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60 Years

Atoms for Peace and Development

General Conference

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Temporary President: Dato' Adnan OTHMAN (Malaysia)

President: Ms ANGARA COLLINSON (Philippines)

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¹ GC(61)/25.

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Abbreviations used in this record:

AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARCAL	Co-operation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CSA	comprehensive safeguards agreement
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EU	European Union
GW	gigawatt
HEU	high enriched uranium
INDC	intended nationally determined contribution
INIR	Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review
IPPAS	International Physical Protection Advisory Service
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
LEU	low enriched uranium
MNSR	miniature neutron source reactor
MW	megawatt
NPP	nuclear power plant
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
ORPAS	Occupational Radiation Protection Appraisal Service
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
PUI	Peaceful Uses Initiative
RANET	Response and Assistance Network
ReNuAL	Renovation of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SESAME	Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

SIT	sterile insect technique
SMART	system-integrated modular advanced reactor
SMR	small modular reactor
TC	technical cooperation
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
USA	United States of America
WMD	weapons of mass destruction

– Opening of the session

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT declared the 61st regular session of the General Conference open.
2. In accordance with Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, he invited the delegates to observe one minute of silence dedicated to prayer or meditation.

All present rose and stood in silence for one minute.

3. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT welcomed the ministers and senior officials from Member States attending the General Conference, whose participation in large numbers underscored the international community's strong support for the Agency and its noble endeavours. He said that the Conference was also an invaluable stock-taking exercise in which efforts and initiatives by Member States could be assessed objectively and guidelines and directions for the Agency developed with a view to enhancing its efficiency, strengthening its transparency and accountability and enhancing its ability to take decisive action and achieve better results.

4. In 2016, on the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the Agency, Member States had highlighted the Agency's significant contribution to global peace, security and development and the achievement of key goals enshrined in its motto 'Atoms for Peace and Development'. In common pursuit of that goal, Member States must sustain their consensus, cooperation and support for the Agency's noble efforts and activities relating to nuclear science and applications, nuclear safety, nuclear security, safeguards and verification, and technical cooperation.

5. Since the 60th General Conference, a large number of significant meetings had been held in Vienna; perspectives on key challenges and lessons learned had been presented at those meetings, particularly with regard to ways in which the Agency could more effectively facilitate and strengthen coordination and coherence among its activities and initiatives related to the peaceful use of nuclear technology. Many Member States had commended the entry into force of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the Ministerial Declaration adopted at the International Conference on Nuclear Security: Commitments and Actions, which had been held in 2016; certain States, however, believed that those initiatives continued to fall short of expectations. Nonetheless, the meetings held in Vienna had increased awareness, understanding and ownership by Member States of the issues addressed by those initiatives, and provided a firm foundation for the implementation of the Agency's important agenda. By building mutual trust and confidence, it would be possible to formulate better targeted activities to support the priorities of Member States, in accordance with the Agency's Statute.

6. The technical cooperation programme remained a key driving force for Member States' efforts to achieve sustainable socio-economic development and, in particular, the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. He commended the Agency on the successful convening of the International Conference on the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme: Sixty Years and Beyond – Contributing to Development, and underscored that the Agency was devoting additional resources to initiatives related to health and nutrition, nuclear safety, food and agriculture. The ReNuAL project was another noteworthy effort by the Agency that would facilitate attainment of the SDGs.

7. The achievements of the Agency over its first 60 years were evident and laudable; it was sure to do even better over the following 60 years. Member States would continue to cooperate with, and fully support, the Director General and the Agency, whose tireless efforts and steadfast commitment were deeply appreciated.

8. He extended his deepest gratitude to the South East Asia and the Pacific Group and its Chair for nominating him to preside over the General Conference, and thanked the outgoing Chair of the Committee of the Whole, the Vice-Presidents of the Conference and the Director General and the Secretariat staff for their assistance and support. He also expressed his sincere gratitude and appreciation to all delegations for their valuable support and cooperation, which had resulted in a fruitful and successful conclusion of the 60th General Conference.

1. Election of officers and appointment of the General Committee

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

10. Mr KITANO (Japan), speaking on behalf of the Far East Group, proposed Ms Angara Collinson (Philippines).

11. Ms ANGARA COLLINSON (Philippines) was elected President by acclamation.

12. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT congratulated Ms Angara Collinson on her election and wished her every success in her task.

Ms Angara Collinson (Philippines) took the Chair.

13. The PRESIDENT thanked delegations for the confidence they had placed in her, a woman from a developing country, by electing her to preside over the General Conference at its 61st session. Noting that she was only the third woman and only the fourth representative from the Philippines entrusted with the responsibility of steering the proceedings and deliberations of the General Conference, she saw her appointment as a promising portent of the future of the Agency, whose importance and relevance to the world and to humankind had increased dramatically over the years. She pledged to strive, with the support of Member States, to ensure that the General Conference was fruitful and successful.

14. She expressed special appreciation to the members of the Far East Group, and in particular to Japan, for nominating her, and also expressed appreciation to the Ambassador of Malaysia, Mr Othman, for his excellent chairship of the 60th session of the General Conference. She also paid tribute to the Director General for his balanced, able and effective stewardship, which, combined with the dedication and expertise of the Secretariat, had facilitated the Agency's significant achievements over the preceding eight years.

15. In 2017, which marked the 60th anniversary of the entry into force of the Agency's Statute, the international community faced both opportunities and threats. The opportunities stemmed from the promise of ever-increasing benefits from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. They included enhanced food security achieved, among other developments, through high-yielding crop varieties and disease-resistant livestock, improved environmental and water resources management, longer lifespans

and a better quality of life achieved through curative and preventive advances in health-related technology, and greater prosperity and a higher standard of living for people worldwide.

16. At the same time, however, safety issues related to nuclear technology and its applications remained, despite some progress in that area. There were still no magic bullets for dealing with issues such as the management of disused radioactive sources and the safe and permanent disposal of spent fuel or perfect answers to lingering doubts about them that could foster collective confidence or secure unequivocal universal support for nuclear technology rather than for alternative technologies.

17. The biggest threat from nuclear energy, however, came from its weaponization. A lingering pall was cast over the Conference by the real and present danger of developments in the DPRK. The nuclear non-proliferation regime supported by the entire international community was being directly challenged, and it was imperative to address that particular threat sooner rather than later. The Agency should not be judged on the basis of factors beyond its control, but rather on its readiness to resume implementation of the DPRK's comprehensive safeguards agreement. In that regard, she commended the Agency for its recent proactive measures, including the creation within the Secretariat of a dedicated DPRK unit.

18. She also commended the Agency on its work on safeguards following the conclusion of safeguards agreements, on the expert assistance it provided upon request to Member States with a view to establishing and maintaining effective and sustainable nuclear security regimes, and on its invaluable verification activities.

19. New global realities must be acknowledged and addressed with both courage and circumspection. Problems demanded solutions, but those solutions could take many forms. The international community was not lacking in willingness to take action and, on 7 July 2017, a total of 122 countries had adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in order to minimize, if not completely neutralize, the dangers posed by nuclear weaponization. It was important to recall that, having witnessed the horrors of atomic weapons, the international community had established the Agency to ensure that atomic energy would be used thereafter for peace, health and prosperity. The international community must continue to subscribe to that credo.

20. In that regard, she commended the work of the Department of Technical Cooperation, which, undaunted by the increasing number of Member States, continued to make every effort to deliver effective services to its growing consistency.

