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Temporary President: Mr AZEEZ (Sri Lanka)

President: Mr FORMICA (Italy)

Contents

Item of the agenda ¹		Paragraphs
–	Opening of the session	1–10
1	Election of officers and appointment of the General Committee	11–30
2	Applications for membership of the Agency	31–35
3	Message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations	36
4	Statement by the Director General	37–63
6	Contributions to the Technical Cooperation Fund for 2016	64

¹ GC(59)/25.

Contents (continued):

Item of the agenda ²	Paragraphs
7 General debate and Annual Report for 2014	65–192
Statements by the delegates of:	
Kazakhstan	65–77
Russian Federation	78–101
United States of America	102–120
Islamic Republic of Iran	121–130
China	131–143
Luxembourg (on behalf of the European Union)	144–159
Belgium	160–183
Bangladesh	184–192

² GC(59)/25.

Abbreviations used in this record:

AP 1000	Advanced Pressurized Water Reactor
ARTEMIS	Integrated Review Service for Radioactive Waste and Spent Fuel Management, Decommissioning and Remediation Programmes
ATOM	Abolish Testing. Our Mission
BATAN	National Nuclear Energy Agency of Indonesia
CAEA	China Atomic Energy Authority
CBRN	chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear
CNS	Convention on Nuclear Safety
COP21	Twenty-First Session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
E3/EU+3	France, Germany, the United Kingdom and the European Union plus China, the Russian Federation and the United States of America
EPC	engineering, procurement and construction
EU	European Union
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
HEU	high enriched uranium
HTGR	high temperature gas cooled reactor
INIR	Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
IPPAS	International Physical Protection Advisory Service
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
LEU	low enriched uranium
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MYRRHA	Multi-purpose Hybrid Research Reactor for High-Tech Applications

Abbreviations used in this record:

NEA	Nuclear Energy Agency (OECD)
NPP	nuclear power plant
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NSF	Nuclear Security Fund
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
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
PUI	Peaceful Uses Initiative
PWR	pressurized water reactor
RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
ReNuAL	Renovation of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories
RMB	Renminbi
SALTO	Safety Aspects of Long Term Operation
SDGs	sustainable development goals
SMRs	small and medium-sized reactors
TC	technical cooperation
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
UN	United Nations
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WMDs	weapons of mass destruction
WWER	water cooled water moderated reactor
WWR-K	water-cooled water-moderated reactor - Kazakhstan

– Opening of the session

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT declared the 59th regular session of the General Conference open.
2. In accordance with Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, he invited the delegates to observe one minute of silence dedicated to prayer or meditation.

All present rose and stood in silence for one minute.

3. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT welcomed the ministers and senior officials from Member States who were attending the Conference in such large numbers, thus enhancing the standing of the Agency as the foremost forum for international cooperation on the peaceful and safe use of nuclear energy and demonstrating the importance of the Agency and its work to Member States.
4. The international community was about to adopt the post-2015 development agenda and the new SDGs, which would contribute to the achievement of inclusive and sustainable development and to stronger global peace and security. Those decisions would have a bearing on the Agency's work, in particular on international cooperation on the peaceful, safe and secure uses of nuclear technology, which played a significant role in promoting socioeconomic development and would be crucial as demand for nuclear energy continued to increase.
5. The Agency's activities in 2014 had focused, in a balanced manner, on promoting peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology, enhancing nuclear safety and security, assisting in strengthening global nuclear verification and non-proliferation efforts, and ensuring that the benefits of nuclear science and technology were shared by Member States.
6. He thanked the Director General and the Secretariat for their continued commitment to TC programmes beneficial to Member States. He also thanked donor countries and other partners for providing support for TC programmes and hoped that the good work would continue in support of all Member States and other stakeholders.
7. Highlighting some important developments, he drew attention to the JCPOA and the joint statement between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Agency on the Iranian nuclear issue, commending the courage, commitment, imagination, flexibility and pragmatism shown by all of the governments concerned and the Director General. He also drew attention to the agreement signed by the Government of Kazakhstan and the Agency on the management of LEU.
8. The Conference was beginning on a high note of expectation and optimism, but there had been lapses that had affected the Agency's work directly or indirectly. In particular, the 2015 NPT Review Conference had ended without an outcome document, much to the disappointment of many. Much remained to be done. As enduring peace and security for all required a radical shift in the personal and collective mindset, NPT States Parties and others should consider reviewing some rigid policies and positions that had prevented progress on matters of critical concern.
9. The utmost attention had been given, however, to the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, with Austria consistently leading that initiative and duly considering other positions and perspectives. It was important to reflect on further advances.

10. His presidency of the 58th regular session of the General Conference had been a fulfilling and rewarding experience. He thanked the Government of Sri Lanka and the Middle East and South Asia Group for endorsing his candidacy. He also thanked the Director General and the Secretariat for their constant support.

1. Election of officers and appointment of the General Committee

11. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT invited nominations for the office of President of the Conference.

12. Mr STEINMANN (Switzerland), speaking on behalf of the Western Europe Group, proposed Mr Formica (Italy).

13. Mr Formica (Italy) was elected President by acclamation.

14. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT congratulated Mr Formica on his election and wished him every success in his task.

Mr Formica (Italy) took the Chair.

15. The PRESIDENT said that he was honoured to preside over the General Conference at the 59th session and thanked Member States, in particular those of the Western Europe Group, for placing their trust in him.

16. He praised the Ambassador of Sri Lanka, Mr Azeez, for his enlightened stewardship of the 58th session of the General Conference and commended the Director General and his staff for their remarkable achievements and tireless efforts.

17. The confidence that Member States placed in the Agency was a valuable and forward-looking investment in international peace, security and development, which would bear fruit when the Agency would be required to contribute substantively to the implementation of the historic agreement on the Iranian nuclear issue. He commended the professionalism and dedication of all of the delegations involved in the negotiations.

18. The Agency's verification activities deserved the full support of Member States. It should not be forgotten that the Agency had played a critical role for decades in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Its safeguards represented a fundamental instrument for the security of all, allowing Member States to develop, spread and reap the benefits of the peaceful applications of nuclear technology.

19. He was convinced that the Agency had the knowledge, authority and expertise to implement its statutory mission to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world.

20. Recalling the Agency's efforts to ensure that the highest standards of nuclear safety and security were met worldwide and noting that the consequences of nuclear accidents did not respect borders, he highlighted the importance of strong and effective international cooperation.

21. He welcomed the Director General's report on the Fukushima Daiichi Accident as a significant contribution to the General Conference and hoped that governments, regulators and NPP operators in all States would continue to act on the lessons learnt from the accident.

22. As the Director General had said at the June 2015 Board meetings that there could be no grounds for complacency about nuclear safety, continuous questioning and openness to learning from experience were key to safety culture and essential for everyone involved in nuclear power. Safety must always come first.

23. The post-2015 development agenda was about to be adopted; the stakes were high and the international community of policymakers was expected to devise concrete solutions to a number of major challenges currently facing humanity. It was important not to underestimate the actual and potential contribution that nuclear applications, and therefore the Agency, would make in addressing those challenges, in particular in the least developed countries. Millions of people had no access to radiotherapy and other up-to-date cancer treatments, and that was a moral offence to human dignity and could no longer be tolerated.

24. In that connection, he highlighted the paramount importance of the Agency's TC programme and commended the efforts of the staff of the Department of Technical Cooperation, which deserved the continued support of Member States.

25. Member States, as stakeholders in the Agency and beneficiaries of its work, had a responsibility to ensure that the Agency performed at its best and continued to have the requisite technology, expertise, authority and resources to fulfil its vital statutory responsibilities. He was confident that the General Conference would respond to that call.

26. Turning to procedural matters, he said that the Conference was required under Rules 34 and 40 of the Rules of Procedure to elect eight Vice-Presidents, the Chair of the Committee of the Whole and five additional members of the General Committee to constitute the General Committee of 15, which he would chair.

27. He proposed that the heads of delegation of Hungary, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines, Portugal and the United States of America be elected as Vice-Presidents of the General Conference, that Mr Benhocine of Algeria be elected as Chair of the Committee of the Whole and that the delegates of Argentina, Canada, Germany, Lebanon and the Russian Federation be elected as additional members of the General Committee.

28. The President's proposals were accepted.

29. The PRESIDENT proposed that the General Conference take up items 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7 of the provisional agenda, in that order, pending receipt of the General Committee's recommendation on the agenda.

