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Abbreviations used in this record:

ABACC	Brazilian–Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials
AP	additional protocol
ARASIA	Co-operative Agreement for Arab States in Asia for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARCAL	Co-operation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEANTOM	ASEAN Network of Nuclear Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy
AU-PATTEC	African Union’s Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign
CBRN	chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear
CERN	European Organization for Nuclear Research
CNS	Convention on Nuclear Safety
COP21	Twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Changes
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CSA	comprehensive safeguards agreement
CSC	Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage
CSS	Commission on Safety Standards
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DPRK	Democratic People’s Republic of Korea
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
E3+3	France, Germany and the United Kingdom plus China, the Russian Federation and the United States of America
E3/EU+3	France, Germany, the United Kingdom and the European Union plus China, the Russian Federation and the United States of America

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

EPR	emergency preparedness and response
EPReSC	Emergency Preparedness and Response Standards Committee
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GCC	Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf
GICNT	Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism
ICJ	International Court of Justice
ICSANT	International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism
IEC	Incident and Emergency Centre
imPACT	integrated missions of PACT
INIR	Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review
INSARR	Integrated Safety Assessment of Research Reactors
INSServ	International Nuclear Security Advisory Service
INSSP	Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan
IPPAS	International Physical Protection Advisory Service
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
ITDB	Incident and Trafficking Database
IWAVE	Water Availability Enhancement Project
JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
Joint Convention	Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management
Joint Division	Joint FAO/IAEA Division of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture
JPA	Joint Plan of Action
LEU	low enriched uranium
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NDT	non-destructive testing

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

NPP	nuclear power plant
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NSF	Nuclear Security Fund
NSGC	Nuclear Security Guidance Committee
NSS	Nuclear Security Summit
NSSC	Nuclear Security Support Centre
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
OFID	OPEC Fund for International Development
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PET–CT	Positron emission tomography–computed tomography
PUI	Peaceful Uses Initiative
QUATRO	Quality Assurance Team for Radiation Oncology
R&D	research and development
RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
S&T	science and technology
SALTO	Safety Aspects of Long Term Operation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEANWFZ Treaty	Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone
SESAME	International Centre for Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East
SIT	sterile insect technique
SPECT/CT	single photon emission computed tomography/computed tomography
TC	technical cooperation
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
TCP	Technical Cooperation Programme

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

UAE	United Arab Emirates
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USA	United States of America
WWER	water-cooled, water-moderated power reactor
WANO	World Association of Nuclear Operators
WMDs	weapons of mass destruction

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

1. Ms ŽIAKOVÁ (Slovakia) said that Slovakia continued to develop its nuclear power programme as a clean source of energy and had adopted a new energy policy strategy in November 2014, with nuclear energy occupying a stable position in her country's energy mix. Construction of two units was under way at the Mochovce site and a new nuclear source was planned at the Jaslovské Bohunice site, at which an environmental impact assessment was being conducted. Those additional units should provide sufficient energy-generating capacity for Slovakia in future.

2. Slovakia supported the Agency's efforts to globalize nuclear safety, a key precondition for the use of nuclear energy, by networking, integrating safety-related activities, assisting Member States in the application of safety standards and promoting accession to the relevant international conventions.

3. Slovakia recognized and supported the Agency's peer review mechanisms, as essential tools that combined external assessment with self-assessment and led to a stronger and consolidated international nuclear safety culture. Nuclear safety cooperation between regulators and a worldwide peer review system had proven to be an important pillar in the international nuclear safety regime and in building mutual confidence. Slovakia had accordingly hosted in 2015 an IRRS follow-up mission, which had concluded that the recommendations and suggestions from the 2012 IRRS mission had been systematically taken into account in a comprehensive action plan under which improvements had been made, which demonstrated Slovakia's commitment to effective implementation of IRRS findings. It had hosted at its NPPs several OSART missions which, together with the Agency's advisory services and WANO peer reviews, had been highly rated by regulators and operators for their contribution to the continuous improvement of the national nuclear safety framework.

4. Slovakia welcomed the Fukushima Daiichi report and the five detailed technical volumes which had broadened understanding of the root causes, analysed technical aspects and incorporated lessons learned. It had welcomed the adoption of the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety, through which the Contracting Parties had approved principles to guide them in implementing the CNS objective of preventing and mitigating radiological accidents. It called on all Contracting Parties to pay serious attention to the implementation of the Vienna Declaration in order to maximize nuclear safety.

5. Slovakia commended the Agency for facilitating accession to and implementation of key international instruments on nuclear security and considered that the entry into force of the amendment to the CPPNM would strengthen the global nuclear security framework. It recognized the significant role of the NSGC and acknowledged the successful completion of its first three-year term and its role in compiling Agency security guidance documents, which had assisted Member States in establishing and improving their national legal frameworks and in introducing best practices.

6. Considering that atomic energy had a decisive role to play in meeting basic human needs and in achieving the SDGs, Slovakia had supported activities carried out in partnership with other organizations, such as the FAO, noting that in the previous 50 years, the Joint Division had contributed significantly to health, food, agriculture and economic development worldwide.

7. Commending the Agency for its continuous support for AU-PATTEC, through which African Member States had received development assistance and had strengthened national and regional

capacities, Slovakia stressed that it had provided SIT assistance to affected countries and had supported and cooperated with institutions in Africa.

8. As nuclear techniques were critical to early cancer detection, diagnosis, treatment and care and were often the sole or the most effective and efficient means of diagnosis and treatment, Slovakia supported PACT, through which Member States had built their cancer control and treatment capacities.

9. Slovakia fully supported the Agency's TCP and efforts to develop peaceful applications of nuclear technology, measures to raise efficiency and effectiveness in TC management and project implementation, and the application of the principles of transparency and accountability, while stressing the importance of TC and the benefits to Member States. Networking based on responsiveness, collaboration, solidarity, impact, inclusiveness, partnership, transparency, safety, security and non-proliferation had contributed to the self-sufficiency and sustainability of the outcomes, taking regional or subregional specificities into account.

10. Considering that TCF resources must be sufficient, assured and predictable, Slovakia urged other Member States to pay their share of the TCF target on time and in full.

11. Ms DRÁBOVÁ (Czech Republic) commended the efforts made and the initiatives taken to enhance nuclear safety at all levels after the Fukushima Daiichi accident, for nearly all Member States with NPPs in operation had conducted or initiated safety reassessments of plant design, safety features and robustness to extreme events. She hoped that all nuclear power generation stakeholders would act on the lessons contained in the Fukushima Daiichi accident report and related technical volumes, which had assessed the impact on the public.

12. She also commended the unanimous adoption of the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety, enshrining principles for the prevention and mitigation of radiological accidents, and the consensus that had preserved the integrity of the international nuclear safety regime embodied in the CNS. Noting that a peer review of action taken by the Contracting Parties to reflect those principles had been placed on the agenda of the Seventh Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the CNS, she recalled that issues critical to the future of nuclear power, such as the disposal of spent fuel and radioactive waste in another country, had been considered at the Fifth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention in May 2015.

13. As the Chair of the CSS, she had participated in the review of IAEA safety standards, to which only a few amendments had been required to strengthen the safety requirements and facilitate their implementation, and had informed the Director General that the Vienna Declaration was already reflected technically in the relevant safety requirements. Some Safety Guides had already been revised under the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety and those mentioned in the Vienna Declaration would be reviewed and revised, as appropriate. The reviews had shown that implementation of safety standards was the key to a high level of safety.

14. The Czech Republic welcomed EPRESC established under the CSS to review and approve Agency safety standards in nuclear or radiological EPR, a cross-cutting area that required specialized expertise. It believed that the involvement of senior EPR experts would raise the quality, transparency and consistency of EPR in Agency safety standards and would improve EPR coordination among various publications.

15. The Czech Republic appreciated the Agency's IRRS and other safety missions, which had contributed to enhanced nuclear safety worldwide. It had hosted nuclear safety reviews since the previous session of the General Conference, namely a SALTO assessment at Dukovany NPP and a follow-up corporate OSART mission to ČEZ, a utility with two NPPs in operation. The SALTO team

had proposed operational safety improvements, good practices and pointers for good performance at the plant, which would be shared with the nuclear industry globally. The OSART team had found that six of the nine issues identified in a 2013 review had been fully addressed and had recommended further action on another three issues, although satisfactory progress had been noted.

16. She announced that the draft Atomic Act submitted to the Czech Parliament was expected to enter into force in 2017.

17. The Czech Republic supported action taken by the Agency to assist Member States in developing infrastructure to deploy nuclear power safely and securely, establish an appropriate legal and regulatory framework and ensure the highest nuclear safety and security standards. It commended TC projects for enabling the exchange of expertise among nuclear specialists from Member States at different levels of development.

18. Despite financial austerity, the Czech Republic was a net contributor to the TCP and would make extrabudgetary contributions through the PUI. It had, moreover, provided to the Agency a cost-free expert who had worked in the Radiation Safety and Monitoring Section since March 2015. It would contribute roughly the same amount to the PUI in 2015 as in 2014. Its extrabudgetary contributions had been used primarily to assist Armenia in upgrading its national nuclear regulatory infrastructure, in enhancing operational safety at its NPP and in strengthening radiotherapy services at the National Centre of Oncology in Yerevan. It was considering cooperation with Ukraine, a major user of WWER reactors, in order to explore and test technologies for implementing lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident.

19. The Czech Republic had supported all measures to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the Agency's safeguards system and called on all States to conclude CSAs and an AP as the worldwide standard for verifying compliance with the NPT. As the spread of nuclear weapons must be prevented, it welcomed the JCPOA agreed by the E3/EU+3 and Iran and hoped that, once implemented, the JCPOA would mark the conclusion of long-running diplomatic efforts to achieve a comprehensive and peaceful solution to the Iranian nuclear issue, thus contributing positively to world peace and security.

20. Mr JURI (Malaysia) thanked the Director General for the executive talk on Atoms for Peace: Nuclear Technology in the 21st Century, which had drawn the Malaysian public's attention to the advantages of the peaceful uses of nuclear sciences and technology, during his visit in January 2015.

21. Malaysia attached the utmost importance to nuclear safety, which should be ensured through the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, and welcomed the Fukushima Daiichi accident report and the related technical volumes, addressing the causes, consequences and lessons learned. It hoped that the Agency would continue to take the lead in building on the report findings to shape a safer nuclear future.

22. Malaysia supported the Agency's efforts to find solutions through regional and international cooperation to common issues and challenges facing TRIGA facilities and accordingly appreciated the assistance provided through the pre-INSARR and INSARR missions at its TRIGA PUSPATI research reactor in 2014.

23. Stressing the importance of global nuclear security efforts and commitment to achieving effective global security, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, Malaysia fully supported the Agency's central role in enhancing and strengthening nuclear security under the Nuclear Security Plan and appreciated the Agency's support for nuclear security activities conducted under Malaysia's INSSP to improve its nuclear security capability. Malaysia thanked the European Commission and Canada for supporting its establishment of two laboratories for those purposes.

24. As Malaysia ascribed great importance to the promotion of nuclear security culture, it had organized and participated in human capital development programmes relating to nuclear security nationally and internationally, and would participate actively in the Nuclear Security Summit scheduled for March 2016 in the hope that consensus would be reached on tangible improvements to the security of nuclear material and on the strengthening of international institutions that supported nuclear security.

25. Given the importance of nuclear security in preventing the unauthorized use of nuclear material and nuclear technology, Malaysia had ensured that all of its nuclear security activities complied with international standards and, as a regional NSSC, had cooperated with the Agency in disseminating best practices and sharing experiences with States in the region. It had cooperated and shared knowledge and experience with other ASEAN Members States in order to detect cross-border smuggling of nuclear and radioactive material and, as Chair of ASEANTOM in 2015, thanked the Agency and donor countries for their collaboration on the August 2015 Malaysia–Thailand table top and field exercise on combating trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive material.

26. Malaysia had always supported the TCP, through which it had reaped the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear S&T, and considered that, as the main vehicle for the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, the TCP must be developed and implemented in accordance with the Agency's Statute, the agreed guidelines set out in INFCIRC/267 and the decisions of the Agency's Policy-Making Organs.

27. Malaysia had always believed that R&D and knowledge sharing were the keys to successful and sustainable nuclear S&T development and appreciated the Agency's designation of the Malaysian Nuclear Agency as an IAEA Collaborating Centre for NDT, which it hoped would be extended to cover radiation processing of natural polymers and nanomaterials. It had been gratified to receive the FAO/IAEA achievement award for plant mutation breeding, which had constituted international recognition of its contribution to that field in the Asia and the Pacific region.

28. Malaysia attached great importance to CRPs conducted to foster the exchange among Member States of scientific and technical information and of scientists for peaceful uses of atomic energy. It appreciated the RCA medium term strategy and strategic priorities for 2018–2023, which supported the post-2015 development agenda.

29. Malaysia recognized the Agency's central role in establishing and promulgating effective safeguards and verification mechanisms for nuclear non-proliferation. It had always honoured its CSA obligations to demonstrate its commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and to build confidence, and thanked the Agency for its collaboration on the workshop on AP implementation and the training course on the fundamentals of domestic inspections, which had enhanced Malaysia's understanding of and local capability for safeguards.

30. Malaysia reaffirmed its understanding that Article IV of the NPT had vested an inalienable right in States Parties to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination. It asserted full confidence in the Agency as the sole authority for the verification of Member States' respective safeguards obligations and considered that the Agency had discharged its duties and responsibilities impartially, effectively and professionally. It commended the Agency for its implementation of JPA-related NPT safeguards agreement and verification work and welcomed the road map for the clarification of past and present outstanding issues regarding Iran's nuclear programme.

31. Malaysia regretted the lack of consensus at the 2015 NPT Review Conference and hoped that the nuclear-weapon States would accede at the earliest opportunity to the Protocol to the SEANWFZ Treaty.

32. Mr UZCÁTEGUI DUQUE (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) confirmed the country's strict compliance with the NPT, the CTBT and the Agency's Statute. Venezuela's firm commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation was reflected in the explicit prohibition, enshrined in its Constitution, of the entry into the country and the production and use of WMDs, and in its implementation and promotion of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean and the Declaration on Nuclear Disarmament. It had supported the proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace and had signed the declaration reiterating its commitment to nuclear disarmament and stressing that any use or threat of the use of such deadly weapons was a crime against humanity and a violation of international law and of the Charter of the United Nations.

33. Venezuela paid special attention to the Agency's TC activities, the transfer of technology and the building of capacities and knowledge, since they supplemented and promoted the objectives set in its economic and social development plan for 2013–2019. It considered the TCP to be the key mechanism for providing services to Member States and for creating and building human and institutional capacities for the peaceful use of nuclear technology in support of national sustainable socioeconomic development priorities.

34. Venezuela had intensified its TC collaboration with the Agency and had accordingly held, in March 2015, the first National Day on research and technology into the use of ionizing radiation for health, the environment, food security and industry. Two Agency experts had spoken at the workshop, which had been attended by 441 professionals from ministries, universities, research institutions and organizations involved in the peaceful application of nuclear S&T.

35. Venezuela had reaped the benefits of technical and financial cooperation projects that had been negotiated bilaterally or through ARCAL, and currently implemented projects in the areas of health, the environment, food security and radiation protection and safety. Considering that the Agency's technical assistance was crucial to its people's development and prosperity, Venezuela held that such assistance must not be tied to political, economic, military or any other conditions that were incompatible with the provisions of the Agency's Statute. Moreover, as funding for statutory technical assistance must be sufficient, assured and predictable, the TCP should be financed from the Regular Budget to ensure project continuity and strike an appropriate balance with national nuclear energy policy priorities.

36. Venezuela had unconditionally supported the Agency's activities under the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety and called on the Agency to continue to play a pioneering role in the establishment of international norms, standards and codes to ensure that the design, use and decommissioning of nuclear technology were based on the most rigorous and stringent levels of nuclear safety, and to give priority to capacity building for the safety of nuclear technology.

37. Venezuela appreciated the Agency's and the Japanese Government's efforts to offset the impact of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident as soon as possible and took note of the accident report.

38. While regarding nuclear security as a State responsibility, Venezuela considered that the Agency should focus on providing support for States requiring such assistance. Its nuclear security policies had been designed to develop an endogenous security culture, and the Agency's assistance in achieving that goal was of vital importance. It considered that the Agency's nuclear security activities, albeit important, did not form part of the Agency's statutory mandate and must therefore be financed from extrabudgetary sources, while related cooperation must be unconditional and must respect each State's national interests.

39. Venezuela acknowledged the Agency as the sole competent authority for verification and safeguards and requested that the Agency focus on objective technical facts and exclude political

and discriminatory considerations that could be levelled against States wishing to exercise their right to develop peaceful nuclear programmes.

