cooperation in the field of nuclear security. In that context, he drew attention to the international conferences on nuclear security organized by the Agency, the second of which was to be held in Vienna in 2016.

134. He highlighted the contribution of the Nuclear Security Summits to raising awareness, both among the public and heads of Government, about serious threats to nuclear safety. Chile had participated in the Summit process from the outset because it met the objective of sending a clear signal, at the highest level, regarding the need to promote, strengthen and ensure strict compliance with legal, political and technical instruments that brought States closer to their goal of protecting their citizens from nuclear threats.

135. Chile attached great importance to nuclear safety and had promoted the strengthening of its legal system and initiatives to improve standards of nuclear safety. In particular, it was following with interest the situation resulting from the Fukushima Daiichi accident and the important lessons to be learned from that accident. He reiterated his country's solidarity with the people of Japan and recognized the important progress Japan had made in overcoming that grave crisis.

136. The safe transport of nuclear material was a subject to which Chile attached high priority within the IAEA framework and which it had insisted should be kept on the Agency's agenda. Dialogue between representatives of coastal and shipping States, conducted in accordance with the decisions of the Agency, constituted a very useful consultation mechanism. In particular, it had resulted in a document on measures for improving transparency and communication between such States. The road map for 2014–2015 had been adopted at a meeting in September 2014, chaired by Chile. He hoped for further progress in the process of improving transparency and communication in order to protect citizens and the environment.

137. The Agency's technical cooperation with various national bodies provided new knowledge to professionals and, consequently, new solutions for meeting national needs. In 2013 and 2014, through the technical cooperation programme, Chile had found solutions to a number of issues of great economic and social importance in key sectors such as health, focusing on quality control of products for human consumption; agriculture, through the study of good agricultural practices in the use of fertilizers and pesticides; water resources; medical physics; the environment; and forensics.

138. In particular, the Agency's support had allowed Chile to conclude the modernization of a radioisotopes and radiopharmaceuticals production laboratory, which was essential for nuclear medicine and would ensure the highest quality standards through the implementation of good manufacturing practices for pharmaceutical products, benefiting operators, recipients, the environment and the public. Thanks to the joint efforts of Chile and the Agency, the country had been provided

with a robust modern facility that ensured the local production and supply of the most commonly used radioisotopes.

139. Chile was aware of its national security needs and its technical cooperation with the Agency had played a key role in opening up new possibilities for police investigations. The country needed more reliable and precise techniques in order to address crime-related developments, as reflected in recent figures and the emergence of more sophisticated criminal offences. Such offences required forensic analytical techniques that could respond to the questions raised by the judicial bodies.

140. Technical cooperation had enabled the Chilean Investigations Police (PDI) to enhance its work with trace evidence and build expert capabilities to establish the existence of instances of contamination. That line of enquiry was unprecedented in investigations into environmental offences relating to contamination by heavy metals. The introduction of such technology would have a positive impact on future criminal investigations, giving the PDI incomparable advantages in national and international forensic police work.

141. In the area of human resources, mechanisms to organize fellowships, scientific visits, workshops, training courses and expert visits conducted under technical cooperation projects with the Agency had benefited the Chilean Nuclear Energy Commission and various other institutions around the country. In turn, Chilean capacities, both in relation to technology and among professionals and technicians had been recognized by the Agency and the region, as reflected by the increasing numbers of fellowships and scientific visits to Chile. Chilean experts had also provided support to the Agency in various areas.

142. Areas of cooperation included radiation protection, nuclear energy, nuclear safety, dissemination and communications and nuclear technology. Chile had also received significant support from experts in the areas of radioisotope production, radioactive waste management and research reactors.

143. In February 2014, the project cycle for 2014–2015 had been initiated. That cycle comprised important projects aimed at conventional forensics, the study of climate change and the education and training of human resources, which was fundamental for ensuring national capacities.

144. The work carried out through collaboration with the Agency had enabled Chile to build, maintain and strengthen capabilities to conduct activities in the nuclear and radiological area, reap the benefits and integrate all the efforts of the international community so that activities might be conducted in the context of safety and security, consistent with current standards.

145. Chile valued the various tasks performed by the Agency to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy, which was an inalienable right under Article IV of the NPT, apply safeguards that were fundamental to the implementation of the NPT and improve levels of nuclear safety.

146. At the same time, Chile reaffirmed its commitment to disarmament, non-proliferation and the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear energy in order to improve human welfare and consolidate international peace and security. He hoped that the 2015 NPT Review Conference would be an opportunity to advance those goals.

147. Lastly, he gave assurances that, as a new member of the Board, Chile would actively cooperate with the Agency and its Members in working towards their common goals.

148. Mr NOROV (Mongolia) said that, despite its resource limitations, the Agency had continued to play its role in the international community by maintaining nuclear safety and security and promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy. In particular, he encouraged further cooperation between the Agency and the Iranian Government in addressing past and current outstanding issues related to

the NPT provisions, in order to build international confidence that the Iranian nuclear programme was exclusively peaceful in nature.

149. As the 2015 NPT Review Conference was approaching, the States parties to the Treaty would have to examine their role in the implementation of the action plan adopted at the 2010 Review Conference and further define what they needed to do to meet their common goals. Mongolia called on the State Parties to do everything possible to achieve the best outcome at the upcoming conference.

150. He was pleased to note the progress made under the Agency's Action Plan on Nuclear Safety to strengthen global nuclear safety since the previous report to the Board and the General Conference in 2013. In particular, countries with operating nuclear power plants had undertaken comprehensive safety reassessments to evaluate design and safety aspects, while countries without such plants were taking advantage of the IRRS. The Agency had continued to conduct peer reviews as Member States had been encouraged by the effectiveness of such reviews. While there had been substantial improvements since the adoption of the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, much more still needed to be done.

151. Taking into account the lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident, various countries — in particular those looking to introduce nuclear power or other peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including Mongolia — were eager to work closely with the Agency to strengthen national, regional and international capacities and relevant standards accordingly. Mongolia therefore supported the Agency's efforts to promote and maintain high levels of nuclear safety and security worldwide and encouraged the Secretariat to continue providing guidance and assistance to Member States in establishing and maintaining an adequate regulatory infrastructure.

152. Nuclear technology applications for civilian use constituted an important aspect of the Agency's work as that was an area in which many developing countries benefited the most. In that regard, Mongolia firmly supported the ReNuAL project, which should be developed to meet all the needs expressed by the Member States. He highlighted the importance of Biosafety Level 3 laboratory capabilities and called on the Agency to consult with Member States in considering the best options for the implementation of the subsequent ReNuAL Plus project.

153. He extended his country's sincere appreciation to the Agency for the continuous cooperation and support that Mongolia had received under the technical cooperation programme. Mongolia was implementing national technical cooperation projects and the RCA for Asia and the Pacific. The Agency's technical assistance had given significant impetus to the development of scientific research, including the establishment of various laboratories working in the field of nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes.

154. The technical cooperation programme should take into account the evolving needs of Member States and the need for sufficient funding. Accordingly, Mongolia would continue to meet its obligations to the Agency, including the timely payment of its contributions and NPCs. In 2014, it had hosted four regional workshops and meetings in collaboration with the Agency.

155. He congratulated the Joint FAO/IAEA Division on the 50th anniversary of its establishment and wished it every success in its invaluable work to mobilize nuclear science and technology to ensure better and safer food and agricultural produce while sustaining natural resources in Member States. Over the years, the Division had contributed greatly to the development of the Mongolian agricultural sector.

156. He also thanked all the financial contributors under the PUI, in particular the Government of the United States for its commitment to continued support for national projects.

157. Mr PARVEZ (Pakistan) said that his country had historically enjoyed a productive and mutually beneficial relationship with the Agency. It remained committed to synergizing its efforts with those of the Agency in order to harness the vast potential of nuclear technology. Given its limited conventional energy resources, the most important of those, for Pakistan, was nuclear power.

158. The significance of nuclear power had been apparent to Pakistan decades previously, when in 1972 the Karachi nuclear power plant (KANUPP) had been established, making Pakistan the 15th country in the world to have established a nuclear power plant. KANUPP had continued to function for more than four decades even though vendor support for the plant had been withdrawn very early in its life. Its safe and successful operation had given his country the confidence further to pursue the nuclear power option.

159. The next stage had come some time later when the 325 MW(e) units I and 2 of the Chashma nuclear power plant complex (CHASNUPP) had been built. The performance and economics of C-1 and C-2 had won support for nuclear energy from decision makers. Two more units, C-3 and C-4, with a power rating of around 340 MW(e) each, were under construction at the Chashma site and were expected to be completed within budget and on schedule. China had assisted with the building of all four units under a long-term cooperation agreement.

160. In November 2013, Pakistan had taken a big step forward with the initiation of work on two large nuclear power plants of 1100 MW(e) each near Karachi. With the completion of those two units, nuclear power would begin to make a sizable contribution to the country's electricity generation. At the ground-breaking ceremony for those plants, Pakistan's Prime Minister had announced the country's nuclear energy vision 2050, which envisaged nuclear power generation of 40 000 MW(e) for a strong, prosperous and dynamic Pakistan.

161. Pakistan was committed to keeping all its current and future civilian nuclear power facilities under Agency safeguards. As the nuclear power programme expanded, so should the emphasis on the safety and security of nuclear installations. The new plants being installed at the Karachi site were Generation III plants with enhanced safety features. A response action plan, designed to reassess and upgrade the safety of Pakistan's nuclear power plants, had been initiated immediately after the Fukushima Daiichi accident. It was currently being implemented and the immediate and mid-term actions of the plan had already been carried out.

162. Pakistan's Centre of Excellence in Nuclear Security had been established to conduct specialized training courses on the physical protection of nuclear materials and facilities, material control and accounting, personnel reliability, transport security and other security-related areas. In coordination with the Agency, the centre had planned a regional training course on the security of radioactive sources for November 2014.

163. The Pakistan Institute of Engineering and Applied Sciences (PIEAS) was the country's premier institute for education and training in nuclear science and technology and it offered special courses on nuclear security and physical protection as part of its curriculum on nuclear engineering. His country offered those facilities as a regional and international hub for training.

164. Pakistan's interaction with the Agency, the World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO) and the CANDU Owners Group (COG) in the area of nuclear power plant safety was also continuing successfully. As a party to the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS), Pakistan had participated in the Sixth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention held in Vienna from 24 March to 4 April 2014.

165. Pakistan had a firm regulatory infrastructure in place, the Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA), established in 2001, enjoyed complete autonomy from the promoters of nuclear

energy. The PNRA, which based its regulations on the Agency safety standards, also offered itself for independent peer reviews. An IRRS mission had been conducted in April-May of 2014. The IRRS team had comprised more than 20 experts from 15 different countries.

166. The PNRA had also established a National Institute of Safety and Security for facilitating national and regional training courses on nuclear security. The institute was equipped with state-of-the-art laboratories for training in nuclear and radiation safety, nuclear security and physical protection.

167. Pakistan voluntarily contributed to Agency information resources, including the Incident and Trafficking Database (ITDB), and was also deploying Radiation Portal Monitors at several entry and exit points.

168. Pakistan had also consistently supported international endeavours to enhance nuclear security at the national level. It had participated in all the Nuclear Security Summits since 2010 at the highest governmental level. During the inaugural Nuclear Security Summit, held in Washington DC in 2010, Pakistan, as an advanced nuclear State, had offered its nuclear fuel cycle services under Agency safeguards to other countries. During the previous Summit, held in The Hague in March 2014, the Prime Minister of Pakistan had commended the Nuclear Security Summit process for generating high-level commitments to foster national nuclear security culture. He had further highlighted the fact that it had enabled participating States to coordinate and synergize the work of the international community, while avoiding duplication, and had reaffirmed the central role of the Agency in those efforts.

169. Besides nuclear power, the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) had also been making other important contributions to the socio-economic sector of Pakistani society. Hospitals with nuclear medicine facilities were providing a vital service to the country. In 2013, three more hospitals had been established, bringing to 18 the total number of nuclear medicine centres working under PAEC's administration. The hospitals served more than 700 000 patients each year. PAEC planned to expand its services further by setting up more nuclear medicine centres.

170. In December 2013, an imPACT mission had come to Pakistan and had visited several nuclear medicine hospitals in the public and private sector. His country had now received the draft report of the mission and were in the process of implementing its recommendations.

171. The plant at the Pakistan Institute of Nuclear Science and Technology (PINSTECH) for the production of molybdenum-99, the precursor of technetium-99m, a vital ingredient for many important radiopharmaceuticals, was functioning smoothly. Pakistan had had extensive interaction with experts from the Agency with a view to establishing another facility for LEU-based production of molybdenum-99, and looked forward to further Agency support in that regard. His country also continued to produce most of the other radioisotopes required by its hospitals.

172. Pakistan had established a very broad educational and training programme in specialized areas such as radiation oncology, nuclear medicine and medical physics. The PIEAS ran a master's programme in those disciplines. With extensive experience in those fields, Pakistan could provide expert services and training facilities to other countries embarking on those technologies. The Agency could provide a forum for planning and undertaking such joint ventures.

173. Pakistan was making efforts to broaden its scientific horizon by participating in activities at a global level. After more than two decades of interaction with the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) in Geneva, Pakistan had applied for associate membership in February 2013 and had recently been admitted as an associate member.

174. Pakistan was also actively participating in the activities of the Synchrotron-Light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East (SESAME) based in Jordan. Those partnerships promised to boost scientific activities in Pakistan.

175. Pakistan greatly valued the Agency's contribution to the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy and its support in diverse areas, including nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety, nuclear security, and the application of nuclear technology in agriculture, medicine, industry and nuclear energy. That spirit of mutual cooperation had been demonstrated by the visits of Agency officials. Over the past three years, four Deputy Directors General had visited Pakistan, and the visit of the current Director General in March 2014 had been especially important in that regard.

176. During his stay in Pakistan, the Director General had held meetings with the President, the Prime Minister, the Federal Minister for Science and Technology, the Advisor to the Prime Minister on National Security and Foreign Affairs and other officials. He had also visited several PAEC facilities, including the Chashma nuclear power plant, the Pakistan Institute of Nuclear Science and Technology and the PIEAS. He had visited the PNRA's headquarters and the Pakistan Centre of Excellence in Nuclear Security at Chakri, near Islamabad. During his visit to the PNRA, the Director General had inaugurated the National Institute of Safety and Security, which was being set up by the PNRA. Mr Amano's visit had not only been appreciated at the governmental level but had also been very heartening for the scientific community working in the nuclear field in Pakistan.

177. Pakistan had the experience, the credentials and the potential to become a recipient and supplier of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. It aspired to play its part as a mainstream partner at an international level, including as a full member of export control regimes, in particular the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). In Pakistan's view, that that would be a mutually beneficial proposition, both for the international community and for itself.

178. In conclusion, Pakistan appreciated the Agency's positive role in fostering the peaceful applications of nuclear technology around the world. His country had greatly benefited from that cooperation, and was very glad that it had also been able to make some modest contributions towards the Agency's activities by sharing its experience and providing expert services in several technical areas.

179. Mr STRITAR (Slovenia) said that the Fukushima Daiichi accident had had an enormous impact on the international community and triggered a long series of improvements in nuclear safety. The Slovenian post-Fukushima national action plan had been adopted at the end of 2012 and was currently being implemented. The focus of the safety upgrade programme under the plan was on the Krško nuclear power plant. The first major modifications carried out under the plan had been the installation of a passive autocatalytic recombiner system and a passive containment filtered vent system. Both had been designed to cope with severe accident conditions and to protect containment from overpressurization in case of an accident. The systems had been installed during the October 2013 refuelling outage.

180. Other important elements of the plan still to be implemented included a safety upgrade of the AC power supply, installation of an alternate heat sink, construction of an emergency control room, installation of a mobile heat exchanger and a fixed spray system for the spent fuel pool, the erection of a new technical support centre and the upgrade of the existing operations support centre.

181. Slovenia was and always had been active in bringing its emergency preparedness and response system into line with international standards. His country was currently working with colleagues from neighbouring Croatia to harmonize emergency response in the event of a nuclear accident. That included intensive reassessment of the basis for emergency planning such as the size of protective action zones and a set of countermeasures. In addition, Slovenia was working to optimize radiation

monitoring in case of an emergency. Post-accident preparedness was gradually being improved and the first plan for the post-emergency phase of a large-scale accident had been prepared. Slovenia regularly performed exercises at a national level and took part in Agency ConvEx exercises. The 2014 annual Krško nuclear power plant exercise would be conducted as a national two-day exercise including field activities and it expected that the Agency and Croatia would participate. Slovenia had carefully followed the latest Agency guidance on emergency preparedness and response. Its national Agency EPR–NPP workshop had been attended by over 90 participants.

182. The safe operation of nuclear installations remained Slovenia's uppermost priority. Since the previous session of the General Conference, no events had occurred which significantly affected nuclear safety at Slovenia's research reactor and the Krško nuclear power plant. During the last refuelling outage in October 2013, however, a significant fuel failure had been discovered during core unloading. After very intensive corrective actions on the part of the operator and the fuel supplier, the plant had been able to restart only two weeks after the intended completion time for the refuelling outage. Slovenia was glad to report that there were now no indications of leaking fuel. An important milestone for his country's nuclear power plant that year had been the approval of its second periodic safety review. Fifteen safety factors had been included in the review, which had revealed no major safety related problems, while a few hundred potential safety improvements had been identified. More than 200 items had been included in Slovenia's action plan and would be further addressed over the next five years.

183. After several years of standstill, approval had been granted in July 2014 by the Minister for Infrastructure and Spatial Planning for the investment programme for a future low-level and intermediate-level waste repository at the Vrbina site near Krško. It was envisaged that the construction licence would be issued in 2017 and the repository would be finished by 2019. The project would be mainly financed by the Krško nuclear power plant decommissioning fund. The State budget, which would pay for the disposal of radioactive waste from other institutional users in areas such as medicine, science and industry, would contribute less than one fifth of the funding.