30. The President's proposal was accepted.

2. Applications for membership of the Agency (GC(59)/11, 23 and 24)

31. The PRESIDENT drew attention to documents GC(59)/11, 23 and 24 containing applications for membership by Turkmenistan, Antigua and Barbuda, and Barbados respectively. The

applications had been endorsed by the Board of Governors, which had submitted, in those documents, three draft resolutions to the General Conference for adoption.

32. He took it that the Conference wished to adopt the three draft resolutions by acclamation.

33. It was so decided.

34. The PRESIDENT congratulated Turkmenistan, Antigua and Barbuda, and Barbados on being approved for membership of the Agency.

35. Mr MEZILOV (Turkmenistan), on behalf of the President of Turkmenistan, thanked all Member States of the Agency for endorsing Turkmenistan's application for membership. That was symbolic because 2015, which had been declared the year of neutrality and peace, marked the 20th anniversary of the neutrality of Turkmenistan. At the 69th session of the UN General Assembly, a resolution had been adopted, again confirming the significance of Turkmenistan's neutrality. Turkmenistan had complied strictly with its international commitments and had participated actively in international life, attaching great importance to its work in international and regional organizations. Turkmenistan's foreign policy involved constant and active cooperation with the UN. President Berdimuhamedov had met the Director General and had noted that one of the key aspects of Turkmenistan's foreign policy was its commitment to cooperation with the Agency. In 2005, Turkmenistan and the Agency had signed a safeguards agreement and an additional protocol. Turkmenistan fully supported the Agency's work to expand the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for the benefit of humankind and to ensure non-proliferation and greater security worldwide. Turkmenistan was prepared to continue to cooperate with all Member States of the Agency and to work with the Agency, and would honour all of its commitments and obligations as a Member State, in strict compliance with the Agency's Statute and the Charter of the United Nations.

3. Message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations

36. The PRESIDENT conveyed the following video message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations:

“Yukiya Amano, IAEA Director General, distinguished delegates, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I am pleased to greet the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

“I commend the Director General, Yukiya Amano, and Agency staff for their diligent efforts to help Member States realize the safe and secure benefits of nuclear energy while protecting against its misuse.

“Over the past twelve months, the Agency has made a significant contribution to international peace, security, health and development. I congratulate the Agency on its efforts in assisting the P5+1 and Iran in reaching a diplomatic solution to the issue of Iran's nuclear programme.

“The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action is a historic agreement. It shows the value of dialogue and, if implemented by all in good faith, can generate real security benefits for the region and beyond. It is essential that this agreement be given every opportunity to succeed. The Agency will play a critical role in that effort, in particular in very fine compliance with Iran's safeguards agreements and in ensuring the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. The United Nations stands ready to assist the IAEA and the countries concerned.

“I look forward to building a strengthened partnership with the IAEA in our shared efforts to realize a world free of nuclear weapons.

“Please accept my best wishes for a productive conference. Thank you.”

4. Statement by the Director General

37. The DIRECTOR GENERAL welcomed the new Member States, namely Guyana, Djibouti and Vanuatu, which had joined the Agency at the 58th session of the General Conference, thus raising membership of the Agency to 165 States.

38. In the following week, world leaders would meet at the UN summit in New York to adopt 17 SDGs. The Agency had participated actively in their formulation. The SDGs were clearly linked to the Agency’s work, as both covered energy, food security, nutrition, human health, environmental protection and water resource management. He welcomed the explicit recognition among the SDGs of the importance of science and technology in advancing development. He had stressed the importance of science and technology to development ever since he became Director General and would continue to do so. The Agency had so much to offer in that area that he often summarized its work as atoms for peace and development. The Agency made peaceful nuclear technology available to improve people’s welfare and prosperity worldwide.

39. Since the previous session of the General Conference, the Agency had continued to contribute to Member States’ development needs by transferring nuclear technology through its TC programme. The PUI, which complemented the TCF, had proven to be very effective.

40. In addition to its ongoing TC projects, the Agency had again demonstrated its ability to respond quickly to crises in Member States. Following the earthquake in Nepal in April, the Agency had assisted the authorities in testing the safety of critical buildings such as hospitals and schools, using non-destructive testing techniques, including radiography. In an excellent example of South-South cooperation, Indonesia’s BATAN, which had built its food irradiation capacities under a joint FAO/IAEA research project, had provided safe, irradiated food to Nepal.

41. Following the outbreak of Ebola in West Africa, the Agency had provided equipment and diagnostic kits for the rapid identification of the virus and had since worked with States in the region to build or strengthen their capacity to respond to future outbreaks of Ebola and other deadly zoonoses.

42. Member States had been assisted under PACT in integrating radiation medicine into comprehensive cancer control strategies. The Virtual University for Cancer Control, an innovative e-learning tool, was being developed in Africa to provide high-quality expert training online to health professionals.

43. Preparations for the long overdue ReNuAL project were under way at Seibersdorf. Designs for two new laboratory buildings had been completed. The site was being prepared for construction, with work on the new infrastructure to begin in 2015 and construction of the Insect Pest Control Laboratory to start early in the following year. The target date for completion of the Insect Pest Control Laboratory was the end of 2017. Construction of the Flexible Modular Laboratory could begin once sufficient extrabudgetary funding was available. The laboratories were the engines of much of the technical support that the Agency provided to Member States. He thanked the Member States that had provided or pledged valuable support. Substantial additional funding was still required, however, and

he appealed to all Member States that could do so to contribute generously so that the Agency could continue to provide high-quality scientific support to all States.

44. He urged all States to participate in the Atoms in Industry: Radiation Technology for Development Scientific Forum, at which participants would consider the key role of nuclear technologies in areas ranging from the production of high-performance materials to the control of disease-causing pollutants. He looked forward to meeting students, who would present their research work at Nuclear Olympiad: Developing a Youth Talent Pipeline, an event held to encourage young people to study nuclear science and technology.

45. Many States believed that nuclear power could help them to address the twin challenges of ensuring reliable energy supplies and curbing greenhouse gas emissions, and delegates from more than 190 States would meet in Paris for COP21 later in the year. Nuclear power, one of the lowest CO₂ emitters in terms of entire life-cycle emissions, had a low environmental impact, significantly avoided greenhouse gas emissions and should thus be considered in UNFCCC talks on climate change mitigation.

46. The 438 nuclear power reactors operating in 30 States together provided about 11% of the world's electricity. The Agency's assistance to countries that were considering, starting or expanding nuclear power programmes had delivered tangible results. Two INIR missions had taken place in Kenya and Nigeria during the year and a third one had been scheduled for the following month in Morocco. That reflected the growing interest in peaceful nuclear technology in Africa. The Agency had revised *Milestones in the Development of a National Infrastructure for Nuclear Power*, its key guidance document, to reflect experience gained in the previous decade and feedback from Member States.

47. He thanked the United Arab Emirates for offering to host the Agency's ministerial conference on nuclear power early in 2017.

48. In August 2015, he had signed a Host State Agreement and a related technical agreement with the Government of Kazakhstan, establishing the IAEA LEU bank. The legal framework was fully in place and the Agency could move towards full-scale implementation. He thanked the Government of Kazakhstan for hosting the IAEA LEU bank.

49. The report on the Fukushima Daiichi accident had been distributed, along with five technical volumes. Experts who had contributed to the technical volumes would participate in a Conference side event. He thanked all outside experts and Agency staff for their work. He believed that the report would provide a solid knowledge base for the future and would help to improve nuclear safety throughout the world.

50. The Nuclear Security Report 2015, contained in document GC(59)/12, provided an update on the Agency's assistance to States in strengthening their national nuclear security systems.

51. Special emphasis would again be placed on the 2005 amendment to the CPPNM at the Agency's Treaty Event. Accession by 14 States was still required for the amendment to enter into force, which would reduce the likelihood of terrorists detonating a dirty bomb in a major city and the risk of a terrorist attack on an NPP, with the resultant release of radioactivity. He called on all States that had not yet done so to accede to that important nuclear security instrument as a matter of urgency.

52. He thanked the Republic of Korea for offering to chair, at ministerial level, the IAEA International Conference on Nuclear Security to be held in Vienna in December 2016.

53. With regard to nuclear verification, 182 States had safeguards agreements in force, while 126 States had brought additional protocols into force.

54. The DPRK's nuclear programme remained a matter of serious concern. The Agency could not undertake verifications there and had little knowledge of that State's nuclear programme. The Agency had nonetheless maintained its readiness to return to the DPRK if requested to do so by the DPRK, and subject to approval by the Board. He called on the DPRK to comply fully with its obligations, to cooperate promptly with the Agency and to resolve all outstanding issues, including those that had arisen during the absence of Agency inspectors from the country.