40. As Venezuela defended States' sovereign right to use nuclear energy for development and had supported the Agency's statutory endeavour to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of nuclear energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world, it welcomed the agreement reached on the JCPOA and on the road map. It congratulated the Parties, whose negotiations had proven that diplomacy was the best option for settling disputes, and encouraged the Agency to continue to work impartially and independently on the issue.

41. Noting that the situation on the ground in the Syrian Arab Republic had prevented the Agency from carrying out routine safeguards activities, Venezuela called for the early restoration of peace in Syria and for the item concerning Syria to be deleted from the Board's agenda, stressing that it was paradoxical that the 2007 assault had not been condemned at the time by the Board and that Syria was still under scrutiny, when rigorous questioning of the authorities who had conducted the assault could clarify matters definitively.

42. From the outset, Venezuela had supported the initiatives aimed at establishing an NWFZ in the Middle East as a means of achieving peace and stability in the region. It considered that the tragic events in the region in past months had confirmed that the establishment of a zone free of WMDs should not be postponed any longer. Dismayed at the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference to adopt a final document, Venezuela called on the international community to acknowledge the importance of such a zone and to expedite its establishment.

43. Regretting the exacerbation of tension on the Korean Peninsula, Venezuela appealed for the exercise of common sense and for the resumption of the dialogue that had been suspended in 2009.

44. As Venezuela had repeatedly given priority to the elimination of nuclear WMDs as an imperative goal, inasmuch as a surge in post-Cold War regional conflicts and international terrorism that had turned the spotlight on the proliferation of WMDs. Venezuela considered that the rationale for WMDs would not lose sway until international relations became fair and just, and that world peace and stability would be achieved only when States knew for certain that their territory and sovereignty would be respected by other stakeholders in the international community. Accordingly, Venezuela called for emphasis to be switched to nuclear disarmament in international efforts to promote nuclear non-proliferation since the mere existence of nuclear weapons was a threat to humankind and total elimination was the most effective means of forestalling any use, or threats of use, by nuclear-weapon States or terrorists.

45. Referring to the 70th anniversary of the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Venezuela asserted that, on 6 and 9 August 1945, science had been placed at the service of the powerful and their delusions, and human beings had become the sole species capable of voluntary self-genocide. It hoped, however, that reason would prevail to counter any such eventuality.

46. Mr ALKAABI (United Arab Emirates) said that, as shown by its national nuclear policy, the UAE was committed to maintaining close ties with the Agency and to abiding by Agency standards. It had made significant strides in developing its civil nuclear power programme and associated infrastructure, and had begun construction work on its fourth nuclear reactor. Four nuclear power reactor units were under construction at Barakah NPP, and the first was more than 75% complete.

47. The UAE set great store by the Agency's support and guidance and hoped to contribute further to the Agency's work. It ascribed the utmost importance to nuclear safety, it supported international efforts to bolster the nuclear safety regime and it considered that the Fukushima Daiichi accident report would subsequently offer a return on investment in other Agency programmes. It had observed

and learned from the response to the accident and had taken significant steps to implement the lessons learned.

48. The UAE abided fully by the CNS. It had striven to secure the adoption of the Vienna Declaration and called on non-CNS States Parties that had significant nuclear activities to accede to the Convention at the earliest possible date.

49. In its endeavour to boost its nuclear safety infrastructure, the UAE had drawn on the Agency's review services, including follow-up IRRS and EPREV missions.

50. The UAE had supported the establishment of the IAEA LEU bank politically and financially from the outset and considered the Director General's efforts and the leadership shown by Kazakhstan to have been most praiseworthy.

51. Holding the Agency's contribution to the worldwide development of nuclear power to be invaluable, the UAE looked forward to hosting the International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century in Abu Dhabi and would do its best to ensure its success.

52. The UAE commended the Agency's efforts to enhance its TC activities and to tailor TC projects to Member States' needs and thus secure Member States' ownership. The Department of Technical Cooperation had actively and invaluablely supported the UAE, which had thus made substantial progress in areas such as nuclear infrastructure development, health and agriculture.

53. The UAE welcomed the entry into force of the CSC, which had brought a harmonized international liability regime a step closer.

54. The UAE had signed and implemented all international instruments that enhanced nuclear security nationally, regionally and internationally. It had implemented an INSSP in cooperation with the Agency and looked forward to an IPPAS mission in 2016.

55. Having endorsed the amendment to the CPPNM, the UAE hoped that it would enter into force in the near future. It considered that the NSS series, in which it had always participated actively, had contributed significantly to world nuclear security. It called on the Agency to play a central role through its safeguards system in the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, stressing that full safeguards implementation and a commitment to non-proliferation were prerequisites for a nuclear programme. It was incumbent on States whose nuclear programmes had been called into question to comply fully with their international obligations, cooperate with the Agency and take all steps required to address international concerns, including any military dimensions.

56. Disappointed at the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference to reach consensus on a final document and to adopt a mechanism for the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs, the UAE reasserted its commitment to all efforts to achieve that goal.

57. Mr BAPTISTA MOITINHO DE ALMEIDA (Portugal) said that his country had been promoting the Agency among States that were not yet Members. The increasing number of States joining the Agency reflected its unquestionable role in contributing towards peace and stability. It was important to be mindful of 'Atoms for Peace' — the Agency's founding principle, and the full spectrum of the Agency's activities. Portugal appealed to all States that had not yet done so to join the Agency, to accede to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States, and to conclude and bring safeguards agreements and APs into force.

58. Regretting that a final document had not been adopted by consensus at the 2015 NPT Review Conference, Portugal called on all States to work towards achieving common ground in furtherance of

assured peace because the discussions had highlighted the need for perseverance on the issues of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

59. Portugal hoped that the JCPOA and the road map, to which Iran and the other Parties had made a serious commitment, would be honoured by being fully implemented.

60. Regretting that the safeguards implementation situations in the Syrian Arab Republic and in the DPRK remained unresolved, Portugal appealed to those States to comply fully with their Agency and NPT obligations.

61. Portugal commended the Agency's work in the area of health and welcomed the continued full implementation of PACT, considering that the Agency's support to national laboratories and institutions, particularly for cancer treatment and diagnosis, was of major importance and must be continued.

62. The Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety was a step forward, although Portugal would have preferred a stronger decision. Priority should be given to practical implementation of the obligations already set out in the CNS. Portugal had participated actively in the CNS and Joint Convention meetings by delivering national reports and presentations and had requested an INSARR, which should be concluded by March 2016; it would require an IRRS by the end of 2016, in accordance with EU directives.

63. Portugal and Spain had signed an agreement on 30 July 2015 on strengthening their cooperation on the establishment of response mechanisms and promoting the development of human and material resources, to respond to nuclear or radiological emergencies with a cross-border or transnational impact. It would apply to routine and emergency nuclear or radiological events and was intended to promote a systematic exchange of information, knowledge and experience regarding planning and environmental radiological monitoring and results.

64. Portugal welcomed the progress achieved by the group of coastal and shipping States on the notification of shipments, and had participated in the tabletop exercise in June 2015.

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

66. Nuclear security and, in particular, cybersecurity, were of even greater relevance in an unstable world and required a committed approach.

67. Stressing the importance of TC, Portugal pointed to Article II of the Statute and to the Revised Guiding Principles and General Operating Rules, which enshrined the eligibility of each Member State or group of Member States for technical assistance.

68. Since Portugal had signed a new CPF in 2013, it worked with its African partners to boost S&T relations.

69. Ms GEELS (New Zealand) said that the continued growth in Agency membership was a clear indication of the value of the IAEA's work.

70. New Zealand's goal was a world free of nuclear weapons, in which all radioactive material was safe and secure. In 2015, major opportunities to advance towards that goal had been missed, most notably the NPT Review Conference. New Zealand was very disappointed that no conference had been convened on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of WMDs, which had contributed

significantly to the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference. It hoped that efforts to implement the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East would nonetheless be continued.

71. Another year had passed with no efforts on the part of the DPRK or the Syrian Arab Republic to address the international community's serious proliferation concerns. New Zealand called on the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons programme, conducted in blatant defiance of Security Council and Agency resolutions, and reinforced the international community's calls for Syria to provide information on the undeclared nuclear reactor at Dair Alzour and to comply with its safeguards agreement.

72. New Zealand welcomed the JCPOA concluded with the Islamic Republic of Iran and congratulated those who had stayed the course and had demonstrated that diplomacy and cooperation could and should succeed. It looked forward to the implementation of the JCPOA and the resolution of the outstanding issues, including the possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear programme.

73. New Zealand welcomed the innovative work on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, which had opened up a new avenue for progress on nuclear disarmament. The Agency offered Member States practical assistance in safeguarding dangerous materials and would help to build international confidence and underpin nuclear disarmament through its nuclear security endeavours. New Zealand made regular contributions to the NSF, including €85 500 in the preceding year. Its support for the central role of the Agency in nuclear security complemented its participation in the NSS process and a range of other initiatives, including GICNT and the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. It looked forward to the discussions at the International Conference on Nuclear Security in December 2016, which would further cement the Agency's leadership and central role in strengthening the global nuclear security framework and in coordinating international activities.

74. In January 2015, New Zealand had hosted an initial inspection under the modified small quantities protocol to its CSA. In November 2014, it had welcomed an Agency team to prepare for an IPPAS visit in November 2015.

75. A comprehensive radiation safety bill was under consideration by the New Zealand Parliament. Her country aimed to ratify in the near future both the amendment to the CPPNM and ICSANT.

76. New Zealand continued to contribute to and benefit from advances in nuclear science in areas such as human and animal health, water management and food quality. It appreciated the scientific interchange provided by the RCA.

77. New Zealand continued to support the PUI and had contributed €100 000 in 2014 and 2015 for the integrated management and sustainable development of the shared groundwater resources in the Sahel.

78. Although New Zealand did not use nuclear power, it was vulnerable to damage caused by a nuclear accident, particularly during the maritime transport of nuclear material near its waters, and called on all States developing and using nuclear energy to apply the highest standards of safeguards, safety and security throughout the fuel cycle, including waste management and transport. New Zealand highly valued the dialogue between coastal and shipping States, the voluntary guidelines on government-to-government communications developed by participating coastal and shipping States, and initiatives such as the tabletop exercise held to test those guidelines earlier in 2015. It remained engaged in efforts to improve the international nuclear liability regime to address the concerns of States, especially non-nuclear States, which might suffer damage as the result of an accident involving nuclear material, including a maritime transport incident.

79. New Zealand welcomed and supported EPRéSC, for which it had nominated an expert. The Fukushima Daiichi accident report made for sobering reading, and the lessons learned must be put to optimal use.

80. New Zealand was committed to helping to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, including through the implementation of safeguards in accordance with the NPT. The integrity of Agency verification activities was fundamental to ensuring that nuclear activities were purely for peaceful purposes. It welcomed the State-level concept, which had increased confidence in the Agency's implementation of its verification mandate.

81. Recognizing that increased Agency activities under the JCPOA entailed increased costs, New Zealand looked forward to discussions on including central monitoring and verification activities in the Regular Budget from 2017. It had previously made voluntary contributions for the JPA and had pledged a further contribution of €50 000 to support the Agency's verification activities in Iran.

82. Ms PETRICK CASAGRANDE (Peru), welcoming the progress achieved by the Agency under its Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, said that primary responsibility for nuclear safety lay with States and that Peru had taken appropriate measures to that end. The Agency played an important role in the promotion of international cooperation and in the coordination of comprehensive efforts to strengthen the international nuclear safety regime. Although nuclear energy was used in Peru only in applications for human health, agriculture, the environment and industry, priority was still given to the implementation of suitable nuclear safety standards. The lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident were of particular significance and should lead to technological improvements, safer facilities and more effective mitigation measures.

83. Peru recognized the importance of improving nuclear and radiological security internationally and was working with the United States Department of Energy to detect trafficking in nuclear material and radioactive sources on container ships. Peru sat on several committees that supported the international nuclear security framework and had assigned to the NSGC an expert who had attended all meetings held to review nuclear security standards and their links to nuclear safety.

84. Peru welcomed the action taken by the Agency to boost the efficiency and sustainability of its Member States' nuclear security efforts and the assistance provided at the COP preparatory conference in Lima.

85. Noting that the Agency had assisted Member States wishing to accede to international legal instruments on nuclear security, Peru called on CPPNM States Parties to ratify the amendment thereto as soon as possible if they had not yet done so. It was firmly committed to the objectives of non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy that underpinned the nuclear security regime and to the strengthening of nuclear security in order to prevent malicious acts, and called on the Agency to continue to coordinate action to those ends.

86. In order to meet developing countries' needs more effectively, the Agency's TC priorities should focus on cancer control, improved food supply, technical and financial support for Member States wishing to add nuclear energy to their energy mix and the conduct of hydrological studies to optimize the use of water in agriculture and groundwater management. Peru considered that national capacity building, professional training and the procurement of equipment for diagnosis and treatment were crucial to cancer control and had launched a programme to improve access to oncological services nationwide. It had begun to cultivate higher yielding Andean grains that had been improved through mutation induction under a project conducted by La Molina National Agricultural University.

87. Peru had proposed new TC projects that could be framed as regional cooperation projects, in particular its proposal to convert the RACSO Nuclear Centre into a regional centre for cooperation with States that lacked facilities such as Peru's RP-10 nuclear reactor, which would remain in operation owing to a uranium supply agreement between Peru, the Agency and the United States of America. Under its 2012–2016 CPF, Peru had participated in the design of national cooperation projects and regional initiatives in key areas, such as improved nuclear security and radiation protection, stronger cooperation within Latin America and the Caribbean, an increase in TC programmes and the strengthening of its own national regulatory framework, mainly within the scope of the recently extended ARCAL. In particular, SIT, developed to control the vectors of diseases such as chikungunya, had sparked interest in many States in the region.

88. It commended the Agency's support for FORO, which had achieved excellent results in its effort to improve radiation and nuclear security, and the Agency's application of safeguards and its efficiency gains in carrying out its mandate.

89. Peru welcomed Iran's agreement with the E3+3 on the JCPOA and praised all Parties for their commitment to reaching an agreement through dialogue and understanding. It hoped that the agreement would be implemented in full and that the Agency would conduct its monitoring and verification activities in accordance with its mandate and UNSC resolution 2231 (2015). Peru commended the Director General for his role in the negotiations leading to the agreement and the signing of the road map.

90. Deploring the DPRK's decision to cease all cooperation with the Agency, Peru called on the DPRK to respect its international commitments under UNSC resolutions and resume the six-party talks with a view to reaching an agreement, through dialogue and negotiation, on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

91. Mr SNIR (Israel) said that the Agency's central role in predominant international issues, ranging from evolving threats to global and regional security and to the growing demand for energy, had been demonstrated in the previous year.

92. In 2015, Israel had made an extrabudgetary contribution for ReNuAL, which had attested to its long-standing support for the Agency's objectives and assistance to States in developing nuclear technologies for a wide range of peaceful applications. It had participated actively in the TCP, including in the fields of health and agriculture; it had completed several successful projects and it would host an interregional training workshop on quality assurance in radiation therapy in October 2015. In 2014, it had conducted an emergency response exercise that had simulated an incident, sparked by a malicious act in its research reactor at the Soreq Nuclear Research Centre. Foreign observers had been present during the exercise, during which the Agency had observed some of Israel's RANET-registered capabilities.

93. Israel congratulated the Agency and Kazakhstan on signing the Host State Agreement establishing the IAEA LEU bank for the assured and sustainable supply of nuclear fuel to States with a nuclear power programme.

94. The contentious and politically motivated draft resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities, submitted by the Arab Group, was intended to single out and isolate Israel. It exceeded the scope of the Agency's Statute and mandate and, if passed, it would harm the Agency's credibility by politicizing it, and would drain its resources.

95. Israel was committed to direct, open dialogue with its neighbours on all regional security matters and had engaged in efforts to advance regional dialogue, through five rounds of multilateral consultations facilitated by Mr Laajava. It regretted that some key States in the region had avoided

those consultations altogether, while others had brought them to an end by rejecting further consultations. During the multilateral consultations, Israel had elaborated its policy and approach to regional security and arms control and had reiterated its position that the nuclear issue and all regional security issues could be addressed realistically only within the regional context and that direct dialogue among all States in the Middle East must be based on the indispensable principle of consensus among the parties, as had been demonstrated repeatedly in other regions of the world. The draft resolution had been submitted to divert attention from the dire situation in many parts of the region and it negated dialogue, trust and confidence. Israel called on the General Conference to stand up for the Agency's mission and object to the draft resolution.