21. It was imperative to achieve equal representation of women in the Secretariat, particularly in the Professional categories. As a good management practice, the establishment of standards and measurements would facilitate an assessment of whether progress was being achieved in that regard. The issue of balanced geographical representation also deserved Member States' attention with a view to finding a satisfactory solution. The Agency should be perceived as belonging to all, and stakeholders must be represented in a fair and balanced manner, with due regard for appropriate qualifications.

22. The Conference had a full agenda. As with many other organizations, it was difficult for the Agency to address its increasing workload and meet the growing expectations of stakeholders within its existing resources; increased funding for all programme areas was therefore required. Member States must provide financial resources, within their capacities, in full and in a timely manner, and the Agency must foster synergies among its departments with a view to maximizing its impact within available – but not necessarily more limited – resources. The Conference would consider the budget for the next biennium; in that regard, she trusted that Member States' collective wisdom and shared objectives would lead to the best possible results, and urged those States to ensure that the outcomes of their deliberations led to a reinvigorated Agency, promoted respect and goodwill

among Member States, and fostered the emergence of a safer and more secure world that enjoyed peace, health and prosperity.

23. Turning to procedural matters, she said that the Conference was required under Rules 34 and 40 of the Rules of Procedure to elect 8 Vice-Presidents, the Chair of the Committee of the Whole and 5 additional members of the General Committee to constitute the General Committee of 15, which she would chair. She proposed, however, that in the current session the General Committee be composed of 16 members, comprising 8 Vice-Presidents and 6 additional members, so that the area of the Far East, in addition to providing the President of the Conference, could also have a Vice-President. That would involve the suspension of Rules 34 and 40 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, as had been done in comparable situations in the past.

24. It was so agreed.

25. She proposed that the heads of delegation of Australia, Bulgaria, Finland, Ghana, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mexico, Mongolia and the United States of America be elected as Vice-Presidents of the General Conference, that Mr Stalder (Switzerland) be elected as Chair of the Committee of the Whole and that the delegates of Angola, Canada, the Czech Republic, Kuwait, Peru and the Russian Federation be elected as additional members of the General Committee.

26. The President's proposals were accepted.

27. The PRESIDENT further proposed that the General Conference take up items 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8 of the provisional agenda, in that order, pending receipt of the General Committee's recommendation on the agenda. That would involve the suspension of Rule 42 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, as had been done in comparable situations in the past.

28. The President's proposal was accepted.

2. Applications for membership of the Agency (GC(61)/22)

29. The PRESIDENT drew attention to document GC(61)/22 containing an application for membership by Grenada. The application had been endorsed by the Board of Governors, which had submitted, in that document, a draft resolution to the General Conference for adoption.

30. She took it that the Conference wished to adopt the draft resolution by acclamation.

31. It was so decided.

32. The PRESIDENT congratulated Grenada on being approved for membership of the Agency.

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

33. Mr MARKRAM (Deputy to the United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs), read out the following message:

“I am pleased to greet the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

“Sixty years since its founding, the IAEA continues to serve as a bulwark against nuclear proliferation and as an essential forum for international cooperation for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Its technical cooperation programmes help Member States to advance sustainable development – a valuable yet sometimes overlooked dimension of the Agency’s work. The international recognition garnered by the Agency is testament to its work and integrity.

“Many challenges have been met, but many also remain.

“Nuclear security continues to be at the forefront of international concerns, and every care must be taken to minimize the threat of non-State actors acquiring nuclear material. The IAEA’s assistance to States in protecting nuclear materials and facilities from malicious acts is crucial.

“The world can never be complacent about nuclear safety. One of the IAEA’s many roles is helping States who wish to use nuclear power and nuclear technology to do so safely, securely and sustainably. As such, there is always work to be done.

“The IAEA, through the implementation of safeguards agreements, continues to work to ensure that the use of nuclear power will not contribute to nuclear weapons proliferation. This is an integral contribution to international peace and security.

“The value of this contribution has been demonstrated clearly by the IAEA’s role in overseeing the implementation of nuclear commitments under the JCPOA. I remain confident that this historic agreement is the best way to ensure the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran’s nuclear programme and realize the great aspiration of the Iranian people. I commend the IAEA for its outstanding efforts in the interest of international peace.

“The importance of ensuring full support for the IAEA’s safeguards mission has also been underscored by other recent events. I fully condemn the recent nuclear test by the DPRK, which is yet another serious breach of its international obligations and undermines disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. I welcome the IAEA’s continued remote monitoring of the DPRK’s nuclear facilities and its readiness to resume verification work in the DPRK.

“I commend both the Director-General and the IAEA staff, both past and present, for their efforts. And I look forward to the IAEA and the United Nations continuing to work together for sustainable development and for a world without nuclear weapons.”

34. In closing, he reaffirmed the full commitment of the Office of Disarmament Affairs to an ever-closer collaborative partnership with the Agency, and thanked its Director General and staff for their hard work and dedication.

4. Statement by the Director General

35. The DIRECTOR GENERAL, welcoming participants to the 61st session of the General Conference, said that, over the preceding six decades, the Agency had contributed to international peace and security and had made a real difference to the lives of millions of people.

Thanks to the support of Member States and the dedication of its excellent staff, the Agency could take pride in important achievements in all areas of its work.

36. Since his appointment as Director General nearly eight years previously, he had focused on ensuring that the Agency remained an international organization of excellence that delivered tangible results promptly.

37. Since the 60th session, the Agency had continued to verify and monitor the implementation by Iran of its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA. Those commitments were being implemented, and Iran was subject to the world's most robust nuclear verification regime. The Agency continued to verify the non-diversion of nuclear material declared by Iran under its safeguards agreement, and evaluations regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran were under way.

38. The nuclear programme of the DPRK was a matter of grave concern, and the nuclear test by that country on 3 September 2017, its sixth and largest to date, was extremely regrettable. He called on the DPRK to comply fully with its obligations under all relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and the Agency. The Agency was working to maintain its readiness to return to the DPRK when political developments made that possible.

39. The International Conference on the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme: Sixty Years and Beyond – Contributing to Development had greatly enhanced awareness of the Agency's unique role in transferring nuclear technology to developing countries. In order for the Agency to fulfil that role, it was important that all countries contributed on time and in full to the TCF.

40. The technical cooperation programme helped countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals related to energy, food and agriculture, industry, water management and health.

41. The ReNuAL project at Seibersdorf continued to make excellent progress, and the Insect Pest Control Laboratory would be inaugurated in the very near future. When completed, the expanded laboratory complex would greatly increase the Agency's capabilities as a technology holder, to the benefit of all 168 IAEA Member States.

42. Nuclear power played a significant role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving energy security. The Agency supported countries wishing to introduce nuclear power or expand existing nuclear power programmes.

43. The IAEA LEU Storage Facility had been inaugurated in Kazakhstan in August 2017. Establishment of the IAEA LEU Bank would provide a last-resort mechanism that would strengthen the confidence of countries that they could meet their future nuclear fuel needs.

44. The International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century would open in Abu Dhabi on 30 October 2017, and he encouraged all Member States to participate in that Conference at ministerial level.

45. Safety and security were extremely important in all uses of nuclear technology, and regardless of whether that technology was used in power or non-power applications. Although safety and security were national responsibilities, the Agency played a central role in ensuring effective international cooperation in that regard.

46. Lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident had been incorporated into all Agency nuclear safety requirements so as to ensure that they were integrated into global safety practice. Further efforts were needed to promote a culture of nuclear safety.

47. The International Conference on Nuclear Security: Commitments and Actions, held in December 2016, had been a great success, and he commended the Board of Governors on its adoption by consensus of the Nuclear Security Plan 2018–2021. The Agency would continue its work as the global platform for strengthening nuclear security.