55. The Board had authorized him to undertake the verification and monitoring of Iran's nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA agreed by the E3/EU+3 and Iran. As stated in the JCPOA, Iran would implement the additional protocol, which would give the Agency greater access to information and to sites in Iran and was an essential prerequisite for the Agency to be able to provide, in due course, credible assurance about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran. Iran had agreed to implement additional transparency measures that would help to improve the Agency's understanding of Iran's nuclear programme. As agreed in the road map signed on 14 July 2015, Iran had provided the Agency with written explanations and related documents in clarification of outstanding issues. The Agency had reviewed that information and had submitted its questions to Iran during the previous week.

56. The costs of the Agency's work in monitoring and verifying Iran's nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA must be addressed, both under the Regular Budget and through extrabudgetary contributions, and support in that regard would be welcome.

57. The Agency's budget in recent years had not kept pace with the steady growth in demand for the application of Agency safeguards. To continue to meet its legal obligations, the Agency strove to become more efficient, without compromising the credibility of its safeguards conclusions. It continued to engage in open dialogue with States on safeguards matters, including the State-level concept, and had modernized the safeguards information technology system.

58. As shown in the report on Application of IAEA Safeguards in the Middle East, fundamental differences of view remained among States in the region on the subject. Further progress in fulfilling his mandate from the General Conference in that area had therefore been impossible. He would continue to hold consultations.

59. Financial difficulties were likely to continue in many Member States in the coming years. The Agency would seek to maintain a balance between budgetary constraints and the increasing demand for the Agency's services from its growing number of Members.

60. As requested by the General Conference, the Agency had intensified its efforts to increase the number of staff recruited from developing countries or from unrepresented or under-represented Member States, especially at senior levels.

61. Good progress had been made in the representation of women in the Secretariat, in the Professional and higher categories and in the scientific and engineering fields. However, more was yet to be done.

62. Women made an enormous contribution to the Agency's work at all levels. He remained committed to expanding the opportunities open to women in the Agency and encouraged all Member States to assist the Agency in achieving the ultimate goal of equal gender representation.

63. He thanked all Member States for supporting the Agency's work and for the confidence that they had placed in him as Director General. He expressed gratitude to Austria for being a model host country. He also expressed deep appreciation to all Agency staff for their hard work and dedication.

6. Contributions to the Technical Cooperation Fund for 2016 (GC(59)/20)

64. The PRESIDENT said that the Board had recommended on 9 June 2015 a figure of €84 456 000 as the target for voluntary TCF contributions for 2016. Document GC(59)/20 showed the contributions that each Member State should make in order to meet its share of that target. Early pledging and payment of contributions into the TCF considerably facilitated the planning of the Agency's TC programmes, and all delegations that could, but had not yet done so, were urged to notify the Secretariat during the session of their governments' TCF contributions for 2016. He would report at the end of the session on the pledged contribution amount and hoped to do so favourably regarding the percentage of the 2016 target figure then pledged.

7. General debate and Annual Report for 2014 (GC(59)/7 and Additional Information)

65. Mr SHKOLNIK (Kazakhstan), after welcoming the Agency's new Member States, said that the Director General's report outlined the Agency's considered and effective policy formulated to ensure nuclear safety and security and prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. He supported the Director General's statement.

66. He commended the Agency's work and the Director General's report on the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident, which gave a balanced and objective account, highlighting the need to learn lessons and formulate recommendations to improve NPP safety.

67. He supported the Agency's safeguards activities and welcomed the broader conclusion drawn in respect of his country which, with the Agency's support, was moving towards integrated safeguards.

68. Commending the Agency's verification activities concerning the nuclear programmes of the DPRK, Syria and the Islamic Republic of Iran, he called on the DPRK to meet its obligations in full in accordance with relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and to return to the Six-Party Talks with a view to regularizing its situation. Welcoming the JCPOA, he said that his country had contributed to the negotiation process on Iran's nuclear programme by holding two rounds of talks in Almaty, on the initiative of President Nazarbayev, thus helping to build an atmosphere of trust.

69. An important event in the past year had been the signing by Kazakhstan and the Agency in August 2015 of the agreement on the establishment of the LEU bank in the country. Two technical agreements had also been signed on specific procedural aspects of the project. Ratification of the host-country agreement by Parliament in 2016 would mark the beginning of the second phase of the project, involving practical measures and requiring rapid and effective solutions to technical questions. His Government would take all necessary steps to ensure that the LEU bank would begin operating within the planned time frame. An IAEA LEU bank was the proper way to ensure a guaranteed supply of nuclear fuel and did not impinge on the right of Member States to build their own technological nuclear fuel cycle capacities. No projects or initiatives involving the peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be politicized or discriminatory in nature. Peaceful nuclear technology and knowledge must be accessible to all States that abided by the principle of nuclear non-proliferation.

70. His country had been an active proponent of an NWFZ in Central Asia and supported the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East, so that the whole world would gradually become a

unified zone of peace and security. President Nazarbayev had launched the ATOM project, attracting more than 100 000 supporters to date, and the country was standing for membership of the United Nations Security Council for 2017–2018.

71. Kazakhstan attached great importance to combating terrorism and had implemented the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. He called on those States that had not yet done so to accede to that Convention at the earliest possible date.

72. His country had implemented UNSC resolution 1540 (2004) in full and was taking steps to improve its systems in order to prevent unlawful use of nuclear and other radioactive materials. As a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Zangger Committee and a leading manufacturer of uranium products, Kazakhstan had taken all possible steps to monitor its nuclear exports thoroughly.

73. Kazakhstan was party to the CPPNM and had ratified the amendment thereto, in recognition of the importance of ensuring nuclear security and out of conviction that early entry into force of the amendment would help to improve nuclear security worldwide. He thus welcomed the recent ratification of the amendment by Italy, Turkey and the United States of America and called on all States that had not yet done so to follow suit.

74. Kazakhstan recognized the importance of The Hague Nuclear Security Summit Communiqué and was making every effort to ensure its successful implementation, focusing particularly on practical measures to reduce the use of sensitive civilian materials, which had been one of the Summit's principal aims. The critical test facility at the Institute of Nuclear Physics in Almaty had been converted to run on low-enriched fuel and plans were in place to use fresh LEU fuel in the WWR-K research reactor by December 2015. Work was under way to convert the reactors at the Institute of Atomic Energy in Kurchatov to run on LEU fuel, while technologies were being developed to produce radioisotopes without using HEU. Kazakhstan's initiative to develop and introduce economic means of encouraging the transfer to HEU-free technologies had been supported by participants in the Summit. Without effective economic incentives, it would not be practicable to switch from HEU in industry.

75. The Agency was the world's leading forum for scientific and technical cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear technologies. In particular, it had provided assistance in assessing the radiological situation at the Semipalatinsk test site, with a view to returning it to productive use, and for joint projects in the area of nuclear medicine. Kazakhstan fully supported the Agency's assistance in transferring and developing technologies and knowledge for peaceful nuclear applications. In 2015, Kazakhstan had contributed US \$325 000 to the NSF, the PUI and JCPOA verification activities.

76. Observing that progress in accepting the amendment to Article VI of the Agency's Statute had been slow, as reported in document GC(59)/10, he called for a balanced approach to the placement of Member States in regional groups and welcomed efforts by Member States and the Secretariat in that regard. He also called for additional steps to be taken to accelerate the entry into force of the amendment, which his country intended to ratify.

77. He underlined his country's full support for the Agency's efforts to expand the peaceful uses of atomic energy, strengthen the non-proliferation regime and improve global security.

78. Mr KIRIENKO (Russian Federation) said that when the President of the Russian Federation had met the Director General during the St Petersburg International Economic Forum in June 2015, he had emphasized the Russian Federation's commitment to complying fully with all of its non-proliferation obligations and to working closely with the Agency.

79. The Russian Federation, which had many years of operational experience, believed firmly that nuclear power was a strategic area with long life cycles. Safety was a priority that could not and must

not be contingent on political change. It was extremely important for the Agency to maintain the professional nature of its work.

80. His country had been one of the Agency's founding Members and its fundamental attitude had not changed: it was ready to continue to support the Agency's activities and was taking practical steps to that end. Despite economic difficulties, his country continued to make financial contributions to all areas of the Agency's work. Its total annual extrabudgetary contributions were comparable to its assessed regular budget contribution. It had decided to continue to contribute to the NSF for 2016–2021 and had more than doubled its federal budgetary allocation for the implementation of the Russian Federation's safeguards support programme. It was gradually increasing its TCF contributions. In the previous 15 years, it had provided financial support for the implementation of the INPRO programme, which it had initiated and in which more than 40 States participated.