184. Slovenia firmly supported all improvements to the Agency safeguards system, which had always been a pillar of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. It was important that the Agency, as the organization entrusted by the NPT with controlling nuclear materials, ran an effective and efficient safeguards system. His country was convinced that the Agency's work in that area was good and that with its current efforts and direction it would remain on track. In that context, Slovenia welcomed the introduction of the State-level concept, which would further improve the efficiency of the safeguards system.

185. Slovenia attached great importance to nuclear security. Over the course of 2013, Slovenia had, for the first time, organized an unannounced comprehensive force-on-force exercise to test the physical protection of the Krško nuclear power plant. The exercise had provided Slovenia with specific information on the current level of physical protection, which had proved that the relevant staff were prepared for events challenging the security of the installation. Slovenia continued to support the Agency's efforts in the field of nuclear security and was ready to take part in the next Nuclear Security Summit in 2016. His country was prepared to present national experience gained in that important field.

186. Slovenia recognized the importance of technical cooperation, which had always been the Agency's primary activity for addressing Member States' needs. With many countries facing budget cuts and austerity measures, technical cooperation was indispensable for assisting with financial and technical support to maintain and improve those countries' capabilities. Slovenia noted with great satisfaction that the technical cooperation programme was continually strengthening in all regions, thus ensuring improved food production, better healthcare and stronger protection against ionizing

radiation. His country commended the Agency for reinforcing efforts in that vital area, according to its mandate.

187. Slovenia remained active in supporting the Agency's activities and over the past year had hosted four Agency regional workshops, training courses, meetings and seminars. Many Agency fellows from third countries had been trained at Slovenian organizations and research establishments.

188. The Agency enjoyed great respect in Slovenia and his country would continue to play an active role in contributing to the Agency's broad scope of work. He expressed his thanks to the Director General and the Secretariat for their highly impartial, professional and diligent work to fulfil the Agency's statutory obligations.

189. Mr SABBAGH (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his country had been among the first to ratify the NPT and had always been committed to the Treaty's lofty objectives and principles reflected in the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. It believed in the importance of international cooperation in support of peaceful uses of nuclear energy in order to build Member States' knowledge and capacities and enable them to benefit from its potential. The Agency's Annual Report for 2013 bore witness to that commitment in its affirmation that the Agency had found no indication in Syria of the diversion of declared nuclear material from peaceful activities.

190. At each successive round of meetings, the Board continued to discuss an item concerning implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement in the Syrian Arab Republic. The item had been included following the Israeli assault on the sovereignty of Syrian territory in a flagrant breach of international law and the UN Charter that should have been severely condemned by the international community. Inclusion of the item on the Board's agenda accordingly served political aims, in particular given its reliance on baseless information and allegations submitted by a State that was well known for its hostility to Syria.

191. Despite the fact that the heinous Israeli assault had targeted a military building in no way connected with nuclear activities, and the conclusion in the Agency's report that the failure by certain States to provide the Agency in due time with information concerning the destroyed building in Dair Alzour had greatly impeded the Agency's efforts to determine its responsibility under the NPT and the safeguards agreement with Syria, the Board had gone ahead and adopted a decision based on an entirely hypothetical conclusion entirely devoid of compelling facts and evidence. A large number of Member States had opposed that decision, since they wished to retain the issue within the confines of the Agency and to promote continued dialogue and cooperation between Syria and the Agency.

192. Unfortunately, certain States were persisting in their attempts to exploit that conclusion to advance their political interests and to bring additional pressure to bear on Syria as a form of blackmail. The purpose of that conduct was clearly discernible from their statements and use of terms and descriptions that breached the recognized rules of diplomatic discourse among States in international organizations. Syria reaffirmed its full commitment to cooperating with the Agency in addressing all outstanding issues relating to the Dair Alzour site and its readiness to implement the provisions of the action plan agreed on in Damascus between Syria and the Agency.

193. The successful adoption by the General Conference at its 53rd session of resolution GC(53)/RES/17 entitled "Israeli nuclear capabilities" sent a clear message to the international community, calling on Israel to accede to the NPT and to place all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards. The resolution reflected the continuing concern felt by a large number of Member States regarding Israel's possession of nuclear capabilities that were not subject to any international supervision and that constituted a threat to peace and security in the Middle East region and the world as a whole, in particular in the light of Israel's aggressive behaviour in the region.

194. Notwithstanding the adoption by the Conference of that resolution, no response had been forthcoming from Israel apart from its persistent disregard of all resolutions adopted against it in various international organizations and forums. Regrettably, some influential Member States, including nuclear States, were clearly applying double standards in that regard by, on the one hand, raising the banner of the universality of the NPT and, on the other, turning a blind eye to that principle when the issue of Israeli nuclear capabilities arose. Moreover, the same States continued to support and assist Israel in developing such capabilities, thereby breaching their obligations under the relevant Treaty.

195. All Israel's attempts to divert the attention of the international community from the threat posed by its nuclear capabilities served no purpose. Sometimes it deliberately confused the issue of responsibilities stemming from non-compliance and those stemming from non-accession. On other occasions, it raised political issues relating to regional security arrangements or referred to threats from terrorist groups, ignoring its own international record, which was replete with outrageous acts of occupation, oppression, murder, bloodshed and the pursuit of policies of displacement, isolation and blockade against the Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese.

196. At a time when all States in the Middle East region had expressed willingness to take practical steps to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, Israel continued to defy the international community by refusing to accede to the NPT, relying to that end on the absolute support of its allies.

197. The Syrian delegation had cooperated with all efforts aimed at convening a conference in 2012 based on the mandate issued in the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Unfortunately, the policy of procrastination and manoeuvring pursued by some parties in order to gratify Israel had hitherto impeded the convening of the conference. His delegation strongly condemned the announcement of the postponement of the conference by one of the convening States with the sole motive of shielding Israel from criticism and interrogation at the international level.

198. Syria attached great importance to the Agency's technical cooperation programme because of its promotion of peaceful applications of nuclear energy, in particular in the areas of nuclear medicine, water management and other branches of industry, and its capacity-building activities in nuclear regulation and nuclear safety and security. It also appreciated the major role played by the Agency in promoting nuclear technology for the purposes of development and prosperity in Member States.

199. Despite the special circumstances prevailing in Syria, it had been able in 2014, thanks to the tangible support received from the Department of Technical Cooperation, to implement some components of its CPF that had been frozen during the previous two years. In that context, he conveyed thanks to the Deputy Director General and to the Division for Asia and the Pacific and its team for their continuous oversight and their determined efforts to speed up the implementation process and to surmount a number of difficulties.

200. Syria also attached great importance to the strengthening and updating of legislation governing the safety and security of radioactive sources and nuclear material. Work on a preliminary draft of the Nuclear Act had been completed and the legislative procedures leading to its adoption would be completed in due course.

201. The Cooperative Agreement for Arab States in Asia for Research, Development and Training related to Nuclear Science and Technology (ARASIA) had recently been extended for a second time for a period of six years. During the first 10 years of its implementation, an ARASIA technical cooperation programme had been developed and its effectiveness and scope enhanced. The Syrian Government supported the Agreement and participated in its activities. It continued to host

the international site as an in-kind contribution to the technical cooperation programme and likewise urged the Secretariat to continue supporting the Agreement because of its major role in promoting cooperation among the States parties and promoting the spread of nuclear technology at the regional level.

202. The concept of safeguards implementation at the State level had become a major topic of discussion within the Agency. That was a sound and necessary development, in particular when dealing with such a highly sensitive issue. His delegation had taken note of the content of the supplementary document to the report on the conceptualization and development of safeguards implementation at the State level (document GOV/2013/38 and its corrigendum), which reaffirmed that implementation of the concept should not entail the introduction of any additional rights or obligations on the part of either States or the Agency, nor any modification in the interpretation of existing rights and obligations. States would not be required to provide any additional information beyond their existing legal obligations under safeguards agreements signed with the Agency.

203. In that context, he stressed that State-level safeguards should not be applied unless explicitly approved by the Member State concerned. His delegation welcomed the Secretariat's intention to continue engaging in an open dialogue with Member States concerning the issue until all aspects of the concept had been clarified, including: the aim and purpose of its application; the scope of its application; the economies to be achieved through its implementation; the application of State-specific factors; the procedures for gathering information concerning the implementation of safeguards from open sources and third parties and the means to be used in verifying their credibility; and any other issues raised by Member States during the discussions.

204. Lastly, he drew attention to the fact that, at the 2010 NPT Review Conference held in New York, States Parties had reaffirmed the voluntary nature of the signing of an additional protocol and thence the requirement to avoid confusing what constituted a legal obligation for a State party to the NPT and a safeguards agreement with any other voluntary measures, including a request to sign an additional protocol.

205. Mr EL MHAMDI (Morocco) said that recent developments relating to environmental issues, the scarcity of fossil fuels and climate change had lasting effects on people's daily lives through their capacity to disturb social and economic equilibria and ecosystems around the world.

206. Such natural disruption posed a number of challenges to Member States and a serious obstacle to economic and social progress, most of all in the South, where recourse to nuclear energy was still considered a safe and viable alternative in securing supplies and affordably meeting an ever growing energy demand.

207. In that regard, the Agency played an integral role in building human capacity and knowledge and transferring nuclear technology to benefit deprived countries. That was to be achieved through the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy with a view to replacing increasingly expensive and scarce fossil fuels, which were so harmful to the environment and responsible for the majority of greenhouse gas emissions.

208. Several countries had turned to Agency for support and assistance in the form of technical cooperation programmes exploiting nuclear technology in areas of vital significance, such as water, health, agriculture, nutrition, the environment and nuclear safety and security. Cooperation programmes and other efforts in that area merited further support through the provision to the Agency of the financial and human resources that it needed for extensive technical cooperation programmes.

209. Given the current renewed interest in nuclear energy, Morocco called on the Agency to facilitate access by the South to nuclear power by promoting and providing training in nuclear technology for

interested Member States. In that regard, Morocco welcomed the agreement between Member States to ensure sufficient, assured and predictable resources for the technical cooperation programme and to enhance the transparency and appropriateness of resource allocations.

210. The Fukushima Daiichi accident, despite its scale and the seriousness of its consequences, should not detract from the importance of nuclear energy. The Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety in 2011 and the final declaration emerging from its work had led to the elaboration of the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, designed to strengthen the global legal framework and standards to enhance the reliability and safety of nuclear installations in the light of that tragic accident. Morocco believed that the two-pronged action taken by the Agency in that regard would restore the confidence of States in civil nuclear programmes.

211. In anticipation of the Director General's report on the accident, Morocco believed that nuclear safety and security were an absolute priority in nuclear activities. In that regard, it welcomed the missions by the Agency to assess national infrastructure and Member States' needs and called on the Agency to step up its efforts in that area, in particular by providing stronger technical assistance for the establishment of lasting and effective safety and security systems while working for the universal application of related international legal instruments.

212. Nuclear safety and security requirements were profoundly important to Morocco, which had undertaken to bring its legal provisions fully into line with international norms and standards. In addition, in 2002, it had ratified the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and, in 2006, signed the 2005 International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. It had also launched the legislative process for the promulgation of a national law on nuclear and radiological safety and security and the creation of a body responsible for its oversight. The new legal provisions adopted by the Moroccan authorities conformed with international standards and commitments entered into by the country. In that context, Morocco welcomed the assistance given by the Agency to Member States in their efforts to develop national legislation on nuclear safety and security. Morocco's own law on that subject had only recently entered into force following publication in the official gazette.

213. Security risks and the rise in the number of terrorist acts worldwide had cross-border implications and gave rise to collective and shared responsibility, constituting global threats that could only be countered through a global response. States must therefore take appropriate precautions to prevent individuals and groups from using radioactive and nuclear materials for terrorist purposes and must seek forms of innovative multilateral cooperation involving the pooling of efforts to strengthen the safety and security systems of nuclear infrastructure and facilities at a regional scale. To that end, in cooperation with the Agency, Morocco had conducted the first ConvEX-3 exercise for the Arab States, Africa and Asia, which had made it possible to assess national and international capacities for planning, coordination and assistance between Member States and the Agency and to test procedures for coordination and assistance between those States and other international organizations. The exercise had unequivocally demonstrated Morocco's firm commitment to the enhancement of safety and security in nuclear infrastructure and facilities in accordance with standards set by the Agency.

214. Morocco also continued to participate actively in international efforts to strengthen safety and security systems worldwide. It was a Member of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, which had met for the first time in Rabat in 2006. Furthermore, it had taken part in the three nuclear security summits held in 2010, 2012 and 2014 in Washington, Seoul and The Hague, respectively.

215. Non-proliferation had always been central to the Agency's mission and remained so more than ever before. It kept alive hopes for a peaceful world free of nuclear weapons. There was an apparent

need, as the 2015 NPT Review Conference drew near and the world continued to be torn by major political crises, to rebuild the NPT momentum in furtherance of international peace and security. That was a task incumbent upon the Agency, which had been so mandated by the Treaty. Its role in that regard had been strongly reasserted in the action plan adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference and during the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference.

216. Morocco, which had always striven to build the Agency's verification capacities, had honoured its commitments in that regard. It had ratified all multilateral legal instruments on non-proliferation and continued to encourage disarmament initiatives with a view to establishing, as far as possible, a nuclear-weapon-free world. It had therefore participated actively in conferences held to facilitate the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which was urgently required as a key element of the global multilateral non-proliferation system. Moreover, recent and past history had shown that a calm dialogue in good faith leading to satisfactory solutions to non-proliferation issues could only be achieved through diplomacy and a climate of trust among the parties concerned. Morocco therefore welcomed the dialogue currently under way between Iran and the P5+1 and between Iran and the Agency to resolve pending issues, and hoped that it would be pursued in conditions satisfactory to the parties concerned so that a definitive solution in furtherance of international peace and security could be found.

217. Morocco considered that the Middle East could only expect to enjoy lasting peace when all States in the region — without exception — had acceded to the NPT. Such accession, ardently desired by States in the region, was supported by the entire international community. It therefore urged the Director General to take all necessary steps to elucidate fully the issue of Israeli nuclear capabilities and invited Member States to support his efforts. It deeply regretted that the conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and of all other weapons of mass destruction had been postponed and reiterated its support for the facilitator, Jaakko Laajava, whose mission it considered to be still valid. The conference, scheduled initially for 2012, was still necessary in order to establish a climate of trust among States in the region — an indispensable condition for fruitful dialogue, without which the nuclear-weapon-free zone would remain a forlorn hope. Morocco reiterated its willingness to participate actively and contribute to efforts made within the context of the Agency to establish such a zone.

218. In that context, he stressed that the credibility of the safeguards system lay not only in its ability to uncover undeclared nuclear activities, but also — and above all — in its fair, universal and general application, aimed at building and bolstering trust among neighbouring States, and warned that continuation of the current stalemate on the nuclear-weapons-free zone was likely to complicate, if not jeopardize, conduct of the 2015 NPT Review Conference.

219. Morocco ascribed great importance to the Agency's technical cooperation programme as an effective means of transferring nuclear technology and expertise. As a regular contributor to the TCF which honoured its pledged national contributions, Morocco was gratified by its successful bilateral cooperation with the Agency. The infrastructure and human capacities put in place under the programme had enabled Morocco to make optimum use of nuclear applications in vital sectors such as agriculture, health, water resource management, the environment and nutrition.

220. Morocco reiterated its strong commitment to implement in the best possible manner the various activities and programmes scheduled under the African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training related to Nuclear Science and Technology (AFRA), under which some 100 Moroccans had been trained for key positions each year. For its part, Morocco was supporting sub-Saharan countries by training experts, management staff and scientists in its institutions. Training was provided, in particular, for radiotherapists, who had been assigned to

Moroccan institutes approved by the Agency, and Morocco stood ready to share its modest experience and develop the partnership further by extending it to other interested French-speaking countries.

221. Morocco was taking part in several Agency-sponsored interregional and regional projects in Africa on nuclear-technology applications and on such issues as radiation protection, action in emergency radiological situations and protection of the marine environment. The Agency's scientific and technical support and contribution had thus fostered the emergence of Morocco as a regional cooperation player and its designation as an AFRA regional centre. The country currently hosted four regional AFRA centres of excellence engaged in regional cooperation, whose work had been significantly energized by the visit to Morocco by the Director General. Morocco therefore welcomed the constructive spirit that had prevailed throughout the negotiations on increasing the financial resources for technical cooperation.

222. Lastly, noting that the Conference's 58th session was being held at a time marked by regional and international strife, tension and political crises, he reaffirmed his country's determination to contribute with its accustomed vigour to its work. It was his delegation's firm hope that the proceedings would lead to the necessary undertakings for the Agency to fulfil its three-pronged mission, namely: to strengthen technical cooperation in nuclear activities; consolidate the safeguards system; and, above all, make nuclear power the safest source of energy possible in furtherance of peace, safety and sustainable — and life-sustaining — development.

223. Mr VINHAS (Brazil) said that his country set great store by the peaceful use of nuclear energy in such applications as power generation, human health, industry, agriculture and environmental protection. Brazil was convinced that nuclear technology would continue to be of great relevance for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the future sustainable development goals. Apart from being one of the Agency's main statutory tenets, technical cooperation activities also constituted a key instrument for ensuring compliance with Article IV of the NPT.

224. As both a recipient and donor country, Brazil fully supported the constant strengthening and steady implementation of the Agency's technical cooperation programme. Building on an initiative by the Deputy Director General for Technical Cooperation, his country had strengthened its cooperation in the nuclear field with Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa, in particular Angola and Mozambique, focusing on areas such as licensing, medical applications and the management of technical cooperation projects.

225. The Regional Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean (ARCAL) framework played an indispensable role in strengthening technical cooperation among the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. The recently concluded Regional Strategic Profile 2016–2021 was certain to enhance the formulation of future technical cooperation projects in partnership with the Agency. It would also constitute an excellent foundation for developing and updating the country programme frameworks (CPFs) of Member States in the region.

226. Construction of the third Brazilian nuclear power plant, Angra-3, was well under way and the facility was expected to be connected to the national power grid in 2018. Recently, two major contracts relating to the construction process had been signed, one for electro-mechanical assembly services, and the other for services and imported equipment necessary to finish the plant's construction.