48. Sound management of limited resources was essential if the Agency was to be able to address the growing needs of Member States. The Agency continued to implement efficiency measures, but requests for Agency support were growing. The Agency would continue to strike a balance between those real needs and the reality that many Member States faced continuing financial constraints. Modest real increases in the Agency's budget in recent years had enabled it more effectively to tackle priority areas, including technical cooperation and nuclear safety and security. He trusted that Member States would support modest real increases in the Agency budget in the coming years.

49. The proportion of women staff members at the Agency in the Professional and higher categories was higher than it had ever been. He was confident that, with the active support of Member States, that proportion would continue to increase.

50. In closing, he thanked the staff of the Agency for their commitment and dedication. He shared the great pride that they took in their work. He also thanked all Agency Member States for the active support they provided to the Agency and to him personally. He expressed particular gratitude to Austria, as a very generous and welcoming host country for the Agency. He stressed that, under its slogan 'Atoms for Peace and Development', the Agency would continue to deliver high-quality programmes and respond promptly to the needs of Member States.

The Director General left the meeting.

6. Approval of the appointment of the Director General

51. The PRESIDENT recalled that, pursuant to Article VII.A of the Statute, the Board of Governors had decided in March 2017 to appoint Mr Yukiya Amano to serve as Director General of the Agency for a term of four years from 1 December 2017 to 30 November 2021 and had requested the General Conference to approve that appointment by adopting the draft resolution set out in document GC(61)/5.

52. She took it that the General Conference wished to adopt the draft resolution contained in document GC(61)/5.

53. It was so decided, and the Conference confirmed the appointment of Mr Amano to the post of Director General by acclamation.

At the invitation of the President, Mr Amano re-entered the meeting.

54. The PRESIDENT informed Mr Amano that the General Conference had approved his appointment to the post of Director General for a further four years. She was delighted to be the first to congratulate Mr Amano on behalf of the General Conference and to wish him a fruitful tenure. She invited him to take the oath of office.

55. Mr AMANO took the following oath:

"I solemnly swear to exercise in all loyalty, discretion and conscience the functions entrusted to me as Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, to discharge these functions

and to regulate my conduct with the interest of the Agency only in view, and not to seek or accept instructions in regard to the performance of my duties from any government or other authority external to the Agency.”

56. The DIRECTOR GENERAL said that he was deeply honoured by the decision of the General Conference to renew his mandate for another term. In the 60th anniversary year of the Agency, he accepted reappointment with gratitude and humility and thanked the Member States for their trust and confidence. It was a huge privilege to serve the Agency as Director General. With the steadfast support of its Member States and the dedication of its excellent staff, the Agency could look back with pride on many significant achievements. He was confident that, through building on its strengths as a technical organization, the Agency would meet the many challenges that lay ahead. In the coming years, he would implement the Agency’s ‘Atoms for Peace and Development’ mandate in an energetic, impartial and transparent manner under the guidance of the Board of Governors and for the benefit of all Member States.

7. Contributions to the Technical Cooperation Fund for 2018

57. The PRESIDENT, recalling that on 13 June 2017 the Board of Governors had recommended a figure of €85 665 000 as the target for voluntary contributions to the TCF for 2018, drew attention to the table in documents GC(61)/20 showing the contribution that each Member State would need to make in order to meet its share of that target.

58. The early pledging and payment of contributions to the TCF greatly helped the Secretariat in planning the Agency’s technical cooperation programmes, and all delegations in a position to do so were therefore urged to notify the Secretariat during the Conference’s current session of the contributions that their governments would be making for 2018. She was pleased to note that 16 Member States had already made their pledges to the TCF for 2018, representing the largest number of Member States to pledge before the opening of a General Conference session.

59. At the end of the session, under a subsequent agenda item, she would report on the contributions pledged at that time and hoped to be able to report favourably on the percentage of the 2018 TCF target figure already pledged.

8. General debate and Annual Report for 2016

(GC(61)/3 and Additional Information)

60. Mr SALEHI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his country was pursuing a peaceful nuclear programme, focusing on developing its infrastructure, technology and its young and talented workforce, both for power generation and for other peaceful applications. The first unit of the Bushehr nuclear power plant was operating at full capacity, contributing to the country’s energy mix. Iran would increase the share of nuclear energy by building two additional units, taking an important step towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions at the national level.

61. In recent years Iran had been exporting radiopharmaceutical products and taking part in a major campaign against cancer through the Agency’s TC programme and looked forward to more extensive cooperation in that field.

62. One of the most important aspects of Iran's nuclear-related activities related to the implementation of the JCPOA since its entry into effect in early 2016. As the Agency had confirmed in its periodic report, Iran had fulfilled all its commitments under the deal honestly and in good faith, conducting its nuclear-related activities with the utmost transparency, subject to numerous regular and complementary access inspections.

63. Noting that one of the parties to the JCPOA had created unacceptable obstacles to the agreement's full implementation, he insisted that all parties to the agreement, without exception, must preserve its integrity and be held accountable for complying with its commitments. The agreement must be kept intact, on track and viable, and any measure taken to weaken or nullify its provisions, under any pretext or for a politically motivated and self-serving reason, would be to the detriment of the parties and the entire international community.

64. The recent American démarche at the Agency, which included a host of unjustifiable and peculiar demands with regard to the verification of Iran's strictly peaceful nuclear programme that went far beyond the purview of JCPOA's collectively negotiated and well-defined provisions, demonstrated the US Administration's overtly hostile attitude and exemplified its foot-dragging policies aimed at undermining the JCPOA and blocking Iran from benefiting from its full implementation. Iran was confident that the Agency would resist such demands and would continue to fulfil its crucial technical supervisory role with strict objectivity, fairness and impartiality, including by protecting sensitive, technical and industrial information obtained through inspections, to the benefit of all involved and thereby enhancing its international credibility. He called on the other parties to the JCPOA and the Agency's members as a whole to contribute actively to that effort.

65. For global nuclear security to be successful, nuclear-weapon States must comply with their obligations under the NPT and abstain from discriminatory approaches and policies. Global and regional peace and stability hinged on the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime, which required the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East, in step with the global and regional campaign to persuade the Israeli regime to end its illegitimate nuclear weapons programme and adhere to the NPT.

66. Strengthening nuclear safety standards was a matter of high priority. For its part, Iran had made considerable progress: the Bushehr plant had received an improved safety assessment from WANO. There were also plans to turn the nuclear safety centre —established with the aim of strengthening the Iran Nuclear Regulatory Authority — into a reliable hub for regional cooperation. The bill of accession to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management was before Iran's parliament for ratification, following its recent approval by the Government.

67. Measures to strengthen nuclear security should not hamper international cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear activities and promotion of peaceful uses of energy, including the Agency's TC programme. Having been victim to cyber-terrorist attacks on its nuclear installations, Iran believed that tackling such threats required strong international cooperation. It was similarly concerned about the nuclear security consequences of terrorist threats. It was imperative that existing mechanisms and measures be strengthened at the national and international levels. The prerogatives of national nuclear security should, like other sovereign rights of Member States, be accorded full respect while strengthening the role of the Agency.

68. Iran looked forward to a day when the goal of peaceful nuclear energy for all and nuclear weapons for none became a universally recognized aspiration.

