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Abbreviations used in this record:

AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ANRP	National Radiation Protection Agency of Cameroon
ARASIA	Co-operative Agreement for Arab States in Asia for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
AU-PATTEC	African Union's Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign
CNS	Convention on Nuclear Safety
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CRP	coordinated research project
CSA	comprehensive safeguards agreement
CSC	Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage
CSS	Commission on Safety Standards
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
E3+3	France, Germany and the United Kingdom plus China, the Russian Federation and the United States of America
ECAS	Enhancing Capabilities of the Safeguards Analytical Services
EU	European Union
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
FNRBA	Forum of Nuclear Regulatory Bodies in Africa
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GTRI	Global Threat Reduction Initiative
HEU	high enriched uranium
INIR	Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
INSServ	International Nuclear Security Advisory Service

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

INSSP	Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan
IPPAS	International Physical Protection Advisory Service
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
JPA	Joint Plan of Action
LEU	low enriched uranium
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MESSAGE	Model for Energy Supply Strategy Alternatives and their General Environment Impacts
NPP	nuclear power plant
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NSF	Nuclear Security Fund
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group
NSS	Nuclear Security Summit
NWAL	Network of Analytical Laboratories
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
RADLOT	Radiation Source Location Tracking
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
Rosatom	Federal Atomic Energy Agency (Russian Federation)
SALTO	Safety Aspects of Long Term Operation
SDG	sustainable development goal
S&T	science and technology
SIT	sterile insect technique
SLA	State-level approach

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

TC	technical cooperation
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WHO	World Health Organization
WMDs	weapons of mass destruction

7 General debate and Annual report for 2014 (continued) (GC(59)/7 and Additional Information)

1. Mr LOUGHHEAD (United Kingdom) commended the Agency's assistance to States for the safe and secure development of nuclear energy by newcomers or in expanding existing capacity, efforts to improve nuclear safety and security standards worldwide, nuclear verification and the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear material.

2. The United Kingdom had given priority to a cost-effective and secure transition to low-carbon energy generation and recognized the potential role of civil nuclear energy in securing energy supplies and in meeting international obligations to reduce carbon emissions in order to achieve climate change goals. Through electricity market reform, planning for major infrastructure projects and independent regulation, the United Kingdom encouraged companies to apply to build new NPPs and five such projects were in development. Two reactor designs that were new to the United Kingdom were undergoing generic design assessment, which entailed full pre-approval of any reactor design before submission of the application for site-specific authorization, yielding cost, time frame and risk reduction benefits.

3. Nuclear safety must remain the Agency's top priority, as a nuclear accident could affect all States. The radiological impact of events and their impact on public confidence in nuclear energy must be addressed. The United Kingdom therefore welcomed the OSART mission to Sizewell B NPP later in 2015, as it would guarantee the safety of the plant and build public confidence. It had contributed to international and European efforts to ensure that lessons were learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident, enhance safety and strengthen the CNS. It strove for continuous improvements to nuclear safety and had publicised action taken to address EU stress test findings and the results of reviews of its national safety arrangements. It urged States that had not yet done so to submit progress reports on the implementation of the Agency's Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, given that openness and transparency were key to maintaining public confidence in Member States' ability to deliver nuclear power safely. Member States must learn from each other about ways and means of managing ageing nuclear installations and improving public communication.

4. The United Kingdom Government was working closely with the nuclear industry, the regulator and local authorities to ensure that emergency planning and response were robust and fit for purpose at all levels and that coordination was achieved between the nuclear site, local areas, and national and international arrangements.

5. The United Kingdom attached great importance to understanding and countering the threat posed by persons who sought to acquire and use radioactive materials or information for malicious or terrorist purposes, and it therefore strongly supported the Agency's pivotal role in the international nuclear security architecture, including the coordination of international assistance. As the second largest Member State contributor to the NSF, the United Kingdom had already made an extrabudgetary contribution of more than £5 million in 2015. It intended to participate fully in the Spring 2016 nuclear security summit and it looked forward to the International Conference on Nuclear Security in December 2016.

6. It called on States to accede to the amendment to the CPPNM and welcomed activities planned by the Agency to promote its early entry into force.

7. As peer reviews by international experts were key to nuclear security, the United Kingdom welcomed the IPPAS mission scheduled for 2016 to review its nuclear security arrangements.

8. While acknowledging the potential gains in efficiency and effectiveness from digital technologies in the nuclear industry, the United Kingdom was acutely aware of the risks to computerized systems posed by malicious actors. It therefore welcomed and supported the work of the Agency and the wider international community to develop common guidance on cybersecurity and called on States to take action to reduce the risks inherent in digital technologies. It commended the International Conference on Computer Security in a Nuclear World, held in June 2015.

9. The United Kingdom encouraged the Agency to continue to implement its Nuclear Security Plan and to provide assistance where required, by supporting States' efforts to ensure the security of civilian nuclear materials and other radioactive materials.

10. As the Agency played an essential role in verifying States' compliance with safeguards obligations, the United Kingdom called on all non-nuclear weapon States that had not yet done so to bring into force a CSA and an additional protocol, which constituted the current verification standard.

11. As it was essential for Agency safeguards to develop continuously in order to address new challenges and learn from experience gained, the United Kingdom welcomed the development of State-level safeguards approaches, under which the Agency considered each State as a whole and which were consistent with existing safeguards agreements and additional protocols, while constituting an optimal approach to safeguards that would boost effectiveness and efficiency.

12. Nuclear safety, security and safeguards were fundamental to the safe growth of civil nuclear energy in the future. The NPT obligations of Member States remained unchanged, despite the lack of consensus at the 2015 NPT Review Conference, and the United Kingdom remained strongly committed to the action plan adopted at the 2010 conference.

13. The United Kingdom continued to support the Agency's TC programme, which enabled States to use nuclear techniques safely and effectively. It welcomed the continued implementation of the results-based management approach and called for further measures, such as established project management techniques, to be implemented in order to demonstrate value for money and ensure project success.

14. The JCPOA was historic and, when implemented fully, would provide a long-lasting, peaceful solution to the Iranian nuclear issue by building confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. It was a significant achievement for diplomacy and would contribute to regional and international peace and security. The United Kingdom called on the international community to support the implementation of the JCPOA, including through financial contributions to enable the Agency to monitor JCPOA compliance, and it intended to make a substantial extrabudgetary financial contribution to that end.

15. The United Kingdom welcomed the road map for the clarification of past and present outstanding issues regarding Iran's nuclear programme and looked forward to the Director General's final assessment on the resolution of such issues by 15 December 2015. It urged Iran to cooperate fully with the Agency and thus achieve the necessary substantive progress on all outstanding issues by 15 October 2015.

16. As four years had passed since the publication of the resolution on Syria's non-compliance with its safeguards agreement, the United Kingdom urged Syria to provide the Agency with the full disclosure and cooperation that it had promised.

17. The United Kingdom expressed concern at the DPRK's continued failure to cooperate with the Agency and urged the DPRK to resume such cooperation, comply immediately with all relevant UNSC resolutions and refrain from further provocative actions.

18. Mr CHO Taeyul (Republic of Korea) considered that no other State felt simultaneously the stark contrast between the benefit and threat of nuclear power as did the Republic of Korea. It was a founding Member of the Agency, currently the world's fifth largest producer of nuclear energy with 24 reactors in operation and, as a result, satellite imagery showed the southern half of the Korean Peninsula to be glowing with bright lights. Yet it was under constant nuclear threat from its neighbour, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which had withdrawn from the Agency two decades previously, refused to apply safeguards and pursued a nuclear weapons programme at the expense of its own people, in violation of all international obligations. As a result, the northern half of the Korean Peninsula remained in deep darkness.

19. The Republic of Korea was fully committed to nuclear non-proliferation, as it believed that the nuclear non-proliferation regime based on the NPT and the Agency's safeguards system was the cornerstone of international peace and security and indispensable to the sustainable development of nuclear energy. It had become one of the two Member States to apply the SLA, it had been elected to chair the NSG from 2016 to 2017 and would host the NSG plenary meeting in Seoul in 2016. Its Government would continue to work with the Agency and the international community to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

20. The Republic of Korea believed that nuclear security must be strengthened in parallel with nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear safety and had thus contributed nearly US \$5 million since 2012 to the NSF, while participating actively in global efforts to enhance nuclear security. It had developed new high-density LEU fuel in a drive to phase out HEU fuel in reactors, had enhanced the cybersecurity of nuclear infrastructure and had implemented the trilateral RADLOT project in cooperation with the Agency and Viet Nam. Furthermore, its Minister of Foreign Affairs would chair the 2016 International Conference on Nuclear Security, thus attesting to the country's strong commitment to the enhancement of global nuclear security and its belief in the Agency's central role in building an enduring nuclear security architecture on completion of the NSS process in 2016.