96. Israel considered Iran to be the greatest threat in the region, for it played a destabilizing role, engaged in subversive activities in the region and worldwide and it financed, trained and armed terrorist organizations such as Hamas and Hezbollah. Iran had pursued a secretive nuclear programme for decades and had come to the negotiating table only under the heavy pressure of international sanctions; it had given no indication that it had abandoned its strategic goal of acquiring nuclear weapons and it would be in a better position to do so on expiry of the agreement with the P5+1, even if the Board assumed that Iran was not engaged in undeclared nuclear activities. Iran would continue to provide misleading explanations while concealing or destroying incriminating evidence, as evidenced by the large-scale clean-up of the Parchin site in the previous three years.

97. Israel called on the international community to maintain pressure on Iran until the Agency had reported the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities. The termination of UNSC and Agency resolutions on Iran before such a conclusion could be drawn would convey to the world a very dangerous message about nuclear proliferation. Allowing Iran to be within reach of nuclear weapons on expiry of the current agreement was not an option for Israel, the region or the world.

98. Israel considered that the Middle East was at a critical juncture, faced with great threats and dangers. The decades-long quest for a Middle East zone free of WMDs should be evaluated realistically. The Middle East was changing dramatically, but Israel remained committed to its vision of a more secure and peaceful Middle East. Direct engagement based on confidence and trust was essential to progress in fulfilling that vision. Israel believed that meaningful regional dialogue based on mutual recognition and respect could benefit all parties in the Middle East, without exception, and hoped that its neighbours would react positively to its constructive approach.

99. Ms LAAMANEN (Finland) said that the Agency's latest nuclear power generation statistics had highlighted the importance of nuclear power to many States' energy mix and the potential for growth, as facilities were under construction worldwide, including Finland, where Olkiluoto NPP was at the commissioning stage and Fennovoima had applied for a construction licence for Hanhikivi 1 in June 2015. The two facilities and greater recourse to renewable energy would contribute significantly to electricity production, to the achievement of emission reduction targets and to the Government's goal of coal-free electricity production.

100. Licensing procedures were under way for the ONKALO final underground spent-fuel repository designed to use highly advanced and mostly domestically developed technology and to meet strict safety, security and safeguards requirements. The construction licence would be the first ever issued in the world for a final spent-fuel disposal facility. The encapsulation and final disposal process was scheduled to begin in the early 2020s.

101. As the proliferation threat continued to loom large, Finland called for the integrity of the non-proliferation regime and the NPT to be upheld and for appropriate measures to be taken against non-compliance, while stressing the utmost importance of NPT universalization and full compliance. As no final document had been adopted at 2015 NPT Review Conference, emphasis should shift to

finding practical ways and means of achieving the NPT's objectives. Finland had contributed tangibly to the quest for a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs through Mr Jaakko Laajava's efforts to convene a conference to that end. Those efforts had opened up a channel for regional dialogue on critical Middle East security issues but, ultimately, the States of the region were in the driving seat.

102. Highlighting the crucial importance of the Agency's safeguards system to the nuclear non-proliferation regime, Finland considered that a CSA and an AP thereto should be the universally accepted verification standard and called on States to sign and ratify an AP without delay if they had not yet done so. It would continue to contribute to the safeguards system, having contributed more than €7 million to date, and supported further development based on the State-level concept.

103. Finland planned to contribute an additional €200 000 for the Agency's monitoring and verification activities under the JPA and for JCPOA preparation and implementation, thus raising its total contribution to €600 000. It hoped that Iran would implement all of its JPA and JCPOA commitments swiftly, engage fully with the Agency in resolving all outstanding issues and thus build international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme.

104. As it attached great importance to enhanced nuclear safety and had consistently supported action by the Agency to that end, Finland stressed that States using nuclear power or embarking on nuclear power programmes must enact sound legislation and regulations on nuclear and radiation safety, that stakeholders' roles and responsibilities must be defined clearly and that regulatory bodies must be given the requisite resources, authority and decision-making autonomy to enjoy stakeholder, and in particular public, confidence. Finland held in high regard the Agency's nuclear safety peer review services, to which it had resorted extensively, and had contributed actively to their development.

105. Finland was committed to drawing on lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident in order to improve nuclear safety nationally and internationally and had been active in international cooperation to that end. It was committed to the inclusion of the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety among the IAEA Safety Standards Series requirements and to consideration of operating NPP safety at future CNS review meetings.

106. Finland gave high priority to nuclear material and facility security and promoted further ratification of ICSANT and the entry into force of the amendment to the CPPNM which it had already ratified. It had provided financial and in-kind support for the Agency's nuclear security activities and was a long-standing contributor to the NSF, to which it would make an additional contribution for 2016. Finland called on Member States to make better use of the Agency's nuclear security peer review services, in particular IPPAS and INSServ, and existing nuclear security guidance, and to be committed to follow-up action on mission findings. It had been active in international nuclear security fora, including the NSS process, and foresaw a key role for the Agency in building on NSS success.

107. Finland had acted on its priority of combating nuclear terrorism by hosting the GICNT Plenary Meeting in June 2015.

108. Mr AL HINAI (Oman), expressing his country's hope that the General Conference would adopt resolutions that addressed Member States' concerns, met current nuclear safety and security challenges and contributed to sustainable development, noted that the Agency's technical programmes, including the TCP, could address the SDGs that would be adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit. SDGs such as food security, improved nutrition, sustainable agriculture, ensuring healthy lives, sustainable management of water resources, promotion of sustainable industrialization, action to combat climate change and its impacts, conservation of oceans

and seas, sustainable use of marine resources and action to combat desertification had been included in Oman's peaceful nuclear applications programme.

109. Oman had participated in the IWAVE project, under which samples from the *falaj* irrigation system and aquifers had been analysed with a view to drawing the country's first hydrological map, while training courses had been attended at home and abroad to build capacity among water resource experts to collect and analyse isotope data and design water resource monitoring networks. Modelling studies on the Samail catchment were under way, after which other catchments would be studied and water resources would be assessed for sustainable management, which would build national analytical capacity to incorporate isotope hydrology in other hydrological and geological studies. Oman hoped that capacities would be enhanced when the new system for the electrolytic enrichment of tritium and the accompanying software, would be made available to Member States in 2015.

110. Oman attached great importance to public health and had sought to improve its health care services. The first PET-CT centre had been brought online at the Sultan Qaboos University Hospital in 2015 and a similar centre, containing a cyclotron accelerator for the production of radioisotopes for PET-CT, would be operational shortly at the Royal Hospital in Muscat. Consideration was being given to the establishment of a proton therapy centre and Oman would follow Agency guidelines and recommendations on the use of emerging technologies, such as particle therapy.

111. Quality management systems for nuclear medicine and radiation scanning and therapy had been included in Oman's TCP for 2016-2017, which would ensure that its practices would be consistent with Agency standards. It was drawing up its 2018-2025 CPF pursuant to its five-year development plan for 2016-2020 and Oman Vision 2040, which would reflect the goals agreed in the post-2015 development agenda.

112. Ever keen to contribute to initiatives to promote world nuclear and radiological safety and to fulfil its obligations under the CNS and the Joint Convention, Oman had attended the two major meetings convened in 2015 under those conventions. It had supported Switzerland's initiative to amend Article 18 of the CNS and had welcomed the guidelines on the prevention and mitigation of radiological accidents contained in the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety. Although the Declaration was not binding, Oman urged all bodies and nuclear regulators to apply its principles without delay to new and existing NPPs and thus build public confidence in the safety of nuclear energy for power generation and desalination and help to avert harm to people and the environment in the event of a nuclear accident. At the Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention, it had reported on its basic infrastructure for safe radioactive waste management and had identified shortcomings and the measures required for compliance with the Agency's monitoring standards. It had, moreover, submitted its action plan designed to fill infrastructural gaps.

113. The Agency had assisted Oman under the TCP in formulating a national radiological EPR plan in line with Agency standards, and the road map for its implementation was being drawn up jointly with the Agency's IEC experts.

114. Oman considered that the devastation wrought by the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had steeled humanity's resolve to free the world of nuclear weapons and of the threat posed by them and other WMDs. The Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons had turned the spotlight on non-nuclear-weapon States' serious concern about the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. Oman had supported the humanitarian pledge and would collaborate with all States to achieve the goal of comprehensive nuclear disarmament.

115. Oman voiced grave disappointment at the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference to adopt a final document, which had shown that challenges still remained to the implementation of the NPT's

principles and to the achievement of its goals, namely disarmament, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the purely peaceful use of nuclear energy.

116. Oman welcomed the conclusion of the JCPOA on Iran's nuclear programme and hoped that outstanding issues would be resolved through dialogue and by peaceful means. It considered, however, that security would remain parlous in the Middle East unless all States in the region acceded to and abided by the NPT. Israel was the only State that had not yet done so, and its possession of nuclear weapons was shrouded in ambiguity. Accordingly, Oman called on Israel to accede to the NPT and place all of its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards. It deplored the lack of progress in implementing the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 NPT Review Conference, which had acknowledged the precarious situation prevailing in the Middle East.

117. Ms KJÆRSGAARD PLESNER (Denmark) said that her country firmly supported the Agency's efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation, given the crucial need to ensure that no nuclear material was diverted for military purposes and to uphold safety and security in the peaceful uses of nuclear S&T. Denmark fully supported the application of the State-level concept as a means of increasing the efficiency of safeguards while maintaining effectiveness.

118. Welcoming the JCPOA as well as the road map for the clarification of past and present outstanding issues regarding Iran's nuclear programme, Denmark called on Iran to cooperate fully with the Agency in clarifying all outstanding issues and acknowledged the Agency's major role in monitoring and verifying Iran's JCPOA compliance, for which additional resources would be required, primarily under the Regular Budget, but also from voluntary contributions. As it fully supported the Agency's crucial work in that area, Denmark had undertaken to make a financial contribution.

119. Denmark shared the serious concern expressed about the DPRK in document GC(59)/22. Having strongly condemned the previous nuclear tests, it urged the DPRK to refrain from further tests and called on the General Conference to adopt a strong resolution urging the DPRK to fulfil its obligations and its commitments to achieving the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

120. Deeply regretting the lack of any developments since the previous year that would indicate Syria's willingness to remedy its non-compliance with its safeguards agreement, Denmark called on Syria to comply with the Board's 2011 resolution on the implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement, to cooperate fully with the Agency and to bring an AP into force. Until Syria had done so, the item must remain on the Board's agenda.

121. In the previous year, Denmark had attended Agency seminars and workshops on safeguards, safety and security in an endeavour to clarify issues concerning possible uranium extraction in Greenland and to ensure that the highest international standards and best practices were met in any related work. It would continue to draw on the Agency's expertise and professionalism and commended the assistance provided to date.

122. Denmark, which had announced a further pledge to the NSF in December in support of the Agency's nuclear security-related activities, was committed to ensuring sufficient funds for the Agency's nuclear security endeavours under the Regular Budget. It looked forward to the International Conference on Nuclear Security scheduled for December 2016.

123. Denmark regarded the recent ratifications of the amendment to the CPPNM as significant steps towards its entry into force and called for an analysis of further steps to close gaps in the international nuclear security legal framework.

124. Denmark considered that the Fukushima Daiichi accident report had enhanced understanding of the causes and consequences of the accident and of the need for more robust nuclear safety measures

everywhere. It commended the Agency for its implementation of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety and for its improved and expanded nuclear emergency response arrangements. Denmark, too, had taken action to improve its emergency preparedness system and resources within the nuclear field to achieve a higher level of awareness and coordination among the various national authorities involved in emergency planning. It had continued to strengthen its system to monitor radiation levels continuously in Denmark and Greenland and had established special field investigation teams to perform more sophisticated measurements and map hotspots. It was also strengthening nuclear cooperation with its Nordic neighbours.

125. Denmark hoped that the consensus outcome of the 2015 Diplomatic Conference of the Contracting Parties to the CNS would be reflected clearly in Member States' reports at future review meetings, in particular the 2017 review meeting, as the commitments enshrined in the consensus outcome should be key commitments for all Member States.

126. Denmark had decided not to include nuclear power in its own energy mix, for it was committed to the development and expansion of more sustainable forms of energy, but it respected the choice of other Member States and the Agency's statutory obligations; it recognized States' interest in introducing nuclear power and held in high regard the Agency's contribution to ensuring that they did so under optimum safety, security and non-proliferation conditions.

127. Denmark fully supported the Agency's TC activities in such crucial areas as human health, food security, water and the environment, and had accordingly pledged its full share of the TCF target for 2016.

128. Mr HAMZE (Lebanon) urged the Agency to continue to protect the right of NPT States Parties to adopt R&D programmes and to produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination. Lebanon stressed the need for the Agency to respect the principles of balance and coordination among its activities when preparing its programme and budget.

129. The use and continuous development of nuclear technology for food security, public health, and sustainable use of water and environmental resources had become a vital necessity and a right of all societies and States. Lebanon praised the Agency's continuous efforts to develop its S&T capacity to meet those strategic challenges.

130. Lebanon commended the Agency's close, transparent and prompt cooperation on several scientific and technical projects, yielding a project implementation rate of nearly 100%. The Agency had supported the establishment of a centre for the control of orphan radioactive sources, while France and Germany had provided financial and logistical support for the removal of disused radioactive sources. Commending the Agency's support for ARASIA projects, Lebanon stressed the importance of developing regional cooperation and of greater Agency support in that context.

131. Lebanon considered the Fukushima Daiichi accident report to be an invaluable source of information on ways and means of enhancing nuclear safety and of reversing the tendency to disregard possible risks. Lebanon welcomed all action taken to achieve that aim, including through universal ratification of the CNS and expansion of the Agency's peer review services. It stressed that the effectiveness of the Agency's action to assist Member States in enhancing safety and security by promoting the implementation of international instruments, improving its guidance, diversifying its services and training experts in nuclear safety and security depended on a sound verification framework and on competent, effective and independent national regulatory commissions.

132. There had been worrying setbacks to the non-proliferation regime, such as the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference to adopt a final document, dashing hopes raised by the relative success of the 2010 Conference, owing to certain major powers' resolve to uphold the interests of a single

State over those of the entire international community. The non-proliferation regime was being subjected, to a greater extent than ever before, to double standards and teetered on the brink of an abyss. Israel's non-accession to the NPT had undermined the credibility of the Treaty and international resolutions, particularly in the light of its record of transgressions and violations during the various stages of development of its military nuclear programme. The nuclear spectre therefore continued to haunt the Middle East, which was currently prey to all kinds of conflicts and wars and which had proven unable to solve any of its problems for more than six decades.

133. The international community could, when moved by sincere intentions, resolve the most complex international issues, as attested by the historic agreement signed by Iran and the E3+3. Lebanon hoped that the agreement would be implemented smoothly, thus facilitating the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East. It was surprised at the international community's impotence in the face of Israel's expanding nuclear capabilities and at the lack of constructive initiatives aimed at achieving a breakthrough. Stressing that the Agency's efforts to promote safeguards by persuading all States to sign an AP would be to no avail until the NPT had been universalized and ratified by Israel, it called on Member States to adopt the draft resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities as an essential step towards the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East.

134. Lebanon regarded the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons hosted by the Austrian Government in December 2014 as a milestone on the path to nuclear disarmament.

135. Considering that existing challenges had been exacerbated by the strategic conflict between the major powers, unwillingness to cooperate in achieving radical solutions and the major threat to nuclear safety and security posed by current conflicts in the Middle East marked by the rise in terrorism and the disintegration and collapse of borders, States and security forces, Lebanon urged the Agency to take those factors into account in its TC programmes and projects in the region. As the mounting challenges were unlikely to be resolved in the near future, Lebanon stressed the need for United Nations bodies and the Agency to play a neutral and objective role, in cooperation with Arab States and institutions, and to provide the technical and logistical support required to prevent any further exacerbation of the situation.

136. Ms ALIFERI (Greece) stressed that the cornerstone of Greek public policy was compliance with international law and the entire UN system. Greece commended action taken by the Agency to promote international cooperation on the use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, prevent nuclear proliferation and contribute to nuclear disarmament, while highlighting the Secretariat's competence, dedication and professionalism in pursuing the Agency's goals.

137. Greece advocated the cautious and peaceful use of nuclear power. While atomic energy was not part of its energy mix, all States had a sovereign right to opt for peaceful nuclear energy, provided that they adhered fully to and respected the international non-proliferation regime, safeguards agreements, Agency safety standards and the nuclear security architecture.

138. Ascribing paramount importance to human safety, Greece hoped that the lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident would be included in the post-2015 IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety and in the Agency's departmental programmes in order to tackle, and even forestall, future challenges and risks.