69. Mr LIKHACHEV (Russian Federation) said that the Agency played an essential role in developing safe nuclear power technology and related infrastructure and introducing new countries to

the benefits of nuclear energy, and for that reason Member States' support for the Agency's activities within its mandate was vitally important. As the Russian President had reiterated in his address to the General Conference in 2016, the Russian Federation had always supported and would always support the Agency as the main international organization overseeing the full range of issues related to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. It was crucial for the Agency to maintain its neutral and professional approach to its work. The Director General had succeeded in that task and was to be congratulated on his re-election.

70. The Russian Federation took part in the work of the Agency in a variety of ways, including through its financial contributions, in-kind technical participation and intellectual resources. It was participating in several new joint nuclear infrastructure and safety regulatory infrastructure projects with the Agency. The Russian Federation supported the Agency's safeguards work, including under the JCPOA, an agreement that had struck a balance between the interests of the parties concerned and should be implemented rigorously and in full.

71. Among significant milestones marked by the Russian Federation over the previous year, he highlighted the commissioning of the first unit of the Novovoronezh NPP-2, the world's only operating Generation 3+ light water reactor; the handover of the Kudankulam NPP Unit 2 to India, with the launching of the construction of Units 3 and 4 and signing of a package of documents for Units 5 and 6; the continued construction of Russian-designed units in Belarus and China and the creation of the necessary infrastructure for the construction of new units at Akkuyu in Turkey, Paks in Hungary, Hanhikivi in Finland, Bushehr in Iran, and Rooppur in Bangladesh. The Russian Federation was also working with local partners on projects in Egypt, Armenia, Jordan, Bolivia and Zambia. Construction of the Akademik Lomonosov floating nuclear power plant was nearing completion. The future of world nuclear power was largely dependent on the development of small and medium-sized reactors in general and floating units in particular.

72. Nuclear power development was inextricably linked to fast neutron reactors and closed nuclear fuel cycles. To that end, the Russian Federation was building a multi-purpose fast neutron research reactor in Dimitrovgrad and carrying out an ambitious project in Seversk to build an experimental demonstration complex that included a fast neutron reactor, a facility for manufacturing high-density mixed uranium-plutonium fuel and a spent nuclear fuel reprocessing facility.

73. The world faced two strategic challenges: energy poverty and uneven access to electrical power on the one hand and, on the other, the threat of the irreversible destruction of the planet's ecosystem, which could only be addressed through growth and by rebalancing the world's energy generation capacity. Fossil fuel use must be minimized — that was the world's duty to its future generations.

74. The world's current installed capacity of 392 GW already contributed greatly to preserving the planet's environment. If coal and gas were used to generate the same capacity, some 2 billion tons more carbon dioxide would be released into the atmosphere each year. Given that the planet's forests annually absorbed 2.5 billion tons of carbon dioxide, the world's nuclear power generation capacity was commensurate with the ecological capacity of the planet's forests.

75. The future belonged to green energy. The sun, the wind, water and the atom, complementing one another, would form the foundation of a future world with a carbon-free balance. As the Agency had reported, by 2050 the overall share of clean energy generation in the world energy mix should exceed 80%. Installed NPP capacity should therefore increase to 930 GW. In order to replace the existing nuclear power units scheduled for decommissioning, over 20 GW of new nuclear generation capacity would need to be commissioned annually — an ambitious but doable task. Its fulfilment would primarily fall to countries that had chosen to develop nuclear power. Those countries were not

competitors, since all green sources of energy formed part of the solution to the problem of global climate change.

76. A new level of cooperation in the international nuclear community was needed in nuclear safety and to change the reputation of nuclear power. Each country's choice whether or not to develop national nuclear power should be respected, but that decision should be made on the basis of scientific knowledge rather than irrational fears. Society, governments, scientific and expert communities needed to be convinced that nuclear energy was clean, safe and cost-effective. In his country, and in countries where new Russian-designed nuclear facilities were being built, a systematic effort was under way to raise public acceptance of nuclear energy. The Russian Federation was ready to share its expertise in that regard.

77. Those considerations should be reflected in the relevant General Conference resolutions and in the final document of the forthcoming International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century in Abu Dhabi. Four years earlier, in St Petersburg, it had been established that, for many countries, nuclear energy was a proved, clean, safe and economically attractive technology. The next step was to move from promoting public acceptance of nuclear energy to managing its demand by society. His country would put forward specific proposals in that regard. The world nuclear industry could and should make full use of its technological leadership potential to become one of the key players in the fourth industrial revolution.

78. Mr PERRY (United States of America) read out the following message from President Trump:

"I extend my greetings to the delegates of the 61st International Atomic Energy Agency General Conference.

"For the past six decades, the IAEA Member States have made great strides in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear technology and developing non-proliferation norms. Strong partnerships between our nations and respect for these norms continue to be vital to achieving our shared goals of harnessing nuclear energy and ensuring a more peaceful world. The United States remains committed to working closely with the IAEA in establishing nuclear security guidelines, preventing the loss or theft of nuclear materials, and putting an end to the threat of nuclear terrorism - one of the greatest challenges to international security.

"The IAEA serves a critical role in monitoring nuclear programmes around the world. The United States supports these efforts and strongly encourages the IAEA to exercise its full authorities to verify Iran's adherence to each and every nuclear-related commitment under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. We will not accept a weakly enforced or inadequately monitored deal. In North Korea, the regime's actions and threats of nuclear terror should be a concern for all nations. The United States continues to consider all options to address the North Korean threat to international peace and security, and would welcome the IAEA's return to North Korea should that State finally choose a path of peace instead of nuclear provocation.

"Together, the IAEA member states can work together to build a world safe from nuclear threats and free to pursue the peaceful use of nuclear technology. On behalf of the American people, I wish all those gathered the best for a successful conference."

79. The Agency had been established 60 years before to accelerate the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity while supporting global efforts to stop the spread of nuclear weapons. Six decades later, the responsibility to guard against the malicious use of atomic energy was no less urgent.

80. Safeguards, a fundamental element of non-proliferation, were essential to achieving the fullest possible exchange of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Among its many other safeguards responsibilities, the Agency was entrusted with monitoring Iran's nuclear programme. It was

imperative that the Agency exercise its full authority in that area and verify Iran's adherence to all of its JCPOA commitments. The USA was committed to providing resources to support that mission.

81. Non-compliance, including by the DPRK and the Syrian Arab Republic, was a serious matter that must be addressed. The international community must continue to hold the Syrian Arab Republic accountable for its past construction of a clandestine nuclear reactor, and must reinforce the Agency's authority as a critical element in the international strategy to contain and walk back the DPRK's nuclear programme.

82. Compliance with non-proliferation obligations was essential, as was strengthened verification, including implementation of safeguards at the State level to ensure the absence of undeclared nuclear activities. A comprehensive safeguards agreement combined with an additional protocol had become the de facto international standard, which the USA encouraged all States to adopt.

83. As States were aware, terrorism did not recognize international boundaries. In order to combat terrorist threats effectively, States must work together to continually improve nuclear security on a global level and help ensure that all nuclear material was protected from theft or misuse.

84. Member States had made significant commitments to nuclear security. It was time, however, for those commitments to be turned into actions. All Member States should therefore subscribe to and implement the joint statements that had been highlighted at the December 2016 International Conference on Nuclear Security: Commitments and Actions. Those joint statements described specific steps that committed countries would take to prevent nuclear terrorism, including countering nuclear smuggling, mitigating insider threats and protecting nuclear material in transit. Member States would also have an opportunity to gather in Vienna in November 2017 for a conference focusing on the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities. The USA strongly supported universal adherence to the Convention, which served as the only legally binding international instrument in the area of physical protection of nuclear material. His country therefore encouraged Member States to participate in the November conference.