81. The Russian Federation welcomed the agreement on the establishment of the IAEA LEU bank in Kazakhstan. In support of that project, his country had signed a transit agreement, and both agreements would conduce to an assured supply of nuclear fuel, an initiative first implemented in the Russian Federation. It supported a guaranteed LEU reserve held in readiness at the International Uranium Enrichment Centre in Angarsk.

82. The Russian Federation had continued to organize visits to nuclear facilities for ambassadors accredited to the Agency. It regarded such visits as a means of supporting the Agency's statutory activities, in particular with regard to transparency and the exchange of information on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In July 2015, participants had visited Atommash, one of the world's largest nuclear mechanical engineering enterprises, in the city of Volgograd, and Rostov NPP, where they had seen Unit 3, which had already been commissioned, and Unit 4, which was under construction, each with Russian WWER reactors.

83. The Russian Federation complied with all of its international commitments. It would continue to work with all States to ensure strict compliance with nuclear non-proliferation and safety requirements, and trusted that other States would approach the development of nuclear energy with due regard for their responsibilities.

84. The Russian Federation, which considered the development of safeguards to be one of its political priorities, worked closely with the Secretariat to strengthen the safeguards system. Safeguards implementation must be non-discriminatory, free of bias, based on objective criteria and consistent with the decisions of the Agency's governing bodies.

85. The completion of the Director General's report on the Fukushima Daiichi accident was a 2015 milestone. Russian experts had participated actively in the preparation of the report, which would enable the international community to turn, at last, that sad page in the history of world nuclear power.

86. Other milestones included the signing of the JCPOA and the road map for the clarification of past and present outstanding issues regarding Iran's nuclear programme. His country had immediately begun work on JCPOA practical issues and had undertaken considerable preparatory work. It was working closely with Iran to develop the engineering design for the reconfiguration of the Fordow facility for the production of stable isotopes and would fulfil all of its JCPOA obligations.

87. The Russian atomic industry would be celebrating its 70th anniversary in 2015. Although 70 years was a short period in history, there had been crucial changes during that time and it was difficult to overestimate the impact of peaceful nuclear energy on the world economy and on modern life. Despite the highs and lows that nuclear power had experienced during that time, development had always recommenced, as could currently be seen. Nuclear power had not simply returned to the pre-2011 stage; it was developing and changing. A new market, a new situation and new opportunities

had emerged and the international community was endeavouring to work within the logic of that market.

88. First, greater emphasis was laid on ensuring nuclear safety. At the end of 2014, Unit 1 of Kudankulam NPP, which his country had built with its Indian partners and which complied with the most modern post-Fukushima safety requirements, had entered into operation.

89. Second, as NPP life cycles were being extended by new materials and technological solutions, the operating lifetime of Hanhikivi NPP, which his country was building with Finland, was expected to last until 2084 at least and could be extended to exceed 100 years.

90. Third, the geography of nuclear power development had changed, as confirmed by the Agency's official forecasts. The centres of nuclear power development had shifted from Western countries to developing countries in Asia, the Middle East and Latin America, where States had opted for nuclear power generation. Such decisions placed particular responsibilities on the vendors of such technologies, and the Russian Federation, which currently had a portfolio of contracts for 23 units in 10 partner countries, fully recognized its responsibilities in that regard.

91. Fourth, a universally recognized nuclear-energy end product, namely the cost per kilowatt-hour of generated electricity, had emerged. The growing number of factors that must be addressed in negotiations comprised not only the cost of equipment, design solutions and infrastructure, but also the cost of maintenance, serviceability, fuel supply, decommissioning and waste management. Negotiations took place within that frame of reference not only in connection with the build-own-operate approach, which was being implemented in Turkey for the first time, but also for EPC contracts.

92. Fifth, the requirements of countries embarking on nuclear power were increasing. It was well known that the establishment of nuclear power generating facilities in a newcomer country had a large-scale cumulative effect on the national economy and on the technical and social structure.

93. The Russian Federation gave priority to choosing the correct strategy for the development of the nuclear infrastructure from the outset and had complied with the Agency's requirements in its work in that connection. Egypt, which was preparing basic documents for the construction of a nuclear power plant, had already established direct dialogue with the Russian regulator and was working on legal infrastructure issues.

94. The Russian Federation was fully cognizant of its responsibilities in the light of such new challenges and was developing its own internal infrastructure not only to meet its own needs but also to fulfil its obligations towards its partners. His country had established a dedicated engineering division to manage NPP design and construction abroad. During the previous year alone, the division had commissioned three new units.

95. Steps had been taken to cluster some 30 enterprises manufacturing major and auxiliary NPP equipment. Manufacturing capacities allowed for the production of seven sets of reactor equipment yearly.

96. In its projects abroad, the Russian Federation was working actively to maximize local component manufacturing, which was an important issue to partner States. In the first NPP construction projects in Belarus and Turkey, the percentage of local construction contractors might be as high as 80%. The figure was also high for the construction of the second stage of Tianwan NPP in China.

97. Sufficient and assured financial resources were required for modern international nuclear projects, and the customer and the contractor bore responsibility in that regard. The

Russian Federation offered various forms of financial support and worked with governmental and intergovernmental institutions and with private institutional investors.

98. In order to ensure long-term and safe NPP operation, the Russian Federation had developed a new project management system that optimized management and accumulation of knowledge at all project implementation stages, including decommissioning. The technology developed enabled the customer to participate in project management from the earliest project stages, thus ensuring transparency and the monitoring of all operations.

99. He invited delegates to visit the Russian Federation's side event and special exhibition, which provided more information on Russian life-cycle management technologies and gave a virtual NPP tour.

100. The Russian Federation attached particular importance to basic and applied scientific research, which provided a basis for innovative medium- and long-term development of nuclear technologies. Two years previously, his country had reported on the multipurpose fast research reactor and on the establishment of the international research centre. He was pleased to report that the laying of the foundations had begun on 11 September 2015. When commissioned in 2019, the reactor would be a unique facility in terms of its technical, economic and research capabilities.

101. The Russian Federation ascribed importance to the development of highly qualified human resources in constant support of the nuclear power industry, which was one of the most dynamic industries in the Russian Federation and worldwide. In the previous academic year, more than 700 foreign students from 11 countries had enrolled in Russian institutions of higher education; the figure was even higher for the current academic year, with as many as 80 applicants for each place. His country had a comprehensive training system, encompassing school and university education and further professional training, and covering all aspects of the long-term life cycle of nuclear power plants and other nuclear power enterprises. The Russian Federation was introducing that system in partner States that were expanding the use of nuclear power, within the framework of open international cooperation, in which the Agency played a leading role.

102. Mr MONIZ (United States of America) read out the following message from President Obama:

"I send greetings as you gather in Vienna for the 59th International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conference. This conference demonstrates the international community's support for the invaluable role of the IAEA, and I thank you for your efforts.

"The United States remains committed to pursuing a world without nuclear weapons. That is why we have worked with our international partners for decades to establish and strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime — encouraging peaceful uses of nuclear technology, while preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. The IAEA has been at the heart of these efforts, constantly adapting to new challenges, developing and promoting international standards for nuclear safety and security and crafting state-of-the-art approaches to nuclear safeguards. The Agency's integrity and capacity to undertake its technical responsibilities deserve our constant support and protection so that the IAEA can continue to contribute to global security.

"This year, with the conclusion of negotiations on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with our P5+1 partners, the European Union and Iran, we demonstrated once again that it is possible to settle difficult non-proliferation issues diplomatically. Under the interim deal that allowed comprehensive negotiations to take place over the past two years, the IAEA played a key part in building the necessary confidence to complete the long-term deal by verifying Iran's implementation of its nuclear commitments. The IAEA's role is central to the verification regime established in the JCPOA.

“Next year, I look forward to hosting the fourth Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, where one of our primary objectives will be the strengthening of the global nuclear security architecture. The IAEA, which already contributes extensively to global nuclear security efforts, will play an even more prominent role after the summit as we further coordinate nuclear security activities among nations, institutions and initiatives.

“As you join together in Vienna and work to shape a better future across the globe, I call upon all Member States to strengthen the Agency’s ability to ensure nuclear programmes are peaceful and secure. I wish you all the best for a productive General Conference.”