21. Nuclear safety was essential to the sustainable development of nuclear energy. The report on the Fukushima Daiichi accident would raise the international community's awareness of the crucial importance of nuclear safety. In 2011 and 2014, the Agency's IRRS had noted the country's efforts to enhance its nuclear safety regulatory infrastructure effectively and, early in 2015, the Republic of Korea had revised its Nuclear Safety Act in order to improve its safety standards. It intended to incorporate the ideas and principles of the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety into its safety regulations.

22. The Republic of Korea recognized the entry into force of, and would consider acceding to, the CSC.

23. North-East Asia had the highest NPP concentration in the world, and the Fukushima Daiichi accident had vividly demonstrated the need to gather collective wisdom and strengthen cooperation for nuclear safety in the region. Accordingly, President Park Geun-hye had proposed the establishment of a nuclear-safety consultative body for North-East Asia, composed of the region's States. The Government was pursuing various avenues to promote and achieve intra-regional cooperation on nuclear safety. The Republic of Korea would thus host in October 2015 the eighth Top Regulators' Meeting (TRM), and the North-East Asia Nuclear Safety Cooperation Conference — an extended TRM+ meeting attended by participants from other States and from international organizations. The Republic of Korea firmly believed that the practice of dialogue and cooperation was crucial to the

North-East Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative taken to build sustainable peace and prosperity in North-East Asia through confidence building and heightened cooperation, starting with soft security issues.

24. Nuclear energy, as a low-carbon energy source, was a highly effective means of achieving the SDGs that were on the agenda of the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit. The Republic of Korea planned to increase the number of its NPPs from 24 to 34 by 2035, thus raising its reliance on nuclear energy from 22.5% to 29%. In an endeavour to share the benefits of nuclear energy, the Republic of Korea had contributed about \$5 million in the past five years under the PUI, with special emphasis on CRPs and PACT. It was actively engaged in RCA partnership programmes and was keenly interested in developing innovative nuclear technologies, including pyroprocessing, sodium cooled fast reactors and very high temperature reactors. It was constructing a new research reactor for the stable supply of medical isotopes and it participated in the Agency's medical isotope production project, using LEU targets.

25. The Republic of Korea welcomed the adoption of the JCPOA and commended the road map for the clarification of past and present outstanding issues regarding Iran's nuclear programme. The JCPOA had a robust verification scheme, including the application of an additional protocol to Iran's safeguards agreement. JCPOA implementation would build confidence among all parties and strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The agreement had amply shown that nuclear proliferation issues could be resolved through dialogue and it had proven the power of diplomacy, enabling the Agency to take valuable first steps towards resolving one of the two pressing nuclear proliferation cases. The time had come for the international community to build on the momentum generated by the JCPOA and to unite in a joint endeavour to resolve the DPRK nuclear issue.

26. The DPRK's pursuit of nuclear weapons undermined the very foundation of the global non-proliferation regime and posed a serious threat to peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and beyond. The DPRK continued to reject proposals for dialogue on denuclearization, while advancing its nuclear capabilities. It violated daily the commitments that it had made at the Six-Party Talks and all international obligations under the relevant UNSC resolutions. It continued to operate its 5 MW(e) reactor in Yongbyon and was extending the building that was reportedly used as an enrichment facility. After conducting nuclear tests, it styled itself a nuclear weapon State and demanded rights befitting that status. Furthermore, it had publicly announced its intention to launch a long-range missile under the guise of a satellite launch, as reiterated by the DPRK Government on the previous day.

27. The DPRK's options were clear. It must abandon all of its existing nuclear programmes completely, verifiably and irreversibly, in accordance with the relevant UNSC resolutions. Further provocation by the DPRK must be deterred. The Republic of Korea had urged the DPRK to comply fully with its NPT and Agency safeguards obligations and to become a responsible Member of the international community. The international community should, through the Agency, say in a strong, clear and united voice that the DPRK's pursuit of a nuclear programme could not be tolerated.

28. Nuclear technology could resolve contemporary challenges such as climate change and sustainable development. As pointed out by Einstein 70 years previously, it was people's modes of thinking that created and solved problems. Finding new applications for nuclear technology thus entailed venturing boldly where no one had ventured before. The Republic of Korea was unwaveringly committed to the Agency's founding vision of Atoms for Peace, and its commitment had a very long half-life.

29. Mr MOLEFHI (Botswana) commended the Agency's achievements in the previous year, in technical cooperation, nuclear safety, safeguards and security, despite the limited financial resources

available to meet the diverse challenges and growing demand for the safe use of nuclear technology for development.

30. Safe water supplies, better crops, nuclear diagnostics and medicine, energy planning and pest control were but a few areas in which the Agency had provided assistance. Botswana supported the Agency's TC programme and welcomed other countries' experts to Botswana on scientific visits and fellowships. The Agency could make a positive contribution to the achievement of the MDGs in close cooperation and partnership with other United Nations agencies.

31. Botswana was fully committed to the Agency's ideals and objectives and it thus continued to honour its financial obligations to permit the successful implementation of the Agency's mandate. He was pleased to announce that Botswana had paid its annual contributions for 2015 in full.

32. He commended the TC programmes and projects currently implemented for the benefit of his country and stressed that Botswana needed support and assistance to acquire, adopt, adapt and use appropriate nuclear technologies for socioeconomic development and poverty alleviation.

33. Botswana had noted with great appreciation the growing attention being given to cancer therapy in developing countries. Its teaching hospital, at which a radiotherapy centre would be established, had been completed and would be operational shortly, thus raising hope that a sustainable, cost-saving and convenient cancer-treatment solution was within reach. There was a large deficit in cancer-management equipment and expertise in developing countries and, as a result, many patients did not receive appropriate radiotherapy in his country. Botswana therefore welcomed parallel programmes for early cancer diagnosis, particularly in collaboration with WHO and other United Nations bodies.

34. Botswana was a beneficiary under national and regional projects supported by the Agency. It was generating useful data and encouraging results in the mutation breeding of indigenous crops, the improvement of milk and meat production, environmental monitoring and nutritional interventions. Appropriate techniques had been acquired under those projects, and the relevant institutions had undertaken to address the challenges that affected the people of Botswana.

35. To achieve TC programme objectives, human resource skills and capabilities must be upgraded and strengthened to their fullest capacity. The transfer of scientific and technical knowledge through fellowships, scientific visits and workshops was, therefore, a very important mechanism that was essential for the projects' success.

36. Botswana participated in AFRA. Immense benefits had accrued from AFRA projects in agriculture, human health, food and nutrition. Botswana would therefore accede to the fifth extension of AFRA and had submitted its instrument of accession.

37. Botswana had recently submitted its instrument of accession to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, which would assist in ensuring that radioactive waste and disused sources were managed safely. The construction of a radioactive waste management and storage facility had been planned.

38. As it was committed to the implementation of international instruments on nuclear safety, security and safeguards, Botswana had recently ratified the amendment to the CPPNM and encouraged other Member States to do so. There had been real momentum towards its entry into force, for it was one of the most significant measures that the world could adopt to strengthen nuclear security.

39. Nuclear safety and nuclear security could not be considered in isolation, but in conjunction with non-proliferation and disarmament and in a coordinated manner to minimize the various inherent risks,

which was crucial to achieving the goals of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful, safe and secure uses of nuclear energy.

40. He thanked the United States Government, the EU and the Agency for the assistance extended to Botswana and other States in the region to address the issue of nuclear safety and security. He commended the bilateral assistance provided to Botswana by the US Department of Energy through the GTRI in upgrading nuclear security in the facilities with significant radiation sources and nuclear waste management.

41. He stressed the importance of further steps to reinforce the Agency's safeguards system, urging Member States to conclude CSAs and additional protocols to permit thorough inspections, strengthen the system's capability for detecting undeclared nuclear material and activities, and so buttress the safeguards regime and build confidence among States in the peaceful use of nuclear material.

42. The Government of Botswana had requested an IRRS mission for 2017, which would enhance the effective independence of the regulatory body by ensuring that it fulfilled its core mandate of ensuring the safe uses of nuclear technology in the country.