85. In order for the peaceful use of nuclear energy to flourish worldwide, it was necessary to address a third and vital element of safety. Nuclear safety, enhanced through the Convention on Nuclear Safety and other legal instruments, was key.

86. As President Trump had highlighted, the USA was a leader in promoting nuclear power and other peaceful applications across the globe. It had contributed over \$320 million to the Agency's work in that area since 2010. The USA was also contributing another \$3.1 million in new funding to renovate the Nuclear Applications Laboratories at Seibersdorf, bringing total US contributions for that effort to over \$15.6 million.

87. The USA made those commitments because it understood the broad benefits of nuclear power and other nuclear applications. Nuclear energy was an essential source of safe, clean, reliable and affordable power in the country and provided hundreds of thousands of competitive, high-paying jobs. The USA's nuclear industry was a worldwide leader in technology and safety.

88. In order further to enhance public acceptance of nuclear power and facilitate international civil nuclear cooperation, Member States needed to agree to common legal frameworks, such as the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage. By showing commitment to a predictable and reasonable legal structure, Member States would underscore with the public their commitment to safety.

89. Highlighting his country's continued commitment to strengthening the Agency in order to meet the challenges that lay ahead, he urged all Member States to recommit themselves to that same goal.

90. Mr TOUQAN (Jordan) congratulated the Director General on his election for a third term.
91. Jordan continued to take vigorous action to promote its nuclear energy programme. The Jordan Research and Training Reactor had been commissioned at the Jordan University for Science and Technology in December 2016. It played a pivotal role in training engineers and specialists in nuclear technology and in using the reactor to produce medical radioisotopes.
92. The SESAME project, which was hosted by Jordan, had been launched in May 2017 as the first global centre of excellence in the region. The centre, which contained a third-generation electron accelerator, was designed to promote scientific research in medicine, pharmacology, physics and other sciences. The Director General had attended the inauguration ceremony, highlighting the partnership and close cooperation between Jordan and the Agency.
93. With regard to the uranium prospecting project in central Jordan, a second report on uranium ore reserves based on the global classification standards of the Joint Ore Reserves Committee (JORC) had been published in April 2016. Prospecting and extraction activities would be resumed in accordance with international standards with a view to raising the uranium ore classification level. In addition, an economic feasibility study would be conducted concerning the funding of a commercial yellow cake production project.
94. Where the country's nuclear power plant was concerned, the Jordan Nuclear Power Company had undertaken technical studies of the site, water cooling, and the electricity network and market. It was also preparing an economic feasibility study on the construction of two small modular reactors in cooperation with the King Abdullah City of Atomic and Renewable Energy in Saudi Arabia. A final decision would be taken once the feasibility study had been completed.
95. In view of the vital importance of nuclear safety and security for the development of the Jordanian nuclear programme, the Government had adopted a nuclear safety policy. In addition, the National Assembly was currently discussing a bill on the Energy and Minerals Regulatory Commission containing comprehensive regulatory requirements for the licensing of nuclear facilities. The Agency's assistance in that regard was greatly appreciated. The Commission was expected to issue an operating licence to the Jordan Research and Training Reactor in October 2017.
96. He commended the Agency on the successful convening of the International Conference on the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme, which over the past six decades had contributed to the transfer of nuclear technology, the development of human and institutional capacity, and the promotion of international and regional cooperation between Member States. During the Conference Jordan had signed a CPF for 2018–2022, which had been prepared in consultation with relevant national bodies and in coordination with the Agency, thus ensuring that it reflected the country's needs and priorities and that it met the standards of efficiency and sustainability required to achieve social and economic development in line with national plans, particularly in the areas of electricity generation, uranium extraction, regulatory infrastructure, radioisotope production and water resource management.
97. He commended the Agency's role in supporting national efforts to raise awareness of the importance of nuclear science and technology and in incorporating sustainable development issues in educational curricula. For instance, with Agency support, a national workshop had been conducted by experts from Tokyo University on nuclear education for secondary schools, including practical tests involving radiation technology and applications.
98. Jordan believed that global partnerships played a vital role in the development of the nuclear infrastructure required to ensure the successful and efficient implementation of the country's nuclear energy programme, in particular the development of a legal and regulatory framework for all

nuclear activities in accordance with international standards. Jordan had submitted an official request to join the NSG with a view to supporting the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

99. Jordan welcomed the agreement signed by the Agency with the Chinese Government on the transport of LEU through Chinese territory to the Agency LEU Bank in Kazakhstan with a view to guaranteeing the supply to Member States.

100. In view of the importance of global nuclear security, Jordan welcomed the adoption of the Nuclear Security Plan 2018–2021 and commended the Agency on its consistent support for the strengthening of nuclear security measures that were consistent with its guidance and standards.

101. 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 applications. It reiterated its appeal to all States in the Middle East, including Israel, to accede to the NPT and place all their nuclear installations under Agency safeguards, thereby ensuring the 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 and security.

102. Jordan commended the Agency's crucial role in promoting sustainable global development through peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

103. Mr MÜNT (Estonia), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States; the candidate countries Albania, Iceland, Montenegro, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, said that the EU was fully committed to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, continued to support the universalization of the NPT, called upon States that had not yet done so to join the Treaty and underlined the importance of the Agency's safeguards system in the implementation of the Treaty.

104. The EU was committed to the full implementation by all parties of the JCPOA. While welcoming the Plan's current implementation, the EU reiterated the need for the Islamic Republic of Iran to abide strictly by all its nuclear-related commitments and to cooperate fully and in a timely manner with the Agency through implementation of its CSA and additional protocol, including by providing all requested access, which was crucial for the Agency to draw a broader conclusion.

105. The EU strongly condemned the DPRK's latest nuclear test and all the nuclear weapons and ballistic missile activities conducted by that country. The latest developments in contravention of a number of Security Council resolutions threatened international peace and security and disrupted the strategic equilibrium in Asia and beyond. The EU welcomed the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 2375 (2017) on 11 September 2017 and continued to attach the highest importance to maintaining an essential role for the Agency in verifying the DPRK's nuclear programme. There was therefore an urgent need for agreement on and adoption of a strong resolution concerning the DPRK by the General Conference.

106. The EU urged Syria to cooperate promptly and transparently with the Agency to resolve all outstanding issues, including through concluding and implementing an additional protocol as soon as possible.

107. The EU reaffirmed its full support for establishing a zone free of all WMDs and their delivery systems in the Middle East and reiterated its readiness to assist in the process leading to the establishment of such a zone.

108. The EU called for the universalization without delay of CSAs together with additional protocols. It also urged those States which had not yet amended their SQPs to do so. It strongly

supported the State-level concept and the further development and application of enhanced capabilities of analytical services, information analysis and technologies. It was actively supporting the Agency's safeguards system through the European Commission Nuclear Safeguards Support Programme to the IAEA and through the support programmes of some of its Member States.

109. The EU congratulated both Kazakhstan and the Agency on the successful construction and opening of a facility dedicated to the operation of the Agency LEU Bank and was providing approximately €25 million in support of that project.

110. The EU noted that, while the projected increase in global installed nuclear capacity had been lowered since 2010, nuclear power remained an important option for a number of Agency Member States. In that context, he stressed the importance which the EU and its Member States attached to the worldwide implementation and continuous improvement of nuclear safety and the importance of keeping at the forefront of the Agency's work the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety and the cross-cutting safety issues as defined by the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Security.

111. The EU stressed the need to prevent nuclear terrorism and the misuse of nuclear and radioactive material, strongly supported the central role of the Agency in the global nuclear security framework and welcomed the adoption of the Nuclear Security Plan 2018–2021. It called on Member States to ensure reliable and sustainable resources for those services and noted that, together with its member States, it was currently the second biggest donor to the Nuclear Security Fund.