103. The USA, Germany, France, the Russian Federation, China, the United Kingdom, the European Union and Iran had reached agreement on the JCPOA to ensure the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran’s nuclear programme. The JCPOA had subsequently been endorsed in UNSC resolution 2231, which represented a shared commitment to uphold, and a collective determination to enforce, global non-proliferation norms.

104. The JCPOA was unique in its structure and its tasks. It assumed a long-term engagement built around a step-by-step approach, with reciprocal commitments among the parties, and it provided in its preamble that under no circumstances would Iran ever seek, develop or acquire nuclear weapons. It had been acknowledged by scientific leaders familiar with nuclear issues as an innovative agreement, with much more stringent constraints than any previously negotiated non-proliferation framework. It included a fixed time frame for providing access to undeclared sites and full uranium supply chain surveillance. Furthermore, Iran’s pledge never to seek, develop or acquire nuclear weapons had been reinforced by its agreement not to engage in the development of key nuclear weaponization-related capabilities. Moreover, concerns over plutonium production from the Arak heavy water reactor had been resolved because the P5+1 and Iran had undertaken to support a modernization project to redesign the reactor as a multi-purpose research reactor, with low enriched uranium and plutonium production minimization, thus providing Iran with a modern research tool for peaceful purposes and simultaneously addressing international concerns about the potential accumulation of plutonium, further allayed by Iran’s commitment to ship all spent fuel out of Iran for the reactor’s lifetime.

105. The Agency already played a critical role in implementing the nuclear deal negotiated between the P5+1 and Iran, which was required under the JCPOA to cooperate by 15 October 2015 on the Agency’s investigation into possible military dimensions of its previous programme, on which the Agency would report to the Board of Governors in December 2015.

106. The JCPOA provided, moreover, an opportunity to discuss a broader safeguards regime in the future.

107. The USA commended the Agency’s ongoing efforts to address all present and past concerns regarding Iran’s nuclear programme. It welcomed the Agency’s essential and expansive role in verifying Iran’s nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA in the future. Success required the support of all Member States and receipt of sufficient funding. He therefore called on the international community to make contributions so that the Agency would have the requisite resources to monitor the JCPOA.

108. In addition to making regular budget and extrabudgetary contributions to the Agency annually, the USA was proud to provide technical support for the Agency’s non-proliferation activities. Many of the advanced monitoring technologies used in the Agency’s inspection work had been developed at the United States Department of Energy’s national laboratories.

109. To combat the threat of nuclear terrorism, he called on all Member States to support a strengthened global nuclear security architecture built on legally binding instruments, multilateral

institutions, voluntary collectives and national action. To that end, the USA would host the fourth Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, DC, in Spring 2016. The Agency's central role in global nuclear security and his country's commitment to supporting and bolstering the Agency's nuclear security capabilities had been reaffirmed at previous Summits. The United States had already submitted its instrument of ratification of the amendment to the CPPNM and it planned to deposit its instrument of ratification of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism in the near future. It strongly urged all countries that had not yet done so to accede to and fully implement those agreements.

110. As more reactors came on line, it was increasingly important for regulators and operators to discuss and cooperate on nuclear safety issues. He encouraged current Contracting Parties to join the CNS and participate fully in the CNS peer review process, in which participation had declined notably.

111. He commended the Director General's report on the Fukushima Daiichi accident and considered that it was important to handle liability issues through treaty-based mechanisms. A significant milestone in 2015 had been the entry into force of the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage (CSC). The USA was committed to supporting the International Conference on Global Emergency Preparedness and Response, to be held in October in Vienna, and it encouraged other Member States to attend.

112. He urged States to propose ambitious climate commitments preparatory to the climate negotiations in Paris. The threat of climate change called for global responses, including expanded use of nuclear power to produce the electricity needed to sustain the rising standard of living of the world's growing population.

113. President Obama had made it clear that nuclear energy was an important part of his country's 'all-of-the-above' energy strategy. In partnership with the nuclear industry, his Government supported the deployment of reactors with passive safety features both at home and abroad. It had partnerships with national industry to support the licensing and technical support process of SMRs and it expected the first SMRs to be deployed within the next decade.

114. The United States Department of Energy had issued \$8.3 billion in loan guarantees to support the construction of two passively safe reactors at Plant Vogtle. By incorporating passive safety systems into SMRs and the large Generation III designs, the USA aimed to provide a broader set of options for safe, reliable nuclear energy. The security and safeguards aspects of the new designs were under study.

115. With nearly 440 operating nuclear reactors generating electricity worldwide, approximately 70 reactors under construction and many more planned, global interest in peaceful nuclear energy remained strong. States with little or no experience faced the complex tasks of managing nuclear facilities, protecting and safeguarding nuclear material and safely managing spent fuel. The USA therefore supported the Agency in assisting Member States in building the necessary infrastructure, and the NEA, the International Framework for Nuclear Energy Cooperation and the Generation IV International Forum in ensuring the continued safe, secure and sustainable use of nuclear energy.

116. The USA strongly supported the Agency's efforts to assist interested Member States in using the various applications of nuclear science and technology to meet their national development needs. The Agency's programmes had contributed directly to the MDGs and would be equally relevant to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

117. The Agency's TC programme remained the core of that effort and deserved full support. The PUI was an essential source of voluntary funding. The USA was pleased to be one of 19 Agency

Member States that, along with the European Union, had together made more than \$77 million in monetary or in-kind contributions to the PUI since its inception in 2010. At the 2015 NPT Review Conference, the USA had announced an additional \$50 million contribution to the PUI in the following five years. It urged all that were in a position to do so to contribute to the PUI.

118. The USA had donated \$3 million to the Agency's ReNuAL project, thus fulfilling its \$2 million pledge at the NPT Review Conference. It had to date contributed approximately \$5.5 million to ReNuAL, which could serve as a catalyst to encourage further donations from other Member States so that construction could proceed quickly and efficiently.

119. The USA commended the IAEA and Kazakhstan for signing the Host State Agreement on the IAEA LEU bank, which was an important element of collective peaceful uses and non-proliferation efforts.

120. States faced the great challenge of supporting global development while adapting to become more responsible stewards of the future. Safe, secure and peaceful nuclear technology was crucial to addressing that challenge. The USA would continue to look to the Agency to provide the necessary technical expertise to meet shared goals. As the Agency's financial resources, political support and legal authorities must be commensurate with the task at hand, he urged all Member States to contribute to those ends.

121. Mr SALEHI (Islamic Republic of Iran), after welcoming the Agency's newest Member States, said that the Agency's Statute gave it the major responsibility of promoting nuclear energy for peaceful purposes throughout the world. The General Conference provided an opportunity to share and exchange views on that issue. In the light of the *fatwa* issued by the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the illegitimacy of producing, deploying and using WMDs, including nuclear weapons, his country had always pursued the path of peaceful nuclear technology based on constructive engagement and mutual respect. It had joined negotiations, which had gathered pace following the election of President Rouhani in June 2013, with the objective of exercising its right to peaceful nuclear technology. After almost two years of hard and intensive negotiations, an agreement had been reached with the E3/EU+3 in July 2015, as set out in the JCPOA, conveying to the world the message that neither imposed sanctions nor military threats had had any effect on the will of the Iranian people. The agreement paved the way to new opportunities and was a step towards ending a contrived and unnecessary crisis that had been deliberately prolonged for more than a decade.

122. The signing of a road map between his country and the Agency was yet another indication of its determination to take action to resolve outstanding issues. Further to its voluntary confidence-building measures, the Islamic Republic of Iran was committed to implementing the road map and expected the Agency and the E3/EU+3 to reciprocate by concluding the process impartially and objectively and by removing unjust sanctions, respectively, thus demonstrating their good intentions and trustworthiness to the international community. Wide support from all of the world's peace-loving nations would undoubtedly expedite the process.

123. The Islamic Republic of Iran had been acknowledged in UNSC resolution 2331 (2015) as a State possessing peaceful nuclear technology, including full fuel cycle technologies, and the right to enrichment, while preserving all of its existing nuclear infrastructure. He expressed his country's readiness to engage in extended cooperation with other Member States in all aspects of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, according priority to nuclear safety within existing Agency regulations.

124. His country had already taken significant steps to develop peaceful nuclear technologies. Bushehr NPP was operating safely and securely, with technical assistance from the Agency, and had been evaluated positively by the World Association of Nuclear Operators in 2011 and 2015. He hoped

that the Agency would assess the plant's performance positively as part of pre-OSART activities in 2016 and an OSART mission in 2017.

125. Affirming the high priority given to nuclear and radiation safety in his country, he suggested that a regional cooperation mechanism for nuclear and radiation safety and emergency preparedness be established in order to enhance confidence and transparency among countries in the region.