139. Greece called for environmental safety considerations to be taken into account always and acknowledged the Agency as the leading authority for conducting nuclear verification, giving assurances of Member States' compliance with their nuclear safeguards obligations and addressing all cases of non-compliance.

140. Welcoming the historic agreement on the JCPOA between the E3/EU+3 and Iran and on the road map agreed between the Agency and Iran, Greece praised the political will on all sides and the hard work that had led to such success, which it hailed as a victory for multilateralism, diplomacy, the Agency and the entire UN system. Greece hoped that full and timely JCPOA implementation by all would build confidence and trust in the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear energy and thus contribute to peace and stability in the region and beyond.

141. Greece hoped that the 2016 session of the General Conference, marking the 60th anniversary of the Agency, would be an occasion to celebrate good news in areas in which little, if any, progress had been made to date. It voiced great concern at the DPRK's nuclear proliferation activities, its continuous acts of provocation and its violation of its international obligations. Greece strongly believed in the universality of the NPT and urged all States that had not yet done so to accede to the Treaty. Ratification of the CTBT, too, constituted a necessary step towards gradual disarmament. Greece shared other Member States' disappointment at the lack of progress at the 2015 NPT Conference and in the establishment of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East. Considering that the application of comprehensive safeguards to all nuclear material, facilities and activities would build confidence among all States and would promote peace, security and prosperity, Greece called for greater efforts to establish such a zone.

142. Greece attached particular importance to the Agency's pursuit of maximum nuclear safety and security worldwide, assistance to Member States in nuclear S&T capacity building in furtherance of scientific, technological and economic development, and TCP support designed to boost safety and security in the peaceful use of nuclear technology.

143. Greece adhered to all relevant Agency agreements and fully supported related projects, including those on cooperation between the Agency and the EU. It had participated actively in all relevant international conferences. It had attended the February 2015 Diplomatic Conference, the Fifth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention in May 2015 and the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons hosted by Austria in December 2014.

144. Greece reaffirmed its strong commitment to greater bilateral cooperation with the Agency and had been gratified by the Agency's decision to invite a Greek expert to sit on the Advisory Group on Nuclear Security.

145. Greece had contributed, through its expert, to the drafting of documents and fundamentals in the IAEA Nuclear Security Series. Greek scientists had participated in expert missions, including IRRS missions, and in scientific groups and workshops on nuclear safety. Furthermore, Greece had provided hands-on training in nuclear safety to five international fellowship holders and had assisted the Agency actively in its TC activities by participating in expert missions and scientific visits and by hosting fellowships in its own laboratories.

146. Under a long-term nuclear safety agreement between the Agency and the Greek Atomic Energy Commission, Greece had hosted 13 participants from 10 Member States for a six-month postgraduate course in Athens on radiation protection and the safety of radioactive sources and would host a follow-up education and training appraisal mission, which would help Greece to evaluate the progress achieved under the programme and future education and training activities in radiation protection and nuclear safety.

147. Under practical arrangements with the Agency, Greece had hosted and co-organized in 2015 one technical visit by 16 participants from South Africa, one regional training course for 20 participants from southern European countries and Turkey, and one international training course for 47 participants from Asian, African and Latin American States. The first workshop on developing

an effective compliance assurance regime for the transport of radioactive material in Mediterranean coastal States and associated shipping States had been held in Athens.

148. Mr ISTRATE (Romania) said the 60th anniversary of the launch of Romania's civil nuclear programme, marked in 2015, had afforded an opportunity to reaffirm Romania's commitment to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and unstinting support for the role and purposes of the Agency.

149. Romania was convinced that the Treaty remained central to the current disarmament and non-proliferation regime and was crucial to international security, which the entire international community held dearer than any sectoral approach or political gambling. All States Parties were collectively responsible for strengthening the NPT and for preserving its integrity and validity. Romania, which had played an active role in the 2010–2015 NPT review cycle, chairing the Second Preparatory Committee and Main Committee II on non-proliferation issues at the 2015 Review Conference, considered that despite the lack of consensus at the 2015 Conference, the action plan adopted in 2010 could serve as a road map for further progress and as a reference document for assessing NPT implementation. The points on which the States Parties had been close to agreement, in particular non-proliferation and peaceful uses, should be a source of inspiration for negotiating relevant Agency General Conference resolutions.

150. Romania fully endorsed the Agency's efforts to develop the State-level concept, which was conducive to efficiency gains while maintaining and strengthening the effectiveness of safeguards implementation and respecting the existing CSA and AP legal framework.

151. Some developments and events of concern in the preceding few years had highlighted the critical role of the AP that, together with a CSA, constituted a genuine verification standard and built the Agency's capacities to detect and respond to non-compliance with safeguards obligations. Romania therefore called for the universal adoption and implementation of APs and for greater efforts to conclude more APs.

152. Considering that the Agency played a crucial role in ensuring the safe, secure and proliferation-free use of atoms for peace, Romania said that Member States bore a shared responsibility for providing the Agency with the necessary political, financial and technical support so that it could continue to fulfil its mandate under Article III of the NPT and be prepared for future challenges.

153. Romania called for new steps to counter global threats and challenges from State or non-State actors that defied international law and standards, and for specific results to be drawn up for States that were not complying with their obligations and commitments.

154. Romania welcomed the agreement between the E3+3 and the Islamic Republic of Iran on the JCPOA and the road map for the clarification of past and present outstanding issues regarding Iran's nuclear programme. Full implementation by Iran would mark the beginning of a gradual and long-term process that would end in assurances that Iran's nuclear programme had been, was and would be, used for peaceful purposes only. The Agency's role in that regard remained paramount.

155. Romania urged the DPRK to follow suit and to comply fully, unconditionally and without delay with all of its international obligations and to resume negotiations within the six-party talks.

156. Romania had substantial expertise in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, for it encompassed the entire nuclear cycle, ranging from uranium extraction and fuel fabrication to the safe storage of radioactive waste. Nuclear energy could contribute materially to meeting crucial human needs and to sustainable development in health, industry, agriculture, access to water and energy and environmental protection.

157. Romania remained committed to the safe and secure use of nuclear power as part of its overall energy mix. The Agency and the competent EU authorities had repeatedly confirmed that the nuclear safety and security procedures and practices at all nuclear facilities in Romania met requirements. Romania was a responsible actor, using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes only, and it had traditionally made proactive commitments under international cooperation projects, constantly expressing its willingness to share its experience in the nuclear field. The Romanian Institute for Nuclear Research and the Agency had accordingly signed practical arrangements for providing scientific and technical nuclear safety support to Member States.

158. Dedicated to the NSS process, Romania attached great importance to all security measures taken to ensure that nuclear material remained in peaceful uses only and had accordingly made several unilateral and multilateral commitments, on which it would report at the 2016 Summit. It would work with all participants to maximize Summit outcomes and identify the best post-2016 follow-up to the NSS process. In preparation for the Summit, it would participate actively in drafting action plans, including the one concerning the Agency. It had contributed €30 000 to the NSF in 2014 and would contribute another €30 000 in 2016.

159. Romania strongly supported the TCP and the statutory right of all Member States to be eligible for TC projects, through which the Agency had promoted nuclear-related techniques to eradicate poverty and hunger worldwide, thus contributing to the achievement of the MDGs. Romania had benefited considerably from the TCP through several nuclear security and safety projects, while also providing in-kind contributions. On completion of the 2014–2015 cycle, it would consider gradually moving from the status of TCP beneficiary to that of TCP contributor.

160. Romania supported the PUI as a valuable and flexible mechanism for meeting NPT States Parties' development needs by ensuring food security, better human health and environmental protection.

161. Romania was gratified that the CSC had entered into force on 15 April 2015. It had endorsed the primary CSC objectives of establishing a nuclear liability regime for all States and of increasing the compensatory amount payable in the event of a nuclear incident.

162. Its National Commission for Nuclear Activities Control, the national contact point for the physical protection of nuclear material and for preventing and combating trafficking in nuclear and radioactive material, had contributed to the ITDB and was responsible for reporting all trafficking incidents on Romanian territory. Under a bilateral document signed with the Office of Nuclear Security in 2014, the National Commission for Nuclear Activities Control would receive specialized support in such areas as security culture, prevention, protection against threats, security in the transport of radioactive material, security of radioactive sources and action to combat trafficking in nuclear material. Some activities had been implemented in 2015 and others were being scheduled.

163. Romania had paid particular attention to spent fuel and radioactive waste management in implementing Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom and had drafted the first report on its national spent fuel and radioactive waste management programme in accordance with Article 15 of the Directive.

164. As a Member of the International Framework for Nuclear Energy Cooperation, Romania would host an international radioactive waste management workshop in October 2015.

165. Mr AZZOPARDI (Malta), stressing his country's continued commitment to implementing the NPT and to supporting all action taken to achieve the NPT objectives, regretted the lack of significant results under the NPT pillar of disarmament and called for a balanced and graded approach to be taken in implementing the three mutually reinforcing pillars of non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy in order to preserve the legitimacy of the NPT. He called on non-NPT States to

accede to the Treaty without further delay. Regretting the failure at the NPT Review Conference to agree on the final document that could have furthered negotiations on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of WMDs, he stressed that Malta was paying close attention to events unfolding in the southern Mediterranean. It considered non-proliferation and disarmament efforts in the region to be important to the region and to the wider international community and thanked Mr Jaakko Laajava for his efforts in the previous years' negotiations. As no conference had been convened in 2012 on the establishment of a zone free of WMDs in the Middle East, it stressed that the goals of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East remained valid and called on States to engage in constructive dialogue and to work in good faith to achieve tangible progress towards that goal.

166. Noting that the Agency faced the challenging task, as the international nuclear inspectorate, of assuring the international community that States were honouring their international obligations and using nuclear power for peaceful purposes only, Malta called on States that had not yet done so to sign and enforce a CSA and an AP, as they were crucial to the Agency's verification work and to boosting confidence within the international community.

167. As an island State and a leading flag State, Malta called for nuclear safety and security principles to be applied at sea, in particular to maritime transport, highlighting the need for adequate communication practices and the highest safety standards to be followed at sea to avert possibly permanent devastation and contamination of the marine environment and ecosystems.

168. Malta welcomed the JCPOA, commended the EU High Representative for her coordinating role in the negotiations and said that the implementation of an AP and of the road map would clarify matters in line with NPT principles. Malta supported the Agency's pivotal role in verifying and monitoring Iran's nuclear activities pursuant to UNSC resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA, and noted that, by taking a constructive approach, Iran was helping to improve relations regionally and internationally, and thus to increase stability and security in the Middle East.

169. Voicing deep concern at the situation in Syria, at Syria's failure to remedy its non-compliance with its safeguards agreement, at the presence of terrorist networks in the country and at the constraints on the Agency's verification capabilities imposed by the unpredictability of the ongoing conflict, Malta called on Syria to cooperate fully with the Agency in connection with all unresolved issues and to bring an AP into force without delay.

170. Condemning the DPRK's continued defiance of the international non-proliferation regime and further acts of provocation designed to heighten regional tensions, Malta called on the DPRK to comply fully, unconditionally and without delay with the relevant General Conference and UNSC resolutions.

171. Pointing to the new and growing security challenges faced by the international community, Malta highlighted the obligation of States to ensure that weapons-grade nuclear material did not fall into the hands of terrorists and stressed the crucial importance of preventing the proliferation of vulnerable nuclear material in the interests of world peace, safety and security.

172. Malta had fully supported Austria's efforts to heighten awareness of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and accordingly called for the humanitarian dimension to remain a central feature of discussions on non-proliferation and disarmament, even while ridding the world of the threat of nuclear weapons.

173. Malta held in high regard the Agency's TCP, under which it had implemented national medical radiotherapy and cultural heritage projects and had participated in regional training programmes. A plan of action had been drawn up on the 2015 IRRS mission recommendations designed to develop the

country's radiation regulatory infrastructure. Malta looked forward to participating in future programmes.

174. Mr STUART (Australia) said that his country had participated actively in the RCA, the main programme for implementing the Agency's development objectives for the peaceful uses of nuclear power in Asia and the Pacific.

175. In support of the TCF, Australia had pledged to pay its share of the 2016 target, amounting to €1 685 742, on time and in full, and encouraged others to follow suit. Furthermore, Australia had contributed about €1 million to the PUI since 2011, including €600 000 for ReNuAL, and it had provided substantial in-kind support such as training programmes. Australia called on other Member States to contribute to the PUI.

176. Australia called on all NPT States Parties that had yet to fulfil their obligations under the Treaty to conclude CSAs without delay. Credible verification shored up confidence in the Agency's ability to detect both the misuse of declared facilities and the conduct of undeclared facilities or activities. Australia did not consider it satisfactory that the Agency had been obliged to issue qualified safeguards conclusions. It noted that the combination of a CSA and an AP had been recognized as the safeguards standard under the NPT in international practice and that the Agency could provide credible assurance of the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities only for States with an AP in force. It therefore commended those States that had brought an AP into force since the 58th session of the General Conference and urged States that had not yet signed, ratified and implemented an AP to do so as soon as possible.

177. Australia had continued to work with the Agency to encourage all States to develop and implement effective safeguards and to promote best practice in safeguards implementation and in the overall non-proliferation regime. It welcomed the new State-level approaches concluded by the Agency and noted that the Australian safeguards support programme had made valuable contributions in such areas as analytical services for environmental sampling and safeguards guides.

178. Welcoming the JCPOA agreed between the E3/EU+3 and Iran and commending the Agency's central role in JCPOA monitoring and verification, Australia noted that the Agency would require additional funding and announced that it was considering a voluntary contribution to support that work. It stressed that JCPOA success depended on Iran's compliance with the terms of the JCPOA and of the road map, and called on Iran to abide fully by those commitments.

179. Deploring the DPRK's continued non-compliance with its safeguards obligations and the DPRK's acts in defiance of UNSC resolutions, Australia voiced deep concern at the DPRK's continuing attempts to develop, produce, modernize and proliferate WMDs, its threats to undertake a new form of nuclear test and its efforts to develop nuclear facilities. It urged the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons programmes completely, verifiably and irreversibly, it opposed the DPRK's claim to have a 'right' to conduct further nuclear tests and it called on the DPRK to comply with its obligations under the NPT and Agency safeguards. Australia encouraged the Agency to maintain its readiness to play a central role in verifying the DPRK's nuclear programme.

180. Australia, which had long supported the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs, considered full compliance by all States in the Middle East with their non-proliferation obligations to be critical to building mutual confidence and security in the region and urged all States to work constructively towards that goal.

181. Australia ascribed great importance to nuclear security and, in its endeavour to make the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit a success, would co-chair a working group on the Agency's post-Summit role in nuclear security policy.

182. Australia commended the States that had ratified the amendment to the CPPNM since the 58th session of the General Conference and strongly encouraged those that had not yet ratified the amendment to do so as soon as possible.

183. Australia acknowledged the Agency's efforts in implementing the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. It noted that the Fukushima Daiichi accident report provided a thorough, objective and factual analysis of the causes and consequences of the accident and appreciated the lessons learned, stressing that there was no room for complacency in nuclear safety systems and processes. It noted that the assessment of the radiological impact of the accident correlated closely with that of the 2013 UNSCEAR report.

184. Australia stressed its commitment to the safe and environmentally sound mining, processing and transport of uranium and its desire to engage in discussion with prospective uranium-mining States. It had hosted a side event during the session of the General Conference on responsible uranium mining. Its molybdenum-99 processing plant, once operational in 2016, could meet a significant proportion of global demand and thus assure radiopharmaceutical supplies at a time when some current production reactors would have closed down. Production at the new plant would be fully LEU based and consistent with worldwide nuclear non-proliferation efforts to minimize civilian use of HEU. Construction of the co-located Synroc waste treatment plant would commence in 2016.

185. Progress had been achieved in bilateral civil nuclear cooperation with India under India's safeguards agreement and AP signed with the Agency in 2009. Australia had met India's energy needs by agreeing to supply uranium to assist India in meeting its rapidly rising electricity demand. Australia expected the early entry into force of its bilateral agreement on civil nuclear cooperation with India, signed in 2014, to ensure that all Australian uranium and nuclear material derived therefrom would be used for peaceful purposes only, would be subject to Agency safeguards and would be protected in accordance with international nuclear security standards.

186. Mr TOUQAN (Jordan) said that his country had continued to pursue its aim of being a model to be emulated in the Middle East in terms of its use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

187. In March 2015, Jordan had signed with the Russian Government a framework agreement on the construction and commissioning of the Kingdom's first NPP. The agreement, shortly to be submitted to the Jordanian Chamber of Deputies, had established the legal and political framework for the project and had laid down general principles for cooperation between the two Governments, in addition to specific details on fuel supply and spent fuel disposal. Jordan had agreed to establish a company to manage the NPP in two phases. The investment decision would be taken on completion of the first phase. The Russian strategic investor would participate in the project and an engineering, purchasing and construction contract would be signed with the Atomstroyexport company.