112. The EU and its Member States continued to be strong supporters of the technical TC programme, including through the TCF and the PUI, and were the second largest contributor to the TC programme. The EU supported both the Secretariat and Member States in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology through technical expertise and with an average annual contribution of €15 million.

113. The EU attached importance to the empowerment of women and gender equality within the Secretariat.

114. Mr MATSUYAMA (Japan) congratulated the Director General on his reappointment and commended him on his efforts to tackle a number of serious challenges, such as the DPRK's nuclear development, the monitoring and verification of the implementation of the JCPOA and the promotion of the 'Atoms for Peace and Development' mission. Japan would continue to support him to the fullest extent and expected all Member States to do the same.

115. On 3 September 2017, the DPRK had conducted its sixth nuclear test in disregard of repeated protests and warnings by the international community. That was an intolerable and reckless act. The DPRK's nuclear and missile programmes posed an unprecedented, grave and imminent threat to the security of the region, Japan and the international community and a significant challenge to the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. In coordination with the international community, Japan would put maximum pressure on the DPRK and strongly urged it to refrain from any further provocations, to fully comply with relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks, and to return to compliance with the NPT and Agency safeguards. Noting the substantially stricter measures imposed by Security Council resolution 2375 (2017), Japan emphasized the importance of non-proliferation efforts by the entire international community, including the rigorous and full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

116. In 2017, the Government of Japan had published its basic nuclear energy policy, which indicated long-term policy directions for nuclear energy use in Japan, and had resumed the publication

of a white paper on nuclear energy. Japan would continue to work to enhance public understanding and confidence in nuclear energy use.

117. Five nuclear power stations, including Units 3 and 4 of the Takahama nuclear power plant, were currently online in Japan, and it intended to restart other nuclear power stations once their safety had been confirmed.

118. Japan also continued to promote its nuclear fuel cycle, which was the most transparent in the world, by steadily consuming its plutonium in the course of plutonium thermal power generation, reinforcing the governance of reprocessing projects and advancing transparency and confidence-building measures, including through the publication of its report on the status of plutonium management in Japan, while adhering to the principle of not possessing plutonium without specific purposes and under the stringent application of Agency safeguards.

119. The importance of developing a fast reactor remained unchanged. Japan would move forward with its development based on the policy adopted at the end of 2016. It would also promote back-end measures by publishing a nationwide map of scientific characteristics.

120. Over the past six years, Japan had been actively working to enhance nuclear safety, drawing from the lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident, including by fundamentally reforming the regulatory structures in Japan.

121. Japan was making steady progress in decommissioning work and in the management of contaminated water at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, and issues could now be addressed as planned. Environmental remediation activities were also progressing, with decontamination measures being completed as planned in the areas for which the Government of Japan was responsible. Furthermore, owing to the various measures taken to secure food safety and to the results of inspections under strict standards, many countries had already confirmed the safety of Japanese food and lifted import restrictions. Japan called on all countries to do the same based on scientific evidence.

122. Building on the recommendations and suggestions of the 2016 IRRS missions, Japan had been working to improve nuclear regulations, for instance by amending legislation in April 2017 to introduce a new regulatory inspection system. In August 2017, Japan had requested that the Agency conduct an IRRS follow-up mission. In the meantime, Japanese operators were continuing their own efforts, including by receiving the Agency's OSART mission.

123. Japan would continue to share its experience from the Fukushima Daiichi accident with the international community and contribute to enhancing nuclear safety worldwide. It would take an active part in the 2018 Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. It would also continue to support the activities of the RANET Capacity Building Centre in Fukushima and assist in the development of infrastructure and human resources in countries introducing new nuclear power plants.

124. Japan looked forward to the Agency's further contribution towards achieving the SDGs. In the past year, Japan had provided more than \$5 million in financial support for the PUI and had continued to support Member States by strengthening partnerships between the Agency and development agencies, including the Japan International Cooperation Agency, and the private sector, and by promoting the further involvement of Japanese experts in regional frameworks such as the Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology. In addition, Japan highlighted the importance of international cooperation in the research and development of nuclear fusion based on the outcomes of the IAEA Fusion Energy Conference held in Japan in 2016.

125. Japan upheld the Agency's central role in nuclear security. In 2017, it had hosted the plenary meeting of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, to which positive contributions had been made by the Japan Atomic Energy Agency's Integrated Support Centre for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Nuclear Security. In February 2017, Japan had requested that the Agency conduct an IPPAS follow-up mission in autumn 2018. Japan would also strengthen measures to counter nuclear terrorism at major public events with the Agency's support, in preparation for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

126. The Agency safeguards were the most important instrument in ensuring nuclear non-proliferation and Japan supported the efforts by the Agency work to make the safeguards system more effective and more efficient. Japan also attached importance to the universalization of the comprehensive safeguards agreement and its additional protocols, which it would continue to promote through frameworks such as the Asian Senior-Level Talks on Non-Proliferation and the Asia-Pacific Safeguards Network. Japan stood behind the Agency in its efforts to prepare for the resumption of inspections in the DPRK and strongly urged that country to abandon its nuclear and missile development and to take tangible steps to achieve the verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

127. Japan emphasized the significance of promoting cooperation in the field of non-proliferation by enhancing transparency in both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States.

128. Japan supported the JCPOA and hoped for its continued implementation, in which the Agency played a crucial monitoring and verification role. In September 2017, working in cooperation with the Agency, Japan would be providing safeguards training for Iran to facilitate the implementation of the JCPOA.

129. As an original Member State of the Agency and a leading country in atomic power, Japan reiterated its commitment to further promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and strengthening nuclear non-proliferation.

130. Mr TANG Dengjie read out the following message from Mr Li Keqiang, the Premier of the Chinese State Council:

“On the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the Agency, I hereby, on behalf of the Chinese Government, would like to express my warm congratulations to the Agency. Over the years, the Agency has carried out close cooperation with its Member States in the areas of nuclear energy technologies, safety and security and made important contributions to the international community in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, in keeping with its statutory purpose.

“Looking to the future, we believe that the Agency, by upholding the mandate of Atoms for Peace and Development, will play an ever bigger role in achieving the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. China has put forward the concept of innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development such as the Belt and Road initiative and considers the development of nuclear energy as one of the most important methods of optimizing the energy mix while protecting the environment. China is willing, in a spirit of openness, inclusiveness and mutual benefit, to continue to work together with the Agency and its Member States to promote the safe, efficient and sustainable development of global nuclear energy and make unremitting efforts for global peace, prosperity and development.”

131. China's nuclear energy industry was continuing its rapid development. In 2016, seven nuclear power units had become operational and the construction of four NPPs using China's independently developed third-generation technology, Hualong One, was progressing smoothly and ahead of

schedule. The CAP1400, a large advanced pressurized water reactor, and the ACP100, a small modular multi-purpose reactor, were ready to become operational. The demonstration high temperature gas-cooled reactor project was also progressing smoothly and the construction of a demonstration fast reactor would soon commence.

132. China's nuclear energy industry was extensively involved in international cooperation and exchange activities. It had signed a transit agreement with the Agency for the LEU Bank and China's safeguards analytical laboratory had become an accredited member of the Agency's Network of Analytical Laboratories. China was willing to share its experience with all other countries and welcomed qualified candidates from emerging nuclear power countries to apply for its recently established atomic energy scholarships.