126. Although nuclear security was a matter of sovereign right, the Agency's assistance to Member States was instrumental in strengthening and promoting the nuclear security regime. As such, the Agency's central and pivotal role in establishing a relevant supportive body was of vital importance. As guiding documents were required for effective implementation of security regimes, he strongly recommended that all Member States participate in the Nuclear Security Guidance Committee in order to draft, compile and revise such documents. While condemning cyberattacks against nuclear facilities, he expressed his country's continuing concern at the probable leak of confidential information.

127. The State-level concept for safeguards remained ambiguous, and its implementation should neither contradict the NPT nor disrupt the rights and obligations of Member States in a prejudiced and discriminatory manner. Agency inspections should be carried out in such a way as to avoid intervening in domestic military and national security affairs. By the same token, his country intended to implement its additional protocol fully in due time, in line with paragraph 13 of the JCPOA, as a gesture of good will and for the sake of confidence building.

128. Drawing on its principles and religious tenets, his country, a supporter of disarmament efforts under the NPT, considered the production, accumulation and deployment of nuclear weapons to be inhumane and uncivilized. He urged the nuclear-weapon States to meet their obligations under Article VI of the NPT, as endorsed by the 16th Non-Aligned Summit, held in Tehran in August 2012. It was sad that those States had yet to fulfil their disarmament commitments after nearly half a century.

129. The establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East was of vital importance. The idea, initiated by his country in 1974, had been included in the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and in the action plan adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Israel, which had not acceded to the NPT, was the greatest obstacle to implementing the plan and a serious threat to the region's security. He expressed great concern at the current trend towards the incubation of terrorist groups in the region and warned of the threat of such groups using radiological dirty weapons. If complications were to arise from that menace, the countries that supported such groups financially or materially should be held responsible and be required to act.

130. Efficiency and effectiveness in the Agency's decision-making processes must be enhanced by striking a balance between the Board and the General Conference and by reviewing the issue of membership of the Board. The time had come for the Agency to take constructive steps in that regard and so meet the legal and technical expectations of Member States. The rationale of the power of logic and reasoning was a wise substitute for the logic of power that had been chronically dominant in the international arena. The JCPOA was a shining example in that respect. He hoped that the world would in future be enriched with prosperity, peace and security for all humankind.

131. Mr XU Dazhe (China), after welcoming the Agency's new Member States, said that the Agency had dealt with challenges in such areas as energy supply, environmental protection, non-proliferation, anti-terrorism and nuclear safety since the previous session. It had made great progress on several fronts and had won wide acclaim and support from the international community. China appreciated the efforts made by the Director General and the Secretariat and was satisfied with the Agency's work.

132. The year 2015 marked the 60th anniversary of the launch of the nuclear industry in China and the 30th anniversary of the start of construction of Qinshan NPP, the first on the Chinese mainland. Outstanding achievements had been made by China's nuclear energy industry, exemplified by a comprehensive and indigenous nuclear industry, cutting-edge research and development and design, highly qualified construction professionals and consistent, indigenous and large-scale NPP construction. In August 2015, 26 NPPs were in operation in mainland China, with a total installed capacity of 24.69 GW(e). A further 26 were under construction, with a total installed capacity of 29 GW(e), accounting for at least 40% of the total number under construction worldwide. Construction of pilot projects for China's independently developed Generation III Hualong One ACP1000 reactor had begun in China and in other countries, which demonstrated widespread recognition of the sophistication, maturity and economy of that technology. Steady progress had been made with the independently developed large-capacity CAP1400 PWR and small multi-purpose ACP100 reactor; both were ready for project construction.

133. China had made satisfactory progress in nuclear research and development. The China Experimental Fast Reactor was in good operation, the HTGR demonstration project was well under way and positive progress had been made in advanced nuclear energy systems such as supercritical water cooled reactors and tokamak. To ensure sustainable development of nuclear energy in China, the CAEA had increased contributions to research and development on, and capacity building in, the nuclear fuel cycle, which had increased the overall capacity and the level of the nuclear fuel cycle industry and had enabled China to meet both domestic and international market demand. The application of nuclear technologies was growing in step with the accelerated pace of industrialization, bringing increased social and economic benefits.

134. The efficient and safe development of nuclear energy in China had contributed to its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to optimize its energy mix and to promote social and economic development. It had also given strong impetus to post-Fukushima global nuclear energy development.

135. China consistently supported the Agency in its statutory activities and in working in a balanced way to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and non-proliferation. It valued the concept of atoms for peace and development, as promoted by the Director General. China had cooperated with the Agency for many years on a give and take basis in the areas of nuclear energy, nuclear technology, nuclear safety, security and safeguards. China had always contributed to the Regular Budget and TCF on time and in full. Despite the downward pressure on its economy, his country had continued to provide extrabudgetary and in-kind contributions and cost-free expert services to the Agency. In view of the importance and pressing needs of the ReNuAL project, China had donated an irradiation system valued at US \$2.5 million to the Agency in 2014 and would donate a further €2 million in extrabudgetary contributions for ReNuAL-related infrastructure construction, equipment procurement and expert services. He called on all Member States to increase extrabudgetary contributions for that programme, so that well-functioning, technically advanced and modern technical applications laboratories would be available at the earliest possible date to meet the growing needs of the Member States.

136. Nuclear safety was the cornerstone of the sustainable development of nuclear energy. After the Fukushima accident, the Chinese Government had undertaken a timely and effective comprehensive safety review of all of its nuclear facilities. The lessons learnt from the Fukushima accident had been applied to ensure the safety of all NPPs in operation and under construction. China had participated actively in various activities under the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, fulfilling its obligations and strengthening and improving its own nuclear safety regulation and emergency management systems. In June 2015, China's nuclear accident response preparedness and capability had been comprehensively reviewed during the Shield 2015 nuclear emergency exercise conducted in China. As

part of overall efforts to strengthen the legal system, China's Atomic Energy Law was under procedural legislative review and was expected to be promulgated in 2016.

137. The Chinese Government had always supported the Agency in its leading role in the area of nuclear security and had participated fully in the Agency's efforts to enhance global nuclear security. The Agency's leading role in promoting international cooperation in nuclear security had been recognized by the international community. To further strengthen China's capacity building in nuclear security, the Chinese Government would invite the Agency to carry out an IPPAS mission and was discussing the necessary procedures and preparations with the Agency.

138. To honour its commitment to stronger global nuclear security, China was speeding up the HEU-to-LEU conversion of miniature neutron source reactors. Good progress had been achieved under the domestic reactor conversion project, as the unloading of the HEU core had begun and completion of the loading and commissioning of the LEU core was expected by the end of 2015. After an agreement on assistance in supplying of LEU to the research reactor in Ghana had been signed by China, the Agency and Ghana in 2014, that project had been implemented smoothly. On completion of the work, the HEU-to-LEU conversion experience could be rolled out to other States.

139. China played an active role in other international nuclear security cooperation mechanisms. Taking an approach that placed equal emphasis on development and security, rights and obligations, independent and collaborative efforts, while treating symptoms and addressing causes, as described by President Xi Jinping, China endeavoured to fulfil its obligations and improve its own nuclear security capabilities comprehensively. Construction of the China-US centre of excellence on nuclear security, which was expected to begin operation by the end of 2015, was progressing smoothly. It would then become a good platform for promoting technical exchanges and training on nuclear security in the Asia-Pacific region or even globally.

140. China greatly appreciated international nuclear non-proliferation efforts and firmly supported the Agency's endeavours to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its safeguards system. China had contributed actively to international and regional progress in the area of nuclear non-proliferation.

141. To improve the use of nuclear energy for the benefit of all humanity, China was committed to international cooperation and had thus signed agreements with 28 States and international organizations, which had led to growth in nuclear trade. In the context of ever-expanding cooperation on nuclear energy, the CAEA thoroughly monitored export activities in accordance with the regulations on nuclear export control and the regulations on export control of nuclear dual-use items. It continued to uphold China's international obligations through the timely adjustment of relevant regulations and the trigger list based on the international non-proliferation situation and the most recent technological developments.

142. China welcomed the JCPOA and the road map for the clarification of outstanding issues regarding Iran's nuclear programme. The progress achieved to date had again shown that dialogue and consultation were effective means of resolving international disputes, which was of great significance for the maintenance of the nuclear non-proliferation system and the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy worldwide. Much work remained to be done and it required joint efforts by all parties concerned. China had taken an active part in the negotiations with a just, objective and constructive attitude. It had made an extrabudgetary contribution of RMB 2.3 million to the Agency for related verification activities in Iran. China would cooperate with all parties concerned to support the Agency in carrying out relevant verification in accordance with UNSC resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA. It would help to ensure comprehensive, timely and effective JCPOA implementation.