188. The Jordanian Atomic Energy Commission had signed an agreement in October 2014 with the Korea Electric Power Corporation on the conduct of technical studies on the NPP site, which would include two AES-92 1000 MW(e) pressurized water reactors. The site of the first NPP in Amra and the stability of the electricity grid would be studied in detail, and the environmental impact and the site's compliance with the Agency's safety standards, Jordanian environmental legislation and international environmental preservation norms would be assessed. The pre-investment studies would be staggered over two years, as agreed with the Russian strategic investor.

189. Jordan commended the Agency's outstanding and vital support provided through its review missions, findings and recommendations conducive to the development of the country's nuclear infrastructure and the successful implementation of its nuclear programme. The report on the August 2014 INIR mission had been posted on the Agency's website in the interests of transparency and as a national confidence-building measure.

190. The 5 MW Jordan Research and Training Reactor built by the KAERI-Daweco Consortium at Jordan University for Science and Technology would be used for training, education and research and to produce radioisotopes for medical, industrial and agricultural purposes. The Jordan Nuclear Regulatory Commission had issued the licence to build the research reactor after the environmental and radiation impact assessment, site studies and seismic risk analysis had been conducted. Work was currently in the final stages, an application for an operating licence had been submitted to the Energy and Minerals Regulatory Commission and the reactor would be commissioned in 2016.

191. A report would be issued under the Jordanian uranium exploitation project on uranium prospecting conducted in central Jordan, in accordance with relevant international standards. Technical reports by international experts and Jordanian specialists, confirming the existence of commercial quantities of uranium in central Jordan and indexed in accordance with the code of the Joint Ore Reserves Committee (JORC-2012), had been issued by the Jordanian Atomic Energy Commission.

192. Jordan stressed its commitment to the principles of transparency and compliance with world nuclear safety and nuclear security standards and had given pride of place to environmental protection in all measures taken to implement its nuclear programme, while requiring all nuclear projects to comply with the Agency's standards as a prerequisite for the issuance of licences.

193. Its Atomic Energy Commission had constantly supported nuclear security activities, such as training, the strengthening of technical and logistical cooperation with relevant national institutions and the Agency, systematic bilateral cooperation, the development of the national nuclear security infrastructure and the conduct of experiential exchanges.

194. The Government had approved the establishment of an international advisory committee, composed of prominent nuclear scientists and policymakers, to assess progress in implementing the nuclear programme transparently and to issue regular reports and public information.

195. The Jordanian Atomic Energy Agency had promoted human resource development and the training of technical teams by taking up 73 fellowships granted by donor States under bilateral cooperation agreements, while the Agency had arranged TCP visits for members of the Jordanian Chamber of Deputies to its headquarters and to NPPs in Hungary, which had heightened Jordan's commitment to global standards and transparency. Jordan would host SESAME, a major regional TC project to be launched in mid-2016.

196. Jordan set great store by the safeguards regime, which had crucially supported international action to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to confine nuclear energy to peaceful uses and applications. It had signed a CSA consistent with its NPT obligations and it called on to all States in the Middle East, including Israel, to accede to the NPT and place all of their nuclear installations under Agency safeguards, thus ensuring universality of the Treaty in the region and paving the way for the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East in furtherance of international peace, security and stability, which would encourage States to focus on their people's socioeconomic development.

197. Mr ILIOSKI (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), noting the need for a strong international safeguards system to promote collective security, said that the Agency's role was increasingly important owing to the rise in terrorism worldwide. He therefore called for greater cooperation between all Member States and the Agency on the application of safety standards and measures under the Nuclear Security Plan. His country had acceded to the most important instruments designed to strengthen non-proliferation, nuclear verification and export controls and had fulfilled its reporting commitments. It encouraged Member States that had not yet done so to ratify those instruments in the near future and called for consistent efforts to secure negotiated peaceful solutions to urgent problems.

198. In its endeavour to join the EU, his country had implemented a wide range of measures to strengthen its nuclear regulatory framework and infrastructure in the previous decade. To prevent the misuse of nuclear and radioactive material and related knowledge and technologies, his country had regularly improved its capabilities to combat trafficking and had strengthened measures for the physical protection of nuclear and radioactive material.

199. The country's independent Radiation Safety Directorate had, with the Agency's assistance, made significant progress in building national capacities for effective radiation protection and nuclear safety and had trained many young experts. It had adopted rules that were aligned with EU law, thus further harmonizing national legislation on nuclear safety and radiation protection, and it had acceded to the European Community Urgent Radiological Information Exchange under an agreement between Euratom and non-EU Member States.

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

201. The country appreciated the Agency's assistance in the implementation of its national TC programme. The priority nuclear sectors had been structured so that the Agency's TC activities could contribute to development priorities. National development priorities and activities relevant to the Agency's TCP had been revised to reflect the country's increased efforts to meet the requirements for EU membership and international development assistance, including the MDGs. The projects selected for the 2014–2015 project cycle had been consistent with the 2013–2017 CPF, and the country had participated extensively in regional and interregional TC projects, thus complementing national efforts to develop nuclear institutions, human resources, human health, radiation protection and nuclear applications. The country had contributed actively to the TCP by hosting workshops, scientific visits and fellowships and by providing expertise in nuclear security, human health, food safety and veterinary medicine to other Member States.

202. The country expected a national project on preparatory activities for making a decision on entering into a new nuclear energy programme to be approved under the 2016–2017 cycle by the Board of Governors in November 2015. It had formulated a national energy development strategy for 2008–2020, with a vision up to 2030, which comprised the option of meeting electricity demand in 2030 and beyond through a combination of nuclear power and other energy sources. It required financial and technical assistance in order to implement all steps properly, assess the work plan and results and ensure that the programme complied with international and Agency guidelines and requirements in all necessary areas.

203. A national TC project involving substantial governmental cost-sharing was being implemented to establish a PET centre, and new diagnostic capabilities would be introduced in the medium term to develop therapeutic procedures in nuclear medicine. Preliminary Agency approval had been granted under the 2016–2017 cycle for a national project on the introduction of SPECT/CT hybrid imaging at the Institute of Pathophysiology and Nuclear Medicine in Skopje, thus affording an opportunity to develop nuclear medicine in university clinical settings, enhance its sustainability and improve diagnostic imaging in the public health care system. The radiotherapy practice at the Skopje University Clinic of Radiotherapy and Oncology had been upgraded through TC support and had been recommended as a Centre of Competence following an Agency QUATRO mission. Plans had been made to build cancer treatment capacity at the clinic and in the region, with the clinic as the main training provider. The goals set for an ongoing project on strengthening 3-D conformal and intensity modulated radiotherapy would be strengthened under the third national project entitled

‘Strengthening Brachytherapy and Advanced External Beam Therapy Techniques at the University Clinic of Radiotherapy and Radiation Oncology’.

204. His country fully endorsed the Annual Report for 2014 and the Programme and Budget for 2016–2017. It would continue to be an active partner of the Agency in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for the benefit of all States.

205. Mr INCARNATO (Italy) said that the verification and monitoring system established under the JCPOA should provide the international community with the necessary assurances as to the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran’s nuclear programme and would contribute to regional and international peace and security.

206. Welcoming those developments and acknowledging the great importance of the Agency’s monitoring and verification role, Italy considered that it was crucial that adequate resources be provided to the Agency so that it could perform its task and assured the Agency of its support in that endeavour.

207. Deeply regretting that it was impossible for the Agency to implement safeguards measures and verification activities in the DPRK, Italy voiced grave concern at reports of continuing renovation and construction at the Yongbyon nuclear facility and other sites and at official statements confirming the DPRK’s intention to bolster its nuclear deterrent capabilities. Italy condemned the DPRK’s nuclear and ballistic missile activities in violation of many UNSC resolutions and called on the DPRK to comply fully with its obligations.

208. Italy voiced regret at Syria’s failure to cooperate with the Agency and urged Syria to cooperate fully on all outstanding issues.

209. Italy called on all States that had not yet concluded an AP with the Agency to do so. It supported the State-level concept which, if universally implemented, would strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of the Agency’s safeguards system.

210. Convinced of the benefits of multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle, Italy welcomed the Host State Agreement between the Agency and Kazakhstan on the establishment of the IAEA LEU bank.

211. Committed to promoting universal accession to nuclear, biological and chemical non-proliferation and disarmament agreements, Italy deplored the use of chlorine as a chemical weapon in Syria and the alleged use of chemical weapons in the region, which had thrown into relief the genuine threat posed by WMDs and the urgent need to rid the Middle East of all WMDs and their delivery systems. It regretted the divergence of views that had prevented the Agency from applying comprehensive safeguards to all nuclear activities in the region and had foiled efforts to convene a conference on the establishment of a zone free of WMDs in the Middle East. Stressing that the establishment of such a zone was primarily the responsibility of the States in that region, Italy undertook to continue to support efforts to build confidence and strengthen inclusiveness.

212. Noting that the NSS process had afforded a political forum for world dialogue on nuclear security, in particular the threat of nuclear terrorism, Italy hoped that the international nuclear security environment would be enhanced and that cooperation among partners would increase as a result of the process. It looked forward to an expanded GICNT, to a higher profile G8 Global Partnership and to the forthcoming International Conference on Nuclear Security, which would provide an opportunity to review efforts to date and to make recommendations for the future.

213. Considering that the 2005 amendment to the CPPNM was a critical step forward in international cooperation on nuclear security, Italy urged Member States to expedite ratification in order to facilitate the early entry into force of the amendment.

214. It reported that the fifth annual training course of the International School on Nuclear Security, conducted jointly by the Agency and the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), had been highly valued by developing and emerging countries for providing expertise for an international legal framework for nuclear security and for raising awareness of trafficking in nuclear and radioactive material. It had worked closely with the Agency and the ICTP to conduct the first pilot course of the School of Radiation Emergency Management at the ICTP. It had held in 2015 an event entitled 'Nuclear Security Summit 2016 and Beyond: The Role of Training and Support Centres, and Centres of Excellence' and the Amaldi Conference on 'International Cooperation for Enhancing Nuclear Safety, Security, Safeguards and Non-proliferation'.

215. Calling for the lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident to be heeded, Italy stressed the great importance that it attached to the worldwide implementation and continuous improvement of the highest nuclear safety standards. In 2014, it had supported the adoption of an EU Directive to strengthen the safety framework for nuclear installations and it had endorsed the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety as a milestone in the strengthening of nuclear safety. It would continue to allocate funds for nuclear safety and security under its national NPP decommissioning and radioactive waste management programmes. Excess HEU and separated plutonium were being removed from Italy in cooperation with the United States of America.

216. Italian institutions which had collaborated successfully with the Agency during the year comprised the Italian National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and the Environment (ENEA) and its affiliated centres, which had conducted expert training courses and experimental activities, the Elettra facility, which was a leader in accelerator physics, synchrotron light and free-electron lasers, and the Gran Sasso and Legnaro National Laboratories, which had participated in the Agency CRP on accelerator-based alternatives to non-HEU production and in the Environmental Radioactivity Monitoring for Earth Sciences project at the National Institute of Nuclear Physics.

217. Italy highlighted the peaceful uses of nuclear technology by FALCON, the international consortium that aimed to foster the construction of the Advanced Lead Fast Reactor European Demonstrator (ALFRED) and to create the first open-access technology park for international research and collaboration. FALCON had been extended to the Czech Republic and another ten partners. TAPIRO, the Italian fast neutron source research reactor, had featured prominently in research, in particular in studies on basic research fields such as neutron irradiation damage analysis to support the aerospace industry, nuclear fusion and the development of detectors for use in particle physics. Through ENEA's National Institute of Ionizing Radiation Metrology, Italy had supported international efforts to develop national and international standards for accurate and reliable ionizing radiation and radioactivity measurements. The synchrotron accelerator at the National Centre for Oncological Hadron Therapy in Pavia had been used to produce proton and carbon ion beams for the precise and specific treatment of tumours resistant to conventional radiotherapy or requiring a selective release of energy.

218. Mr de ALBA (Mexico) acknowledged the Agency's prominent role in non-proliferation and in the promotion of nuclear energy for peaceful and safe uses and highlighted individual State responsibility for the safe use of nuclear technology. Accordingly, Mexico lauded the agreement between the Government of Iran and the E3+3 on compliance with the JCPOA on Iran's nuclear programme as a highly significant contribution to regional stability and world security and called on the Agency to preserve its standing as the benchmark authority for JCPOA implementation.

219. Mexico acknowledged the Agency's efforts to compile the Fukushima nuclear accident report and the related technical volumes, which constituted a prime reference for experience gained and lessons learned on nuclear accident prevention and response. Mexico called on the Agency, as the international repository of S&T expertise and human capital in terms of nuclear technology and nuclear facility inspections, to play a more active role in supporting nuclear disarmament and voiced dissatisfaction at the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference to adopt a final document. Nevertheless, it was gratified by the endorsement of the humanitarian pledge proposed by Austria.

220. Mexico had honoured its disarmament and non-proliferation obligations and, accordingly, the findings of all CSA- and AP-required safeguards inspections had been satisfactory. Mexico was a CNS State Party and had supported the agreement reached at the Vienna Diplomatic Conference in February 2015. It had ratified the amendment to the CPPNM and urged States to ratify it if they had not yet done so.

221. Mexico was developing nuclear technology applications in fields such as gamma irradiation for medical products and for agricultural pest control. As a TC donor and beneficiary, it was committed to collaborating regionally on the effective and safe use of nuclear S&T in order to overcome shared development challenges in close cooperation with the relevant Agency Departments. It would implement national energy, agricultural, water resources and environmental protection projects and would participate in six regional projects under the 2016–2017 cycle. It currently held the office of Vice-President of ARCAL.

222. As a TC donor, Mexico had provided the Agency with facilities, services and experts in various disciplines and venues for regional or interregional events. Its researchers had provided project-related advisory services to other States and the country had received fellowship holders from various world regions, the key players being the National Nuclear Research Institute, active in nuclear development and cooperation, and the National Commission on Nuclear Safety and Safeguards.

223. Mexico acknowledged the importance of strengthening the nuclear sector and its regulatory bodies by promoting institutions that prescribed and applied the highest safety and security standards in handling radioactive and nuclear material, while taking vital aspects of incident and emergency prevention, response and mitigation into account.

224. Mexico paid special attention to surveillance of trafficking in nuclear or radioactive material, radiological and nuclear emergencies, and the specialized research programmes required. Its Nuclear Research Institute had opened bioassay and neutron activation analysis laboratories in August 2015. Mexico had cooperated closely with its trade partners in order to enhance the security and control of radioactive sources under the Agency's Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, and the supplementary Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources. It highlighted the bilateral import and export control agreements signed with Canada and the USA.

225. Ms ZEINABOU (the Niger) said that, difficulties notwithstanding, all must believe in the feasibility of building the necessary consensus to make the 'Atoms for Peace' principle a reality worldwide and to direct greater effort towards research for the benefit of all.

226. The Niger welcomed the agreement signed between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the P5+1, as a sign of progress towards the peaceful resolution of long-standing issues.

227. The Niger called on all States to be committed to achieving the post-2015 development objectives, since they would bring sustainable solutions to the challenges faced by humanity in general and Africa in particular.

228. The Niger's new CPF had been designed to develop fruitful cooperation and make the most of the opportunities provided for the peaceful use of nuclear technology. It commended the Agency for

the provision of cooperation, which had been conducive to social and economic development, and stressed the importance of continued TC support and of cooperation under AFRA, which the Niger supported unwaveringly. The national priorities set in the forthcoming CPF reflected the Niger's commitment to using the applications of nuclear energy peacefully, safely, sustainably and transparently. Despite its huge mineral deposits and great mining potential, its economic situation remained parlous; it faced electricity supply difficulties owing to its limited generation capacity, which it had sought to remedy by instituting a renaissance programme that provided for the development of a civilian nuclear power programme subregionally and by ensuring that its institutional, legislative and regulatory framework met nuclear power programme requirements. The establishment of an independent nuclear safety authority was in its final stages and the related draft law had been submitted to Parliament for approval.

229. The first meeting of the West African Integrated Nuclear Power Group, attended by experts and decision-makers from other West African States, had laid the foundations of subregional cooperation for the implementation of a joint nuclear power programme, and a road map and a memorandum of understanding had been drawn up. The Niger provided the group's interim secretariat pending the establishment of a definitive body. The group was open to all ECOWAS Members. The Niger called on the Agency to continue to support and promote that regional initiative and thus ensure its success.