133. China followed a rational, cognitive and balanced approach to safety within its nuclear power development programme and had recently passed new nuclear safety legislation. In 2017, a Year of Improving Nuclear Power Safety Management Capacity had been launched and China actively supported the central role of the Agency in international cooperation on nuclear security. An IPPAS mission had been successfully completed in September 2017. China had supported the Ghana MNSR LEU conversion project and was willing to work with other countries on similar projects. It was also willing to use the Centre of Excellence for Nuclear Security as a platform to work with countries in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

134. It was a tenet of traditional Chinese culture that a new cycle of development began every 60 years. The global nuclear energy industry currently faced both opportunities and challenges in which the Agency should play a more significant role. The Agency should focus on three main areas. First, it should promote the sustainable development of nuclear energy and technology by harnessing the best global resources in order to provide more targeted technical support and services to Member States through its TC programme, in pursuit of the SDGs. Second, the Agency should enhance nuclear safety and security by attaching great importance to the development of nuclear safety standards and nuclear security guidelines, strengthening peer review services, assisting Member States in capacity building and working hard to build a robust global nuclear safety and security system. Third, the Agency should reinforce the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the safeguards system by further promoting the universality of the CSA and its additional protocol, strengthening nuclear safeguards and analytical capacity, maintaining close communication with Member States and engaging in joint efforts to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of nuclear safeguards, while ensuring impartiality and objectivity.

135. Mr FRIMPONG-BOATENG (Ghana) said that his country was undertaking various nuclear infrastructure development activities and working to ensure the delivery of a sustainable nuclear energy programme in a safe, secure and efficient manner.

136. A phase 1 INIR mission, as requested by Ghana, had been successfully conducted in January 2017 and the report submitted to the Government of Ghana on 24 May 2017 and had subsequently been published on the Agency website. Ghana assured the international community that it would address fully all the report's recommendations and suggestions.

137. With the help of the USA through the Global Threat Reduction Initiative, Ghana had successfully completed the conversion of its research reactor from HEU to LEU fuel and had successfully repatriated the HEU fuel to China in August 2017 in line with the project and supply agreement signed by Ghana, China and the Agency in 1994.

138. The Agency had conducted an ORPAS mission at Ghana's request in December 2016 with a team of three international experts and the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission acting as the national

contact point. The final report had been submitted to the Government of Ghana in July 2017 and the country would ensure the implementation of all the report's recommendations.

139. As part of its long-term management strategy for disused sealed radioactive sources, Ghana had decided to use the borehole method for the disposal of disused sealed sources system, as developed by the Agency. Implementation of that process was being led by the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission, with financial and technical assistance from the Agency's TC programme and funding from the Canadian Government.

140. Food and animal production in Ghana was hampered significantly by pests and diseases that were flourishing owing to climate change and other ecological factors. The sterile insect technique (SIT) had successfully sterilized insect males using gamma radiation and SIT studies were currently in progress for the control of fruit flies, fall armyworms and anopheles mosquitos. The Ghana Atomic Energy Commission and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research of Ghana were undertaking a mutation breeding project on African oil palm, with the aim of developing dwarf or semi-dwarf mutant varieties with high fruit and oil yield and resistant to Fusarium wilt and drought.

141. Ghana continued to provide support for nuclear education and training at its School of Nuclear and Allied Sciences, a regional designated centre for professional training and higher education in nuclear science and technology, radiation protection and medical physics education. With its recently expanded physical infrastructure, the School was expected to help increase admission numbers and provide a congenial environment for the training of scientists and engineers in nuclear science and technology and Ghana remained grateful to the Agency for that opportunity.

142. The Nuclear Regulatory Authority, Ghana, had been admitted as an active recipient of the Regulatory Cooperation Forum and was scheduled to meet Forum officers to identify areas of cooperation and assistance for the coming years. It had also recently concluded arrangements with the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the exchange of technical information and cooperation in nuclear safety matters.

143. Ghana had participated in the Seventh Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, during which challenges and areas of good performance had been identified. The country was working hard to satisfy all the conditions required for nuclear safety.

144. Mr OSMAN (Bangladesh) said that his country took pride in its ever-growing relationship with the Agency. In May 2017, the Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, had attended the International Conference on the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme: Sixty Years and Beyond – Contributing to Development. The Director General had visited Bangladesh for the second time in July 2017 and had seen the progress made in the construction of the country's first NPP, in Rooppur.

145. Bangladesh was one of the fastest growing economies of the world and had made significant social and economic progress in recent years. The Government's 'Vision 2021' and 'Vision 2041' initiatives aimed to elevate Bangladesh to an upper middle income country by 2021 and a top-ranking developed nation by 2041.

146. Access to clean, reliable and affordable energy was a precondition for sustainable economic growth and improved human well-being, as it affected health, education and job opportunities. The power sector of Bangladesh would be required to cope with rapid increases in demand to support higher economic growth. Owing to limited indigenous energy resources, nuclear power had been identified as a viable component of the overall energy mix for Bangladesh.

147. Bangladesh considered nuclear energy to be a safe, environmentally friendly and economically viable source of electricity generation and had started construction of the Rooppur NPP under bilateral cooperation arrangements with the Russian Federation. It was working closely with the Agency in

establishing the Rooppur NPP by following Agency guidelines to create its national nuclear infrastructure and implementing the jointly developed Integrated Work Plan for infrastructure development. The process of training personnel for the safe operation and maintenance of the NPP had begun under its operating organization, the Nuclear Power Plant Company Bangladesh, with assistance from the Russian Federation. Bangladesh was also collaborating with India in the area of national capacity building to ensure the safe and secure implementation of the nuclear power programme.

148. The Bangladesh Atomic Energy Regulatory Authority had been regulating and overseeing all safety and security aspects and the nuclear power generation programme was fully in line with the country's longstanding position on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

149. Through the TC programme, the Agency had been cooperating with and assisting Bangladesh in human resource development and capacity building for the introduction, development and peaceful use of nuclear technology in various sectors, such as nuclear infrastructure, livestock, agriculture, health, industry and water management. The development of human resources through TC projects had been particularly successful.

150. The Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology would continue to promote regional capabilities and expertise in areas such as energy, health, agriculture, industry and the environment, research reactors, radioactive waste management, nuclear safety and radiation protection, and Bangladesh had hosted the Agreement's 39th meeting in Cox's Bazar in April 2017.

151. Mr ELMARKABI (Egypt) said that his country was making efforts to develop a peaceful nuclear programme in order to meet its growing needs in the areas of economic and industrial development. Egypt was working to ensure that its nuclear programme was supported by a comprehensive legislative and technical framework, overseen by national experts of the highest levels of rigour and professionalism, in order to guarantee the safety and security of the nuclear power plants which Egypt would build in the coming years. Four nuclear electricity-generating units, each with a capacity of 1200 MW, were scheduled for construction; the annual consumption level of nuclear power in Egypt was currently 30 800 MW and was predicted to rise to 55 000 by 2025.

152. Egypt had made great progress towards completing the executive aspects of its nuclear power project in conjunction with its strategic partner, the Russian Federation. Construction had started on the country's first NPP, in Al Dabaa region, which would have a capacity of around 4800 MW. In addition, the technical, financial and legal aspects related to finalizing the design contracts, guaranteeing the supply of nuclear fuel, securing advisory services for the operation and maintenance of the plant and organizing the management of spent fuel had been completed.

153. Egypt upheld consistently the principle of transparency during its efforts to meet its obligations under the NPT. In that connection, its continued cooperation with the Agency was a cornerstone of the close relationship that it had developed with the Secretariat, which Egypt valued. The most recent visit of the Director General to Egypt in 2015 — during which he had listened to the views of the Egyptian Government and discussed its vision for generating nuclear power — was one manifestation of that relationship.