227. In parallel, the construction of Brazil's national 30 MW multipurpose research reactor was proceeding, the basic engineering design being developed in cooperation with Argentina. The reactor would ensure self-sufficiency in the production of radioisotopes for human health, industry and agriculture in Brazil and would be used for other applications such as materials testing and research.

228. Brazil had actively participated in the Sixth Review Meeting of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, held earlier in 2014. Its report at that meeting had contained detailed information on the implementation of its national response plan to the Fukushima Daiichi accident. The plan, conducted by the nuclear power plant operator, Eletronuclear, covered three main areas: protection against risk events, the cooling capacity of reactors and spent fuel pools and the limitation of radiological consequences.

229. Brazil looked forward to the diplomatic conference in 2015 which would consider the proposal by Switzerland to amend the Convention on Nuclear Safety. The main challenge at the conference would be to find wording that would, at the same time, take into account different national realities in relation to existing nuclear power plants, while inviting States to consider safety improvements wherever technically and economically feasible.

230. Also in the area of nuclear safety, Brazil wished to highlight the activities being carried out by the Ibero–American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies (FORO) and its growing cooperation with the Agency. Of particular relevance was the establishment of criteria for licensing and inspecting cyclotrons used to produce radioisotopes for medical applications and research.

231. Brazil fully supported Agency efforts to promote more efficient and effective safeguards and urged all States to meet their obligation in that regard. At the same time, it was vital that the Agency operated strictly within the established legal parameters, taking into account the different scope and corresponding safeguards measures that derived from the distinct categories of agreements entered into by Member States.

232. Brazil welcomed the supplementary document on the State-level concept, prepared pursuant to the request of the General Conference at its 2013 session. The supplementary document had required an unprecedented process of consultations and technical meetings between the Secretariat and Member States. In Brazil's view, a new phase in safeguards had been inaugurated, with greater accountability and transparency on the part of the Secretariat, and closer Member State involvement in the development of proposed new policies. In addition, with a view to the further refinement of the concept, a series of crucial assurances had been given to Member States regarding its future application, which had been duly reflected in the Chair's summary at the last round of Board meetings. For a relationship based on trust and confidence to be established, the Secretariat needed to abide rigorously by those assurances. Any future steps related to the concept, guided by the experience acquired in the coming years, should be taken in close consultation and coordination with Member States, with the results being consolidated in a future document for the consideration of the Board.

233. Brazil acknowledged the central role of the Agency in strengthening the nuclear security framework globally, in an inclusive, transparent and genuinely multilateral manner. The Ministerial Declaration adopted at the 2013 Nuclear Security Conference provided high-level guidance on future endeavours in that field, which were to be reassessed at the 2016 Nuclear Security Conference.

234. Brazil and the Agency had diligently cooperated on the successful implementation of nuclear security measures at public events, most recently the 2014 FIFA World Cup. That joint work would continue as the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro approached. Brazil stood ready to share its experience with other interested countries.

235. It was Brazil's firm conviction that nuclear security efforts needed to be pursued in tandem with the international community's endeavour to promote nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. A sustainable global nuclear security strategy went beyond the mere adoption of practical physical protection measures in civilian facilities. It also needed to address the vast stocks of HEU and separated plutonium used for military applications in States which possessed

nuclear weapons. The Ministerial Declaration adopted at the 2013 Conference had stressed each State's responsibility to maintain the effective security of all nuclear material under its control, including nuclear material used for military purposes.

236. That comprehensive view underpinned Brazil's position and that of many other non-nuclear weapon States in discussions related to nuclear security at the Agency and other forums. In that regard, the Joint Statement entitled 'In larger security: a comprehensive approach to nuclear security', issued by Brazil and 14 other States at the Hague Nuclear Security Summit, in March 2013, if nuclear security was to be dealt with in an effective and proper manner, it had to encompass both civilian and military nuclear material. Nuclear security was of little relevance if it was disconnected from global endeavours to promote peace and security through the reduction and ultimate elimination of all nuclear arsenals.

237. As the Secretary-General of the UN had stated, there were no right hands for the wrong weapons. Accordingly, as the 2015 NPT Review Conference approached, serious consideration must be given to nuclear disarmament steps, as an indispensable measure in upholding the continued authority, relevance and integrity of that Treaty. The synergy between UN General Assembly resolutions, the NPT's three interrelated pillars and the Agency's statutory functions, including that of acting in conformity with UN policies furthering the establishment of safeguarded worldwide disarmament, was becoming increasingly apparent. The Agency had played an essential role in verification activities in the past, either in country-specific situations or pursuant to requests from interested States parties to disarmament agreements. That role, which had been welcomed in successive Conference resolutions, should be supported and pursued so that the Secretariat would be ready to perform such tasks in the future.

238. Brazil was proud to be a party to the Tlatelolco Treaty and valued the successful partnership with Argentina that had led to the Quadripartite Agreement with the Agency and the Brazilian–Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Weapons (ABACC). Those success stories were good examples for other endeavours, in particular the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. In that regard, Brazil hoped that the conference on the establishment of such a zone could be convened at the earliest opportunity before the 2015 NPT Review Conference.

239. Finally, Brazil welcomed the ongoing conferences on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any possible use of nuclear weapons and looked forward to participating actively at the third conference, to be sponsored by the Austrian Government in December 2014. In that connection, Brazil and other Latin American States wished to draw attention to the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, as declared by the UN. A General Conference side event was being organized, as an opportunity for all members of governments and civil society, to reiterate the urgent need to work towards the common goal of achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world.

240. Mr NOGUÉS ZUBIZARRETA (Paraguay) said that Paraguay was following with great interest the advance of nuclear development across the world and, in particular, the Agency's activities to improve and strengthen the safeguards system.

241. Paraguay had observed the Agency's efforts to improve the security of nuclear installations and of external users of the Incident and Trafficking Database (ITDB). In that regard, Paraguay was pleased with the achievements reached under the Nuclear Security Plan 2014–2017 and the enhancement of the functions of the Advisory Group on Nuclear Security (AdSec).

242. In order to consolidate and expand the achievements of the plan, his delegation urged States to continue making voluntary contributions to the Nuclear Security Fund (NSF). It was a cause for concern, however, that, nine years after its approval, the amendment to the CPPNM had still not

entered into force. Paraguay requested that the Agency, which was already working to promote adherence to numerous conventions, would make the same efforts with the amendment and provide detailed information to States about the assistance available in that regard. Given the Agency's access to support, such as nuclear security programmes and legislative assistance, it was appropriate that it invite States to make full use of the assistance available. The Agency should encourage all Contracting Parties to act in conformity with the objectives and purposes of the amendment until it entered into force and to apply all legally binding and non-legally binding international instruments relating to nuclear security.

243. Reaffirming its willingness to collaborate with the Agency's principles, the Government of Paraguay had acceded to the Convention on Nuclear Safety through Act No. 5027/2013, which had entered into force on 9 April 2014 in accordance with Article 31.2 of the Convention. In 2013, the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency had also entered into force for Paraguay. Moreover, Paraguay's national parliament was in the process of ratifying the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Security of Radioactive Waste Management.

244. On 8 May 2014, the Paraguayan Government had promulgated Act 169, setting up a nuclear and radiological regulatory authority. That measure would help to maintain and improve the effectiveness of his country's legal and regulatory regime. The regulatory authority would, among other functions, establish norms, guidelines and code, for regulatory practice and security in relation to activities involving nuclear technology and sources of radiation in the country. They would be carried out periodically in accordance with technological developments and the Agency's recommendations. During the next phase, the Government, with the aim of reaching a high level of radiological and nuclear safety in a sustainable manner, would oversee capacity building, human resource development, the development of safety regulations and the establishment of management systems, along with the active participation of the regulatory authority in the Ibero-American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies (FORO) and related networks.

245. His Government reiterated its commitment to the use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, as demonstrated by those and other activities.

246. In 2014, Paraguay had recovered its right to vote after making its outstanding contributions to the Agency. It would use that voting right to reinforce its role in important discussions on Agency agenda items. At the current time, Paraguay's priorities for assistance from the Agency were in the areas of capacity building and the strengthening of national activities to reduce poverty and promote social and economic development in accordance with its national development plan. His country was aiming for nuclear techniques to be transferred and effectively applied in the areas of human health, food and agriculture, water resource management, environmental protection, industrial applications, radiological safety and security. Paraguay was also working to create and consolidate partnerships, mobilize additional resources and promote subregional and bilateral cooperation.

247. In terms of bilateral cooperation, he noted in particular the reactivation of negotiations with Argentina leading to updating of the cooperation agreement on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, signed on 20 July 1967. Bilateral meetings had also been organized to establish an agreement between the National University of Asunción and the National Atomic Energy Commission of Argentina (CNEA) to strengthen cooperation. Bilateral activities had been conducted with Argentina's nuclear regulatory authority, to help strengthen Paraguay's new regulatory authority. The dialogue established between the Paraguayan and Argentinian authorities would build confidence for future nuclear installation projects in the Formosa Province of Argentina.

248. In 2013, Paraguay had assumed the presidency of the Regional Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean (ARCAL), in which capacity it would promote regional cooperation and approval of the Regional Strategic Profile for Latin America and the Caribbean 2016–2021. In the Latin American region, the transfer of practical knowledge of nuclear technology to professionals in different countries was a priority in efforts to address the real needs and improve the well-being of the population. Paraguay was eager for that knowledge transfer to be as effective and efficient as possible. His country encouraged the Agency and the other Member States participating in ARCAL, to take the necessary steps to improve project management quality and build competence so that its activities could be carried out as smoothly as possible. In Paraguay's view, the In Touch platform had considerably facilitated the process and its own work had been greatly facilitated by the response capacity from project counterparts across the entire region.

249. He noted with appreciation the growing support received over past years from the Agency in terms of technical cooperation and, in particular, in the areas of human health, food security, environment and radiation protection. Paraguay was currently participating in 36 regional projects, six national projects and one interregional project. Thanks to those initiatives, Paraguay was strengthening its technical and technological capacity through grants, training courses, workshops, scientific visits, expert missions and equipment.

250. His country advocated fluid cooperation between States and civil society with a view to providing effective solutions and ensuring transparency in the development of nuclear energy, and fostering an extensive and timely exchange of information among all actors involved.

251. In conclusion, he reaffirmed Paraguay's commitment to contributing effectively to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and reiterated its encouragement to countries that had not yet done so to adhere to international instruments in the nuclear field within the Agency's framework.

252. Mr LAAMANEN (Finland) said that, according to the latest Agency statistics, 435 nuclear power reactors were generating electricity in 30 countries worldwide. In addition, 72 new nuclear power reactors were under construction in 15 countries, including in Finland. Nuclear power plants provided about 11% of the world's electricity and 21% of electricity in OECD countries. Those statistics demonstrated that nuclear power was still an important element of the energy mix in many countries.

253. Finland faced increased challenges in balancing its need for a realistic energy mix and assurance of security of supply. The overall energy environment was changing quickly, with concomitant changes in the electricity market.

254. Nuclear power and renewable energy sources such as wind and solar installations were not flexible in terms of energy production, thus they reduced the flexibility of the system as a whole. As more and more intermittent energy sources entered the market, the need for flexible capacity would increase accordingly. When electricity production was provided by smaller production units, larger nuclear reactors did not fit into the energy mix in the way they had previously. Consequently, it might be time to move from larger to small and medium-sized nuclear reactors, which would allow more flexibility.

255. The current economic downturn made it even more difficult for companies to commit themselves to significant investments. High upfront capital costs posed funding challenges, even when longer term returns meant that investments could be attractive. If investments were wanted in the future, a tolerable economic threshold must be set. It was clear that nuclear energy had to adapt itself to the changing electricity market if it were to be successful in the future. National policies could

promote that change and, in that regard, Finland supported the Agency's activities in the area of small and medium-sized reactors.

256. Nuclear waste management strategies always needed to be considered from the very beginning of the development of a nuclear power programme. Finland was currently licensing a final underground repository for spent fuel, Onkalo, which would make use of the most advanced technology, mainly developed in Finland. It would meet strict safety, security and safeguards requirements. The Finnish Government was expected to take a decision on the application of a construction licence during the first quarter of 2015. That would be the first construction licence issued anywhere in the world for a spent nuclear fuel final disposal facility. The encapsulation and spent fuel final disposal process was scheduled to start in 2020.

257. Nuclear weapon proliferation continued to be a serious concern and the international community must take appropriate measures in cases of non-compliance in order to preserve the integrity of the non-proliferation regime and its cornerstone, the NPT .

258. Since the previous session of the General Conference there had been important developments in the preparations for the convening of a conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. The facilitator and the conveners of the Helsinki conference had held five informal meetings in Switzerland with States of the Middle East region. Some progress had been made on the arrangements for the conference. Continuing and determined consultation between States of the region, willingness to seek solutions acceptable to all and political will to pave the way for the conference were now required.

259. The Agency's system of safeguards played an indispensable role in the implementation of the NPT. Safeguards were a prerequisite for the peaceful use of nuclear energy and the Agency comprehensive safeguards agreement, together with an additional protocol, should be accepted universally as the international verification standard.

260. Finland supported the further implementation of the Agency's safeguards system based on the State-level concept. Consistent and universal implementation of the State-level concept would further strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of the safeguards system and would thus contribute to global non-proliferation efforts.

261. Finland also continued to provide extrabudgetary support to Agency safeguards. It had decided earlier in the year to provide a financial contribution of €300 000 for the implementation of the Agency's monitoring and verification activities in Iran pursuant to the JPA. In addition, Finland had given permission to use its unspent balance for the extension of the JPA until November 2014. His country strongly supported current efforts to seek a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue and the work of the Agency under the Framework for Cooperation.

262. Finland attached great importance to the enhancement of nuclear safety and had consistently supported the Agency's activities in that area. It was essential that countries using nuclear power, or embarking on a nuclear power programme, had a sound legislative and regulatory framework for nuclear and radiation safety. The roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders must be clearly defined and regulatory bodies must be given the required authority and independence in their decision-making. Regulatory authorities also needed to enjoy the trust of stakeholders, in particular the citizens of each country.

263. Finland had made extensive use of various Agency safety services and had contributed actively to the implementation and development of those services which it highly valued. It strongly encouraged other States to make full use of them.

264. In conclusion, Finland was strongly committed to strengthening nuclear security worldwide. It had ratified the Amendment to the CPPNM and encouraged all States to do so.

265. His Government continued to provide financial and in-kind support to the Agency's nuclear security activities and the country was a longstanding contributor to the NSF. Finland had participated actively in the work of the Nuclear Security Guidance Committee (NSGC) and in developing documents for the Nuclear Security Series.

266. The Nuclear Security Summit process had significantly raised the visibility of the issue and brought it to the highest political level. Finland had actively taken part in that and other relevant international processes. The unanimous view expressed at The Hague summit was that, for its part, the Agency would have a key role in follow-up and in ensuring that the progress achieved by the summit was irreversible. The summit had set combating nuclear terrorism as a clear priority. Finland would be contributing to that work by hosting the next plenary of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism in June 2015 and he welcomed new partners to join the initiative and participate in that plenary.

267. Mr PETERSEN (Norway) said that disarmament and non-proliferation were, and would remain, cornerstones of Norwegian foreign policy. Nuclear disarmament and a strong and universal NPT were needed in order to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. Norway remained committed to the NPT and to working towards a successful Review Conference in May 2015.

268. The Agency's safeguards system was a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Norway commended the Agency on the implementation of its safeguards mandate and its progress in developing the State-level concept. Furthermore, Norway remained convinced that the system of comprehensive safeguards agreements, combined with additional protocols, was the appropriate international verification standard pursuant to the NPT and it called for universal accession to and implementation of both instruments.

269. The non-proliferation regime faced challenging times. With regard to Iran's nuclear programme and the related Board discussions the previous week, the Agency was still unable to conclude that all nuclear material in Iran was used for peaceful activities. Norway welcomed the continuing dialogue between the Agency and Iran but progress was slow. It was time for Iran to step up and engage fully with the Agency in order to resolve all outstanding issues and restore international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme.

270. He emphasized Norway's full support for the political dialogue between the P5+1 and Iran and the efforts to reach a comprehensive agreement by 24 November 2014. Norway had pledged 3.65 million Norwegian kroner (\$570 000/€440 000) to support the Agency's pivotal role in monitoring and verifying the implementation of the JPA.

271. The Board had reported Syria's non-compliance with its safeguards agreement to the Security Council and General Assembly. Norway strongly urged Syria to comply fully with the Board resolution of June 2011 and to conclude and bring into force an additional protocol as soon as possible.

272. Norway was deeply concerned by the DPRK's ongoing defiance of the international community as it continued to pursue its nuclear weapons programme. Its declaration of its status as a nuclear-weapon State was unacceptable and its statements on expanding and modernizing its nuclear capabilities were deeply worrying. The DPRK must refrain from any further such provocations. In addition, Norway urged the DPRK to comply with the norms of the NPT.

273. Non-compliance clearly demonstrated the need for a robust, effective and legally binding non-proliferation regime. Norway reiterated the importance of the early entry into force of the CTBT and called on all States — in particular the Annex 2 States — to sign and ratify that vital Convention.

274. Besides the challenges relating to non-proliferation, improvements were urgently needed in safety and emergency preparedness. While nuclear safety was a national responsibility, the Fukushima Daiichi accident had served as yet another reminder that nuclear accidents were never exclusively a national concern and could only be managed through international cooperation.

275. In addition to nuclear safety, emergency preparedness and response must also be improved. The Agency's capacities and national capacities must be developed in that area and coordination must be enhanced in order to make effective use of all existing expertise. It was necessary to continue seeking universal adherence to nuclear safety conventions, to update or revise them as necessary, and to improve their implementation.

276. His country urged the Agency and all its Member States to continue their efforts to fulfil the Agency's Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. It looked forward to the continued implementation of the recommendations in the International Action Plan for Strengthening the International Preparedness and Response System for Nuclear and Radiological Emergencies.

277. Neither nuclear accidents nor terrorism respected borders. While commitment to nuclear security had been confirmed at the highest political level, progress in adherence to the 2005 Amendment to the CPPNM had been slow. Norway called upon all States to sign and ratify the global conventions on nuclear security and to cooperate with the Agency in their implementation.