43. Ms TCHUINTE (Cameroon) commended the report on the Agency's activities in 2014 and congratulated the Secretariat on the quality and density of the documents of the 59th session of the General Conference, for they effectively reflected the progress achieved in technical cooperation, nuclear technology and its uses, nuclear safety and security, and the application of safeguards under the NPT.

44. Cameroon commended the Agency's TC programme, which had contributed substantially to the achievement of the MDGs worldwide. In September 2014, Cameroon had signed its 2014–2018 CPF, under which it had hosted Agency-organized events such as the subregional workshop on food safety, the regional training course on the application of environmental isotopes and geochemistry for the study of the interaction between groundwater and surface water, the subregional training course on the development of a regional electrification programme using the Agency-developed MESSAGE, the regional training course on hydrochemistry and the dating of groundwater, and the coordination meeting of the regional project on support for the integrated approach to monitoring the pollution of marine coasts. It had also hosted nuclear safety and security events such as the Regional Workshop to Familiarize African States with Nuclear Security Detection and Response Measures, and the regional course on the Nuclear Security Information Management System. Cameroon welcomed the priority given in 2014 to health and human nutrition, nuclear safety, nuclear and radiological security, nutrition and agriculture.

45. Applauding the Agency's continued national and regional support for Member States in developing national legislation to underpin the peaceful use of nuclear techniques and applications of ionizing radiation, she called for human resources training in law, such as the courses offered by the Nuclear Law Institute, to be continued. The availability of national capacity for the drafting of relevant legislative and regulatory acts, the main objective of that course, was a factor of sustainability in the applications of nuclear S&T.

46. Acknowledging that the management and effective regulation of uranium production activities had not yet been mastered by the States with uranium deposits, including those in Africa, Cameroon reiterated its support for the Agency's uranium exploration and production capacity-building programme and welcomed the related interregional project that would develop national and regional expertise for front-end activities in the nuclear fuel chain. To highlight its commitment to the Agency's strategy in that area, Cameroon had volunteered to hold the Regional Training Workshop on Uranium Exploration, Mining and Processing in November 2014, in collaboration with the Agency.

47. Cameroon had hosted, moreover, a regional training workshop on the use of the logical framework approach and the application of principles and tools for monitoring technical cooperation projects in November 2014.

48. Cameroon highlighted and acknowledged the Agency's unique and universally valued role in improving regulatory practices in nuclear and radiological safety, emergency preparedness and nuclear security. The second IRRS mission had been conducted in October 2014, following the INSServ mission earlier in the year. The Government had endorsed the ensuing recommendations on capacity building at the National Radiation Protection Agency, for implementation under a governmental action plan.

49. Cameroon had ratified its additional protocol for the application of safeguards under the NPT and the amendment to the CPPNM. It was grateful for the Agency's contribution to those successful outcomes of dynamic and positive cooperation with Cameroon. Moreover, it wished to continue to receive technical assistance from the Agency in order to make its national nuclear safety and security infrastructure more effective and to avail itself of other international instruments, for which the Agency was the depositary.

50. Acknowledging that the management of radioactive waste and orphan radioactive sources gave cause for concern worldwide, Cameroon welcomed the outcome of the Agency's joint initiative, involving France, to repatriate spent and orphan radioactive sources listed by its National Radiation Protection Agency. The service agreement had paved the way for the effective start of the operation, which could be completed by the end of 2015. Cameroon reiterated its gratitude to the Agency and all donors for the progress achieved under that project.

51. Cameroon commended the action taken by the Agency to promote the establishment of national nuclear safety and security infrastructure in Africa and welcomed the support provided by the Agency to FNRBA, as illustrated by its leadership of FNRBA thematic groups and the development of its Strategic Action Plan 2016–2020, which had been approved at a General Conference side event during which Cameroon, through the ANRP, had been elected President of the network. Cameroon was grateful to FNRBA Members for the trust that they had placed in the country to conduct FNRBA activities for its two-year term and called on the Agency to continue to cooperate with the network, which aimed to contribute sustainably to the promotion of the safe use of nuclear energy in Africa.

52. Cameroon welcomed the Agency's, donors' and Africa's friends' support for AFRA, which was the main vehicle for the dissemination of the peaceful applications of nuclear technology in Africa and undoubtedly the instrument of Atoms for Peace on the continent. It urged AFRA States Parties to continue to honour their commitments by paying their contributions to the AFRA Fund to permit the implementation of all planned activities.

53. Cameroon was convinced that the application of CSAs and additional protocols determined the effectiveness of the non-proliferation regime and nuclear disarmament worldwide, and considered that its ratification of its protocol attested to its desire for transparency on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

54. Given the insecurity prevailing in various regions, Cameroon again drew the Agency's attention to the need to continue to develop appropriate measures to ensure nuclear security and to forestall incidents and acts involving nuclear material and radioactive substances. It considered that the Agency could muster the requisite expertise to strengthen the international nuclear safety and security regime, thus ensuring that the atom served to protect life and to promote world peace.

55. Ms JOEMAT-PETTERSSON (South Africa), noting that 2015 marked the 70th anniversary of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the 20th anniversary of the indefinite extension

of the NPT, was delighted that the Director General had joined the President of South Africa earlier in the year to mark the 50th anniversary of South Africa's SAFARI-1 nuclear research reactor.

56. The history of Pelindaba and the SAFARI-1 research reactor was symbolic of South Africa's democratic transformation. That site, where the apartheid regime had forged its nuclear weapons, was currently central to her country's determination to use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes only. South Africa had renounced nuclear weapons as the basis of its security and had instead resolved to build a united, non-racial and democratic country capable of taking its rightful place as a sovereign State in the family of nations.

57. Considering that nuclear weapons were inhumane WMDs that undermined security, South Africa was concerned that the 2015 NPT Review Conference had failed to rally behind the unacceptable humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and to agree to effective measures to eliminate nuclear weapons, thus depriving the Agency of a consensus outcome document that could have contributed to the Board's work. South Africa nonetheless remained committed to the attainment and maintenance of a world free of nuclear weapons and to the NPT and its three pillars, namely nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Agency had an important role to play in each of those three areas by accelerating and enlarging the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world, by establishing and administering safeguards and by promoting peace and international cooperation by furthering the establishment of safeguarded worldwide disarmament.

58. Nuclear weapon-free zones enhanced global and regional peace and security and constituted important steps towards strengthening the nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime, including in the Middle East. South Africa was therefore disappointed at the failure to reach agreement on that key issue during the NPT Review Conference. South Africa would sign the host country agreement with the African Union Commission to establish the Secretariat of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy in South Africa.

59. South Africa welcomed the historic agreement on the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which attested to the success of negotiation and diplomacy and was consistent with the inalienable right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy enshrined in Article IV of the NPT. Nuclear power and the peaceful applications of nuclear technology, if optimized to the fullest, could enhance the achievement of the MDGs and contribute to the post-2015 development agenda.

60. South Africa aimed to raise its nuclear power generating capacity to 9600 MW and to commission the first new unit by 2023 under a programme designed to contribute to the country's energy security by supplying electricity reliably and sustainably, while creating jobs, developing skills, creating industries and establishing a knowledge economy in South Africa.

61. Since the previous session of the General Conference, South Africa had conducted detailed studies on various aspects of the new build programme. It had followed the INIR mission, had acted on the recommendations and had implemented an action plan. It was reviewing its National Nuclear Regulator Act and Nuclear Energy Act and had signed various intergovernmental agreements to lay the foundation for cooperation, trade and exchange in nuclear technology and procurement. The Government had begun the actual nuclear procurement process to select a strategic partner or partners, and would submit the outcome to the South African Cabinet by the end of the 2015–2016 financial year. The nuclear new build programme necessitated capacity building, and her country had therefore initiated a nuclear skills and training programme to support all aspects of its nuclear power programme, while continuing to cooperate with various countries to that end.

62. South Africa attached great importance to the work of the Agency's nuclear application laboratories, through which vital support was provided to Member States in fields such as human

health, agriculture and water. South Africa was honoured to co-chair with Germany the Friends of ReNuAL, which sought to mobilize Member States to support the renovation of the laboratories. She was pleased to announce that South Africa would contribute approximately €200 000 for that purpose.