143. Four-and-a-half years after the Fukushima nuclear accident, owing to the joint efforts of the Agency, Member States and other international organizations, the world community was rebuilding

confidence in the safe uses of nuclear energy. China attached great importance to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and would further enhance cooperation with the Agency and other Member States and rigorously promote both multilateral and bilateral nuclear cooperation in order to ensure nuclear safety and nuclear non-proliferation. On the one hand, it would provide more support for the Agency to perform its obligations in terms of policies, finance, technology and human resources; on the other hand, it would enhance and expand comprehensive, multi-level and mutually beneficial cooperation with all Member States. It would share experience and promote common development to ensure that nuclear energy, one of the greatest discoveries of the twentieth century, continuously served the peace, security and prosperity of humanity.

144. Ms MUTSCH (Luxembourg), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia and San Marino aligned themselves with her statement. She commended the Director General and the Secretariat for their professional and impartial work, assured them of the EU's unfailing support and welcomed the Agency's new Member States.

145. The EU attached great importance to the Agency's core responsibilities in non-proliferation, nuclear energy, nuclear safety, nuclear security and technical cooperation and was fully committed to promoting universal accession to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament agreements. The NPT was the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with Article VI of the treaty and vital to the further development of nuclear energy applications for peaceful purposes. It called on States that had not yet done so to accede to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States. It regretted the lack of consensus on the draft final document of the 2015 NPT Review Conference but welcomed the strong support that had been expressed for the Agency's work.

146. The EU reaffirmed its support for the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and recalled the affirmation of its goals and objectives by the 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences. The EU considered that the 1995 resolution would remain valid until its goals and objectives had been achieved and deeply regretted that the conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of WMDs and their delivery systems had not been convened. It maintained the view that dialogue and confidence building among all stakeholders was the only sustainable way to agree on arrangements for a meaningful conference, to be attended by all States of the region, as decided at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. The EU commended Mr Jaakko Laajava for his hard work and unstinting efforts as conference facilitator.

147. The Agency's safeguards system was a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and played an indispensable role in NPT implementation. While underlining the primary responsibility of UNSC in cases of non-compliance, the EU recognized the serious proliferation challenges that continued to threaten international security and the need to find peaceful and diplomatic solutions.

148. The EU welcomed the historic agreement on the JCPOA, which was fully consistent with the principles enshrined in the NPT, and it fully supported the Agency's long-term mission of verifying and monitoring Iran's nuclear-related commitments throughout their duration. Full JCPOA implementation, facilitated by the application of the additional protocol to Iran's safeguards agreement, would provide the international community with the necessary assurances of the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme and would contribute positively to regional and international peace and security.

149. The EU looked forward to the full and timely implementation of the road map for the clarification of past and present outstanding issues regarding Iran's nuclear programme. It was

important for Iran to cooperate fully with the Agency regarding possible military dimensions to its nuclear programme, and the resolution of all outstanding issues would be essential to implementing the comprehensive, negotiated long-term settlement.

150. The EU had condemned the nuclear tests conducted by the DPRK and its threat of another nuclear test, in outright violation of its international obligations, particularly under UNSC resolutions 1695 (2006), 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009), 2087 (2013) and 2094 (2013), which had urged the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapon and ballistic missile programmes and to return to the NPT and Agency safeguards at an early date. The EU attached the highest importance to maintaining an essential role for the Agency in verifying the DPRK's nuclear programme.

151. Recalling the Board's resolution of 9 June 2011 (GOV/2011/41), which had concluded that Syria was in non-compliance with its safeguards agreement, the EU urged Syria to cooperate promptly and transparently with the Agency to resolve all outstanding issues, including by concluding and implementing an additional protocol as soon as possible.

152. Comprehensive safeguards agreements, together with additional protocols, constituted the current verification standard, and the EU continued to call for their universalization without delay. It was therefore gratified that Cambodia had brought into force an additional protocol and Djibouti a comprehensive safeguards agreement with an additional protocol, and urged States that had not yet amended their small quantities protocols to accelerate their efforts to that end. The EU had firmly supported the continued evolution of safeguards, as exemplified by the development of the State-level concept, and was convinced that consistent and universal application of that concept would strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of the Agency's safeguards system and contribute to global non-proliferation efforts.

153. Close cooperation between Euratom and the Agency was conducive to effective and efficient safeguards. The EU supported the Agency's safeguards system actively through the European Commission Safeguards Support Programme and through some of its Member States' support programmes.

154. The EU had allocated €225 million over the 2014–2020 period for the promotion of nuclear safety, radiation protection and the application of efficient and effective safeguards for nuclear material in third countries, as further support for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It attached importance to the worldwide implementation and continuous improvement of the highest standards of internationally promoted nuclear safety. The EU Council had adopted a renewed directive in 2014 to strengthen the safety framework for nuclear installations, in order to prevent accidents, mitigate the consequences of any accidents and avoid early and large radioactive releases. Similar principles had been enshrined in the 2015 Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety. The EU would give serious attention to implementing the Declaration, including at Review Meetings of CNS Contracting Parties.

155. Under its strategy against the proliferation of WMDs, the EU actively supported UNSC resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1887 (2009) and other international initiatives that contributed to stronger nuclear security. Of the €260 million dedicated to EU-funded CBRN risk mitigation worldwide, more than €100 million had been allocated to the EU's regional CBRN Centres of Excellence Initiative for 2014–2020. The EU strongly supported the Agency's nuclear security activities and was a major NSF contributor, providing €40 million from EU funds and €45 million from EU Member States to date, for the benefit of around 100 countries. It intended to continue to support the Agency's work and called on all Member States to participate at a high level in the second International Conference on Nuclear Security, scheduled for December 2016.

156. The EU urged all States that had not yet done so to become CPPNM Parties and to accede to the 2005 amendment to the Convention, as had all EU Member States.

157. The EU, firmly committed to the benefits of multilateral approaches, welcomed the Host State Agreement, signed by Kazakhstan and the Agency, and the Board's approval of the Transit Agreement with the Russian Federation, which were required for the establishment of the IAEA LEU bank. The EU had earmarked some €25 million for the project.

158. The EU noted the projected increase in global installed nuclear power capacity by 2030, with developments varying from one region to another. Although projections had fallen since 2010, nuclear power remained an important option for several Member States of the Agency. NPP modernization and construction continued in several regions of the world. The EU welcomed the Director General's decision to hold the 2015 Scientific Forum on Atoms in Industry: Radiation Technology for Development.

159. The EU and its Member States were the second largest contributor to the Agency's TC programme, including through the TCF and the PUI. They valued the Agency's role in the responsible development of the peaceful applications of nuclear technology to human health, food and agriculture, water resources, the environment, preserving cultural heritage, nuclear and radiation safety, and nuclear energy, and supported its insect pest and zoonosis control activities. They also supported PACT geared to achieving sustainable cancer control capacity, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. The Agency's work at the nuclear sciences and applications laboratories at Seibersdorf was of great importance, and the ReNuAL initiative was therefore welcome. The EU provided some €150 million yearly in support to the Agency and Member States for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology, including through technical expertise, and would continue to support the Agency in its activities.

160. Ms MARGHEM (Belgium) commended the professionalism and impartiality of the Secretariat and the Director General. Belgium remained convinced that the Agency played a key role in ensuring that nuclear energy was used in its Member States for the purposes of peace, health and prosperity in accordance with its Statute. All parties benefited from the Agency's efforts to encourage and help all Member States to apply the highest safety standards and security recommendations.

161. The importance of the Agency had been further cemented recently by the role that it must play in verifying the application of the historic agreement concluded between the E3/EU+3 and Iran. The signatories to the JCPOA and all Member States were duty bound to support the Agency in that crucial role; Belgium had therefore decided to make a financial contribution for that purpose.

162. The publication of the report on the Fukushima Daiichi accident had provided the international community with lessons to be learnt from the accident and for the future. It had confirmed the relevance of many international nuclear safety initiatives, in particular the Agency's Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, the success of which was dependent on the political commitment of Member States.

163. Belgium reaffirmed its commitment to promoting nuclear safety criteria based on the highest international standards and believed that systematic and mandatory peer reviews, such as OSART and IRRS missions, were the best tools for facilitating experiential exchange and support during the application of safety standards.