278. Norway acknowledged that the Agency was the keystone of international nuclear security cooperation. His country had also taken part in the successful Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague in March 2014 and it looked forward to continuing that important process in Washington DC in 2016. During the summit, the Prime Minister of Norway had launched a joint Norwegian–Swedish initiative to assist Ukraine with improving the safety and security of Ukrainian nuclear installations. In addition, Norway and the United States had recently signed a bilateral nuclear non-proliferation agreement. The first project under that agreement would assist Ukraine in securing radioactive material and strengthening border controls.

279. Norway also supported nuclear security through international forums such as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. It provided funding for the NSF and for work to ensure full implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). Norway had recently completed its ratification of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

280. Minimizing the use of HEU remained a priority for the Norwegian Government. While important progress in HEU minimization had already been made in the civilian sector, justification for the continued use of HEU in both civilian and military applications — and the security concerns related to that material — must be addressed. Norway would continue its efforts in that regard.

281. Norway remained committed to multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle. It appreciated the Secretariat's work in developing the Agency's LEU bank and looked forward to its completion.

282. Peaceful uses of nuclear energy went far beyond the production of electricity. Safe water supplies, improved crops, nuclear diagnostics and medicine, energy planning and pest control were among the areas in which the Agency provided assistance. Norway supported the Agency's technical cooperation programme by paying its full share and by welcoming experts from other countries to Norway on scientific visits. Norway reiterated that the Agency could make a positive contribution to efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in close partnership with other UN organizations.

283. His country fully supported Article IV of the NPT and respected the sovereign right of every State to choose its own energy mix, subject to compliance with the highest standards of safety and security. The probable increase in the use of nuclear energy worldwide would bring with it an increased risk of accidents, the need for safety and emergency preparedness, nuclear security implications and non-proliferation issues. The Agency must therefore be equipped to take on those and future challenges.

284. 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. The Agency could only perform, however, to the extent that it was enabled by Member States. It was crucial for the Agency to be properly equipped and have the authority, expertise and resources needed to fulfil its mandate. Funding for the Agency's statutory activities was still inadequate. The Agency's Regular Budget must increase in proportion to its tasks in order to ensure a sustainable effort in the field of nuclear safety and security. Norway had made substantial contributions to the NSF, the ECAS project and the Agency's work to strengthen safety in developing countries embarking on nuclear power programmes.

285. It was important that the Agency prepared for potential verification tasks under nuclear disarmament or arms control agreements, as set out in the Medium-Term Strategy 2012–2017. Norway supported and looked forward to the implementation of the strategy in the future.

286. Nuclear safety and nuclear security could not be dealt with in isolation. That work must also involve non-proliferation and disarmament. Nuclear safety, security and non-proliferation were global concerns that must be dealt with in a coordinated manner in order to minimize the various inherent risks of nuclear power. The Agency played a crucial role in achieving the goals of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful, safe and secure uses of nuclear energy.

287. The Agency must remain the primary instrument of the international community to ensure the use of nuclear materials in the safest and securest way possible and to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

288. Mr AGUILAR CASTILLO (Costa Rica) noted that the number of members from Latin America had grown in recent years, which gave the region greater significance and influence in the Agency. Increased and improved attention should therefore be given to the activities and initiatives of GRULAC countries, the provision of technical cooperation and the Agency's other areas of work.

289. Costa Rica's membership of the Board for the period 2012–2014 had ended in September 2014. He was proud to be able to affirm that, as in all its international actions, Costa Rica had taken on that role responsibly and seriously. It had focused on promoting the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear technologies and energy for the benefit of the social and economic development of developing countries.

290. With regard to the nuclear safety and security of radioactive sources and materials and nuclear facilities, Costa Rica highlighted the Agency's ongoing work to implement the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety in the light of the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant.

291. High-level risks associated with the production of nuclear power required constant work to improve practice and methods to protect the public and environment and should be a primary concern for the responsible and sustainable use of nuclear energy.

292. Costa Rica thanked the Agency for the assistance provided to optimize its regulatory capacities for the proper disposal of waste and disused sources. In that regard, it drew attention to the successful conduct in 2014 of a mission to extract disused radioactive sources with the support of the Government of Canada and the Agency. Through that mission, it had been possible to dispose safely

and securely of a number of sources which had been stored in Costa Rica for several years. That exemplary operation, carried out in collaboration with the authorities of Costa Rica, had been shared with other countries as a model for exercises of that kind.

293. Costa Rica had also continued to make significant progress in ensuring the nuclear security of its radioactive sources and in strengthening regional cooperation in that domain.

294. To that end, Costa Rica had hosted two important events in 2014: a regional training course on the foundations of a nuclear security infrastructure and the first regional meeting on the Nuclear Security Information Management System (NUSIMS), which had had a positive impact.

295. With the Agency's advice, Costa Rica also planned to adopt an INSSP in the short term, which would determine the technical framework required for measures to be implemented in the coming years and which would be focused on building the necessary capacity of Costa Rican institutions and its human resources.

296. Ratification of the Amendment to the CPPNM, which was currently being processed in Congress, would complement that INSSP and its aims. In 2013, Costa Rica had also ratified the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and it hoped to contribute to the strengthening and universalization of the international nuclear security regime, which was becoming increasingly relevant in light of the asymmetric risks and threats faced by the contemporary world.

297. Costa Rica participated actively and dynamically in the Agency's technical cooperation programme, both in its national projects and in the Latin America and the Caribbean regional programme. It therefore highly valued the Agency's activities that supported the aim of using nuclear applications for peace and development, as embodied in the transfer of knowledge and applicable technologies to fields relevant for its citizens.

298. Costa Rica supported efforts to boost the efficiency of those activities and their impact on improving living conditions in the region, along with its scientific and technological progress, taking into account the country's specific features in terms of the scale of its projects, needs and financial and technical capacities.

299. Implementation of the 2014–2015 technical cooperation cycle, which involved projects in environmental science, isotope hydrology, human health, agriculture, pest control and nuclear safety, had been highly positive for Costa Rica. Those projects were fully in line with the aims of its national development plan and supported the country's growing capacity to implement effectively the increasingly complex projects with tangible and lasting results.

300. During the Director General's visit to Costa Rica in October 2013, he had been able to see for himself the progress and achievements that had been facilitated through the Agency's support, in particular in cancer treatment and environmental studies and, during his tours of Costa Rican health and research facilities, the extent of the Agency's contributions to the welfare of developing countries.

301. He also highlighted the work carried out by his country's institutions in innovative areas and, specifically, the meeting on research using small fusion devices, the 21st in the series of such meetings, which had been hosted by the Costa Rica Institute of Technology in February 2014. Costa Rica firmly supported research backed by the Agency to explore improved and more suitable sources and energy production processes for nuclear technologies.

302. He highlighted the work carried out under the Regional Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean (ARCAL) to improve the management and scope of regional technical cooperation, which was highly important for

its Member States in the Latin American and Caribbean region. In particular, Costa Rica welcomed the approval of a new 2016–2021 Regional Strategic Profile, which would guarantee optimum performance of the Agreement and the achievement of its targets for the next decade.

303. He also commended the Division for Latin America in the Department of Technical Cooperation on its achievements, including the implementation rate scored by the region for projects in the Agency's technical cooperation programme. The professionalism and dedication of the staff in the Division for Latin America had been a decisive and essential factor in ensuring that success.

304. Costa Rica reaffirmed its strong support for the ReNuAL project and hoped that it would continue to develop in line with approved plans. Capacity-building of the laboratories was vitally important if Member States were to receive the assistance that they needed, including training in the use of medical linear accelerators at the new facilities.

305. It was important that the Agency had the necessary resources to fulfil all its statutory obligations and that the resources were allocated proportionally among the three pillars of its activities.

306. In that regard, Costa Rica was positive about the agreements concluded in 2014 by the Working Group on Financing the Agency's Activities, the recommendations of which would be adopted by the Board and gradually implemented by the Agency. Consistent progress must be made towards the goal of having technical cooperation resources that were sufficient, assured and predictable. Only then would it be possible to guarantee the stability and future of the technical cooperation programme and the Agency as a whole, whose existence was essentially related to the technical cooperation that it provided.

307. Costa Rica reaffirmed its support for the Agency's work in fulfilment of its obligations for safeguards application and other nuclear verification activities, essential to the international non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament regime. The stability and sustainability of that regime were closely linked to the integrity, impartiality and technical objectivity of the Agency's safeguards system. For that reason, Costa Rica recognized the serious efforts made by the Agency to streamline and strengthen its safeguards system through the development and application of the State-level concept and State-level approach and through the transparent and satisfactory consultation process conducted with Member States on that issue since the end of 2013.

308. Costa Rica called on countries that had not yet signed a comprehensive safeguards agreement and additional protocol to take those essential measures in order to fulfil the objectives of the Agency's verification programme and application of safeguards. The use by Member States of nuclear materials and facilities exclusively for peaceful purposes could only be guaranteed by the universal application of the comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol.

309. Where pending issues in the area of safeguards were concerned, Costa Rica, as a steadfast advocate of international law, had always supported peaceful, multilateral and negotiated resolutions to all conflicts and the fulfilment of international obligations by all Member States of the Agency, without distinction. Costa Rica had confidence in the Agency's key role in that regard and would continue giving constructive support in order to contribute to global peace and security.

310. The Agency's work relating to safeguards application and nuclear verification would be of value only if the wider international community truly aspired to achieve global, comprehensive, total, irreversible and verifiable nuclear disarmament, as recalled by the UN Secretary General in his address at the start of the Conference. As repeatedly stated by the 33 Member States of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), the total elimination of nuclear weapons was the only real guarantee against the threat of their use.

311. Costa Rica, alongside GRULAC partner countries, therefore greatly welcomed the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, which had been commemorated for the first time in 2014, having been approved by the UN General Assembly in 2013. Costa Rica continued to hope that attainment of the goal of a world free from nuclear weapons could be celebrated in the near future.

312. Mr ERFANI (Afghanistan) said that, although the development of nuclear applications was a relatively new step for Afghanistan, the country had already benefited extensively from its cooperation with the Agency.

313. Afghanistan was currently preparing for what it had termed the Transformation Decade 2015–2024, which would take it towards a self-reliant economy. Nuclear science and technology would have a crucial role to play in achieving the national development agenda during that critical decade and beyond. Afghanistan's Country Programme Framework had already facilitated cooperation with the Agency in some of the most important areas of work towards that goal, such as radiological safety, nuclear security infrastructure, human health (specifically cancer control), agriculture and food, water resource management, energy planning and human resources development.

314. For its part, Afghanistan was committed to continuing efforts to develop the institutional and regulatory framework required for peaceful nuclear technology applications. Training and capacity building remained key to the efforts of the Afghan Atomic Energy High Commission (AAEHC), which was leading that process, and the Agency had provided considerable capacity-building opportunities to the Commission in the form of fellowships and training courses. The continued lack of funds, however, necessitated further cooperation and support from the Agency and the international community at large.

315. The Agency's technical cooperation activities were of great importance for Afghanistan and the entire region. His country considered it essential, therefore, that there be sufficient, assured and predictable resources for the TCF. His country was appreciative of all the contributions pledged to the Fund for 2015. It also greatly appreciated the support and assistance received from the Agency under various technical cooperation projects and looked forward to the expansion of such cooperation in the implementation of future projects.

316. Over the past year, three key projects had been the focus of technical cooperation between Afghanistan and the Agency, while a number of others were in the initial development stages. The first such project was the establishment of a radiation oncology centre, a centre for diagnostic radiology, and radiotherapy and radiology services in Kabul. That project was extremely important to Afghanistan, as there were no cancer-related diagnostic and therapeutic services anywhere in the country and very few patients could afford to travel abroad for treatment. The Agency and Afghanistan had been successfully working on the project since 2005, and the relevant bankable document had been completed in 2013. A project document was now ready to be submitted to the donor community as fundraising was crucial for implementation of the project.

317. Under the project, seven fellowships had already been approved by the Agency for Afghan candidates to receive specialized training in diagnostic radiology. As Afghanistan had no suitable training facility for specialists in that field, such fellowships and training programmes were vital to ensure that the centre could call on the required specialists to maintain the necessary standards when it became operational. To ensure that those specialists who had been trained in the past could be kept up to date with new advances in technology, his country would appreciate the Agency's assistance in facilitating the attendance of its experts at regional conferences and in facilitating the donation of specialist equipment for, among other purposes, mammography and ultrasound scans to ensure the quality of the services provided at the centre.

318. The second key project was the development of Afghanistan's draft regulations for the safety of radiation sources. The first nuclear bill was under review and his delegation hoped that it would soon be ratified. The relevant Afghan authorities and experts were working in close consultation with the Agency to sharpen the regulations' focus on health and agriculture. A work plan had been set up which envisaged the completion of the project by the beginning of 2015. Afghanistan needed the continued support of experts from the Agency throughout the project, however, in order to improve the regulations from a technical perspective and to assist with the further training of specialized Afghan personnel and staff of the AAEHC in general.

319. The third key project was a Regulatory Infrastructure Development Project (RIDP) for radioactive sources. A bilateral meeting on the implementation of the RIDP in Afghanistan had been held in Vienna, on 26 and 27 May 2014. Discussions had focused on different elements of Afghanistan's radiation safety regulatory infrastructure, with the aim of identifying gaps and priority needs and developing an initial short term action plan to be implemented under the RIDP project.

320. Afghanistan was strongly committed to the implementation of its safeguard agreements with the Agency. His delegation was following the subject closely and hoped to improve cooperation on the subject over the coming year.

321. His country fully supported the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East and respective regional consultations to achieve that goal. The Agency was central to that process and the Government of Afghanistan welcomed any confidence-building measures in the complex region of the Middle East, together with any positive steps towards the elimination of arsenals of weapons of mass destruction. Afghanistan supported all efforts to convene the Helsinki conference on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East prior to the 2015 NPT Review Conference, thereby helping to ensure a reliable non-proliferation regime.

322. As a prime victim of international terrorism, Afghanistan strongly supported all efforts aimed at strengthened global nuclear security. The security framework was constantly changing, therefore the Agency needed the full support of all Member States in order to fulfil its mandate, given its central role in ensuring nuclear security. Afghanistan looked forward to the Nuclear Security Summit to be held in the United States in 2016 and to the International Conference on Nuclear Security to be held in December 2016. Highlighting the excellent work of the CTBTO and the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (VCDNP), he called on those bodies to continue and, where possible, increase their training and capacity-building efforts.

323. Afghanistan attached great importance to the Agency's technical cooperation projects under its CPF and remained confident that the impact of its activities would be increasingly felt. Afghanistan wished to encourage the increased transfer of know-how and more capacity-building programmes from countries with advanced nuclear and radiological standards. Those could also serve as an important step in shifting from mere assistance to proper cooperation. His country valued the Agency's efforts in all areas in which it assisted developing countries to gain further access to nuclear technologies. In its view, that must be a priority for the post-2015 development agenda, owing to the important role that access to energy played in poverty reduction and improving health and livelihoods in developing nations.

324. In conclusion, he affirmed the importance for his country's future of its cooperation with the Agency and expressed its gratitude for all the assistance received thus far.

325. Mr DAVIDOIU (Romania) said that, over the years, his country had enjoyed excellent cooperation with the specialized services of the Agency. None of the missions carried out by the Agency in Romania had ever identified any undeclared nuclear material, nor had there ever been any indication of the possible diversion of nuclear material from peaceful nuclear purposes.

326. As a State Party, Romania was convinced that the NPT remained the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. It strongly promoted a comprehensive and balanced approach towards the three pillars of the NPT regime as the best way to implement the 2010 NPT Action Plan.

327. In that context, Romania had assumed an active role in the current review cycle process and had had the privilege of chairing the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee in Geneva. Romania would also have the honour to chair Main Committee II at the 2015 NPT Review Conference. The forthcoming Conference would offer an excellent opportunity for all States Parties to renew and intensify their commitment to the NPT. Romania firmly believed that a general commitment to fully implement the provisions of the Action Plan would further strengthen the three pillars of the Treaty: nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

328. The longstanding objective of complete elimination of nuclear weapons must be accompanied by strict adherence by all States to their non-proliferation obligations. As a country with a civilian nuclear programme, Romania fully supported the right of any State to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, provided that non-proliferation and safety and security conditions were met in full. It was essential to maintain the balance between the rights and obligations envisaged in the Treaty. Romania underlined the special role of the Agency and its safeguards system and supported the enhancement of its effectiveness.

329. The safeguards system was the correct instrument to ensure the control of all raw and special fissionable materials by the Agency and Euratom. Developments in recent years had underscored the critical role of the comprehensive safeguards agreement and the additional protocol, which had strengthened the Agency's capacity to detect and respond to non-compliance with safeguards obligations. Romania therefore welcomed the further development of the State-level concept as a valuable tool in the implementation of the NPT, as it would help to create an environment conducive to peaceful nuclear cooperation.

330. Furthermore, Romania welcomed the extension of the United States contribution to the PUI beyond 2015. It would augment the resources of the TCF and provide the Agency with the additional flexibility to respond to crises and emerging challenges.

331. New steps were needed to counter global threats and challenges from States or non-State actors that defied international law and global standards in the field. Concerted efforts should be undertaken with States that did not currently comply with their respective obligations and commitments. Although no final agreement had yet been reached on the Iranian nuclear issue, Romania continued to hope that extended negotiations would be used wisely and efficiently in order to achieve that final important step. Romania condemned the DPRK's continued proliferation activities and provocations and urged the DPRK to comply fully, unconditionally and without delay with all its international obligations.

332. Romania was strongly committed to efforts to strengthen nuclear safety and security and reduce the continuing threat of nuclear terrorism.

333. In the light of the Fukushima Daiichi accident, Romania highly appreciated the activities carried out by the Agency to address the issues of nuclear safety and nuclear security in a coherent manner, thereby helping to ensure the safe, secure and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Since nuclear power would remain an important option for many countries, it was imperative for every country to initiate comprehensive actions to strengthen nuclear safety and security at a national level, including by establishing and implementing various legally and non-legally binding instruments.