63. South Africa set great store by the Agency's TC programme and commended the support provided for AU-PATTEC and other campaigns. The campaign raised awareness and aimed to eradicate tsetse flies by creating tsetse-free zones in Africa through various eradication techniques, such as SIT, thus contributing to socioeconomic development. South Africa welcomed the Agency's contribution to the fight against the Ebola virus disease outbreak in West Africa in 2014 and considered that the Agency's quick response reflected the flexibility of the TC programme and its importance in delivering life-saving technology. South Africa's National Institute for Communicable Diseases was one of the Agency's main partners on Ebola in Sierra Leone, where the Agency had provided equipment, laboratory supplies and other technical advice and services. She was honoured to announce that her country would pledge the full recommended TCF amount for 2016.

64. South Africa continued to support the global nuclear medicine industry as one of the major suppliers of radioisotopes, particularly Mo-99. The SAFARI-1 research reactor and associated processing facilities at the Pelindaba site met some 20% of world radioisotope demand and South Africa was proud to be acknowledged as the world's leading supplier of Mo-99 manufactured from LEU.

65. South Africa would host a regional conference in October 2015 to encourage States that had not yet done so to accede to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. It commended the consensus reached by Member States on the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety and it participated actively in various regulatory forums regionally and internationally.

66. South Africa would use the Agency-developed long term operation (LTO) methodology in compiling the safety case for extending the lifetime of Koeberg NPP and would host a pre-SALTO mission in November 2015. Work was expected to be completed in four to five years, and a follow-up mission would be conducted in 2018 to assess progress, while the actual SALTO mission was scheduled for 2020, before the submission was made to the regulator. She thanked South Africa's partners for their support for the Koeberg NPP steam generator replacement project, which had reached an advanced stage.

67. South Africa continued to work closely with the Agency on the verification of nuclear materials and related activities and had continued to maintain the broader conclusion. It had agreed with the Agency to implement the integrated safeguards approach for the country's nuclear facilities, which optimized the effectiveness and efficiency of the Agency's safeguards implementation under the CSA and additional protocol.

68. South Africa attached great importance to open communication to build confidence and to demystify nuclear energy. Nuclear education and awareness activities continued to gain momentum steadily, as South Africa prepared for the new build programme. Outreach efforts had been an invaluable means of informing the public of the many benefits derived from using nuclear energy in an awareness-raising drive that had been enhanced by the Director General's visit.

69. Mr SEKHAMANE (Lesotho) said that, as the sun set on the MDGs and a new dawn broke, heralding in the SDGs, the Agency would continue to play a pivotal role in the pursuit of a better world by continuing to support developing countries through the TC programme, which had promoted the use of nuclear technology for sustainable development in Africa as a whole. Lesotho's TC programme, which had focused on water resources management, livestock and crop production,

cancer therapy and energy planning, had grown considerably. Lesotho was grateful to the Agency and to cooperating partners for their invaluable support.

70. Lesotho pledged support for the Agency's ideals and would continue to play its part in their achievement. It was committed to meeting its TCF pledge and encouraged the developed countries to increase their financial contributions as they had always done in the past.

71. He praised the swift response of the Agency and the international community to the outbreak of Ebola virus disease in Africa. He was confident that, through the joint efforts of the international community, the disease would be eradicated in his lifetime.

72. Heartened by the Secretariat's efforts to achieve gender parity and equitable regional distribution of the Secretariat staff, Lesotho welcomed the particular emphasis on unrepresented and underrepresented regions and on women candidates and undertook to make a special effort to field competent candidates.

73. Lesotho acknowledged the Agency's endeavours under the ReNuAL project and the contribution of the Friends of ReNuAL, co-chaired by Germany and South Africa. As the laboratory facilities at Seibersdorf were integral parts of the TC programme and of key importance in enabling States such as Lesotho to achieve their development goals, he appealed to developed and developing countries alike to close the funding gap and ensure full implementation of the project.

74. The delegation congratulated the Islamic Republic of Iran and the international community on the adoption of the historic JCPOA and, noting that all sides seemed committed to implementing the road map, hoped that the outcome would be positive.

75. Lesotho was grateful for the support that it had received for the development of its INSSP and welcomed the successful workshop on nuclear security threat assessment held in Maseru. It looked forward to further cooperation with the Agency.

76. As the outgoing Chair of AFRA, Lesotho expressed gratitude to AFRA partners for their financial and in-kind contributions, to the Agency for serving as the AFRA Secretariat and to AFRA Member States for their support during Lesotho's term of office. It hoped that the incoming Chair could rely on such support.

77. Mr HERDAN (Germany) said that Germany had decided to phase out nuclear power by the end of 2022 but it respected every State's sovereign right to choose its own energy mix and supply. Germany's energy policy goals remained very ambitious and its energy supply would be based predominantly on renewable resources. The three main pillars of the energy system were a greater share of renewables, greater energy efficiency and flexible solutions for electricity and the heat market — all beneficial to the economy. Renewables were cost-efficient and environmentally friendly, greater energy efficiency lowered overall consumption and dependency, and the energy infrastructure would be enlarged and made more flexible in order to integrate renewable energy into other markets, such as the heat market. Besides, energy research and innovation had been intensified to ensure that the energy transition would be a success.

78. Germany would nonetheless continue to be involved in nuclear power for many years yet because its NPPs would remain in production until 2022, while nuclear safety concerns over foreign NPPs would subsist. Germany would continue to attach particular importance to nuclear security, which it would maintain at a high level or raise if necessary.

79. Germany currently focused on the back end of the fuel cycle, for permanently shut down reactors must be dismantled immediately, while waste treatment and disposal were decades-long endeavours. The challenges were not only technological and political but also financial, and intense

discussions were under way with operators on their defrayal of the future costs of dismantling the installations and disposing of the nuclear waste.

80. Germany would continue to strive for a leading position in the use of nuclear technology in other areas, in particular in industry and in medical and other research, led by work at the research reactor of the Technical University in Munich. Germany developed and produced innovative high technology components and materials for nuclear applications, basic research, material development, medicine, energy storage and semiconductor production being but a few examples.

81. Germany advocated zero nominal growth in the budgets of all international organizations in order to balance its public expenditure appropriately in times of continuing global financial uncertainties and additional budgetary burdens such as the current refugee situation. In addition to its regular budget contribution, it contributed to the Agency's specific needs and, since 2011, had donated around €5 million to the NSF and more than €6.5 million for the modernization of the Safeguards Analytical Laboratory under the ECAS. In 2014 it had made an extrabudgetary contribution of almost €1.6 million for the modernization of the Agency's nuclear applications laboratories under the ReNuAL project and was pleased to announce an additional financial contribution in 2015 through the PUI. He appealed to all Member States that were in the financial position to do so to make a financial contribution to ReNuAL or to another important PUI project.

82. Germany attached considerable importance to measures aimed at improving transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in budgetary matters and in the management of the Agency, and it appreciated the continued efforts of the Director General in those regards.

83. Effective and efficient Agency safeguards were of the utmost importance and, for that reason, Germany had funded one of the first national support programmes for Agency safeguards. The German Support Programme would celebrate its 38th anniversary in the autumn of 2015. It had contributed successfully to state-of-the-art verification methods and techniques and had provided training, expert advice and consultancy to the Secretariat and Member States. The German Government had nominated the Jülich Research Centre as a candidate for membership of NWAL.

84. Germany urged all States that had not yet done so to enter into an additional protocol and, in the light of the continuing growth in the demand for verification worldwide and the need for cost-effectiveness, welcomed the Secretariat's efforts to improve the implementation of safeguards. It supported the further structured and objective evolution of individual SLAs, under which the technical situation and the legal and institutional structures within a State were taken into consideration, and called for greater cost-effectiveness of safeguards measures within each State.

85. Nuclear safety cooperation between regulators and a worldwide system of mutual controls had proven to be an important pillar of the international nuclear safety regime and had been promoted by the three relevant Conventions, the self-assessments and the international peer reviews conducted in cooperation with IRRS missions. It commended the revision of the IRRS Guidelines and the self-assessment questionnaire and would continue to support actively the Agency's CSS activities, the Safety Standards Committees and the implementation of the Nuclear Safety Action Plan.

86. Germany highly appreciated the Agency's nuclear security activities, in particular its efforts to encourage States to ratify the 2005 amendment to the CPPNM, and would use its diplomatic means to convince potential partners to ratify the Convention and the amendment thereto. It welcomed the Agency's efforts to address the growing need for cybersecurity considerations in nuclear security regimes in the digital world and looked forward to the Agency's International Conference on Computer Security in 2016. It called on Member States to send high-level representatives to the Conference. The German delegation was convinced that 2016 would offer a historic window of opportunity to strengthen the international nuclear security architecture. The Agency did, indeed,

play a major role in that process, but it needed the necessary support from its Member States in order to fulfil its nuclear security role. Germany undertook to report on the progress achieved at the two nuclear security conferences scheduled for 2016 and would continue to support the Agency in developing computer security guidance, in particular recommendations, under the Nuclear Security Series.