230. The Niger considered that the introduction of nuclear S&T would contribute significantly to all areas of its development; it set great store by the Agency's TC, through which effective social and economic solutions had been found for the country.

231. The Niger's greatest public health challenges comprised combating malaria, cardiovascular diseases, cross-border animal and human diseases, zoonotic diseases and infectious diseases, but cancer was the greatest challenge of all. The establishment of the National Cancer Centre, for which the Agency had provided a gamma camera, thus rendering the Nuclear Medicine Department operational, was of prime importance. Consideration was being given to the establishment of another cancer centre to serve the other half of the country.

232. The Nigeriens Nourish Nigeriens initiative had been launched to improve agricultural output, reduce dependence on rainfed farming and preserve food by means of ionizing radiation techniques, thus enhancing food security.

233. The combined use of nuclear technology and conventional methods to assess water resources had been a major development in water resource management. Owing to the adaptability and reliability of nuclear technology for hydrological surveys in arid and semi-arid areas, the Niger had improved its knowledge of its national water resources significantly, at a lower cost. It was statutorily required to take environmental and social considerations into account whenever implementing development activities, programmes and projects.

234. The Niger was mindful of potential terrorist threats and called for a comprehensive action plan covering prevention, detection and suitable intervention measures. Furthermore, under the Agency's safeguards system, a reliable solution, if properly resourced, would consist in erecting insurmountable barriers to prevent trafficking in nuclear material, thus thwarting nuclear terrorism.

235. The Niger was located in the Sahel, currently characterized by mounting insecurity, political crises and uncontrolled movement of people, weapons and licit and illicit goods; aware of the concern felt by governments and the international community, the Niger had taken step to enhance overall security in the Sahel.

236. Committed to nuclear disarmament, the Niger had hosted a seismic station under CTBT auspices and would shortly host a radionuclide and noble gas station, thus contributing to the world

surveillance network. The Niger urged all States to ratify the 20-year-old CTBT in furtherance of progress towards nuclear disarmament and effective action to combat nuclear proliferation.

237. Under the EU's CBRN Centres of Excellence Initiative, the Niger had conducted an assessment of its national needs. Its Parliament had sought to protect the safety of present and future generations. The Niger endorsed the objectives of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament and supported all unilateral, bilateral and multilateral initiatives to those ends, while seeking the support of all Member States to achieve its development objectives.

238. Mr VU (Viet Nam) commended the Agency for its efforts and achievements in 2015, in particular its contribution to the socioeconomic development of Member States and thus to the achievement of the MDGs through the application of nuclear technology to power generation, health care, agriculture, environment and water resource management.

239. Noting that the Fukushima Daiichi accident report reflected extensive collaborative efforts by the Agency and Member States, he considered that the lessons learned would contribute significantly to future nuclear safety worldwide, in particular in embarking countries.

240. He welcomed the signing of the JCPOA and of the road map, which he hailed as historic milestones that had proven that only dialogue and diplomacy could provide a successful solution that would contribute to regional and worldwide peace and stability.

241. As international legal instruments played a key role in bolstering the international nuclear security regime, he called on all parties that had not yet ratified the amendment to the CPPNM to do so in order to bring the amendment into force.

242. Viet Nam, which was implementing its national Strategy for Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy up to 2020, acknowledged the substantial support provided to Viet Nam in nuclear and in non-nuclear fields through TC projects under its 2010–2015 CPF, through which the country had developed the legal, safety, security and human resource aspects of its nuclear infrastructure and had promoted nuclear technology applications in many areas, such as health care, agriculture, industry and the environment. It had worked hard with the Agency to develop its 2016–2020 CPF, in which TC priorities consistent with the country's national development goals for the coming five years had been identified.

243. Viet Nam had achieved outstanding results in applying nuclear technology to health care and agriculture. Four cyclotrons and eight PET centres had been established in Hanoi, Da Nang and Ho Chi Min City. It had hosted an impACT in order to assess the needs of its cancer control system. It was grateful for the assistance provided through OFID and PACT during the national breast cancer and cervical screening project, for which OFID had granted US \$450 000.

244. Gratified by the excellent results achieved in agriculture under an Agency-supported project to control fruit fly populations by means of SIT-inclusive integrated management in Binh Thuan Province, where dragon fruit was produced, Viet Nam hoped to expand such cooperation with the Agency. Irradiation of food and fruits had been improved, with emphasis on maximum food safety for export. Nuclear techniques had been widely applied to research on soil erosion, soil management and plants.

245. Approval of siting and feasibility studies for two NPP projects in Ninh Thuan Province was pending. To ensure NPP safety, security and efficiency, Viet Nam had strengthened its nuclear infrastructure under its integrated nuclear power infrastructure development work plan, with guidance from the Agency, Agency review missions and in accordance with its INSSP, and had heeded the lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident in implementing its own NPP projects.

246. As Viet Nam's national NPP education, training and human resource development programme had both domestic and overseas components, some 350 students had been sent to the Russian Federation and 100 students would be sent to Japan in 2016–2020. The Ministry of Science and Technology had been tasked with drawing up a training and re-training master plan for State management personnel, R&D activities and the provision of technical support for nuclear power development until 2020. Many Agency-supported seminars and workshops on project management, infrastructure projects and nuclear power grids had been held.

247. A pre-feasibility study for the development of the Centre for Nuclear Energy Science and Technology, including a multi-purpose 15 MW research reactor, had been submitted to the Prime Minister for approval in 2015 in order to promote nuclear power and non-power applications and train staff for future work in the nuclear sector.

248. Viet Nam had acceded to nearly all conventions and treaties on nuclear safety, nuclear security and the non-proliferation regime, and its accession to ICSANT was under consideration, while CSC and the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage were under scrutiny. It had striven to strengthen the legal framework and build the capacity of national regulatory bodies. The 2008 Law on Atomic Energy was being revised for consistency with current requirements, in particular in the light of the Fukushima Daiichi accident, and would be submitted to the National Assembly for approval in 2016.

249. Viet Nam had fulfilled its obligations and commitments to the Agency and had paid its financial contributions in full and on time. Its in-kind contribution in 2015, in the form of IAEA/RCA workshops and training courses, fellowships and scientific visits with other Member States, was estimated at US \$200 000. It fully supported action taken by the Agency to promote nuclear S&T in order to achieve world peace, stability, cooperation and development.

250. Mr ŽUGIĆ (Serbia) said that his country was committed to all of the Agency's fundamental principles and goals in furtherance of the safe and secure use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, in accordance with international instruments and practices. Serbia considered that nuclear energy must be used for peaceful purposes only and it would therefore continue to support the Agency's efforts to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of verification measures and to develop integrated safeguards, in accordance with the NPT.

251. Serbia had taken action to ratify an AP to the NPT and to raise nuclear safety awareness. It had accordingly conducted three Agency-supported national seminars in Belgrade in 2015, which had been attended by representatives of many government agencies. Furthermore, to meet IAEA nuclear security requirements, it was strengthening its legislative and regulatory framework and had therefore taken action to ratify the CNS, the Joint Convention and the amendment to the CPPNM expeditiously.

252. As national regulations on nuclear security provided a legal basis for the development of design basis threat and physical protection systems and for drawing up long-term plans and goals, Serbia planned to adopt an INSSP, strengthen the implementation of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and enhance compliance with the Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources.

253. Serbia's capacity building and infrastructure development activities on radiation protection and nuclear safety had been acknowledged by the Agency and supported by national and international projects, which had provided relevant expertise, advice and technical assistance.

254. Although the use of nuclear energy was controlled and covered by national legal instruments, Serbia was strongly committed to strengthening its national legal and regulatory framework in that area so that it would be more comprehensive and fully consistent with international safety standards

and practices and with the EU's *acquis communautaire*. It therefore endorsed the Secretariat's efforts to bolster international safety standards, recommendations and relevant international legal and political texts and was fully aware of technical assistance as an essential prerequisite for any progress.

255. Serbia fully endorsed the Agency's Annual Report for 2014 and Programme and Budget for 2016–2017; it would continue to support the Agency's work wholeheartedly and would pursue its long-standing efforts to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

256. Mr MORRIS (Ecuador) said that peaceful applications of nuclear energy were of great importance to Ecuador, since they had contributed to the development of crucial sectors such as health, agriculture and industry.

257. Ecuador considered that nuclear technology would be crucial to the successful implementation of the post-2015 development agenda and to action on climate change. As the Agency must be capable of addressing those challenges, nuclear S&T activities and applications must be bolstered and the TCP must be supported. Ecuador highlighted the TCP's vital role in promoting nuclear energy for peaceful uses and welcomed the measures taken to enhance the TCP's effectiveness in meeting Member States' needs and priorities, noting that the TCP for Latin America and the Caribbean had scored the highest regional implementation rate in 2014, which betokened the importance of TCP activities to the region and States' eagerness to implement them jointly with the Agency. ARCAL had been crucial to the promotion of cooperation with the Agency and projects implemented under the Regional Strategic Profile for 2016–2017 would have a major impact on the lives of the people in the region.

258. Ecuador was reforming its legal and institutional framework by drafting an Atomic Energy Act that would ensure consistency with the Agency's main areas of activity and the newly adopted international safety standards. The draft, amended with the Agency's assistance, would be discussed during an Agency mission in November 2015 before submission to the National Assembly. A law on the handling and transport of nuclear and other radioactive material and a national emergency response plan for radiological accidents were being drawn up. Technical standards applicable to the regulatory authority's support services, such as radioactive waste management, personal dosimetry, calibration of detectors, radioactive environment monitoring and other nuclear applications were being reviewed. Quality and re-engineering systems were being introduced at the regulatory authority in order to improve inspections through staff training courses and a national service automation programme in line with government policies. The Government had prioritized measures to enhance the regulatory authority's supporting laboratories and a project to build modern nuclear applications laboratories was being promoted. Ecuador relied on the Agency's support for the procurement of appropriate technology and training.

259. Ecuador planned to give higher priority to cooperation in agriculture and food safety and to support the integration of technology that could improve agricultural productivity, generate sensitive products and develop irradiation techniques to increase and facilitate exports of Ecuadorian produce to more distant markets.

260. The Constitution of Ecuador advocated peace and universal disarmament and condemned the use of WMDs. Pursuant to the ICJ's advisory opinion, Ecuador had reaffirmed that the threat or use of nuclear weapons constituted a crime against humanity and a threat to collective security. That conviction had been reflected in Ecuador's active participation in the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the establishment of the first densely populated NWFZ. Ecuador took pride in the formal proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace at the Second CELAC Summit and accordingly asserted that elimination and prohibition were the only effective guarantees against the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons. It supported full implementation of the three pillars of the NPT and was concerned that, while action had been taken to achieve the goal of non-proliferation and to support the

inalienable right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, no progress had been achieved in nuclear disarmament.

261. Ecuador regretted that a small group of States had prevented the 2015 NPT Review Conference from reaching agreement on the final document and had thus generated uncertainty over the general disarmament agenda and the situation in the Middle East. Effective implementation of the Agency's safeguards in the Middle East would build confidence among States in the region and was a necessary step towards the establishment of an NWFZ. Ecuador urged the Agency to further world disarmament and thus discharge its statutory mandate of acting in conformity with policies of the United Nations.

262. As CELAC Member States had been very concerned about the disastrous humanitarian consequences and the global impact of any accidental or deliberate detonation of a nuclear device and had called for the issue to be raised in all discussions on nuclear matters, Ecuador had welcomed the conferences convened on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons in Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna and had strongly supported the Vienna and Nayarit calls for diplomatic negotiations on a legally binding international instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons.

263. Fresh negotiations on a declaration on Article XIV of the CTBT had heightened non-nuclear-weapon States' concern about the debate on non-proliferation and disarmament, as certain delegations had not been committed to the Treaty's core objective of halting the modernization and development of new nuclear weapons and as nuclear weapons were still integral to nuclear-weapon States' strategic doctrines and security policies. Promotion of the entry into force of the CTBT, opened for signature some 20 years previously, should begin with action to ensure that it was perceived as a credible and important tool.

264. Ecuador had warmly welcomed the agreement between the E3/EU+3 and Iran on the JCPOA which, when fully implemented, would enable Iran to develop an exclusively peaceful nuclear programme. As a strong advocate of nuclear energy for peaceful uses, Ecuador had consistently recognized the right of all NPT States to develop such activities. The agreement constituted a historic milestone because a lengthy controversy had been settled by negotiation, and dialogue had prevailed over unilateralism, thus confirming the effectiveness of diplomacy as a means of achieving lasting peace. Ecuador welcomed the road map, under which all past and present outstanding issues regarding Iran's nuclear programme would be resolved by the end of 2015. Ecuador congratulated Iran on its persistent stand despite the myriad challenges faced. Full implementation of all of the agreements would have a major impact on people's lives, demonstrating the benefits to be gained from multilateralism.

265. Ecuador reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring, in cooperation with the Agency and the international community, that nuclear energy was increasingly safe, effective and beneficial for humankind.

266. Mr KOSTOV (Bulgaria) said that his country was committed to the non-proliferation of WMDs and to the strengthening of world security and stability. Bulgaria called for the universalization of the NPT and of the AP and believed that the Agency's safeguards activities were crucial to the implementation of the NPT.

267. Fully supporting the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East, Bulgaria urged all States in that region to redouble their efforts to convene an inclusive conference on the subject. Regretting the decision of the League of Arab States to place an item on Israeli nuclear capabilities on the agenda of the IAEA General Conference, Bulgaria asserted that trust and cooperation were the only means of achieving the desired consensus and progress towards implementing the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East.

268. Bulgaria welcomed the JCPOA, agreed by the E3/EU+3 and Iran, which had demonstrated that active diplomacy and political determination always brought positive results, even on long-deadlocked issues. It hoped that timely implementation of all JCPOA provisions would bolster peace and security, in particular in the Middle East, and that the JCPOA would have positive economic implications for Iran and its trade partners worldwide. While calling on Iran to ratify the AP to its safeguards agreement, Bulgaria urged all States to ratify the AP if they had not yet done so.

269. Voicing serious concern at the DPRK's nuclear weapon and missile programmes and decision to cease cooperation with the Agency, Bulgaria called on the DPRK to return to full compliance with all of its NPT and Agency safeguards obligations, provide the Agency with access to individuals, documentation, equipment and facilities, and abandon all nuclear and ballistic missile activities, including its uranium enrichment programme, completely, verifiably and irreversibly.

270. Bulgaria urged Syria to cooperate with the Agency in clarifying matters relating to Dair Alzour and other sites and to bring an AP into force as soon as possible.

271. Noting that the Annual Report for 2014 reflected the full scope of IAEA activities for the period, Bulgaria commended the Agency for its sustained support for human resource development, training, stakeholder involvement and management in new IAEA Member States and States with established nuclear power programmes.

272. Bulgaria supported the approach taken in revising the Agency's Safety Requirements for NPP safety and spent fuel storage to incorporate the lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident and urged the Secretariat to maintain the momentum in order to complete that crucial task. Regarding the Fukushima Daiichi accident report as a unique reference for enhancing the robustness and resilience of NPP safety mechanisms, it said that the report must be given the importance that it deserved.

273. Materials were being compiled and assessed so that action could be taken on the long-term operation of Units 5 and 6 at Kozloduy NPP. Bulgaria hoped to receive the Agency's invaluable assistance in that endeavour and would thus host a SALTO mission to the Kozloduy NPP in June 2016. An IRRS follow-up mission would, moreover, visit the Bulgarian Nuclear Regulatory Agency in April 2016.

274. Convinced of the importance of promoting the development and application of nuclear science, Bulgaria had participated actively in the work of relevant international scientific organizations, including CERN and the Russian Federation's Joint Institute for Nuclear Research. Bulgaria agreed that the Agency should continue to support activities designed to strengthen physical protection measures in Member States. Its University of National and World Economy had, during the visit by the Director-General to Bulgaria in 2015, signed a practical agreement with the Agency, under which the University would launch a Master's degree programme on nuclear security in October 2016.

275. In accordance with its CPF, Bulgaria had participated actively in the current TCP cycle and had implemented nuclear safety, nuclear energy, agricultural and medical projects which, on completion, would empower beneficiary organizations in Bulgaria to meet challenges and resolve relevant issues promptly.

276. Bulgaria had participated actively in TC projects in Europe, and many Bulgarian specialists and scientists had attended Agency-organized events. The Nuclear Regulatory Agency had hosted two regional meetings during the cycle — a regional workshop on public information and involvement in regulatory activities, attended by more than 20 experts in November 2014, and a meeting at which the TCP for Europe under the 2016–2017 cycle had been adopted.