334. For its part, Romania was a State Party to the CPPNM, the Amendment to the CPPNM, the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the CTBT and

therefore encouraged all States that had not yet done so to become party to the CPPNM, to ratify its Amendment and to sign and ratify CTBT.

335. At the Nuclear Security Summit held in The Hague in March 2014, Romania had taken on several unilateral commitments in nuclear security, one of which had already been implemented, while others were in the process of implementation. Romania had received an INSServ mission in May 2014, which had had the objective of assessing national capabilities for detecting and responding to illicit trafficking involving nuclear and radioactive materials. Romania was currently preparing to send an official request to the Agency for an IPPAS follow-up mission in 2016 and it would also make a voluntary contribution to the NSF.

336. Furthermore, Romania was making every necessary effort to ensure full alignment of its national regulations with the latest Nuclear Security Recommendations.

337. Based on a bilateral document signed in 2013 between the Romanian National Commission for Nuclear Activities Control and the Office of Nuclear Security, the Commission would benefit from specialized support in areas such as security culture, prevention of and protection against threats, security of radioactive material transport, design basis threats, security of radioactive sources, and combating illicit trafficking of nuclear materials. Some activities had been carried out during 2014 and others were being planned.

338. Romania recognized the importance of a formally established long-term sustainability programme in order to maintain the effectiveness of the physical protection regime. That issue would be addressed as part of its national strategy for nuclear safety and security, which had been approved by a government decision in July 2014. Romania was now working on its implementation with the joint involvement of all national authorities and institutions in that field in order to strengthen the level of nuclear safety and security in the country.

339. In 2014, the National Commission for Nuclear Activities Control and the Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority, together with the Agency, had started the extrabudgetary Regional Excellence Project on Regulatory Capacity Building in Nuclear and Radiological Safety, Emergency Preparedness and Response in Romania. That project was funded by a grant under the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanism Programme for 2009–2014, for capacity-building and institutional cooperation between Romanian and Norwegian public institutions, local and regional authorities (RO18).

340. Romania highly appreciated its excellent collaboration with the Agency, including the Agency's technical assistance, to improve its national nuclear capabilities. In that context, he noted that the safe management and disposal of radioactive waste and spent fuel were major challenges for the future of nuclear power. There remained a high risk that nuclear or other radioactive materials could be diverted from their normal use, which represented a serious threat to international peace and security.

341. The relevant institutions in Romania were fulfilling their obligations and responsibilities to ensure the provision of appropriate options for the management and disposal of nuclear fuel and radioactive waste. They were also working to ensure that the use of nuclear energy did not create undue risks for current and future generations.

342. In addition, Romania was an active participant in national, regional and interregional projects covering short and medium-term national development priorities in the areas of waste management, human health and research and development.

343. The National Nuclear Agency aimed to build a low and intermediate-level radioactive waste (LILW) repository for the country by 2020. Technical cooperation was vital in that undertaking, to complete the necessary steps prior to implementation of the project. In October 2014, in collaboration with the Department of Technical Cooperation, Romania would host an expert mission which would

focus on the importance of public acceptance, a communications strategy and the action plan for the planned repository.

344. The National Nuclear Agency was Romania's national liaison office for technical cooperation with the Agency. In May 2014, it had submitted, in accordance with technical cooperation guidelines and using technical cooperation tools, three Category A national projects and one Category B national project, which would be implemented in 2016 and 2017. The fields requiring assistance included improvement of radiotherapy services in Romania, enhancement of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel management, further development of the regulatory infrastructure, and finalization of the educational and training refuelling simulator.

345. The National Nuclear Agency also acted as the national contact point for INPRO and was responsible for developing a medium and long-term national assessment of the contribution made by nuclear energy to the Romanian national energy mix, under the country's Nuclear Energy System Assessment (NESA) project. The deliverables of that project would consist of two interim reports, to be published in September 2014 on the planning of the national energetic system on infrastructure, radioactive waste management and economy and on the evaluation of the sustainability of the nuclear energetic system using the INPRO methodology. The final report, which was scheduled for completion in 2016, would include an overall assessment and cover physical protection, the safety of nuclear power plants and nuclear infrastructures, environmental protection and proliferation resistance.

346. Ms MUNTANDIRO (Zimbabwe) said that her country attached great importance to bilateral cooperation with the Agency in areas such as nuclear medicine, radiation protection infrastructure, radiotherapy, crop and livestock production, tsetse fly eradication, energy planning, cancer therapy and capacity-building. The cooperation had made a significant contribution to the Government's endeavours to improve the socioeconomic well-being of its citizens.

347. Zimbabwe also appreciated the considerable continuing support extended by the Agency to the Radiation Protection Authority of Zimbabwe to strengthen regulatory infrastructure and radiation safety and security. The country had made great progress since 2010, when the Agency had been unable to approve the supply of Category 2 brachytherapy radioactive sources owing to Zimbabwe's inability to satisfy the minimum requirements for thematic safety areas 1 and 2. Zimbabwe was now able to make in-kind contributions to the Agency's programmes by hosting regional meetings. In the area of nuclear safety and security, it had hosted a regional training course on the Nuclear Security Information Management System (NUSIMS) in July 2014. Zimbabwe was also assisting other countries in the region with capacity-building by hosting fellows for radiation safety training. It was committed to continuing its support to other Member States in that field and in other areas where it had capacity. The Agency had also assisted with the development of an INSSP.

348. It was gratifying that Zimbabwe had been invited to participate in the special briefing session on a new strategic approach to establishing and strengthening radiation safety infrastructure in Member States, jointly organized by the Department of Technical Cooperation and the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security in the margins of the 58th General Conference, and to share its experiences in establishing and strengthening its own regulatory infrastructure. Her country deeply appreciated the support extended by the Agency and other international cooperation partners that had significantly contributed to the national goals of establishing a robust and effective regulatory infrastructure.

349. Zimbabwe also looked forward to continued Agency assistance to enable its Radiation Protection Authority to focus on additional capacity-building and improve occupational exposure control, medical exposure control and waste management for disused sources. Her Government therefore expressed its appreciation to the Agency for facilitating the visit of an IRRS mission in

November 2014. National authorities would pay full attention to the findings and recommendations of the IRRS mission in order further to improve the national regulatory infrastructure in line with international standards. Given the potentially high risks associated with the use of nuclear and radiation technologies, including in medical and industrial fields, there was a compelling need for all Member States to prioritize cooperation in establishing and strengthening radiation safety infrastructure.

350. Regarding national cancer treatment measures, the Government of Zimbabwe remained unequivocally committed to providing the resources necessary to strengthen existing health facilities in the country. Continuing Agency support in that area was therefore deeply appreciated. That commitment, evident through the recent purchase of a linear particle accelerator, other relevant equipment and a gamma camera and image scanner intensifier (C-arm), was also strengthened through measures taken to tackle, as a matter of urgency, in a holistic fashion, the challenges of much needed specialist human resources and other related requirements, including raising awareness among the population.

351. Agriculture remained one of the main pillars of Zimbabwe's economy and the effects of climate change and global warming, resulting in drought and erratic rainfall patterns in the country, had therefore eroded its food security and hurt the economy. The Agency's support and assistance under the project ZIM5018: Optimizing Water Use and Soil Productivity for Increased Food Security in Drylands had proved critical in enabling the Ministry of Agriculture to take necessary measures to mitigate the associated challenges. Zimbabwe also benefited from the Agency's assistance in a field project to improve crops using mutation induction and biotechnology through the farmer participation approach and developing drought-tolerant and disease and pest-resistant legume varieties with enhanced nutritional content using mutation breeding and novel techniques.

352. With respect to PACT, her country commended the Agency on its collaboration with governments, private companies and international organizations, including the WHO, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) and the Union for International Cancer Control, in initiatives to mitigate the growing global phenomenon of cancer. The magnitude of deaths from cancer, most of which could have been prevented through early detection, treatment and cancer therapy facilities, which were lacking in most developing countries, demanded a strengthened global and collaborative approach. The Agency's emphasis on PACT was most commendable and worthy of greater support, including from Member States and the private sector.

353. In collaboration with other UN specialized agencies, the Agency's support for efforts to achieve the African Union's goal under PATTEC to create sustainable tsetse and trypanosomiasis-free areas using fly suppression and various eradication techniques also demonstrated the significant contribution of the technical cooperation programme to social and economic development, particularly in Africa. Zimbabwe was a beneficiary of the Agency's SIT applications for its national tsetse control project in the Matusadona National Park. Significant progress had been made towards that end, including the installation of insectary equipment in Makuti, the procurement of tsetse odour attractants, and human resources development. Given that, at 6000 km², the area subject to the threat of tsetse flies was too large for an SIT project alone, national authorities would also continue to use the ground spraying method. Her country also commended the Agency on its support for similar projects in Angola, Chad, Ethiopia, Senegal and Uganda.

354. The Government of Zimbabwe had embarked on economic growth and a wealth creation policy to achieve sustainable socioeconomic development that would both benefit Zimbabweans and reposition the country as one of the strongest economies in the region and continent. The success of its economic growth would also be predicated on using the Agency's competencies in the peaceful

applications of nuclear energy. Accordingly, Zimbabwe looked forward to deepening bilateral cooperation with the Agency in the sectors that overlapped with the country's development agenda.

355. The Agency's technical cooperation programme was the main channel for promoting the global use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, socioeconomic development and poverty alleviation. Zimbabwe believed that the deliberations of the Working Group on Financing the Agency's Activities had served as an extremely useful platform for building understanding and consensus towards measures that could be adopted to ensure that the resources made available for technical cooperation were sufficient, assured and predictable.

356. Current global challenges that affected the lives of people everywhere, such as climate change, food insecurity, water scarcity, the scourge of cancer and other diseases, and the ills associated with economic underdevelopment, all underscored the growing relevance of the Agency's activities in the application of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. It was therefore the responsibility of all Member States to provide the requisite support to the Agency in pursuit of the successful performance of its mandate.

357. Zimbabwe remained unequivocally committed to the NPT, which was the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. It was, however, concerned by the uneven attention given to the three pillars of the NPT and by the requirement to fulfil nuclear disarmament obligations being consigned to mere rhetoric by Member States which possessed arsenals of weapons of mass destruction. Zimbabwe continued to maintain that equal attention must be given to the implementation of all three pillars of the Treaty, for the attainment of complete nuclear disarmament, and the need to allow unfettered use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Zimbabwe welcomed the designation of 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

358. Zimbabwe also unequivocally supported the inalienable right of every Member State to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with their respective obligations. With regard to the development of the State-level concept, the Agency must continually review its safeguards activities, given the wider and growing global use of nuclear technology and the enhanced sophistication of nuclear facilities with the concomitant challenges for safeguards implementation.

359. Her country recognized the imperative need to strengthen the effectiveness and efficacy of the Agency's safeguards system to enable credible assurances of the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities. A robust safeguards system also underpinned collective endeavours to achieve nuclear non-proliferation and a world free from the threat of nuclear weapons. To that end, Zimbabwe commended the Agency for heeding the calls of Member States and undertaking extensive consultations and the open dialogue necessary to engender mutual trust and greater transparency. Her country also welcomed the Agency's commitment to continue open dialogue on that important matter and not to impose new obligations on Member States under their relevant safeguards agreements.

360. Zimbabwe regretted that it had still not been possible to convene the conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. It believed that the creation of such zones was a requisite step towards global nuclear disarmament and the enhancement of peace and security and it urged the Director General to continue his efforts to ensure the convening of the conference at the earliest possible date.

361. In conclusion, she commended the Director General on his unwavering commitment to addressing gender imbalance in top management positions and to increasing the number of personnel at the Agency from developing countries.

362. Ms ALIFERI (Greece) said that Greece was a non-nuclear country and while nuclear power was not part of its own national energy mix, it acknowledged the legitimate right of all States to peaceful nuclear energy, provided that they fully adhered to and respected the international non-proliferation regime, safeguards agreements and the Agency's safety standards and security architecture.

363. Greece adhered to all relevant agreements with the Agency and fully supported all the Agency's applicable projects. It had signed, ratified and implemented in its national legislation the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

364. The amendment to the EU Nuclear Safety Directive had been a priority issue for the Greek Atomic Energy Commission during the Greek presidency of the Council of the EU in the first half of 2014. The new European Directive on Nuclear Safety (2014/87/Euratom) had been agreed upon in July 2014.

365. Greece had participated in the Sixth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety held at the Agency's headquarters in March-April 2014 and intended to participate in the Diplomatic Conference in February 2015.

366. Her country was confident that the highly important lessons to be learned from the Fukushima Daiichi report, which was expected by the end of 2014, would lead to further activities under the Agency's Nuclear Safety Plan in order to improve the management of similar risks worldwide in the future.

367. Greece strongly believed in the universality of the NPT and urged all States that had not yet done so to join the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States. It also intended to participate in the third International Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, to be hosted by Austria in Vienna in December 2014. Greece considered that conference as an effort towards strengthening the disarmament and non-proliferation regime in line with the Agency's statutory mandate and in the interests of humanity.

368. Greece regretted the failure to convene a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. It was confident, however, that the facilitator, Jaakko Laajava of Finland, would be successful in his mission and build on the small progress achieved to date. Greece encouraged all parties to show political will and step up their efforts towards convening the conference and contributing to its success. Greece believed that the application of comprehensive Agency safeguards to all nuclear material and activities in the Middle East and other regions would create confidence among all States and promote peace, security and prosperity for all.

369. Her country also recognized the paramount importance of the Agency's nuclear verification work in Iran, Syria and, it was to be hoped, once again in the DPRK in the near future, in support of efforts made by the international community to reach a peaceful solution to the relevant outstanding issues. In that context, Greece welcomed the progress achieved to date in the cooperation between the Agency and Iran. It called upon Iran to demonstrate full cooperation with the Agency in order to resolve vital outstanding issues and to build confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme. It encouraged all parties to the extended E3+3 and Iran negotiations to continue and further enhance their efforts to achieve a comprehensive peaceful solution.

370. Greece was deeply concerned by the DPRK's proliferation activities, and by the defiance which it manifested in respect of its international obligations. It urged the DPRK to abandon all its existing nuclear and ballistic missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

371. Greece supported the Agency's efforts to develop and implement the State-level concept and welcomed the Agency's supplementary report on that matter.

372. Turning to the issue of bilateral agreements and arrangements between the Agency and the Greek Government in the field of nuclear safety and security, she said that the Greek Atomic Energy Commission had been designated as the regional training centre in Europe for radiation, transport and waste safety, and also as the regional training centre in Europe for nuclear security.

373. Under the bilateral agreement on nuclear safety, Greece looked forward to welcoming approximately 20 participants from regional countries to a six-month postgraduate course on radiation protection and safety of radioactive sources, to be held in Athens from October 2014. Under the same agreement, the Greek Government had arranged with the Agency that it would host the first workshop on developing an effective compliance assurance regime for the transport of radioactive material in Mediterranean coastal States and associated shipping States, in Athens in February 2015.

374. Under the bilateral agreement on nuclear security, Greece continued to provide the Agency with experts participating in consultancy and technical meetings, international missions and training courses and to host fellowships and regional training courses. It also contributed to the development of the Nuclear Security Series documents and the establishment of fundamentals through the regular participation of a high-level Greek expert in the Nuclear Security Guidance Committee.

375. Under the same agreement, Greece would host a regional training course on threat assessment and a risk-informed approach for nuclear and other radioactive material out of regulatory control in December 2014.

376. Ten years after the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, Greece was proud to recall that current fundamental concepts on nuclear security had been initiated and developed through practical experience gained on that occasion. Those Games had been the first major public event covered by a comprehensive Nuclear Security Plan under an extensive cooperation project between Greece and the Agency. Her country now had a wide network of radiation detection portals and other equipment on its border at the main entry points and it was pleased to share the experience gained with other countries and the Agency.

377. Greece was honoured by the Director General's decision to invite a renowned Greek expert to serve as a member of AdSec for the three-year period 2013–2015.

378. Recognizing the importance of strengthening international cooperation, Greece had hosted the Nuclear Detection Working Group of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism in Athens in October 2013. Together with the United States Department of Energy, it would also host an international workshop on second line of defence, in Athens in November 2014, with extensive participation from African countries, the European Commission and the Agency.

379. Greece highly appreciated the Agency's efforts to boost the capabilities of Member States in the development and application of nuclear sciences and technology in order to promote scientific, technological and economic development. It also set high store by the role of technical cooperation as the primary support mechanism for Member States, particularly in strengthening safety and security in all aspects of the peaceful use of nuclear technology. Greek scientists actively assisted with the Agency's technical cooperation activities by participating in expert missions, scientific visits and by hosting fellowships in Greek laboratories.

380. In conclusion, she reiterated her Government's strong support for the important mission of the Agency and reaffirmed Greece's commitment to continued and active cooperation with the Agency.

381. Mr TAZARKI (Tunisia) said that Tunisia was studying the possibility of developing the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology in various fields, given the advantages and possible solutions they could offer in areas such as health, industry and agriculture. Tunisia was also impressing upon the public the importance of those technologies, their long-term economic benefit and

their use in providing relevant solutions while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and without posing a threat to the environment.

382. As fossil fuel resources remained limited in Tunisia, the country had been unable to satisfy its growing energy needs and, in its fragile and political circumstances, had been unable to achieve the development to which it aspired. Tunisia had been striving to mobilize all available water resources and meet additional demand for potable water through seawater desalination, using costly conventional technology. Accordingly, in the light of those challenges, Tunisia was exploring various economic and technological avenues to ensure its energy and water security, including the use of nuclear energy for power generation and seawater desalination. It remained abreast of developments in areas relating to the use of small and medium-sized reactors and wished to strengthen its cooperation with the Agency in that area, to see the greater participation of its experts in technical cooperation programmes aimed at domestic capacity-building, and to familiarize itself with tests and applications which could create added value.

383. Since joining the Agency in 1957, Tunisia had always sought to bolster cooperation and abide by the pledges that it made to the Agency. In addition, it had undertaken to approve amendments to the Agency's Statute, convinced of the importance of providing the Agency with the tools that would allow it to keep pace with the changing world and meet States' aspirations for sustainable, safe and equitable growth.