87. Germany was committed to working with all Member States, in close consultation with the Agency, on the safety and security of high activity radioactive sources in order to strengthen and expand support for the international framework of conventions and Agency guidelines relevant to the safety and security of high activity radioactive sources throughout their life cycle, support the development and use of alternatives to high activity radioactive sources, and enhance efforts by States that were major suppliers of radioactive sources to strengthen and harmonize supplier State activities in order to improve the safety and security of high-risk radioactive sources.

88. Germany greatly appreciated and would continue to support the valuable assistance provided under the TC programme to Member States in health, water management, agriculture and environmental protection.

89. As a founding Member of INPRO, Germany commended the INPRO team for its achievements as an essential forum for exchange on national approaches to nuclear infrastructure, with emphasis on the importance of long-term strategic planning and global dialogue.

90. The establishment of the IAEA LEU bank appeared to be a very challenging task in terms of operation, safeguards and future operational costs. The Board of Governors had agreed, however, that the LEU bank must not affect the proper functioning of the nuclear fuel market.

91. Germany regretted that the 2015 NPT Review Conference had not agreed on a final document with new next-steps guidelines. The detailed, forward-looking 2010 NPT Action Plan therefore remained the yardstick to measure progress. Germany believed that, owing to the failure of the Review Conference, the Agency had every reason to strive harder for progress in the three pillars of the NPT, which remained the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime and the foundation of nuclear disarmament. The agreement of the E3+3 with the Islamic Republic of Iran had reminded everyone of the relevance of the NPT.

92. The JCPOA was a true cornerstone for nuclear non-proliferation in the region and beyond. It would ensure the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme through mutually determined limitations and unprecedented transparency, and would lead to greater security in the world, in particular for Iran's neighbours. The E3/EU+3 and Iran must implement the JCPOA in a timely and effective manner. Germany called on Iran to cooperate fully with the Agency on the verification of its nuclear activities and to implement in full the road map for the clarification of past and present outstanding issues regarding Iran's nuclear programme.

93. The Democratic People's Republic of North Korea remained a threat to regional and international security. The DPRK could not gain the security or prosperity that it desired without halting its provocative nuclear and missile activities. Proliferation to and from the DPRK continued to cause alarm. Germany called on all States to comply strictly with their obligations under UNSC resolutions and to signal clearly to the DPRK Government that nuclear brinkmanship would not and could not be tolerated. Germany's goal remained to bring the DPRK into compliance with all relevant UNSC resolutions and its commitments under the 2005 joint statement of the Six Party Talks.

94. Mr GALSTYAN (Republic of Armenia) said that Armenia attached great importance to greater and deeper cooperation with the Agency in all areas of nuclear energy and nuclear medicine.

95. Armenia believed that compliance with the nuclear non-proliferation regime was crucial to the further development of nuclear energy, the key factors being faithful implementation of the NPT and ensuring appropriate safeguards.

96. Armenia cooperated with other States in the peaceful use of nuclear energy and had signed a cooperation agreement to that end with the Government of Jordan in October 2014. In December 2014 and February 2015, Armenia had signed cooperation agreements with the Russian Federation to extend the operating life of the second electricity generating unit of the Armenian nuclear power plant (ANPP) and on the granting of State export credit to the Government of Armenia in order to finance that extension. Both agreements were already in force and work had commenced on a comprehensive systems and equipment survey of that electricity generating unit. It would sign, in early October 2015, an agreement on the early notification of nuclear accidents and on the exchange of nuclear and radiation safety information with the Russian Federation in order to increase cooperation between Rosatom and nuclear and radiation safety organizations in Armenia.

97. Under the INIR revised in December 2014, Armenia had accepted an IPPAS mission, during which checks had been carried out on ANPP, the closed joint-stock company Obezvrezhivaniye Radioaktivnykh Otkhodov, the National Oncology Centre and the laboratory of the Research Institute for Physics. The IPPAS mission had found a high level of nuclear security at those facilities but had recommended further work to improve physical protection.

98. The Agency-supported regional training course on computer security in the nuclear power industry, to be held in Yerevan in November 2015, was open to ten countries in the region, and Armenia would spare no effort to make it a success.

99. The safety of the existing ANPP electricity generating unit was under close scrutiny by the Government of Armenia. ANPP's managers and the State Nuclear Safety Regulatory Committee would report to the Presidential Council for Nuclear Energy Safety, composed of internationally recognized experts and scientists, at its meeting in October 2015. The Council would discuss the progress achieved in implementing the design and operational safety improvement programme, the extension programme for ANPP's second electricity generating unit and the implementation status of the construction programme for a new electricity generating unit.

100. A programme, under which a new nuclear reactor unit would begin operation in 2027, had been approved by the Government in May 2014, thus confirming Armenia's intention to develop nuclear power deemed crucial to the country's economic development.

101. In June 2015, the State Nuclear Safety Regulatory Committee had received an Agency review mission, which had noted that Armenia's legal framework and the nuclear regulations and safety standards were largely compliant with the Agency's rules and safety standards and had made recommendations to bring Armenia's nuclear legislation and infrastructure into full compliance with the Agency's requirements.

102. States attending the 22nd Forum of the State Nuclear Safety Authorities of the Countries Operating WWER Type Reactors, hosted in Yerevan in September 2015, had shared experiences and discussed possible improvements to the quality of nuclear and radiation safety regulations.

103. The EU-supported drafting of a strategy document on radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel management was near completion. The current radioactive waste and used nuclear fuel management situation and the legislation had been analysed. The strategy would be submitted to the President of Armenia for approval, after which an implementation plan would be drawn up and approved by the Armenian Government.

104. Pursuant to the provisions of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, Armenia had submitted its first national report in May 2015. The delegation had given exhaustive explanations and answers to the 53 written and 45 oral questions received, thus proving that Armenia had fulfilled its obligations and was open and ready for constructive dialogue and mutually beneficial cooperation. Armenia had completed an EU-assisted stress test on the existing ANPP electricity generating unit. The report by the State Nuclear Safety Regulatory Committee, based on the stress test results, had been submitted to the EU in August 2015.

105. The seventh Technical Meeting for the coordination of international assistance to improve the safety of ANPP would be held in Vienna in September 2015 to consider the report of the Chair of the State Nuclear Safety Regulatory Committee and discuss a plan of action on the stress test report. It would be attended by representatives of the Agency, the Czech Republic, the EU, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United States of America and other countries and organizations.

106. He reiterated Armenia's interest in participating in several INPROs, especially those associated with the development of small and medium sized reactors. Armenia was an active INPRO Member and it stood ready to organize a meeting on INPRO in Yerevan.

107. As a firm advocate of the non-proliferation and peaceful use of nuclear energy, Armenia continued to work closely and regularly with the Agency on a wide range of nuclear power issues, including the safety of nuclear facilities. Armenia highly appreciated such cooperation and considered it to be an important factor of its energy policy and security.

108. Armenia had consistently opposed attempts to politicize the work of the Agency which, in accordance with its Statute, should perform its functions to widen use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Unfortunately, some States, ignoring those principles, were trying to use the Agency as a platform for their own narrow political ends. Armenia was increasingly faced with unsubstantiated claims by Azerbaijan alleging that it was dumping various kinds of nuclear and radioactive materials in Nagorno-Karabakh, thus unreasonably calling into question the safety of the operation of the generating unit by linking it to environmental issues. Many Agency inspection and mission reports had shown, however, that the allegation was unfounded and were incontrovertible proof of Armenia's commitment to its international obligations and of its highly open and transparent relations with its partners. The Government had decided to extend the operation of the second electricity generating unit after careful analysis and appropriate consultations with its international partners. The crux of the matter had thus been to ensure a high level of safety and reliability in the continued operation of the NPP. Armenia therefore believed that such actions by Azerbaijan were groundless, politically biased, baseless and designed to discredit Armenia's peaceful use of nuclear energy. Armenia therefore called on the Agency to respond as appropriate to such attempts to politicize its activities.