277. Mr ALBESBAS (Libya) noted that the number of reactors in operation and under construction worldwide demonstrated States' growing interest in exercising their inalienable right, under Article IV of the NPT, to possess and use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. That right had been reaffirmed in the final document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, which had stressed the importance of respecting non-nuclear States' decisions, policies and plans to acquire nuclear energy for peaceful development purposes and their right to implement them without undue constraints and through international cooperation.

278. Libya attached great importance to TC projects, particularly in the areas of health, agriculture, food, water resources, radioisotopes and radiation technology. It was working diligently to increase cooperation with the Agency in building its national capacities in various fields, despite myriad security-related and economic challenges that had adversely affected and had halted the implementation of national projects.

279. Libya was eager to build its nuclear safety and security capacities and had sought to provide the necessary physical protection for nuclear installations and for the use, storage and transport of material in the interior and at border crossings, to guard against radiological or nuclear accidents, smuggling and sabotage, and to protect workers, the general public, the environment and property.

280. The final draft of an INSSP and an action plan on the security of radioactive sources in medical centres in Libya had been completed at a technical meeting held at the Agency in August 2015. The discussions had covered urgent requirements for nuclear cancer treatment technology, since the lack of radiation therapeutic equipment had delayed the treatment of patients in the country's hospitals. Libya had endeavoured to be self-reliant in addressing the challenge and preventing its exacerbation, but it needed to receive continued cancer treatment support from the Agency.

281. Despite the exceptional circumstances prevailing in the country, Libya had submitted its CPF for the 2016–2017 cycle for projects on electricity generation, human health, agriculture and improvement of the national regulatory infrastructure. Libya hoped that the new CPF projects would be Agency funded and supported.

282. Libya considered that successful TCP implementation hinged on TCF resources that were sufficient, assured, predictable and commensurate with the resources allocated for other Agency activities. While Member States were naturally concerned about the scale of contributions to the TCF and anxious to ensure that the target was achieved, Libya cautioned against the application of a system that might be deemed to be equivalent to sanctions that imposed an unendurable burden on Member States, especially those experiencing exceptional circumstances beyond their control and threats to the safety of nuclear and radioactive applications in medicine, industry, research, and protection of human life, property and the environment. It called on the Agency to hold an in-depth discussion with Member States on ways and means of finding a satisfactory solution to the issue of TCF deficits.

283. Stressing that diplomacy and dialogue were the sole means of achieving a long-term solution to the Iranian nuclear issue, Libya welcomed the JCPOA agreed between Iran and the P5+1 and called on Iran and the Agency to cooperate in order to resolve all outstanding issues in the hope that the agreement would build confidence and create conditions conducive to regional and world security.

284. Libya called on the international community to exert its political will to support the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East, as agreed at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Achievement of that goal would be crucial to bringing peace and stability to that region. Considering that insufficient progress had been made towards nuclear disarmament and consolidation of the safeguards regime, Libya called for all States to be required to accede to the NPT in the interests of international peace and stability, stressing that international and regional efforts to establish an NWFZ

in the Middle East had been thwarted by Israel's resistance to all measures and resolutions aimed at achieving that objective, the lack of consensus on a final document at the 2015 Review Conference being yet another setback to that goal.

285. Mr NAJIB (Iraq) said that his Government was deeply concerned about events in the Middle East, for Iraq had been struck by the worst terrorist attack in its recent history, which had targeted people, destroyed the infrastructure, sought to rend the social fabric asunder and destroyed mosques, churches, other places of worship and historical sites. If terrorist groups were to gain control of facilities containing hazardous material, in particular radioactive material, international cooperation would be required to prevent that material from being used for terrorist acts. Iraqi authorities would monitor incoming data closely, assess probable threats objectively and formulate appropriate plans to counter such threats. The Iraqi Government had recovered and secured all radioactive sources from liberated areas, in accordance with Agency standards.

286. Iraq had recently ratified the CPPNM and ICSANT and had implemented convention-specific measures, such as the establishment of treaty-monitoring committees. Procedures for Iraq's accession to the amendment to the CPPNM were near completion, an integrated nuclear safety plan under the CPPNM had been submitted, and institutional capacity had been built to protect nuclear facilities and radioactive material and ensure the security of nuclear information and forensic studies. Pursuant to ICSANT, it had begun to draw up plans to build capacity for detection and response and nuclear and radiological forensic analysis. The Council of Ministers had ratified a joint plan of action with the USA to combat the smuggling of nuclear and radiological material. Coordination meetings had been held to set priorities and proceed to implementation.

287. Iraq had striven to ensure the safe disposal of radiological waste generated by the destruction of nuclear facilities. It had issued national policy guidelines on radiological waste management and had formed a national policy-drafting committee for the management, handling and safe disposal of radiological waste. It had received EU support after signing an agreement and launching a project for the design of permanent landfill storage facilities for radioactive sources and waste in Iraq, in accordance with Agency standards.

288. Iraq supported the total elimination of nuclear weapons as the only means of ensuring that such weapons could not be used by State or non-State actors, thus averting the catastrophic consequences of such use for both humankind and the environment. It was grateful to the Governments of Norway, Mexico and Austria for holding conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, which had shed light on the devastation that could be wrought by nuclear weapons and on the threat to the survival of the human race. Iraq had endorsed the humanitarian pledge, requiring NPT States Parties to take effective measures to prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons.

289. Iraq asserted States' legitimate right to acquire nuclear technology for peaceful purposes in all areas of development, economic growth and energy diversification. As the Agency's TC programme was a primary driver for the achievement of such goals, Iraq agreed that TCF resources must be predictable, assured and sufficient and hoped that an increase in the Regular Budget would be correspondingly reflected in the TCF budget, thus closing the gap between the two. Iraq had striven to draw on the Agency's TCP to rectify shortcomings and build capacity to use nuclear applications for development, while providing support for ARASIA projects and ongoing regional and interregional cooperation projects. Iraq looked forward to further technical cooperation and hoped that Iraqi experts would be appointed to senior posts in TC projects.

290. In furtherance of the ban on nuclear weapons, Iraq called on all States that had not yet done so to conclude a safeguards agreement with the Agency and on all NPT States Parties to acknowledge

their NPT and safeguards obligations and work closely with the Agency to resolve potential problems through dialogue and diplomacy.

291. The agreement between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the P5+1 betokened the triumph of dialogue and diplomacy as a means of solving problems that threatened regional and international security. Iraq hoped that all Parties would fulfil their obligations under the agreed action plan, without triggering tensions, thus fostering peace and security, particularly in the Middle East. The road map agreed by the Agency and Iran was similarly commendable. Iraq highlighted the Agency's crucial and independent role in verifying Iran's safeguards agreement and in giving assurances as to the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme.

292. Iraq pointed out that all States in the Middle East abided by the NPT and applied a CSA, bar Israel, which had declined to sign the Treaty and to place its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards, thus thwarting efforts to establish an NWFZ in the Middle East.

293. Iraq reasserted its commitment to the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, under which the NPT would remain in force until its goals and objectives had been achieved. It called for the total elimination from the Middle East of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in order to bring peace and security to the region and boost the development and prosperity of the peoples there, stressing that it would not falter in its efforts to that end.

294. Mr ERFANI (Afghanistan) said that the General Conference provided a fresh opportunity each year for Member States to learn from past developments, evaluate opportunities and address evolving and enduring challenges to international peace and nuclear safety and security, on which international security depended generally.

295. Since becoming a Member State in 1957, Afghanistan had benefited considerably from the Agency's cooperation and from ongoing efforts to develop nuclear applications in the country, which had emerged from a period of transition and had embarked on its Transformation Decade (2015–2024), designed to create a self-reliant economy. Nuclear S&T could therefore play a key role in the achievement of the goals of its national priority programmes in the coming years. Under its 2012–2016 CPF, it had cooperated with the Agency in key policy areas, namely its legislative and regulatory framework, its nuclear analytical capability, human health, agriculture, food, water resources management, energy planning and human capacity development, which were vital to achieving the goals set out in its development agenda and priority programmes throughout the Transformation Decade.

296. Afghanistan had ratified the national Nuclear Act, drafted with the Agency's support, and was finalizing draft regulations on radiation safety in waste management and on the transport of radioactive material.

297. Stressing that it was essential that TCF resources be sufficient, assured and predictable owing to the importance of TC, Afghanistan noted that it had implemented TC projects to establish a radiation oncology centre, a radiology diagnostic centre and Kabul-based radiotherapy and radiology services, and hoped to expand the scope of such cooperation under future projects. It called on States with advanced nuclear and radiological standards to promote knowledge transfer and provide additional capacity-building programmes in order to develop inter-State relations based on strong cooperation, rather than mere assistance.

298. Afghanistan was committed to developing the institutional and regulatory framework required for the peaceful application of nuclear technology, with emphasis on training and capacity building supported by Agency fellowships and training courses. As the country still lacked funds, it required

further cooperation and support from the Agency and from the international community and hoped that donor countries could contribute sufficient funds to support those important programmes.

299. Commending the Agency for assisting developing countries in gaining access to nuclear S&T, Afghanistan called for priority to be given to nuclear S&T in the post-2015 development agenda since access to energy was crucial to poverty reduction and to improving health and livelihoods. The Agency's activities and the new development goals were clearly interrelated, in particular in the areas of human health, water management, food security, nutrition, environmental protection and energy. S&T played an unquestionably important role in Afghanistan's development, welfare and progress.

300. Afghanistan congratulated the Islamic Republic of Iran and the P5+1 on the historic outcome embodied in the JCPOA which would enhance security and stability in the region and beyond. It urged all parties to make every effort to implement the JCPOA, inasmuch as the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear energy and S&T would contribute to world peace, security and development.

301. Voicing support for the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East and the constructive consultations held to that end, Afghanistan welcomed the measures taken to build confidence and security in the region and to eliminate WMDs.

302. As a major victim of international terrorism, Afghanistan strongly supported all efforts to boost nuclear security worldwide and, acknowledging constant changes to the world security framework, urged Member States to take action to enable the Agency to fulfil its mandate in order to secure a brighter future for future generations.

303. Mr BUZDUGAN (Republic of Moldova) said that his country was gratified that the importance of science, technology and innovation in all of the Agency's key activities had been recognized and would be included in the SDGs for future development. The conclusions of recent scientific fora had confirmed the benefits to be derived therefrom.

304. Moldova, a country without any nuclear installations, had begun to build its nuclear safety and security and radiation protection infrastructure in the late 20th century. As a Member of the Agency since 1997, it had received support for the establishment and maintenance of nuclear safety and security and radiation protection systems that met internationally recognized criteria. Moldova held in high regard the Agency's TCP and its role in enhancing nuclear safety and security and in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear technology.

305. The Moldovan Government attached great importance to responsibilities in the fields of safeguards, nuclear safety and security. Despite State budget constraints, it had decided to increase the staff complement of the Moldovan regulatory body, to which four units had been added. It was determined to cooperate with the Agency in order to maximize nuclear safety and security.

306. Fully committed to promoting universal accession to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament agreements, Moldova considered the NPT to be the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime, which was crucial to the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with Article VI of the NPT and to the development of nuclear technologies for peaceful purposes.

307. Under its common action plan with the Department of Safeguards, Moldova had honoured its obligations under the safeguards agreement and had received invaluable assistance in the form of equipment and personnel training.

308. Moldova had actively supported UNSC resolution 1540 and other international initiatives on the non-proliferation of WMDs, such as GICNT, the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction and the NSS process. It had participated actively in EU projects aimed at establishing CBRN Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence worldwide and had consistently

implemented its regularly updated common integrated action plan, with support from the Agency's Office of Nuclear Security. Furthermore, its regulatory body and first-response authorities held a biannual domestic training course on action to combat trafficking in nuclear material.

309. Moldova strongly supported the Agency's TCP and met its financial obligations. The Agency's expertise had been crucial to competence building in the safe use of radiation in the country and to the improvement of the national regulatory framework. Moldova considered that participation in the TCP was relevant to the establishment of national education and training programmes. It held in high regard the Agency's role in the development of the peaceful applications of nuclear technology in the areas of human health, food, agriculture, water resources, environment and nuclear and radiation safety. It supported PACT activities in order to build sustainable cancer control capacity and had implemented major national projects, primarily in the field of radiodiagnostics, nuclear medicine and radiotherapy. It hoped to overcome economic and financial constraints in order to use nuclear technologies to sterilize medical and pharmaceutical products.

310. Moldova had signed all significant conventions and treaties on nuclear safety and security, radiation protection and non-proliferation, but could not meet its obligations to establish and upgrade its domestic infrastructure to strengthen radiation protection, nuclear safety and security and non-proliferation without fruitful cooperation with other States and without international expert assistance. It was grateful for the support received in 2015 from various sources in areas of nuclear safety and security, radiation protection, non-proliferation, in national human resource development and maintenance.

311. Moldova fully supported action taken by the Agency to extend the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for the benefit of humanity by strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and international security.

312. Mr ESTRADA ROMÁN (Nicaragua) acknowledged the benefits provided by the Agency to Member States under its mandate to apply nuclear knowledge for exclusively peaceful and developmental purposes and reaffirmed his country's inalienable right to knowledge and nuclear energy for such purposes.

313. Nicaragua set great store by closer partnerships with the Agency and gave the highest priority to human health, food security, hydrology and agriculture, from which its people would benefit. Despite being a small country, Nicaragua was determined to play its part in eradicating poverty, including extreme poverty, and accordingly called on all States that were willing to provide assistance in those areas do so through the PUI. Determined to secure food and dignified health services for its citizens, it would apply nuclear technology in close collaboration with the Agency to available resources in order to achieve those goals.

314. Nicaragua had been the first State in the region to accept, at the highest level, the extension to ARCAL, which had entered into force in September 2015 and would help to consolidate integration between Latin American and Caribbean countries, including the joint application of shared nuclear technology.

315. Nicaragua highlighted the excellent work done by the Department of Technical Cooperation and expressed great satisfaction with PACT and imPACT, through which Nicaragua had gained expertise in various areas of oncology. It commended the Director General's skilful leadership in strengthening Nicaragua's ties with the Agency at all levels, thus achieving efficiency gains and broadening the application of the Agency's statutory mandate.

316. Highlighting the importance of the Agency's international role in clarifying outstanding issues in the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran and commending the even greater role

assigned to the Agency in implementing the agreements between Iran and the P5+1, which the President of Nicaragua had dubbed a great triumph of diplomacy, Nicaragua congratulated the Iranian people on their determination and bravery in proving to the international community that in implementing their nuclear programme they had merely exercised their inalienable right to nuclear energy for purely civilian purposes.

317. Noting that Israel was the only State in the Middle East that had declined to cooperate with the international community, was not an NPT State Party and had a nuclear programme that was not under Agency safeguards, Nicaragua urged Member States to denounce Israel's possession of nuclear weapons, its illegal occupation of Palestinian territory and its completely secretive nuclear programme, and it called for all States to be treated equally, without double standards.

318. Stressing that there was no reason for the most basic principles of international law not to apply to Israel, Nicaragua endorsed initiatives aimed at analysing Israel's nuclear capabilities in greater depth and supported, as a matter of principle and as a positive step forward, the resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities, asserting that only diplomacy and fair and open dialogue could triumph over war.

319. Nicaragua similarly defended the historic agreements reached at the 1995 NPT Review Conference, which had defined the Agency's central role in applying safeguards in the Middle East as soon as an NWFZ had been established in the region. Accordingly, it would support the resolution on the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East.

320. Urging Member States to be mindful of the current arms race, Nicaragua highlighted the sense of foreboding due to qualitative and quantitative improvements to nuclear weapons, supported by technologies which were not regulated by international treaties and which could be used to modernize nuclear arsenals without requiring any explosive test. Nicaragua therefore urged the Agency to be mindful of its responsibility to encourage non-proliferation as part of its fundamental purpose of promoting atoms for peace and human development.

321. Mr QUIÑONES (Dominican Republic) said that the Dominican Republic was committed not only to initiatives under which benefits could be obtained from nuclear applications conducive to national development goals but also to the responsible use of technologies to protect its people and strengthen efforts to ensure that nuclear energy was used safely and peacefully.

322. The Dominican Republic regarded the Agency's TCP as a crucial means of building national capacities for the technical use of nuclear energy in health, agriculture, industry and the environment, among others. With the Agency's support, it had strengthened its regulatory and institutional framework to ensure that such technologies were used appropriately.

323. Accordingly, in July 2015, the Dominican Republic had hosted a regional meeting to enable Latin American Member States to update their regulations to meet the Agency's basic safety standards and, in December 2014, a regional workshop designed to ensure consistency of laws for the purposes of nuclear applications. The Dominican Republic had thus begun to align its regulations with international standards. The regional Agency-assisted workshop had covered nuclear safety in nuclear installations, radioactive waste management and storage. Courses and workshops had been held in cooperation with the United States Department of Energy to enable the staff of the regulatory bodies to identify radioactive sources and radiation-emitting devices, ensure physical security and safety of inspectors, protect radioactive sources and review the emergency response plan.