384. Tunisia honoured its financial pledges to the Agency and had transferred all of its contributions to the Agency's accounts and, in turn, sought to benefit from available cooperation opportunities. In that regard, Tunisia undertook, as usual, to make its contribution to the TCF in line with the assessed amount for the coming year.

385. Strengthening scientific and technological cooperation with specialized agencies and its fraternal allies was important to Tunisia and due priority was given to cooperation with the Arab Atomic Energy Agency (AAEA), which sought to realize the same goals and initiatives as the Agency. In that context, he noted with great satisfaction the developments in relations between the AAEA and the Agency, in particular in the framework of the Arab Network of Nuclear Regulators (ANNuR). During its period at the helm of ANNuR, Tunisia had worked to support its activities and development and boost its resources in the service of all parties' common interests. Likewise, it had embraced the many activities that had come to fruition within the framework of cooperation between ANNuR, the Agency, the AAEA and many other stakeholders, such as the Korea Institute of Nuclear Safety and the EU.

386. In previous years, Tunisia had worked to open new channels of cooperation with specialized organizations in the nuclear field and its efforts had been crowned with an agreement with the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) on scientific and technical cooperation in high-energy physics, which aimed to boost the participation of Tunisian experts in CERN's projects and programmes.

387. He also lauded the outstanding cooperation between Tunisia and the United States, noting in particular the bilateral agreement between the US National Nuclear Safety Administration and the Tunisian National Centre for Nuclear Sciences and Technology, which comprised a number of cooperation projects aimed at exchanging experiences in nuclear safety and security and safeguarding against non-proliferation.

388. Tangible progress had been made in preparation for the application of the additional protocol. To date, a number of training sessions had been organized, relating to the preparation of the initial report and mechanisms for its annual updating. In addition, Tunisia was working on formulating and implementing an appropriate legislative and regulatory framework, which had already been prepared

in cooperation with Agency experts, and looked forward to achieving those goals and ratifying the additional protocol as soon as possible. Despite the security, economic and social challenges that it was facing during its democratic transition, Tunisia would spare no effort to make progress in that area. Its National Constituent Assembly was currently putting the final touches to its new law governing the uses of nuclear energy.

389. While it did not possess any nuclear facilities, in accordance with the Convention on Nuclear Safety, nuclear safety remained a matter of great importance to Tunisia, given the potential large-scale devastation of a nuclear accident and the possibility of nuclear facilities being established in the country in the future. Since acceding to the Convention on Nuclear Safety in 2010, Tunisia had participated in a number of review meetings of the Contracting Parties and had submitted all the required reports. With regard to the diplomatic conference on the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the convening of which had been agreed to at the Sixth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties earlier that year, Tunisia hoped that consensus would be reached on a text that would meet all States' expectations without imposing any additional restrictions on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It undertook to maintain that stance during the preparatory work for the diplomatic conference and at the conference itself.

390. As an advocate of all initiatives to enhance the effectiveness of the safeguards regime, in particular the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones, Tunisia had acceded to the African Nuclear Weapon-Free-Zone Treaty and praised efforts to establish the African Commission on Nuclear Energy, which would oversee the activities relating to the implementation of the Treaty. Tunisia remained hopeful for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and would steadfastly support related initiatives, through to the realization of the goal of allowing all peoples of the region to live in peace and security, far removed from the threat of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

391. It also hoped that all nuclear facilities of all States in the region — without exception — would be placed under the Agency's safeguards system, with the inclusion of Israel's facilities, which posed a threat that must be taken seriously and that hindered progress in the peace talks.

392. Mr CABAL SANCLEMENTE (Colombia) said that his country reaffirmed the importance of nuclear disarmament, the non-proliferation regime and the need for universalization and implementation of all three pillars: disarmament, non-proliferation and the promotion of peaceful uses. Collectively, those undertakings were designed to protect humanity from the danger of nuclear war and to safeguard international peace and security.

393. The NPT provisions on nuclear disarmament remained pending 44 years after the Treaty's entry into force. The nuclear threat still existed, not only through the risk of proliferation but also through the actual existence of nuclear weapons. Substantial progress on matters of disarmament and non-proliferation was urgently required and tangible results were needed in multilateral negotiations.

394. In its resolution 68/32, the UN General Assembly had called for the urgent commencement of negotiations in the Conference of Disarmament for the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons to prohibit them and to provide for their destruction. In addition, 26 September had been declared as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

395. Colombia attached importance to the NPT Review Conference to be held in 2015 and believed that it was the forum to reaffirm commitments and to adopt measures. Colombia hoped to see positive results and stressed the need to make progress towards implementation of commitments made at the conferences in 1995, 2000 and 2010.

396. Colombia recalled that total, comprehensive, irreversible and verifiable nuclear disarmament was not only a priority objective but a moral imperative because of the devastating cross-border and global effects of the use of nuclear weapons and the inability of the international community to deal with such an emergency. His country therefore welcomed the second International Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Mexico in February 2014, and looked forward to the third such conference, to be held in Vienna in December 2014. In addition, as a State Party to the Tlatelolco Treaty, which established Latin America and the Caribbean as the first densely populated zone in the world to be free from nuclear weapons, Colombia advocated the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones as a contribution to regional and global peace and security. It therefore supported efforts by the international community to create such a zone in the Middle East.

397. In its belief that the Agency played a key role in the international regime for disarmament and non-proliferation, Colombia set great store by the Agency's three statutory pillars and its work in each of those pillars. In July 2014, the Government of Colombia had deposited its instrument of ratification of the amendments to Articles VI and XIV of the Statute. It understood their importance and hoped to see their prompt entry into force.

398. The peaceful uses of nuclear energy had been promoted through technical cooperation. The transfer of knowledge and nuclear technology in areas essential for development, such as medicine, the environment and agriculture, was of great importance. Colombia was particularly interested in the strengthening of radiation protection. One of the major projects in the national programme for 2014–2015 focused on the creation of a regulatory infrastructure for X-ray emitting equipment. Work was already under way on that project.

399. Colombia was a State Party to ARCAL, which had adopted its second regional strategic profile for 2016–2021 in May 2014. Sound work had been undertaken on the design of that tool and Colombia welcomed its adoption, coming as it did on the 30th anniversary of ARCAL. It hoped that the new phase of ARCAL would consolidate cooperation among its members and continue to receive support from the Agency and its strategic partner, the Government of Spain. Colombia greatly valued and appreciated the special relations it had enjoyed for several years with the Government of Spain.

400. The Agency also had an essential role to play in nuclear safety. The development, improvement and constant updating of safety standards, and also cooperation to strengthen nuclear safety and radiation protection, were all highly important in that area.

401. In July 2014, a new standard for licensing and inspection of radioactive sources had been issued in Colombia, in application of a graded approach to risk classification and control and in accordance with the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, to which Colombia had acceded in 2006. Work was also under way to adopt standard GSR Part 3, replacing BSS 115 as a national regulation for radiological protection.

402. The Colombian regulatory authority for the secure handling of radioactive and nuclear materials had recently joined the Ibero–American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies (FORO), which was an important step for Colombia in line with the objectives set in that important area. His country highly valued the work of FORO, which aimed to keep radiological protection and nuclear safety and security at the highest level in Member States and, by extension, the entire Ibero–American region.

403. Within the area of nuclear safety, and in particular the safety of the maritime transport of radioactive waste, Colombia welcomed the dialogue and consultations between coastal and shipping States and emphasized the importance of the Agency's participation and support. It welcomed the distribution of the information circular INFCIRC/863 showing the outcome of the Working Group on Best Practices for Voluntary Communications.

404. International cooperation, combined with the commitment and concerted action of all States, was vital in the area of nuclear security. Colombia recognized the Agency's key role in strengthening the global nuclear security framework and leading the coordination of international activities in that field.

405. Where progress by his own country in that area was concerned, he proposed that Colombia had deposited its instrument of ratification for the amendment to the CPPNM in February 2014 and supported its prompt entry into force.

406. In October 2013, the Colombian Ministry of Mines and Energy and the US Department of Energy had signed a memorandum of understanding on cooperation to protect radioactive material on Colombian territory.

407. In 2014, a needs assessment had been performed for all Category 1, 2 and 3 facilities and work had started on improving nuclear security. Training courses on security requirements had also been held to train all management in Category 1 facilities. A specific standard to maintain the security of nuclear material had also been drafted and was currently being discussed internally.

408. Colombia was grateful to the Government of the United States, and in particular the Department of Energy, for its Global Threat Reduction Initiative and for the cooperation launched under the memorandum of understanding. Its support had contributed to national efforts to enable Colombia to develop a sustainable infrastructure for security in accordance with the international monitoring regime.

409. In the first week of September 2014, a meeting had taken place in Bogota between a mission from the Agency's Division of Nuclear Safety and Security and officials of the Colombian Government, during which the integrated nuclear safety plan had been updated and work on the project for assurance of high-activity sources and disused sources in the possession of users had recommenced. All cobalt-60 sources would be consolidated in a centralized radioactive waste storehouse, marking a major step forward in the application of cradle-to-grave control.

410. Columbia also expressed gratitude to Canada, the EU and the United States and for their support in the implementation of nuclear safety projects. It was also grateful in that context to the Office of Nuclear Safety, its Director and staff and hoped to continue their collaborative relationship.

411. Verification work, which was a pillar of the Agency, was equally important. Colombia supported the safeguards system and recognized the Agency's fundamental role in that area. The Agency was the only authority competent to grant safeguards for the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear programmes, which contributed to efforts towards non-proliferation, maintaining confidence and, therefore, international peace and security.

412. As a State with both a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol in force, Colombia stressed the importance of those legal instruments and efforts made to strengthen the safeguards system.

413. Ms BERGUIDO (San Marino) said that San Marino was a neutral and peaceful country with no army. As a UN Member State since 1992 and a member of a number of international organizations that sought to ensure peace and stability and improve living conditions for all, it firmly supported initiatives aimed at maintaining or re-establishing peace and security, fighting the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and protecting peoples. She underlined the need to reach complete and final nuclear disarmament through the respect for and full implementation of multilateral treaties.

414. San Marino was a State party to the NPT and the CTBT and believed that only through the universalization of those treaties was it possible to achieve world peace and security. In addition, at the first and second sessions of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference, San Marino had been among the co-sponsors of a joint statement on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons.

415. San Marino had therefore deemed it appropriate to become a Member State of the Agency; it valued the Agency's pivotal role in reducing and controlling nuclear arsenals and its activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications, which were essential for improving people's living conditions.

416. Safe energy production, research in the fields of medicine, agriculture, water and climate change and technical cooperation were all areas in which the Agency excelled and which San Marino endorsed, supported and promoted.

417. Her country supported the ReNuAL Project to renovate the Seibersdorf laboratories and was encouraged by the promising results of research conducted at those laboratories into peaceful nuclear applications, in particular, the eradication of rinderpest in 2011. San Marino also favoured strengthened cooperation with the FAO and, in that context, she noted that September 2014 marked the 50th anniversary of the partnership between the FAO and the Agency designed to ensure food safety and sustainable agriculture. The Joint FAO/IAEA Division was already providing assistance to a number of Member States and contributing to the improvement of living conditions. The Seibersdorf laboratories would continue to be a guiding light in international research in that field.

418. The Agency's verification regime was crucially important to international efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. San Marino supported the Agency in such endeavours and recognized its high professionalism and impartiality. She called on all Member States to implement their obligations and commitments. Agency safeguards were an essential component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the implementation of the NPT.

419. San Marino had always supported the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. In particular, it supported efforts to create such a zone in the Middle East.

420. With regard to the negotiations with Iran, San Marino remained confident in the dialogue and assistance offered by the Agency in order to ensure the full implementation of the Framework for Cooperation.

421. San Marino supported the Director General's appeal to the DPRK and hoped that the dialogue that had been interrupted more than five years previously would resume shortly.

422. With regard to the implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement in Syria, she hoped to see deeper commitment and cooperation with the Agency.

423. San Marino would consider the possibility of concluding an additional protocol. The current delay in that process was due only to the fact that, as a small country, it had limited staff and infrastructure, which hindered the swift implementation of a number of international agreements. In addition, it was close to completing the process of accession to the CPPNM and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

424. Ms ŠIMONOVIĆ (Croatia) said that Croatia was implementing the system of integrated safeguards and all nuclear material was used exclusively for peaceful activities. Besides regular reporting to the Agency on the application of safeguards, as a new EU member, Croatia also reported to Euratom. As a party to all major international treaties and conventions relating to nuclear safety and security, Croatia was fully committed to their implementation.

425. In that context, it had actively participated in the Sixth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, held in 2014. It was also preparing to play an active part in the Fifth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties pursuant to Article 30 of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. The new national strategy for radioactive waste and spent fuel management had been prepared and sent to the Croatian parliament for adoption. That strategy took into account the requirements set out in the Joint Convention and in Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom, establishing a Community framework for the responsible and safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste.

426. Croatia attached great importance to bilateral cooperation in the field of nuclear safety and security. In 2014, it had organized bilateral meetings with Hungary and Slovenia regarding the implementation of its agreements with those countries on the early exchange of information in the event of a radiological emergency.

427. Croatia highly valued the Agency's work on the peaceful application of nuclear technology in participating Member States. In that respect, it was pleased to announce that the Ministry of Health would be hosting an imPACT mission the following week to assess the national cancer control programme. In addition, 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.

428. The most important aspect of successful cooperation between Croatia and the Agency, at national and regional levels, was the Agency's technical cooperation programme. As part of the project cycle for 2014/2015, four national technical cooperation projects had been implemented, covering: quality assurance in radiotherapy; self-assessment of the regulatory body; upgrading of an irradiation facility; and improvement of capabilities for the application of positron annihilation spectroscopy. For the 2016–2017-project cycle, four national and two regional project designs submitted by Croatia had been approved and would be financed jointly by the country and the Agency. Croatia had revised its CPF to set priorities for technical cooperation with the Agency. It was due to be signed by the end of the year.

429. In conclusion, she reaffirmed Croatia's full support for the work of the Agency and its appeal to all Member States to approve the proposed budget for 2015.

430. Mr IBRAIMOV (Kyrgyzstan) said that Kyrgyzstan attached great importance to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It firmly intended to fulfil its international obligations in that regard and to take the necessary measures to control and suppress the trafficking and transit of nuclear material through its territory.

431. To that end, Kyrgyzstan had ratified basic international agreements relating to non-proliferation such as the NPT and the CTBT. In 2003, it had joined the Agency and signed an agreement on the application of NPT safeguards and in 2007 it had signed the additional protocol to that instrument.

432. Furthermore, Kyrgyzstan was the depositary of the treaty to create a Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone. On 6 May 2014, the Governments of the five nuclear weapon States had signed the Protocol to that agreement regarding negative security assurances. During the signing ceremony, Kyrgyzstan had been selected as the depositary for the Protocol, which was a sign of high confidence. He called on the five nuclear weapon States to ratify the Protocol as soon as possible, thereby enabling the completion of institutional measures to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia.

433. In fulfilling its obligations under such international instruments, in particular its obligations to the Agency, Kyrgyzstan regularly conducted practical work with international donors to control the movement of radioactive material across its borders. It had adopted various Government programmes

and action plans to harmonize its legislation with international commitments, build the capacities of specialized bodies and train their staff. He referred in particular to the approval in 2013 of the action plan on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), which included a broad range of measures. Within that framework, Kyrgyzstan had initiated the process of accession to the CPPNM, which was almost complete.

434. Since Kyrgyzstan had joined the Agency in 2003, the potential for technical cooperation had not been fully realized for a number of reasons. Those included the lack of properly functioning infrastructure to oversee the safe use of nuclear technology; weak coordination on the part of Government bodies and organizations in the area of technical cooperation with the Agency; and the absence of a single Government body to ensure regulation in the area of radiation safety.

435. In 2013, in order to improve coordination in preparing and implementing the Agency's programmes and projects, in particular to address issues relating to uranium tailing disposal facilities and radiation safety, the Government had established a national body to coordinate technical cooperation with the Agency.

436. The Agency had the resources to provide coordination and expert consultative assistance to Kyrgyzstan to resolve the issue of uranium tailing disposal. In that regard, he called on the Agency to pay special attention to the issue of radioactive disposal facilities in the territory of Kyrgyzstan, within the framework of the Coordination Group for Uranium Legacy Sites.

437. In December 2013, at the initiative of Kyrgyzstan, the Second Committee of the UN General Assembly at its 68th session had adopted a resolution on the role of the international community in preventing a radiation threat in central Asia. He called on the international community to participate actively in the implementation of that resolution.

438. Mr DUSCIAC (Republic of Moldova) said that his country continued to support the Agency's mandate aimed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of implementing verification mechanisms for the development of integrated safeguards and concluding NPT-related safeguards agreements and the relevant additional protocols. The Moldovan authorities participated in many international initiatives aimed at reinforcing the non-proliferation regime and reported annually and quarterly to the Agency on the status of its nuclear material.

439. Nuclear security was routinely placed at the centre of the country's domestic non-proliferation policy. The National Agency for Regulation of Nuclear and Radiological Activities, its sole regulatory body, paid special attention to the Agency's recommendations for improving and upgrading the relevant domestic legal framework. A special focus was placed on the management of human resources through the continuous education and training of young specialists. Every year Moldova organized exercises and training courses for front-line and nuclear security officers. In that context, the Agency played a significant role through its national and regional technical cooperation projects.

440. Furthermore, the Moldovan authorities were involved in the implementation of eight projects under the auspices of the EU centres of excellence and played an active part in other international exercises conducted by the Agency, NATO, INTERPOL and the EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine. A number of projects were under way on the upgrading of domestic infrastructure for the prevention and detection of and response to trafficking in nuclear material and radioactive sources. Those projects were largely supported by the United States Government, the Swedish Radiation Safety Authority and other donor countries.