109. Mr LINHART (Austria) said that Austria was proud to host the Agency, an international organization with a unique mandate and unique programmes that assisted Member States in the peaceful applications of nuclear energy under the highest safety, security and non-proliferation conditions. Austria continued to support the Agency in its important work through assessed contributions to the regular budget, to the TCF and through programmatic activities relating to nuclear science, technology, applications and infrastructure.

110. Austria attached great importance to the Agency's ReNuAL project on the modernization of the nuclear applications laboratories in Seibersdorf, as the laboratories drove much of the technical assistance provided by the Agency to Member States. With full access to a new biosafety level-3 facility in Mödling, Austria provided the necessary capabilities that were required by the Agency's Animal Production and Health Laboratory. He commended the tireless efforts of the Friends of

ReNuAL to generate financial support for that core project, scheduled to be completed by the end of 2017.

111. Austria welcomed the historic JCPOA and its subsequent endorsement by the United Nations Security Council. Austria took pride in having hosted the final and decisive round of negotiations and firmly believed that full JCPOA implementation would provide the international community with the necessary assurances regarding Iran's nuclear programme, contribute to regional and international peace and security and strengthen the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Austria would contribute financially in support of the Agency's important responsibilities in that regard.

112. Austria regretted the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference and the lack of progress on the establishment of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East. Austria commended Mr Laajava and his team for their efforts and commitment in the past review cycle and shared the view that progress in that area must remain a key priority. Success or failure would have a tremendous impact on the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, in particular the NPT, as the Review Conference had revealed a deep divide regarding the nuclear disarmament obligations enshrined in Article VI of the NPT. Nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament must go hand in hand and could only succeed in parallel. Nuclear disarmament, however, had fallen far behind expectations and must be pursued with renewed new vigour and urgency.

113. In order to stress the urgency of nuclear disarmament and of achieving a world without nuclear weapons, Austria had hosted the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in December 2014. The humanitarian initiative had gained tremendous momentum in previous years, as facts, findings and conclusions had challenged the legitimacy of nuclear weapons and of a security approach based on nuclear deterrence. Austria had issued the 'humanitarian pledge' as a call for urgent nuclear disarmament efforts and to fill the legal gap for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons and was grateful that 115 States had formally endorsed that call for action to date. Austria looked forward to working closely with all stakeholders in furthering that initiative and a world without nuclear weapons.

114. The right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy came with the obligation to do so without harming others and could only be pursued under the highest standards of safety, security and safeguards. Austria fully supported the Secretariat's approach to implement safeguards in a manner that considered a State's nuclear and nuclear-related activities and capabilities as a whole. It was gratified that 87 States Parties had ratified the 2005 amendment to the CPPNM and encouraged others to follow suit so that the amendment could enter into force. It appreciated the recent proposal to draw up an international convention on nuclear security and believed that such a convention could complement and support existing instruments on nuclear security.

115. Several States, including Austria, did not consider nuclear power to be fully compatible with the concept of sustainable development. Austria appreciated that some States had begun to phase out nuclear power.

116. Transparent application of the highest standards of safety, security and non-proliferation remained a top priority in the field of nuclear power. Austria thus noted with appreciation the Director General's Fukushima Daiichi report, which contained important recommendations for further improvement of nuclear safety. Austria agreed that there could be no grounds for complacency about nuclear safety in any country but, owing to remaining uncertainties about actual exposure, considered that the issue should be revisited through a comprehensive and independent assessment of the health and environmental consequences of the Fukushima accident.

117. Austria would have preferred a legally binding outcome to the February 2015 Diplomatic Conference on the Convention on Nuclear Safety, but it was confident that the Vienna Declaration on

Nuclear Safety would contribute to improvements in nuclear safety, if fully implemented. To improve nuclear safety continuously, it would be helpful if the Secretariat would formulate and update a multi-annual nuclear safety strategy in close consultation with Member States and build on the 12 functional areas of the 2011 Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, the experience of States in implementing the Action Plan and the observations and lessons contained in the Fukushima Daiichi report and the Vienna Declaration.

118. Mr STEINMANN (Switzerland) welcomed the JCPOA as a historic agreement, achieved after years of intense and difficult negotiations, which showed that diplomacy could be effective in the face of major problems and was an encouraging development that could restore confidence between the partners and Middle East region. His country therefore hoped that the JCPOA would be implemented constructively by all involved. The Agency would play a key role in verifying the implementation of the nuclear part of the agreement. Switzerland had supported the negotiation process that had led to the adoption of the JCPOA. It had provided financial support for the Agency's implementation of the JPA of November 2013 and would continue to do so.

119. Switzerland was committed to ensuring that safety in new nuclear facilities was at the cutting edge of technology and that existing facilities were checked regularly for safety and continuous improvement. It had made the proposal that had led to the diplomatic conference in February 2015 at which the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety had been adopted unanimously. Switzerland sought to make the goals of that Declaration the benchmark for nuclear safety so that they would be achieved within the Agency framework. That had been a key issue, since the Agency's Members, which set global nuclear-safety standards, were more than twice the number of CNS States Parties. Switzerland encouraged Contracting Parties to the CNS to report on the implementation of the objectives of the Vienna Declaration at the seventh Review Meeting in 2017.

120. In the light of the Director General's reports on the implementation of the 2011 IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety and on the Fukushima Daiichi accident, Switzerland considered that significant progress had been achieved. There was still work to be done, however, for the strengthening of nuclear safety was an ongoing endeavour and the Agency must continue its reflection on the development of its nuclear safety strategy, drawing on achievements under the 2011 Action Plan, States' implementation thereof, the comments and lessons contained in the Fukushima Report and the principles and activities set out in the Vienna Declaration. Switzerland had accordingly proposed an operational paragraph for insertion in the 2015 resolution on nuclear safety and urged Member States to support that approach.

121. Switzerland took the threat of nuclear terrorism very seriously and believed that the approach theretofore taken must be broadened in order to achieve the objective of strengthening international security and stability. It was therefore necessary to take into account the link between nuclear safety and aspects of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. Furthermore, worldwide nuclear safety would be achieved only if the approach encompassed military nuclear material, which accounted for some 85% of all nuclear materials worldwide. In view of its immensely destructive potential, military nuclear material merited at least as much attention as low enriched civilian nuclear material and radioactive sources. That comprehensive approach had been acknowledged by Member States at the Agency's Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety in June 2013 and had been reflected in UNGA resolution 69/39.

122. The intention was to remind the States concerned of their responsibility to assure the international community that their military nuclear material was secure. Switzerland had therefore proposed a paragraph for insertion in the preamble to the 2015 resolution on nuclear security and urged Member States to support that approach, which would enhance nuclear safety internationally in leading up to the Agency's Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Security scheduled for 2016.

123. His delegation supported the concept of evolution of the safeguards system and therefore endorsed the Secretariat's implementation of the State-level concept. Faced with future verification challenges, namely the ever-growing number of facilities, materials and information to be verified in a context of budgetary constraint, reflection on the evolution of the safeguards system was of the essence. Switzerland believed that the State-level concept must lead to a genuinely tangible, substantial and measurable optimization of the safeguards system for the Agency and for Member States. The Agency could optimize its resources, for example, by reducing expenses on States for which it had the most effective verification tools and by allocating its limited resources for matters and areas of higher nuclear proliferation sensitivity. Switzerland had accordingly proposed a paragraph for insertion in the 2015 resolution on safeguards and urged Member States to support that approach, which would enable the Agency to continue its balanced verification mission, while meeting future challenges.

124. Switzerland pursued a policy of zero nominal growth in the budgets of international organizations but it had always shown flexibility when important tasks required a deviation therefrom. Accordingly, as the Agency played a crucial role in nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy and as it required sufficient financial resources to meet needs arising from the growing number of Agency Members and additional tasks in areas such as the peaceful and sustainable use of energy, medicine, food, the environment, science, technology, security, safety and technical cooperation, Switzerland had contributed €230 000 to the ReNuAL project earlier in 2015 and would contribute a further €90 000.

125. The Government and Parliament of Switzerland had decided in principle to phase out nuclear power and to decommission, but not replace, its five NPPs as soon as its regulatory authority considered that they no longer operated within the criteria set for nuclear safety. That decision and other profound changes in terms of market, technology and internationalization had necessitated the gradual transformation of the Swiss energy system under Switzerland's Energy Strategy 2050, which was based on an updated energy outlook that included scenarios for first-class supply security at reasonable prices and with increasingly fewer negative environmental consequences.