324. The Dominican Republic gave pride of place to the transfer to developing countries of nuclear technology in medicine, agriculture, industry, hydrology and in other applications as a means of meeting the challenges of access to food and water and of combating poverty and disease. It

considered the Agency's assistance to be of primordial importance to developing countries in appraising the desirability of installing nuclear power in order to diversify their energy network.

325. The Dominican Republic had been assisted through many TC projects in oncology, the environment and the marine environment. In health, great strides had been made in radiotherapy, in particular at the National Hospital of Oncology, in which an advanced radiotherapy centre equipped with cutting-edge cancer treatment technology and compliant with international radiological protection and safety standards had been opened. TC in agriculture had been of great importance to the national economy, for it had boosted cash crops for exports. With the Agency's assistance, the Dominican Republic had sought to control and eradicate the Mediterranean fruit fly.

326. It commended ARCAL's role in enhancing training for R&D on nuclear applications in the region and for the major results achieved under eight ARCAL-led regional projects in health, industry, energy, food security and radiological safety. It welcomed the extension of ARCAL for another five years.

327. The Dominican Republic was party to many international treaties for the safe and peaceful use of nuclear S&T and had already deposited its instrument of acceptance of the amendment to the CPPNM, which betokened its commitment to cooperating with States in order to prevent malicious actions involving nuclear material, thus contributing to international security and to the prevention of acts of terrorism. It urged States to ratify the amendment to permit its early entry into force.

328. The Dominican Republic welcomed Agency-adopted measures to promote the safe transport of nuclear material and commended Chile's conduct of the dialogue between coastal and shipping States, while highlighting the essentiality of radiological emergency preparation and response. It called on Member States to ensure that nuclear energy and its applications were used only to further States' progress and development.

329. Mr MADIMBA KALONJI (Democratic Republic of the Congo) said that the Democratic Republic of the Congo had always promoted the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for its socioeconomic development and its people's well-being and that its national skillset and nuclear S&T infrastructure had been enhanced owing to the Agency's support and assistance. It had gained considerable experience from operating two research reactors, it had enhanced nuclear and radiological safety to meet international standards and it had introduced regulations on the monitoring of the installations housing those reactors and on the issuance of recommendations to operators. It acknowledged that there was scope for greater efficiency and effectiveness.

330. The Democratic Republic of the Congo would begin to modernize its TRIGA Mark II reactor in 2016 and hoped to form bilateral and multilateral partnerships for that purpose. It would adopt the Agency-approved decommissioning plan for its nuclear facilities under the technical strategy formulated to manage the nuclear legacy at the research reactor site, preserve the environment and health, protect workers and the public and meet the requirements of the national nuclear safety and regulatory body.

331. The Democratic Republic of the Congo had been gratified by the emphasis on agriculture and food security, human and animal health, access to clean drinking water and industry in the Agency's TCP for the 2014–2015 cycle. The Agency had provided support for NDT, radioisotope techniques, capacity building and human resource development, which had been instrumental to the establishment of two NDT laboratories. Action was being taken to establish a national certification agency for CFCND-trained national operators and technology transfer and experiential exchange had been facilitated by Agency-assisted South-South cooperation with Morocco. An industrial radioisotope application laboratory had been established for nuclear gauges and for radiotracers. A project

combining NDT and radioisotope techniques had been submitted to the Agency and would begin in 2016 with a view to building the laboratories' capacities.

332. As its people had occasionally been exposed to non-negligible radiological risks from intensive mining, action had been taken through the representative office of the General Atomic Energy Commission in the mining province of Katanga to raise workers' awareness through training, enhance provincial and national authorities' understanding of the effects and risks of radioactivity, deter trafficking in radioactive and nuclear material, address issues arising from the use of radioactive sources by mining companies and take artisanal miners into account. The initiative had been such a success that it would be rolled out to other mining areas in the country.

333. The Democratic Republic of the Congo had welcomed the efforts to examine key NPT provisions at the Conference of the Parties in April and May 2015 and hoped that an agreement would be reached thereon and on disarmament. It had drawn on its human and technological resources to combat trafficking and nuclear smuggling regionally and internationally. It had retained its bilateral and multinational approach and was determined to combat those growing threats. It had signed a cooperation agreement in 2011 with the USA to adopt a holistic approach to nuclear security issues and to control nuclear smuggling. It had begun to cooperate with the European Commission in 2013 to exert greater control over the movement of radioactive material in central and eastern Africa. Human resources had been developed and radiological detection and measurement equipment had been provided to those ends.

334. Pursuant to UNSC resolution 1540, the Democratic Republic of the Congo had established a National Nuclear Safety Centre and a national counter-terrorism committee, which complemented each other and worked with the nuclear regulatory body to combat trafficking in radioactive material and the threat of nuclear terrorism. Furthermore, the amendment to the CPPNM and several international conventions on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy would be submitted shortly, for ratification, to the Government, which had agreed to host an IPPAS mission.

335. As States were turning to nuclear power as a reliable alternative to address the energy deficit, anticipate future energy demands, strengthen the security of supply and combat climate change, the Democratic Republic of the Congo considered that nuclear power was a feasible option. It called for a holistic approach to the resolution of issues of common interest and was convinced of the Agency's important role in promoting the peaceful applications of nuclear power.

336. Mr MERO (United Republic of Tanzania) noted that the Scientific Forum, themed 'Atoms in Industry — Radiation Technology for Development', focused on the expansion of the industrial applications of nuclear S&T and thus promoted development and furthered services to industry and the environmental sector. Tanzania was consolidating various industrial applications of radiation technology and enhancing its capacity for non-destructive testing, radiation processes for industries, quality agriculture and management of the application of nuclear analytical techniques for the characterization of mineral potential, environmental monitoring and nucleonic gauges.

337. As technical knowledge had yet to permeate all relevant spheres of developmental activities in the country, Tanzania would take remedial action to strengthen and update the knowledge and skills of its human resources to take full advantage of radiation technology in order to increase the efficiency, reliability and safety of engineering structures during its industrialization which would include the development of the petrochemical industry.

338. The country had endeavoured to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear S&T and their contribution to all areas of national significance. It had merged the regulatory framework and the occupational exposure control framework into a fully operational individual and workplace monitoring programme.

339. The Tanzania Atomic Energy Commission would focus on the improvement of the waste management infrastructure, national capacity building to addressing radiological liabilities arising from future uranium mining, the enhancement of nuclear security and the prevention of trafficking. Acknowledging its ultimate responsibility for strengthening and enhancing the effectiveness of the national regulatory infrastructure for nuclear safety, radiation safety, radioactive waste and transport safety and the security of radioactive sources, Tanzania commended the Agency for its readiness to assist by dispatching an IRRS mission as requested.

340. The dramatic rise in cancer cases in Tanzania had posed a major challenge to the national health system that demanded urgent attention. To remedy matters, consideration was being given to staff training and screening in regional hospitals, in particular for breast, cervical and prostate cancer under the National Cancer Control Strategy, for which resources were to be mobilized with the Agency's assistance.

341. The Agency's TC had focused on end-user oriented activities with a visible socioeconomic impact, and the current positive trend in the planning, programming and implementation of TC activities, associated with a strong government commitment to Agency technology transfer, was expected to strengthen in future. The programme was intended to be consistent with the Government's priorities and had been developed through intensive consultations between competent national authorities, stakeholders and the Agency.

342. In addressing the country's critical energy shortage, the Agency had supported the Government in the projection of energy demand and the formulation of supply strategies. Under the energy plan, a national master plan consistent with Tanzania's Vision 2025 would be drawn up. Its energy planning approach had been applied by other Member States and had proven to be very helpful. It was thus developing its local energy planning expertise, which was of significant value to all energy stakeholders and had enabled the Government to make timely, informed decisions on energy supply and demand management.

343. Stressing that Member States must work together to maximize safety and security and minimize proliferation risks in access to and use of nuclear technologies, Tanzania called for greater efforts by States that subscribed to the NPT goals to demonstrate that the NPT was still the only viable means of achieving nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Tanzania considered that action rather than words would lead to the eagerly awaited goal of NPT universalization. It stressed the urgent imperative to eliminate nuclear weapons and pointed out that the detonation of any nuclear weapon spelt disaster for the entire human race, for its effects would inevitably spill over borders and would contaminate the environment, with dire consequences for the natural ecosystem. Tanzania hoped and expected that all commitments integral to the NPT would be fully respected and implemented. It called for significant progress in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, as they were closely related and mutually reinforcing, and stressed that the slow pace of nuclear disarmament had weakened the non-proliferation regime.

344. Mr ABDEL SHAFI (Palestine) said that Palestine attached great importance to the Agency's TC activities, which had played a vital role in building capacities, transferring technology and supporting cooperation with countries aspiring to develop nuclear energy for peaceful uses beneficial to their people.

345. Palestine thanked the Agency for its assistance in developing scientific infrastructure for peaceful uses of nuclear energy through projects such as the Al-Quds nuclear physics laboratory for training and research, the improvement of wheat yields through mutation breeding and the use of environmental isotopes for groundwater resource assessment. Palestine hoped to expand such

cooperation under the 2016–2017 cycle to include advanced applications in the fields of legislation, and water and soil research.

346. Palestine gave high priority to developing its human resource development in the field of nuclear energy applications, despite the scarcity of resources and capabilities and the obstacles raised by the occupying authorities. Palestine had participated in many study and training programmes organized by the Agency and in the SESAME project.

347. Palestine had acceded to the NPT in 2015 and had attended the NPT Review Conference. It was preparing to sign a CSA with the Agency at the earliest opportunity and was motivated by a desire to achieve the universality of the NPT, as attested by its participation as an observer in previous review conferences and preparatory committee meetings. Its accession to the NPT reflected its commitment to supporting all international action aimed at promoting international and regional peace, security and safety and at ridding the world of nuclear weapons and other WMDs. Palestine called on all States, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, to redouble their efforts to achieve that goal without delay.

348. Palestine welcomed the agreement on the JCPOA between Iran and the E3/EU+3, and UNSC resolution 2231 (2015). It also welcomed the road map adopted by the Agency and Iran in July 2015 and hoped that the measures taken would resolve all outstanding issues.

349. Palestine lived under occupation by a State whose nuclear installations were not under comprehensive safeguards. According to specialized reports, freshly released documents and repeated statements by Israeli decision makers, Israel possessed an arsenal of nuclear weapons that posed a direct threat to the safety and security of the Palestinian people, the region and the world. Although Member States had been taking action to strengthen the nuclear security and safety system, Israel had been allowed to continue to expose the people of Palestine to the disastrous consequences that could result from an accident at Israeli nuclear installations. Palestine did not have the capability to deal with the destructive impact of such an accident on its people or environment, and its fears could not be ignored, particularly in the light of reports of structural deterioration in several Israeli nuclear installations.

350. Palestine expressed deep concern at Israel's growing military nuclear capabilities and its continued refusal to accede to the NPT and submit its nuclear programmes and facilities to the comprehensive safeguards system, especially as all other States in the region had acceded to the Treaty. The tendency of some nuclear-weapon States to disregard Israel's military nuclear capabilities and to treat it as a responsible State that did not pose any threat was unacceptable and inconsistent with aggressive Israeli behaviour in Palestine and elsewhere. There had been repeated Israeli military crimes in the region, involving indiscriminate and excessive use of force. Such conduct called into question the extent of its responsibility in the nuclear field.

351. Palestine regretted the failure to convene the 2012 conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East despite the efforts and flexibility of the Arab Group. Palestine believed that the five nuclear-weapon States, particularly the conveners of the conference, were duty bound to achieve universality of the NPT in the Middle East and to take action for the early establishment of such a zone. Palestine had participated in the conference facilitator's multilateral negotiations, which had been to no avail owing to Israel's dilatory practices and distortion of the priorities.

352. Palestine deeply regretted the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference to adopt a final document. The attitude of the three States that had thwarted the achievement of consensus was a worrisome reflection of the determination of certain influential States to provide Israel with unmerited protection from accountability in international bodies, including NPT Review Conferences and the Agency's governing bodies. The States in question had enabled Israel to continue to flout the

principles underlying the nuclear non-proliferation regime to the detriment of all efforts to establish an NWFZ.

353. Palestine believed that Israel's position as the only non-NPT State Party in the region threatened regional and world peace and security and impeded the achievement of peace for all peoples of the region.

354. The initiative taken by the Arab Group in placing an item on Israeli nuclear capabilities on the agenda of the Agency's governing bodies was yet another diplomatic effort to end Israel's refusal to abide by its non-proliferation obligations and to comply with UNSC and UNGA resolutions on its nuclear programme. Palestine considered that the resolutions adopted on the issue at previous sessions of the General Conference showed that many States shared its concern about Israel's unsafeguarded nuclear capabilities and persistent refusal to accede to the NPT.

355. Mr AL GHEILANI (Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf) commended the Agency for its promotion of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and non-proliferation activities. He was confident that the proceedings of the General Conference would contribute to the welfare of all humankind.

356. He thanked Austria for hosting the Permanent Mission of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf to the United Nations Office at Vienna and for the facilities and support that it had provided to the Mission. He also thanked the United Nations for welcoming the Mission and supporting its work.

357. The Permanent Mission of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf hoped to enhance its cooperation with other missions and with international organizations and agencies in order to achieve its assigned objectives. Their Royal Highnesses and the eminent leaders of the GCC States were committed to strengthening cooperation with States and with regional and international groups in order to promote the welfare and development of the world's peoples. International assemblies such as the General Conference could encourage the convergence of views and promote research conducive to human progress.

358. Mr MARCUZZO DO CANTO (ABACC) said that, in accomplishing its mission of safeguarding the nuclear facilities and all nuclear material in Brazil and Argentina, ABACC was pleased to report that all nuclear material and other elements under safeguards in Brazil and Argentina had been used exclusively for peaceful purposes and had been recorded appropriately in 2014. ABACC had performed 62 inspections in Argentina and 56 in Brazil, which had required the availability of 1070 inspectors. ABACC had not found any signs of non-compliance with either country's commitments.

359. Noting that history had shown that security and progress for humankind were best guaranteed by promoting understanding and cooperation among States, he stressed that the history of Brazil and Argentina rested on common understanding, characterized by consensus. The Guadalajara Agreement for the Exclusively Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy, signed on 18 July 1991, had enshrined both States' commitment to the exclusively peaceful uses of all nuclear material and installations under their jurisdiction or control. Furthermore, economic, political, technological and cultural integration between Argentina and Brazil had provided a constructive framework for collaboration in policies of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament and had encouraged the peaceful use of nuclear energy. ABACC had thus thrived while seeking technical excellence through institutional policies and highly qualified staff and inspectors.

360. ABACC had understood that continuing training of officials and inspectors would enable it to remain at the cutting edge and always abreast of new S&T developments for incorporation

into safeguards processes. The ABACC–Cristallini method of uranium hexafluoride sampling, developed by ABACC’s technical staff, was a case in point. It was easier, less intrusive, less time-consuming and safer to handle and transport than the traditional method, while producing less waste and being accurate. It was at the intercomparison for validation stage in laboratories in Argentina, Brazil, the United States Department of Energy and the Agency so that it could be used in routine safeguards application at the enrichment plants.

361. Technical cooperation to develop advanced technologies for use in the application of safeguards, for example, had been crucial to ABACC. The 3D Laser Verification System project and the Ultrasonic Seals project were two equipment cooperation projects in which major progress had been achieved in 2014. ABACC thanked its international partners and expressed its desire to pursue such collaborative relations.

362. ABACC and the Agency had worked harmoniously in an atmosphere of mutual confidence for nearly 25 years. Coordination between the Agency and ABACC had been of the essence in avoiding duplication of effort and in achieving efficiency and effectiveness in safeguards activities, with good results being obtained in joint safeguards activities and from unannounced inspections and the shared use of safeguards equipment. ABACC’s partnership with the Agency had been crucial to the efficient and effective attainment of their institutional objectives.

363. ABACC considered that future challenges posed by the foreseeable rise in nuclear power generating capacity could be addressed by establishing or strengthening independent and reliable regional mechanisms, along Euratom and ABACC lines, that would operate in coordination with the Agency. While regional geopolitics and cultural differences precluded direct application of either model, the central idea of establishing regional agencies based on the neighbour-to-neighbour control concept was a worthwhile possibility.

364. ABACC reaffirmed its commitment to applying safeguards procedures in Brazil and Argentina efficiently, effectively and transparently, while preserving the confidentiality of information, pursuant to the Quadripartite Agreement.

The meeting rose at 9.15 p.m.