441. In cooperation with the Agency's Office of Nuclear Security, Moldova had recently updated its national INSSP, which involved coordinated action on behalf of the regulatory body, the Customs service, the border police and the information service. The previous year, the country had presented to

the UN Secretariat its second progress report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

442. The National Agency for Regulation of Nuclear and Radiological Activities had been founded seven years previously as a single regulatory body with wide competences in the establishment of nuclear-related domestic policy, supervision in non-proliferation issues and monitoring of policy implementation by means of inspection and authorization procedures. Its aim was to provide a comprehensive, strong and sustainable nuclear and radiation safety framework to protect people, society and the environment from the harmful effects of ionizing radiation. It steadily developed its regulatory capacity and functions through new domestic regulations and policy documents, the accession to international legal instruments and the implementation of existing standards. Moreover, in line with the country's European integration path, it was continuously adjusting relevant national legislation to international standards and EU regulations, thus providing a better framework for strengthening the nuclear safety regime.

443. Such significant progress would have been difficult to realize without the generous support of partners, including the Agency, the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the European Commission, the Swedish Radiation Safety Authority, the Romanian National Commission for Nuclear Activities Control and the Lithuanian Radiation Protection Centre.

444. The Agency's technical cooperation programme was a key component of the further development of nuclear technologies in its Member States and Moldova benefited fully from the assistance thus provided. The country's main objectives were to modernize and implement nuclear medicine in the health sector and promote education, scientific research and nuclear engineering. Recently, Moldova had submitted two national project concepts for the forthcoming cycle and had expressed interest in taking part in several regional projects that responded to its most pressing needs in the areas of nuclear safety, nuclear security, environmental protection, radiodiagnostics and radiotherapy, nuclear medicine, human resources and agriculture.

445. He outlined his country's support for the Annual Report for 2014, which had once again demonstrated the Agency's outstanding role in efforts to maintain peace and sustainable global development through nuclear applications and technologies, to the benefit of humankind.

446. In conclusion, he reaffirmed Moldova's commitment to fulfilling its financial obligations to the Agency and its undertaking to pay its annual budgetary contributions in a timely manner.

447. Mr NDIAYE (Senegal) reaffirmed his country's commitment to the fully transparent use of the peaceful applications of nuclear energy on a safe and sustainable basis. In that spirit, Senegal had ratified most of the Agency's conventions and agreements on nuclear safety and non-proliferation and was working on their implementation. It had also acceded to the Agency's Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and looked forward to strengthened international cooperation in the control of transport and the campaign against nuclear terrorism and the illicit trafficking of radioactive sources and nuclear material. To that end, the Senegalese Government had made the necessary preparations for ratification of the 2005 amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and of the additional protocol to its safeguards agreement.

448. In 2014, Senegal had hosted an advisory mission from the Verification Research, Training and Information Centre (VERTIC) for decision makers and, with the help of the Office of Nuclear Security, it had established an integrated plan on nuclear safety, which had been adopted by its authorities in April 2014. In its awareness that the safe and peaceful use of nuclear energy was impossible without a robust safety and security policy, in 2011 Senegal had set up its Authority for Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety as the national regulatory body for nuclear safety and

security, which reported directly to the Prime Minister and which regularly received support from the Agency in terms of equipment, training and advice.

449. Senegal had recently updated and stepped up its participation in the exchange of radiological and nuclear information within the INIS system, the Unified System for Information Exchange in Incidents and Emergencies (USIE) and the Illicit Trafficking Database (ITDB).

450. While nuclear safety was the responsibility of each State, regional and global attention to that issue should be supported through collective action and concerted international cooperation. Accordingly, Senegal strongly supported the amendment proposed by Switzerland to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, which would be discussed at a diplomatic conference in early 2015 in Vienna. It was convinced that the meeting would have an important outcome for the enhancement of nuclear safety worldwide.

451. A commitment to nuclear safety did not entail the rejection of all kinds of peaceful application of nuclear technology — quite the contrary: it offered a clear and viable approach to the use of civil nuclear applications in all their peaceful forms, including for nuclear power. The diversification of energy sources had become an imperative in the current global context, with the depletion of fossil resources. To that end, Senegal subscribed to the objectives of the International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO), and was actively participating in the International Framework for Nuclear Energy Cooperation (IFNEC) and in the Agency's capacity building project for the African region in energy planning and nuclear power. In that context, he expressed satisfaction with the Agency's technical cooperation programme, which covered the major areas where Senegal needed assistance. Those included: training of qualified personnel in national and regional projects; transfer of technology; exchange of experts; supply of equipment in the medical area, in particular for radiation therapy and nuclear medicine, and also in radiation protection and nuclear safety through the inspection of control equipment; support for research in water resource management; energy planning; agricultural production; animal husbandry; radiation protection; control of malnutrition; and others. Given those wide applications, Senegal fully endorsed the ReNuAL project for the Seibersdorf laboratories as announced by the Director General in his preliminary statement.

452. The Government of Senegal expressed its appreciation to the Director General and, in particular, the staff of the Division for Africa in charge of technical cooperation and those dealing with safeguards and nuclear safety. Senegal was also pleased to celebrate the 25th anniversary of AFRA, which had proved to be a outstanding cooperation instrument. Senegal would spare no effort in developing its already excellent cooperation with the Agency through a proactive policy using nuclear science and technology for economic and social development. It reaffirmed its full endorsement of the Agency's peace and development ideals and pledged its continued support for the promotion of the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and the strengthening of the non-proliferation and verification regime.

453. Mr MWAMBA (Democratic Republic of the Congo) said that the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which had been a Member of the Agency since 1961, underscored its commitment to ensuring that peaceful use of nuclear energy should contribute to its social and economic development, for the benefit of its people and, in that context, expressed its gratitude to the Agency for its assistance in many successful projects that had enabled the country to develop its national competencies and infrastructures in science and nuclear technology. Thanks to longstanding experience in the operation of its two research reactors, nuclear and radiological safety had been significantly improved in line with international standards. Following the establishment of a national regulatory infrastructure, the nuclear facilities in question were regularly inspected and recommendations provided to operators.

454. The Democratic Republic of the Congo also reaffirmed its commitment to its nuclear programme and to restarting its TRICO Mark II reactor. To that end, the upgrading of the reactor would commence in 2015 and his country aimed to establish bilateral and multilateral partnerships in support of that project.

455. The Democratic Republic of the Congo was working on a decommissioning plan for its nuclear facilities. That plan formed part of a major initiative by the Kinshasa Regional Nuclear Study Centre, in collaboration with other agencies, designed to set in place a technical strategy for the legacy management of the site housing the country's research reactors. The strategy was aimed at ensuring compliance with modern international standards and practices, environmental and health protection, and the safety and security of the public and employees of these installations, and meeting the requirements of the national nuclear security agency other regulations. In that connection, the country would be hosting a mission by international experts from 13 to 17 October, to assist local authorities in developing the decommissioning process, including issues of nuclear fuel and radioactive waste management.

456. In the area of technical cooperation, he acknowledged with gratitude the assistance provided by the Agency for the implementation of 12 projects and noted also his country's participation in some 20 regional projects within the framework of AFRA. All those projects focused on the peaceful use of nuclear energy in the areas of agriculture, food security, human and animal health, access to drinking water and industry. Recalling that AFRA was marking the 25th anniversary of its founding, he encouraged its States members to strengthen their individual and collective commitments to ensuring that nuclear science was a pillar of social and economic development in Africa.

457. Turning to the issue of mining, he said that his country's intensive mining activities had on occasion exposed its population to radiological risks. To address that problem, in 2009 the Government had opened an office of the General Commissariat for Atomic Energy (CGEA) in the mining province of Katanga, to train and raise awareness among workers and to highlight the problem with national and local authorities. The office also brought closer attention to the illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive materials and the use of radioactive sources by mining companies working in the area. In that way, the CGEA served as the interface between national and local authorities on the one hand, and small-scale miners on the other. In view of the progress already achieved in that endeavour, it was planned to extend such programmes to other mining areas, in particular in the east of the country.

458. The ratification by the Democratic Republic of the Congo of the NPT in 1972 and the Pelindaba Treaty in 2005, together with its signature in 2003 of an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement, demonstrated its keen interest in the development of peaceful nuclear energy. At the same time, it noted with concern that the issue of nuclear non-proliferation was still pending, together with that of nuclear disarmament and, despite the hopes expressed at numerous forums and gatherings of a world free of nuclear weapons, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones remained an elusive goal.

459. With regard to nuclear security, the Democratic Republic of the Congo was gratified by the massive technological and human effort made to combat illicit nuclear trafficking on both regional and international scales. His country believed that the problem must be tackled by both bilateral and multilateral approaches and was determined to combat that growing threat, working together with other States and regional and international organizations. Accordingly, he welcomed the agreement and protocol which his Government had signed in 2011 with the US Government as part of a global response to the issues of nuclear security, in particular with regard to the trafficking in nuclear materials. He also welcomed the valuable practical cooperation launched in 2013 with the EU, to step up control of the movement of radioactive materials in East and Central Africa. For that purpose,

detection equipment had been donated and training provided under a cooperation agreement with the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission and its Institute for Transuranium Elements. In addition, following the tragic events of 11 September 2001 and pursuant to Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), the Democratic Republic of the Congo had set up two bodies in support of nuclear security, the National Council for Nuclear Security (CNS) and the National Committee on Combating Terrorism (CNLT). The creation of those bodies, which complemented the Nuclear Regulation Authority, was a clear manifestation of the country's determination to combat the illicit trafficking of radioactive materials and to counter the threat of nuclear terrorism.

460. Climate change and global warming and their impacts on ecosystems were now a reality acknowledged by the international scientific community. Accordingly, electricity produced by nuclear power stations was increasingly being seen as a viable alternative to the use of fossil fuels, which caused pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Like other countries, which had turned to electronuclear programmes to solve their energy shortages and meet their populations' anticipated electricity needs, the Democratic Republic of the Congo believed that electronuclear power was a feasible option.

461. In conclusion, his country reiterated its call for a global approach to tackle issues that were common to all States and, in that context, reaffirmed its support for the role played by the Agency in promoting the peaceful application of nuclear energy.

462. Mr ROSENBERG (Ecuador) said that his delegation welcomed the attention given by the Director General in his opening address to the Conference to the role played by nuclear science and technology in promoting sustainable development in the areas of agriculture, medicine, energy, water management and industrial development. In particular, Ecuador commended the Agency on its efforts to help countries deal with the effects of climate change on agriculture and on the well-being of their populations.

463. Noting that 26 September had been recognized by the UN General Assembly as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, he drew attention to the commemorative event on that occasion held by the Latin American and Caribbean Group and the Non-Aligned Movement, which Ecuador, as a peace-loving country wholly opposed to nuclear weapons, had been proud to address in its capacity as coordinator in Vienna of OPANAL.

464. His delegation also commended the Director General on the 2014 Nuclear Security Report and looked forward to the Ministerial Conference on Physical Nuclear Security to be held in 2016, which would present a detailed analysis of that important issue at the highest political and technical level. In that context, he drew attention to a regional training course to be held in October 2014 in Quito, on physical nuclear security for detection purposes. Ecuador had offered to host that event as part of its cooperation with the Agency at a regional level and to promote technical knowledge in that important field between its own experts and those from elsewhere in Latin America and the Caribbean.

465. The Agency's technical cooperation programme was of fundamental importance to Ecuador, as the transfer of nuclear knowledge and technology for application in areas of development was an essential prerequisite for progress. During the recent visit to Vienna of the Ecuadorian Under-Secretary of Nuclear Oversight and Verification, his delegation had conducted important working meetings to review its portfolio of projects with the Agency's Department of Technical Cooperation. He expressed satisfaction with the efficiency and professionalism exhibited by the Agency in the many projects which it had set up in Ecuador for the benefit of that country's development.

466. In that context, his delegation believed that the time had come for the Agency to convene a high-level meeting on technical cooperation, comparable to those which it had convened on other

aspects of its work. That would help remedy the lack of recognition for the issue of technical cooperation, a lack which the Director General had observed with regret in his opening address.

467. In conclusion, he noted that, while Ecuador had no programme of nuclear electricity generation, it firmly upheld the inalienable right of all countries to develop a nuclear technology programme for exclusively peaceful ends. Accordingly, his delegation reiterated its hope that the Agency would always be a vehicle for cooperation and understanding and that the technology derived from the power of the atom would never serve any other purpose than the development of humankind.

468. Mr ROZHKOV (Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization) said that the CTBTO and the Agency shared a common vision: that of a safe and secure world, free of the threat of nuclear weapons. The two organizations continued to share responsibilities towards creating such a world by contributing to the establishment of a global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. While the CTBT had not yet entered into force, it was already applied as a de facto international norm, as illustrated by the response of the international community to the nuclear tests announced by the DPRK in 2006, 2009 and 2013, and by the operational readiness of the CTBTO on each of those occasions.

469. It was not only that vision that the two organizations had in common, however. The very principles and methods that underpinned their work brought them together. Multilateralism, verification and cooperation were words that resonated strongly at both ends of the building. Both organizations enjoyed large memberships — which had in fact become very similar in composition — and relied on science and technology to provide Member States with assistance and support. Such parallels placed the CTBTO and the Agency in a privileged position to seek opportunities for enhanced cooperation, in particular with a view to optimizing resources and, to the extent possible, avoiding duplication.

470. A case in point had been the need to continue strengthening global emergency preparedness and to develop an efficient disaster response system. With its 337 monitoring facilities and 250 communication assets, which were almost 90% complete, the CTBTO verification system had been able both to fulfil its verification-related role and to contribute to human welfare in a crucial way.

471. The use of all four CTBT technologies in the monitoring and understanding of the tragedy of the Great East Japan Earthquake, tsunami and Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident clearly illustrated the value of those assets. Cooperation between the Agency and the CTBTO had proved vital in the aftermath of those events.

472. The Inter-Agency Committee on Radiological and Nuclear Emergencies (IACRNE), of which the CTBTO had been a member since 2012, was an essential mechanism in efforts to strengthen coordination between relevant organizations and also communication with the public, with the aim of enhancing overall international emergency preparedness and response. As a member of the Committee, the CTBTO also co-sponsored the Joint Radiation Emergency Management Plan of the International Organizations (JPLAN), an inter-agency framework coordinated by the Agency to prepare for and respond to an actual, potential or perceived radiation incident or emergency independent of whether it arose from an accident, natural disaster, negligence, a nuclear security event or any other cause. Within that framework, the key responsibilities of the CTBTO were to gather and provide close-to-real-time radionuclide particulate and noble gas monitoring data, including results on radionuclide air concentration and non-detections, and to arrange for advice or assistance on atmospheric transport and dispersion predictions relevant to its samples.

473. Those were only some examples of how the CTBTO was able to make a tangible contribution to nuclear safety and security worldwide. The next field exercise of the Treaty's on-site inspection component, the Integrated Field Exercise 2014 (IFE14), would be held later in 2014 in Jordan, further

strengthening the Organization's capacity to carry out on-site inspections when requested and approved by Member States. It would be the largest and most in-depth simulation of the Treaty's on-site inspection procedures ever held, and would incorporate a thorough evaluation of readiness.

474. Whether in on-site inspection equipment, monitoring stations, data centres or communication infrastructure, it was cutting-edge science and technology that gave the Treaty's verification regime its unique and proven value. For that reason, the Organization's biennial Science and Technology conferences continued to strengthen the relationship of the CTBTO with the broader scientific community. The 2013 conference had been attended by over 750 experts from around 100 countries — including, with the exception of the DPRK, scientists from the Annex 2 countries that had yet to ratify the Treaty for its entry into force. Planning for the 2015 conference was now under way.

475. A portion of the 2013 Science and Technology conference had been devoted to the issue of emissions of the radioactive noble gas xenon by radiopharmaceutical plants, which was of interest to Member States, both of the Agency and of the CTBTO. The readings from those emissions were very similar to those of a nuclear explosion and therefore might affect the detections by the Organization's noble gas network. The CTBTO had developed unparalleled expertise in characterizing the worldwide xenon background. Options to better identify and mitigate xenon emissions were also jointly discussed at the regular Workshops on Signatures of Medical and Industrial Isotope Production (WOSMIP). In order to respond to the interest of Member States, the CTBTO would like to intensify its cooperation with the Agency on that topic.

476. In order to build and maintain the necessary awareness and capacity in the technical, scientific, legal and political aspects of the Treaty and its verification regime, the CTBTO had invested heavily in training and education activities. By offering specialized courses and utilizing online learning and new media, the CTBTO was expanding the pool of expertise among its stakeholders and increasing active engagement on the critical issues underpinning the Treaty. That innovative approach had further strengthened the Organization's technical capacity-building and training activities that enabled Member States to collect, transmit, receive and use CTBTO data.

477. With the political, technical and financial support of its 183 Member States, the CTBTO Preparatory Commission had established a state-of-the-art verification system that was unprecedented in its global reach. The system had proven its worth, whether in its primary role by detecting with ever-increasing accuracy the current century's only nuclear tests announced by the DPRK, or by allowing its products to be used for civil or scientific purposes, such as in the case of the Fukushima Daiichi disaster.

478. In the wider context of the joint endeavour of the two organizations towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, on the basis of their shared principles and practices, through their mandates to best serve their Member States by protecting them and their investments in their respective organizations, there were opportunities for greater cooperation. Indeed, it would only be by sustaining the exchange of information and ideas and continuously improving the coordination of activities among experts and organizations in the nuclear field that it would be possible to build the world envisioned by all — safe, secure and free from the threat of nuclear weapons.

479. Mr ROSENBERG (Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean) said that the Tlatelolco Treaty, which created the nuclear-weapon-free zone of Latin America and the Caribbean, was upheld by the relationship between the Agency and OPANAL. In effect, one of the requisites for the entry into force of the Treaty, pursuant to its Article 29, was the conclusion of bilateral or multilateral agreements on the application of the Agency's safeguards system by each contracting party.

480. The Agency played an essential role in the fulfilment of the first obligation specified under Article 1 of the Treaty, by which the contracting parties undertook to use exclusively for peaceful purposes the nuclear material and facilities which were under their jurisdiction. Thus, in 1967, ten years after the Agency's founding, the Tlatelolco Treaty had established its control system (under Articles 12–19 and 24) — the first international monitoring and verification system to ensure compliance with disarmament and non-proliferation obligations — in which a fundamental function was assigned to the Agency. As set out in Article 12 of the Treaty, the control system was established for the purpose of verifying that devices, services and facilities intended for peaceful uses of nuclear energy were not used in the testing or manufacture of nuclear weapons and that none of the activities prohibited in Article I of the Treaty were carried out in the territory of the contracting parties with nuclear material or weapons introduced from abroad.