164. Belgium was implementing the EU's Nuclear Safety Directive, amended in 2014, which afforded a new opportunity to share useful resources and expertise among EU Member States and so strengthen nuclear safety continuously.

165. She stressed the importance of implementing transparently and verifiably the conclusion reached at the February 2015 diplomatic conference on amending the CNS during the periodic reviews of the Convention.

166. In the light of the international risks inherent in NPP operation and the need to uphold international rules on competition, she stressed the importance of worldwide harmonization of nuclear safety regulations at the highest level.

167. Several groups of international experts were conducting detailed evaluations of the documents submitted by the owner of the Belgian reactors Tihange 2 and Doel 3. Authorization to restart the reactors would be granted only when the owner had proven that they could be operated in total safety, in accordance with the requirements of the Belgian safety authorities, which were working transparently on the reactor issue with their international counterparts. Belgium encouraged all Member States to conduct thorough safety inspections on their facilities and offered to share its experience and expertise on the subject.

168. Emphasizing the central importance of the NPT to the non-proliferation regime, she regretted that consensus had not been reached on the final document of the 2015 NPT Review Conference, and confirmed her country's continued commitment to implementing the plan of action adopted at the 2010 conference.

169. She urged all Member States that had not yet signed, ratified and implemented comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols to do so in order to make them universally applicable.

170. Belgium welcomed the Agency's unstinting efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the safeguards system, as the objectivity and independence of such a system should be guaranteed for Member States. It encouraged the Agency to keep Member States informed about the development of the State-level concept and was keenly interested in understanding its implementation methods and its exact impact on Member States. Belgium supported all initiatives that, in an endeavour to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of the safeguards system, took State-specific needs objectively into consideration, thus reducing costs for States that made reliable claims to non-proliferation.

171. Given the significant role played by the Agency in assisting Member States in developing their own nuclear security regimes, Belgium supported the early entry into force of the amendment to the 2005 Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities and highlighted the added value that it would bring.

172. Her country fully supported the central role played by the Agency in managing nuclear security worldwide, as promoted by the Nuclear Security Summit, in which Belgium had always participated. At such a summit, Belgium had undertaken to convert its research reactor and related processor from HEU to LEU only, provided that such conversion was both technically and economically feasible.

173. As demonstrated by its participation in information exchange with other competent authorities, Belgium supported all international cooperation on nuclear security, as long as it was consistent with existing international conventions.

174. In late 2014, Belgium had hosted an IPPAS mission, which had examined its national nuclear security regime thoroughly and had identified areas for improvement and a number of best practices. A plan of action based on the report would be drawn up so that action could be taken on the recommendations.

175. Furthermore, Belgium was working to strengthen the security of radioactive material internationally and would hold a national training course on the subject in February 2016, in collaboration with the Agency.

176. Belgium, which ascribed great importance to nuclear research, had launched the MYRRHA project in order to build an international nuclear research infrastructure, and so contribute to studies on

the transmutation of irradiated fuels and on the development of material and fuel for Generation IV and fusion reactors, and to the production of medical radioisotopes and doping silicon for high power electronics. Owing to the success of the project and developments in the global economy and in international nuclear safety, the Belgian Government had taken steps to continue the project and establish an international consortium.

177. With regard to radioactive waste management, Belgium had incorporated into its domestic legislation in 2014 the European Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom of 19 July 2011 on establishing a Community framework for the responsible and safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste. The Directive had introduced several instruments enabling EU Member States to find substantial short- and long-term solutions. Belgium had begun the adoption process for its national programme and had submitted the drafts, setting out clear provisions on radioactive waste management in the country, to the competent EU authorities, together with its national report. She noted that ARTEMIS reviews appeared to be a useful tool for assisting Member States in implementing radioactive waste management policies.

178. Belgium had participated fully in the Fifth Review Meeting of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, held in May 2015 in Vienna and hoped to use the experience thus gained constructively for instruments developed under Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom; it was willing to share expertise on the subject with interested States.

179. Belgium supported the adoption of a structural solution to prevent long-term medical isotope supply challenges and it continued to strive to increase the radioisotope production capacity of its BR2 reactor and Institute for Radioelements. Stakeholder meetings were held regularly on the subject at the EU level, and Belgium had confirmed its international commitment by adhering to the NEA Joint Declaration on the Security of Supply of Medical Radioisotopes.

180. Furthermore, various public and private sector parties in Belgium operating in the field of medical applications of radiation had come together in a non-profit network to promote the field and its expertise and to provide potential international partners with a pool of skilled collaborators in Belgium.

181. Belgium had seven power reactors that provided more than half of the energy consumed in the country. In 2003, however, the Belgian Government had decided to reduce its dependence on nuclear energy and phase nuclear energy production out gradually and completely by 2025; but, as the transition to other methods of energy production had not occurred at the desired rate and as the security of the country's electricity supply was at risk, the Belgian Government had decided to keep the Tihange 1 reactor and the Doel 1 and 2 reactors operating for a further ten years, subject to approval by the Belgian Federal Agency for Nuclear Control (FANC), which had set nuclear safety and security conditions. The Government had requested that SALTO missions be conducted, while maintaining the original deadline for the cessation of nuclear energy production.

182. As nuclear energy could help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, she hoped that COP21 would clearly signal international commitment to reducing future CO₂ emissions and would lead to a new international climate agreement.

183. She thanked all those who had contributed to the Agency's work and hoped that all Member States would work together without regard for their personal interests in order to find solutions to shared problems.

184. Mr OSMAN (Bangladesh) said that Bangladesh's enviable relationship with the Agency stemmed from its inherent confidence in the Agency's pivotal role in coordinating international efforts to strengthen global nuclear safety and promote the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

185. Bangladesh's Constitution acknowledged the State's responsibility to ensure food, health and energy security for its people. Its Government strove to implement Vision 2021 and Vision 2041 and so transform Bangladesh into a higher middle-income, front-ranking developed nation. It recognized the importance of extending the use of nuclear energy in various sectors to that end and believed that the Agency's support would further the country's socioeconomic development.

186. Bangladesh had proven over the decades that it was committed to the peaceful use of nuclear energy and had decided recently to embark on nuclear power generation as a safe, environmentally benign and economically viable source of electricity for reducing the supply-demand gap in the country's medium- and long-term energy requirements. As a late entrant, it could learn from other States' experience and could use the most modern technology to ensure safety and security. The Rooppur NPP project, implemented in cooperation with the Russian Federation, was expected to add nuclear power to the national grid and energy mix by the beginning of the following decade, unlock the country's development potential through enhanced productivity and sustained growth and reach a net output capacity of 2400 MW(e) by 2022, with 10% of the country's electricity production being derived from nuclear sources by 2030.

187. Bangladesh had already been working with the Agency to address current shortcomings concerning infrastructure development, trained human resources and the application of new generation technology. The Government was implementing the integrated national infrastructure work plan that had been developed in cooperation with the Agency, and it would continue to ensure that investment in capacity building remained a strategic policy priority.

188. Bangladesh had given the utmost priority to radiological protection, safety and security during the implementation of its first NPP project. The independent Bangladesh Atomic Energy Regulatory Authority had been established to oversee all safety aspects of the country's nuclear materials and installations, physical protection, import and export control, the State system of accounting for and controlling nuclear material, transport and waste safety, and emergency preparedness and response. Similarly, the Nuclear Power Plant Company Bangladesh Ltd had been established to ensure that national and international obligations were upheld in the implementation of NPP projects and the maintenance and operation of such plants. Agency codes, guidelines and standards and other internationally accepted practices would be followed strictly during all design, construction, operation and maintenance phases.

189. As an NPT State Party, Bangladesh had looked forward to participating in the 2015 NPT Review Conference and to sharing its progress in various areas of nuclear non-proliferation, the principle of which formed the basis for its nuclear energy generation activities.

190. Under its TC programme, the Agency — which was one of the country's main partners in promoting the safe and secure application of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes — had assisted Bangladesh in human resource development and capacity building in preparation for the introduction, development and peaceful use of nuclear techniques in various economic sectors. Bangladesh hoped that such support from the Agency would continue in future.

191. Bangladesh was confident that the RCA would continue to be a powerful tool for the promotion of regional capabilities and expertise in areas such as energy, health, agriculture, industry, the environment, research reactors, radioactive waste management, nuclear safety and radiation protection.

192. He wished the Member States success during the 59th General Conference and hoped that the Conference would help to shape the Agency's and the Member States' future programmes with a view to making people the ultimate beneficiaries of the peaceful use of nuclear technology.

The meeting rose at 1.14 p.m.