126. Switzerland would nonetheless remain interested in enhancing nuclear safety and security in existing facilities and in cooperating closely with the Agency to that end. It was considering the introduction of specific rules on the long-term operation of some NPPs. The first NPP would be decommissioned in 2019 and would be dismantled thereafter.

127. Under Swiss nuclear energy law, nuclear facility operators were required to finance the costs of radioactive waste management and NPP decommissioning. The search for sites capable of housing a deep geological repository for radioactive waste continued. Site proposals would be reviewed by the federal authorities, expert groups, regions likely to host a site and Switzerland's neighbours, namely Germany and Austria. In 2017, the Federal Council would decide on those proposals and on the next steps in the procedure.

128. Mr ALMUBARAKI (Kuwait) said that the demands of social and economic development worldwide underpinned the necessity of increasing energy supply substantially in the coming decades. As nuclear energy was a complementary energy source, not an alternative to other energy sources, a State's energy choice was determined by its national policy based on its needs, aspirations and capabilities. Kuwait had worked tirelessly in partnership and collaboration with the Agency's various departments in order to make use of nuclear energy and build its national institutions' capacities to implement such projects. It looked forward to further consultation and close collaboration between its institutions and the Agency. It participated in consultations and meetings between experts from GCC States and from the Agency in order to implement a joint programme for the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

129. Kuwait would make a financial contribution of US \$3 million in support of the Agency's work by providing US \$500 000 for the laboratory in Monaco, US \$1 000 000 for the laboratories at Seibersdorf and US \$1 500 000 for the PUI. Furthermore, in an endeavour to support scientific projects and initiatives to boost development in developing countries, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Emir of the State of Kuwait, had announced the launch of an annual US \$1 million award for the most promising research and initiatives for the development of African countries in the fields of health, nutrition and education.

130. Kuwait accorded particular attention to TC activities under the TC programme as a pillar of the Agency's work in building the national capacities of developing countries. It commended the efforts of the Division for Asia and the Pacific in the Department of Technical Cooperation, which had held a variety of workshops and regional training courses that had been of proven effectiveness in various State sectors, and it looked forward to further close and effective collaboration. It had coordinated action with the Department of Technical Cooperation in order to implement six specialized national projects, and seven national technical cooperation programmes had been recommended for adoption in 2016–2017 by the Board of Governors. A practical arrangement would be signed by the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research and the Agency in order to promote collaboration with the TC programme and boost institutional and technical capacities to monitor and protect the marine environment.

131. Kuwait believed that accession to the CNS by all Member States that possessed or planned to build and put into operation NPPs and nuclear fuel recycling facilities was of vital importance in ensuring nuclear safety and security.

132. He congratulated the P5+1 group and the Islamic Republic of Iran on the conclusion of the historic JCPOA and welcomed UNSC resolution 2231, which would help to reduce the state of tension and to promote security and stability in the region, channel capacities, resources and efforts into development and growth in the countries in the region and achieve greater progress, advancement and prosperity for their peoples. Kuwait hoped that the historic agreement would provide a stimulus for Iran's accession to the CNS in order to take full advantage of the Agency's expertise to ensure that Iranian NPPs situated on the Arabian Gulf coast were safe and reassure States in the region of the safety and peaceful use of those facilities.

133. He commended the road map for the clarification of past and present outstanding issues regarding Iran's nuclear programme and expressed great concern about the article relating to implementation of the safeguards agreement in Iran. While affirming the right of all States to produce, develop and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes under the NPT, Kuwait called on the Islamic Republic of Iran to increase cooperation in a fully transparent manner with the Agency, reply to its questions in order to dispel fears and doubts about the nature of its nuclear programme and address all outstanding issues. Kuwait looked forward to ratification and implementation by Iran of the additional protocol, under which the Agency could provide credible assurances that there were no undeclared nuclear materials and activities in Iran.

134. Kuwait attached great importance to the application of Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities throughout the Middle East region. It had observed with increasing anxiety that, despite compliance by all States in the region with the NPT, the application of CSAs and the drive towards implementing all related procedures and systems, Israel maintained its position of refusing to sign the NPT or place its facilities under the Agency's safeguards system, even though its research reactors were obsolete and several of them were known to be used to produce nuclear material for its nuclear weapons arsenal, which posed a threat to the security of the region; its stance was a fundamental impediment to efforts to establish a nuclear weapons-free zone in the Middle East and it had a

negative impact on regional security and stability and, consequently, on international security and stability.

135. Kuwait deplored the continuing delay in convening the conference to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and WMDs in the Middle East, despite five years of effort by the Arab Group. It also deplored the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference to agree on the draft outcome document that could have met the international community's concerns about disarmament and non-proliferation in full. Accordingly, Kuwait called on all Member States to support and unanimously adopt the resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities, proposed after the disappointment of the States of the region at the failure to convene a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and WMDs in the Middle East, pursuant to the 2010 conference outcome document and reference document.

136. He welcomed the establishment of the first LEU bank under an agreement with the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and commended the role played by the Russian Federation by signing the transit agreement with the Agency, which would enable the bank and recipient States to obtain uranium for their peaceful nuclear reactors. As the bank had been established mainly to regulate and meet States' needs for low-enriched uranium to operate their nuclear reactors for peaceful purposes, thus promoting peaceful nuclear collaboration and helping to make the world safer and more secure, Kuwait had donated US \$10 million for the project. Kuwait was wholly committed to continuing to support and strengthen Agency programmes to make the world safer and more secure. It would further support action taken by the Agency to lead and contribute effectively to States' sustainable development by tackling economic, financial and food crises and climate change and by assisting Member States in making optimum use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in pursuit of security, safety, peace, well-being and prosperity for their peoples and the entire world.

137. Mr CESARIK (Croatia) commended the Director General's official visit to Croatia, during which he had discussed matters such as strengthening health systems for cancer diagnosis and treatment using nuclear technology, controlling fruit flies in the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean and establishing a radioactive waste storage centre. Croatia welcomed the Agency's offer of support in establishing the radioactive waste storage centre and in training its staff.

138. The Agency's safeguards were key to the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Croatia had implemented integrated safeguards, and all nuclear material was used exclusively for peaceful activities. The agreement between EU member States, Euratom and the Agency on the implementation of the NPT and the additional Protocol thereto was being ratified.

139. As a party to the major international treaties and conventions on nuclear safety and security, Croatia was fully committed to their implementation and had participated actively in the fifth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. Its Parliament had adopted the new National Strategy for the Management of Radioactive Waste, Disused Sources and Spent Nuclear Fuel, in which requirements set out in the Joint Convention and in the Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom had been taken into account. Amendments to the Act on Radiological and Nuclear Safety, establishing the triangle of responsibilities, had been adopted. A national programme for the implementation of the Strategy had been drawn up and a strategic environmental assessment was under way, as was remediation of the storage facility at the Ruđer Bošković Institute.

140. Croatia attached great importance to bilateral cooperation on nuclear safety and security and had continued to cooperate with Slovenia on the harmonization of emergency planning zones at the nearby Krško NPP. There had been improvements after one and a half years of negotiations, but some issues had not yet been resolved. Croatia was involved in an environmental impact assessment for the

construction of two new units at the Paks NPP site in Hungary in line with the Espoo Convention, and a bilateral agreement on cooperation between regulatory bodies of Croatia and Serbia was being signed.

141. Croatia set great store by the Agency's work on the peaceful application of nuclear technology in participating Member States. In 2014, its Ministry of Health had hosted the Agency's PACT missions conducted to assess the national cancer control programme. Fighting cancer was a key health policy objective in Croatia, as more than one quarter of its population had the disease. Additional efforts, including early detection, diagnosis and treatment, were required to strengthen the country's cancer programme. In 2015, the State Office for Radiological and Nuclear Safety had hosted the Agency's IRRS mission conducted to assess the radiation and nuclear safety legislative and regulatory framework. The IRRS team had recommended and suggested improvements, which would assist Croatia in strengthening the national regulatory infrastructure in line with international safety standards and good practice.

142. Croatia commended the Agency's TC programme, implemented nationally and regionally. During the 2014–2015 project cycle, four national technical cooperation projects had been implemented on quality assurance in radiotherapy, self-assessment of the regulatory body, upgrading of the irradiation facility and capacity building for the application of positron annihilation spectroscopy. Four national projects and one regional project proposed by Croatia had been approved for the 2016–2017 project cycle and would be financed jointly by the Agency and Croatia.