481. Four articles of the Treaty referred to the important role assigned to the Agency. Thus, Article 13 set forth the obligation of each contracting party to negotiate multilateral or bilateral agreements with the Agency for the application of its safeguards to its nuclear activities. As of the current date, all 33 member States of OPANAL had safeguards agreements in force, and 19 of them had also signed additional protocols — 18 of which are already in force — and two, Argentina and Brazil, were linked in a special quadripartite agreement with the Agency and the Brazilian–Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC). Although it was not included in the Tlatelolco Treaty, ABACC could also be considered part of the control system, which had established a unusual and effective mechanism whereby neighbours watched neighbours.

482. Article 14, paragraph 1, contemplated the submission — both to OPANAL and to the Agency — of semiannual reports stating that no activity prohibited under the Treaty had occurred in their respective territories. In that regard, the Secretariat was able to confirm that all Member States had complied with the submission of such reports at some point and that, as of 23 September 2014, 8 Member States had sent in their reports for the first semester of 2014, 11 States had provided information up to the second semester of 2013, and 8 States for the first semester of 2013. That meant that 81% of OPANAL member States were in relative compliance with that obligation. The same article provided that contracting parties should simultaneously transmit to OPANAL a copy of the reports submitted to the Agency which related to matters covered by the Tlatelolco Treaty that were relevant to OPANAL's work.

483. Possibly the most important provision established by the Tlatelolco Treaty in terms of the relation of the nuclear-weapon-free zone with the Agency was to be found in its Article 16, which granted the Agency the power to carry out special inspections in accordance with Article 12 and with the safeguards agreements concluded by the parties at the request of any contracting party, with the authorization of the OPANAL Council and through the Secretary General. Thus far, no such inspections had been conducted, but they constituted an important mechanism to be used if necessary.

484. Article 19 stipulated that OPANAL could conclude such agreements with the Agency as authorized by the General Conference in order to facilitate the efficient operation of the system. On 3 October 1972, the two agencies signed a cooperation agreement which entitled OPANAL to be invited to the regular annual sessions of the General Conference.

485. That agreement provided the framework for the relations between the two agencies, permitting them to act in close cooperation and for each to consult the other with a view to harmonizing their efforts in the light of their respective worldwide and regional responsibilities. Both agencies had been represented in their respective general conferences and each had participated in activities coordinated by the other, the most recent such activity being the Agency's forum on experience of possible relevance to the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, held on 21 and 22 November 2011, and the OPANAL international seminar on the experiences of the

nuclear-weapon-free zone of Latin America and the Caribbean and the prospects for 2015 and beyond, held in the context of the commemoration of the 45th anniversary of the signing of the Tlatelolco Treaty, on 14 February 2012.

486. OPANAL's raison d'être was to ensure compliance with the obligations of the Treaty, and the control system itself was envisaged for the purpose of verifying compliance with the obligations entered into by the contracting parties. The task of assuring compliance with the control system involved the three main organs of OPANAL: the General Conference, which established procedures for the control system to ensure observance of the Treaty; the Council, which, through the Secretary General, ensured the proper operation of the control system; and the Secretary General, who, at the request of any of the contracting parties and with the authorization of the Council, could request any Party to provide complementary or supplementary information regarding any extraordinary event or circumstance affecting compliance with the Treaty.

487. In that way, the Treaty foresaw the involvement of the three organs in ensuring the effectiveness of the control system itself. All member States were aware of the relevance of the control system and constantly observed the need to maintain and promote the denuclearized status of the region. In addition, Additional Protocol I signed by France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States — in their capacity, de jure or de facto, as internationally responsible countries for territories within the Treaty's zone of application — made it necessary for its signatories to have safeguards agreements in force. That represented another way of ensuring that the nuclear-weapon-free zone was covered by the control system throughout all its extensions.

488. Latin America and the Caribbean had always been at the forefront of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, having been the first permanently populated area to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone. All of the 33 OPANAL member States were parties to the NPT, and in accordance with the obligation set forth by the Tlatelolco Treaty prohibiting the testing of nuclear weapons, 31 of those had signed and ratified the CTBT.

489. During its almost six decades of existence, the Agency had played a vital role in the continued viability of the five existing nuclear-weapon-free zones by ensuring, in an internationally verifiable way — through comprehensive safeguards — the commitment of the countries concerned adequately and safely to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes only.

490. OPANAL would continue to work together with the Agency in the promotion of their common objectives until the day when the world had become a single nuclear-weapon-free zone in which nuclear energy was merely another mechanism for the well-being and advancement of humankind.

491. Mr MAHJOUR (Arab Atomic Energy Agency) said that the AAEA sought to develop bilateral and multilateral cooperation among the Arab States in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, in accordance with the Arab strategy applicable to such uses. The strategy had been adopted by the Arab leaders as an ambitious Arab programme to foster action in this important area, which played a vital role in promoting economic development and social prosperity.

492. The AAEA had recorded significant achievements and made great strides towards implementing its strategy-related programmes. One of its primary objectives was to promote human resource capacity-building, focusing on the development of expertise through training courses, workshops, seminars, symposiums, conferences and various other activities.

493. Expressing appreciation to the Agency for its cooperation with the Arab Group and the support provided to the Arab States, he noted that many joint projects had been conducted over the previous year and substantial support provided by the Agency for AAEA activities. It had dispatched a large

number of experts and specialists to provide instruction, deliver lectures, present working papers, and highlight the latest advances in nuclear science and its applications.

494. The AAEA encouraged countries with advanced capabilities in the peaceful use of nuclear energy to provide support and assistance to the Arab States in the form of tuition, training and capacity-building for Arab human resources. In that context, the AAEA recorded its appreciation to the Republic of Korea for its assistance to the Arab States in developing human resources for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to China for the cooperation that had been initiated with that country. Two joint programmes had already been conducted and China had agreed to reserve a number of study opportunities at the master's degree and doctorate level for students from Arab countries.

495. He also highlighted cooperation with the US and the EU, both of which had provided outstanding support to the AAEA and the Arab States, and called on other States to open their doors to cooperation with the Arab States in general, and with the AAEA in particular. The Arab States considered all types of international cooperation as a key step in accelerating and expanding the contribution of nuclear energy to peace, development, health and economic prosperity.

496. Some Arab countries had launched plans to develop national nuclear programmes, to build electricity-generating reactors and to desalinate seawater. They hoped that the Agency would, in that context, help them to tackle nuclear safety and security issues associated with nuclear energy, and also the safe and secure management of spent fuel.

497. Given the growing interest in nuclear safety and security, the taking of all necessary steps to prevent nuclear accidents, and the major efforts under way to base the design of reactors on the highest possible safety standards, he could confidently predict that, within a few years, the world would witness the birth of new generations of very high quality and safe nuclear power reactors, which would dispel the unwarranted fear of nuclear energy applications currently prevailing among the general public. The AAEA also hoped that an effective procedure would be identified for securing long-term nuclear fuel supplies for countries that had recently introduced nuclear power programmes, without undermining global security.

498. The issue of Israeli nuclear capabilities posed an undeniable threat to the countries of the Middle East. The Arab States therefore firmly demanded, in the interests of peace and security, that pressure be brought to bear on Israel to place all its installations under Agency safeguards and to accede to all nuclear non-proliferation conventions and protocols. The Arab States were also eager to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, on the lines of those that existed in many other regions in Africa, Asia and South America.

499. Since 1995, the Arab States had emphasized the need to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The resolution adopted in 1995 by the NPT Review Conference remained in force today and they reiterated their support for its aims and objectives. They called on the States parties to take all necessary steps to fulfil their aspiration to build confidence and achieve peace for the peoples of the region.

500. While the Arab States looked forward to a world in which harmony, stability and development prevailed and nuclear energy played a pivotal role in achieving prosperity for its peoples, they reaffirmed the intrinsic right of all peoples of the world to benefit from nuclear science and its applications exclusively for peaceful purposes. Any exceptions or double standards constituted a violation of the global nuclear security regime and diverted the international community from the humanitarian goal of promoting development and a better life for all the world's peoples.

501. Mr DONA (Sovereign Military Order of Malta)* said that the Sovereign Order of Malta, the oldest humanitarian entity worldwide, which had its headquarters in Rome, worked mainly for those

suffering from the consequences of conflicts that had erupted in high-risk areas worldwide and from natural disasters on every continent. It tackled such problems by introducing risk-reduction measures and undertaking disaster-preparedness planning, through its relief organization Malteser International, in areas where populations lacked access to the essentials required to live peaceful, healthy lives. Humanitarian diplomacy worldwide meant that the Order's diplomatic network was able to help its emergency relief teams to reach stricken areas quickly and to ensure that aid could be delivered with minimal delay.

502. The Order was recognized as a sovereign subject of international law, while remaining independent and neutral, irrespective of political allegiances. It had bilateral diplomatic and official relations at ambassador level with more than 104 States, most of which were Agency Member States, and also with the EU. It also maintained multilateral relations with the UN, to which it had been admitted as a permanent observer on 24 August 1994 by General Assembly resolution 48/265, which had been supported by all the Members. The Order was also a permanent observer in all the other UN international organizations, except the Agency, where it was listed as an NGO and not as an entity, and subject of international law.

503. The Sovereign Order of Malta had been following the activities of the Agency since 1998 in the area of nuclear science and technology. Those activities were important in addressing such global threats such as climate change, food insecurity, the growing scarcity of drinking water, and a deteriorating environment, and together with the development of nuclear techniques for the treatment of disease, improvement of crop yields and livestock and control of pests, were impressive examples of the Agency's work. The Agency's pivotal role in improving the lives of less privileged people worldwide, in particular in the fields of agriculture and health, was also an important aim of the Sovereign Order of Malta.

504. In particular, the Order was concerned about the increasing number of cancer patients, a pandemic that was threatening the global population. Nuclear science and technology, together with other preventive and curative health care measures, could make a major difference. Thus, the Order had been engaged with the Agency for many years in such efforts through a practical arrangement with PACT, with a view to making a vigorous and concerted effort to combat the growing cancer epidemic and to undertake its control in an integrated, comprehensive manner through international cooperation. Those tangible steps for cooperating with the Agency in the battle against cancer, particularly in Albania, would further enhance relations between the Sovereign Order of Malta and the Agency with a view to supporting improvements in cancer control in low and middle-income countries.

505. Such cooperation would be enhanced in future to cover other countries, as the Order was continuing to fight cancer, alongside diseases and other conditions such as leprosy, HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, and it had established permanent health centres and clinics in many countries, providing local first-line medical and social care to remote and regional communities.

506. Appropriate technology was vital to sustainable development and the Agency was also contributing to attainment of the Millennium Development Goals by fostering the safe, peaceful and secure use of nuclear technology in areas where nuclear techniques offered advantages over other approaches.

507. The Order had particularly welcomed the scientific forum held in 2014, entitled 'Radioactive Waste: Meeting the Challenge — Science and Technology for Safe and Sustainable Solutions', and its relevance to supporting research, in particular with regard to safety, waste management, radiation protection, the safety and efficiency aspects of advanced technology and the importance of enhancing international cooperation in those fields.

508. In closing, he said that the aim and tradition of the Sovereign Order of Malta was to assist less privileged populations worldwide, who were rarely in the public eye or high on national agendas, by raising awareness of their humanitarian plight and attracting financial support for them.

509. The Order was keenly aware of the importance of its continuous cooperation with the Agency, its programmes and its activities, and it reaffirmed its continued support for the Agency in the future.

510. Mr VAN DE VOORDE (Belgium) said that, since the Fukushima Daiichi accident, the Agency's Action Plan on Nuclear Safety had become one of its most important initiatives and it was vital that all necessary efforts be made to translate its recommendations into meaningful action and to achieve its operational goals. In that context, Belgium reaffirmed its commitment to the promotion of nuclear safety criteria based on the highest international standards and its belief that inter-operator peer review missions conducted on a routine — and, ideally, compulsory basis — were the instruments of choice in ensuring the progressive application of safety standards at all levels. Accordingly, Belgium had been pleased to receive an IRIS mission in December 2013.

511. Belgium also fully supported the updating of reference levels applicable to existing reactors carried out by the Western European Nuclear Regulators' Association (WENRA) in the light of lessons learned from Fukushima. At the European level, the directive on nuclear safety had been revised and approved in July 2014. It contained a number of provisions drawing lessons from the Fukushima Daiichi accident relating to the safety of existing and planned reactors, to the independence of the regulator and to radiation emergencies. In that context, Belgium also supported the proposed amendment to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, which would be considered at the forthcoming diplomatic conference.

512. Belgium remained very active in the area of training and sharing of experience and regularly organized technical training activities jointly with the Agency, such as the training course in October 2013 on public communication in the event of a radiation emergency.

513. Provisional results on the pressure vessel tests carried out in mid-2013 at the Tihange-2 and Doel-3 reactors had confirmed the results of post-irradiation tests carried out March 2014 and more extensive studies and tests were currently under way. The two reactors would only be authorized to restart when the operator had demonstrated full understanding of the processes observed and had satisfied the requirements of the safety authorities. As in 2012, consultations on the issue had been organized among national and international specialists.

514. Turning to the issue of safeguards, he said that Belgium supported the operation of an effective and credible system of safeguards and full respect for commitments entered to in that regard. Consequently, it deplored any infringements of such commitments, as noted by the Agency in certain countries.

515. Belgium considered the current verification standard to be the comprehensive safeguards agreement with an additional protocol and it therefore appealed to all countries which had not yet done so to sign, ratify and implement those instruments. He commended the Agency on its untiring efforts to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of its safeguards, which were essential elements in the campaign by the international community against the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

516. Noting the report on the State-level approach, he expressed the hope that the Secretariat keep Member States up to date on the evolution of that issue and, in particular, the modalities of its implementation and its impact on Member States. Generally speaking, Belgium supported any initiatives which, while strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of safeguards, took objective account of the specific circumstances of States and thus minimized the costs borne by States which had good non-proliferation records, for example by reducing the number of inspections.

517. On the question of nuclear security, he reaffirmed the importance which Belgium attached to international cooperation. The country was committed to exchanging information in that area and was favourable to any cooperation provided that it was within the letter and spirit of international conventions, respected the principle of confidentiality and did not encroach upon the sovereignty of States. Thus, in 2014, Belgium and the US had jointly transferred from Belgium a significant quantity of HEU and separated plutonium.

518. Belgium supported the entry into force at the earliest possible juncture of the amendment to the CPPNM, which would substantially enhance global nuclear security. In November 2013, a regional workshop had been held in Brussels for French-speaking countries in Africa on facilitating accession to the amendment and he was pleased to note that one participant country had since ratified the amendment.

519. A significant role was played in the domain of international cooperation by the Agency through its recommendations, its training sessions and its IPPAS missions, which made an invaluable contribution to national nuclear security systems and Belgium looked forward accordingly to the IPPAS mission scheduled for November 2014.

520. Every year, the Belgian authorities organized a workshop on a specific aspect of nuclear security, bringing together officials from nuclear facilities and their colleagues and counterparts responsible for physical protection — the police, legal authorities, national security authorities, bodies responsible for coordination and threat analysis, and others. In 2014, the Federal Agency for Nuclear Control (AFCN) had organized a workshop on the so-called ‘insider threat’, prompted by a suspected attempt to sabotage the steam turbine at the Doel-4 nuclear power plant, which was currently under legal investigation.

521. Turning to the issue of nuclear technology, he drew attention to the Belgian project on a multipurpose hybrid research reactor for high-tech applications (MYRRHA), designed to set in place international infrastructure for nuclear science research. MYRRHA was intended to operate as a fast spectrum irradiation facility, which would be of great benefit to studies of the transmutation of irradiated fuels, and to the development of materials and fuels for fourth generation reactors. The facility would also make it possible to produce medical radioisotopes and perform silicon doping for electronic applications, such as photovoltaic cells, wind turbines and hybrid cars. In 2010, the Belgian Government had allocated €60 million for the period 2010–2014, to bring the project forward to the front-end engineering design stage. In addition, the Council of Ministers had agreed to meet 40% of the total costs of MYRRHA, estimated at €960 million at 2009 prices, provided that there was also sufficient external funding.

522. On the issue of waste management, he reported that, in 2014, Belgium had incorporated into its national law European Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom, dated 19 July 2011, establishing a Community framework for the responsible and safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste. In addition, the agreement between the Belgium and France on the reprocessing of spent fuel from the BR2 reactor at The Hague, concluded in Paris on 25 April 2013, had entered into force on 12 June 2014.

523. With regard to medical isotopes, he conveyed Belgium’s support for any arrangement which would obviate long-term supply problems. Belgium emphasized its concern about the issue and was following with close attention the various initiatives undertaken to remedy the situation. It had made substantial contributions to boost the production capacity of the radioisotopes at its BR2 reactor at Mol and at the National Institute for Radioelements (IRE) at Fleurus. The research reactor and processor located in Belgium used HEU for the production of medical radioisotopes. Belgium was in favour of the conversion of HEU to LEU, provided that it was technically and economically feasible,

and was pursuing such conversion at the BR2 research reactor at Mol and the medical radioisotope facility at Fleurus. The various stakeholders in Belgium, both private and public, involved in the medical applications of radiation, such as equipment suppliers and providers of services and health-care, had taken the initiative to create the network Rad4Med.be, designed to make Belgian expertise available for medical applications of radiation, such as nuclear medicine and radiotherapy.

524. In conclusion, he said that the most important development in Belgian energy policy since the 2013 General Conference had been the vote on the Act of 18 December 2013, confirming the Government's decision to phase out the use of nuclear energy for industrial electricity production and prohibiting the construction of new nuclear power plants. Under the Act, the operational life of the Tihange-1 reactor would be extended for 10 years to ensure the country's electricity supply. That extension meant that Tihange-1 would operate for 50 years, while the operational lives of Belgium's other power reactors was limited to 40 years.

The meeting rose at 10.15 p.m.