143. Croatia had revised the CPF that had been signed at the end of 2014. Radiation medicine and health remained the first priority for technical cooperation with the Agency, followed by radioactive waste management, including nuclear and radiation safety and security.

144. Mr AL HAJERY (Bahrain) applauded the Agency's achievements set out in the Annual Report for 2014. Bahrain was keen to participate in all conferences and meetings on all aspects of nuclear energy and had attended the diplomatic conference convened to consider a proposed amendment to the CNS, at which Agency Member States had adopted the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety.

145. Bahrain hoped to benefit further from the exchange of nuclear knowledge and technologies between the industrialized and developing countries and would promote the safe and peaceful use of nuclear energy in order to maximize the benefit derived from action taken by the Agency to achieve the goals of nuclear safety and security, science and technology, safeguards and verification.

146. He affirmed his country's support for the Agency's role in ensuring effective safeguards, which was of great importance in building mutual confidence in the Middle East and the world and contributed positively to initiatives to make the Middle East a nuclear weapons-free zone. He deplored the failure to convene in 2012 the regional conference on the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East and hoped that it would be held in the near future. Noting that WMDs posed a terrible threat to international peace and security, he commended the accession of Palestine to the NPT and stressed the need for Israel to undertake to implement the relevant international resolutions, accede to the NPT and place its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards and verification.

147. While affirming the right of all States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, he called on the Islamic Republic of Iran to be committed to full transparency on account of the region's environmental concerns over the impact of its nuclear reactor in Bushehr, apply the highest standards of safety in that reactor and accede to the CNS at the earliest possible date. Furthermore, Bahrain welcomed the binding agreement between the P5+1 States and Iran in the hope that it would lead to security and stability in the Arabian Gulf and the region as a whole, that the framework agreement reached at Lausanne on 2 April 2015 would be followed up and that the Agency would do its utmost to ensure that Iran's nuclear programme was safe.

148. He commended the fruitful collaboration between Bahrain and the Agency in training Bahraini experts to use the regulatory and supervisory authority's information system on managing and monitoring occupational exposure to radiation and in establishing a national registry to monitor occupational exposure to radiation doses. Bahrain had implemented a successful exercise to test the national radiological and nuclear emergency preparedness and response plan, which had previously been reviewed and assessed by an Agency expert. The relevant ministerial and environmental bodies had taken part, and a training course on radiological and nuclear accidents had been conducted.

149. Furthermore, two Agency -led national training workshops had been convened to build national capacities for assessing the impact of radioactive materials occurring naturally in oil and gas fields and other related industries and for managing industrial waste containing radioactive materials occurring naturally and as a by-product of the steel, aluminium, ship maintenance and mineral recycling industries, in addition to waste from oil and gas fields.

150. He was fully confident that the discussion of Conference business and exchange of views among Member States would achieve the goals of pressing nuclear energy into the service of international peace and prosperity, enrich efforts to preserve the environment and help to achieve peoples' aspirations for development, security and peace.

151. Mr SABBAGH (Syrian Arab Republic) said that, as one of the first States to accede to the NPT, the Syrian Arab Republic was and remained committed to the noble goals and principles of the NPT, as exemplified by its use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Syria believed in the importance of international cooperation to that end, for it was beneficial to Member States because it increased knowledge and built capacities. It further believed that problems and disputes between Member States could be resolved only through dialogue and diplomacy. It therefore welcomed the agreement reached with the Islamic Republic of Iran and considered that Iran's offer regarding verification and monitoring procedures, commitment to the JCPOA and submission of written clarification and documentation on its nuclear programme were clear evidence of the good intentions of Iran's political leadership and its determined endeavour to regain and strengthen the trust of the international community. Syria looked forward to the Agency's final report and to the early settlement of all outstanding issues.

152. His delegation welcomed the publication of the report on the Fukushima Daiichi accident, which contained valuable lessons to be learned and would help to improve safety standards in existing and future NNPs; it should thus be accorded the utmost importance.

153. His delegation welcomed the agreement signed by the Agency and the Republic of Kazakhstan for the establishment of the LEU bank to ensure the supply of such material to Member States.

154. Although the Agency's Annual Report for 2014 attested to Syria's compliance, there being no indication of diversion of declared nuclear material from peaceful purposes, the Board of Governors still held debates from one meeting to another on an item on the application in the Syrian Arab Republic of the safeguards agreement concluded with the Agency under the NPT, which had been placed on the agenda as a result of blatant Israeli aggression against the sovereignty of Syrian territory in flagrant violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations which should have been condemned by the international community. Although the report by the then Director General had held that the criminal Israeli aggression had seriously hindered the Agency from carrying out its responsibilities under the NPT and the safeguards agreement with Syria, the Board of Governors had regrettably adopted a resolution based on a hypothetical conclusion and questionable inference in the absence of any hard evidence, despite the objection of many Member States out of concern for truth, accuracy and continued dialogue between Syria and the Agency. The inclusion of that item in the Board's agenda had served narrow political interests and had been based on unfounded assertions and

accusations by a State known for its hostile stance towards Syria. Those States were still trying to use that conclusion to serve their political interests and apply further pressure on Syria for purposes of extortion. He reiterated Syria's full commitment to cooperating with the Agency in resolving all outstanding issues relating to the Dair Alzour site and its readiness to implement the action plan agreed in Damascus between Syria and the Agency.

155. The adoption by the General Conference of resolution GC(53)/RES/17 on Israeli nuclear capabilities had sent a clear message from the international community, demanding that Israel accede to the NPT and subject all of its nuclear facilities to a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the Agency. That resolution had expressed many Agency Member States' continuing anxiety about Israel's possession of nuclear capabilities without being subjected to international control and the threat that it thus posed to peace and security in the Middle East and the world, owing to its aggressive behaviour in the region, its launching of wars against its neighbours and its occupation of their territory. That General Conference resolution had met with the obdurate disregard with which Israel treated all resolutions adopted against it by international organizations and gatherings. It was particularly regrettable that several influential Member States, including nuclear weapon States, applied double standards, raising the banner of the universality of the NPT, while turning a blind eye to the principle when it concerned Israel's nuclear capabilities, to say nothing of the continuing support and aid that they gave to Israel in order to develop those capabilities, in violation of their NPT commitments.

156. The time had come for the international community to put an end to the policy of condoning Israeli practices and to take a clear decision and serious practical steps to compel Israel to accede to the NPT and submit all of its facilities to Agency inspection without conditions or restrictions. All States of the Middle East had indicated their readiness to take practical steps to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East, yet Israel had continued to defy the international community by refusing to accede to the NPT, confident in its allies' unqualified support. The policy of procrastination and manoeuvring pursued by several sponsoring States to appease Israel had led to the failure to convene the 2012 conference. Furthermore, those States' policy had been revealed in all its clarity when the 2015 NPT Review Conference had been prevented from adopting the draft outcome document owing to the objection of the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Canada, despite the considerable efforts and major initiatives of some States, led by the Russian Federation, to make the conference a success. The derailing of the review conference by those three States had given cause for great concern and constituted a powerful blow against international efforts to free the Middle East of nuclear weapons and other WMDs. That setback must not, however, affect the collective determination to continue the concerted endeavour to achieve the NPT goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. Accordingly, the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, which provided for the indefinite extension of the NPT, must remain in force until its goals had been achieved.

157. Syria supported the Agency's efforts to disseminate nuclear technology among Member States to serve their development plans. The Technical Cooperation Report for 2014 was replete with examples of the effectiveness of the Agency's TC programme in meeting States' emerging and recurring needs and in pressing nuclear technology into the service of humankind. Syria was grateful for the efforts invested in making TC programme delivery unique and supported the programme's strategy for meeting beneficiary States' recurring requests.

158. Syria was actively involved in the Agency's regional TC programme through ARASIA. It had managed the ARASIA website as a contribution in kind for seven consecutive years and it thanked the Agency for its efforts in support of the agreement and for providing the necessary expertise to build its capacities. The ARASIA draft medium-term strategic plan had been drawn up for adoption by the Board at the annual meeting during the General Conference.

159. Despite the unjust unilateral economic sanctions that had been imposed on the country, Syria had paid its contributions to the Agency's regular budget and to the TCF in full until the end of 2014 and had taken action to pay its regular budget contribution for 2015.

160. Lastly, he highlighted the assurances given at the 2010 NPT Review Conference that accession to the additional protocol was voluntary and that a State Party's legal obligation under the NPT and under a safeguards agreement must therefore not be confused with any voluntary measures, including application for accession to the additional protocol.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.