154. The TC programme was essential to facilitating the transfer of peaceful nuclear technology to Member States, in line with article 4 of the NPT, which stated that all Parties thereto had the alienable right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The Agency played a pivotal role in the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. All Member States needed to support and protect that aspect of the Agency's work, which was part of its statutory mandate. The transfer of peaceful nuclear

technology was one of the Agency's central objectives; the success of the Agency's work to that end was the yardstick against which the Agency's progress towards its mandated goals could be measured.

155. Egypt therefore urged the Agency to continue to make efforts to support and strengthen its technical cooperation with developing States, without conditions or restrictions, as such cooperation boosted the rate of economic, scientific and technological development in participating States and would help developing countries to achieve the SDGs.

156. Despite the fact that Egypt had paid its contribution to the TCF in full, the resources available for technical cooperation, as required to carry out the agreed programmes and activities, remained insufficient and unsecured. Although contributions to the TCF were voluntary, Member States had a political obligation to pay them.

157. Egypt spared no effort to make its nuclear research facilities available for training purposes for Arab and African personnel working in the field of nuclear applications, in particular under the framework of AFRA, which Egypt was currently chairing. In 2016, Egypt had held numerous training sessions, with 142 participants from other African countries. Egypt requested that the Secretariat further share with Egypt its experience in the area of human resources training and that it conduct more regional seminars and workshops in Egypt for trainers from all developing countries.

158. Egypt underscored the importance of the Agency's verification and monitoring activities designed to ensure the non-diversion of nuclear materials. The comprehensive safeguards programme was the legal cornerstone of the Agency's safeguards system in accordance with the NPT; the Agency's work to ensure the universalization of the comprehensive safeguards system was therefore essential. Efforts to develop the safeguards system should not place any additional obligations on States beyond their existing contractual obligations, in order to prevent discrimination between Member States and the politicization of the standards that formed the basis of verification activities.

159. The universalization of the comprehensive safeguards system was an essential step towards establishing a WMD-free zone in the Middle East and enabling the people of the region to live without the threat of such weapons. Egypt was continuing to make every effort to establish such a zone and to ensure that all nuclear facilities in the region were placed under the Agency's comprehensive safeguards. It called on the Director General to take all necessary steps to implement the resolution that Egypt presented each year to the General Conference, which contained a request that the Agency implement its safeguards in the Middle East and place all nuclear facilities under the safeguards system. Notwithstanding the support for the resolution each year by Member States, no real action had been taken to implement it, owing to the refusal by one State in the Middle East region to place its nuclear facilities under the Agency's comprehensive safeguards.

160. Egypt lamented the apparent lack of political will to implement the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East and called on the sponsors of the Resolution to uphold their responsibilities and make serious efforts to implement it. Adoption of the Resolution had been one of the main elements that had enabled the indefinite extension of the NPT. Now more than ever did steps need to be taken to rid the Middle East of nuclear weapons and other WMDs, given that the continued failure to implement the resolution openly undermined the validity of the NPT, which was a pillar of the non-proliferation regime. Egypt underscored the urgent need for the international community to make efforts to achieve the universalization of the NPT and called on the States that had refused to accede to the NPT to do so as non-nuclear-weapon States.

161. Egypt reiterated its unwavering support for the efforts made in the area of nuclear security. The most important aspect of nuclear security was the need for nuclear security measures to be applied to all nuclear materials, without exception, including those used for military purposes, in particular

nuclear weapons. Furthermore, nuclear security was the responsibility of each State and should be extended to the State's natural resources.

162. He reaffirmed the faith that his country placed in the important role played by the Agency in supervising a wide range of activities designed to support and strengthen the contribution made by the peaceful uses of nuclear energy to achieving progress and prosperity for all people.

163. In conclusion, he reported that Egypt had commenced the legal steps required to ratify the amendment to Article VI of the Agency's Statute on expanding the membership of the Board in order to grant an additional two seats to the African region: one by appointment and the other by election.

164. Mr CARDOZO ROMAN (Paraguay), welcoming Grenada as a new Member State of the Agency, said that its membership reflected the commitment of Latin America and the Caribbean to the Agency and to the peaceful development of nuclear energy and applications.

165. Noting the progress in nuclear technology worldwide and the accompanying safety actions he cautioned that the increased movement of nuclear material heightened the risk of that material ending up in the wrong hands. For that reason, Paraguay welcomed the progress made in achieving global nuclear safety. In that respect, with the entry into force of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, to which his country was a party, States' obligations to protect nuclear facilities and material throughout their lifetime and the criminalization of any form of sabotage, whether it involved trafficking in nuclear material or information exchange, undoubtedly represented significant progress. The regulatory framework established to date would be an efficient tool with which to achieve effective nuclear safety.

166. Through the country's Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Authority, his Government had improved the effectiveness of the national legal and regulatory framework in the nuclear and radiological fields and in promoting regional and international exchanges.

167. Information policies and the effective and efficient transfer to the relevant professionals of practical knowledge relating to nuclear technology were essential to address real needs and improve people's wellbeing. In the interests of transparency in the development of nuclear energy, his country urged all States to facilitate information exchange while complying with international law and promoting good faith in the performance of their existing endeavours.

168. Like other peace-loving countries, Paraguay unequivocally condemned the incessant nuclear and ballistic tests conducted by the DPRK, which were a provocation and a flagrant breach of international law and which threatened the stability of the Korean Peninsula. Paraguay joined the international community in urging the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons programme, comply with Security Council resolutions and grant the Agency access to its nuclear facilities for the conduct of safeguards inspections.

169. It was vital to move towards a world without nuclear weapons. The only truly effective guarantee against the use or threatened use of those weapons was complete and verified nuclear disarmament. The promotion of NWFZs was a practical and effective way to verify nuclear disarmament because those zones represented a hugely important step towards complete and general nuclear disarmament under international control. Accordingly, his country encouraged the establishment of more such zones in other regions as a matter of priority.

170. Turning to the Agency's TC programme, he noted national projects under way in Paraguay and its participation in projects within the regional programme for Latin America and the Caribbean. There was growing and sustained cooperation in the areas of human health, radiation protection and food security. He also highlighted the important role played by ARCAL. After two years of fruitful work,

Paraguay was leaving the Secretariat of the Board of ARCAL and it encouraged other countries to give sustained support to the programme so that it could continue its valuable work.

171. His country highlighted the work of the Ibero–American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies, which had celebrated its 20th anniversary in June and had continued its efforts to maintain radiological and nuclear safety and security at the highest level in States members and the Ibero–American region as a whole. He hoped that, through synergy with the Agency, the Forum’s results would continue to be widely disseminated, with the aim of promoting nuclear safety worldwide.

172. In conclusion, he reaffirmed Paraguay’s commitment to implementing the SDGs and promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy in accordance with the Agency’s international nuclear instruments.

173. Mr SALIM (Sudan) congratulated the Director General on his election for a third term.

174. The Sudan had continued to support the implementation of Agency programmes in 2016 and 2017 by hosting regional and international activities such as workshops, coordinating meetings and training courses.

175. Major progress had been achieved in the Sudanese legislative and regulatory framework. An Act regulating nuclear and radiological activities had been approved by Parliament in early 2017 and had entered into force in February 2017. Pursuant to the Act, from May 2017 the National Nuclear and Radiological Regulatory Authority had been strengthened with a General Secretariat and a Management Board in May 2017. Technical committees had been set up to draft and update nuclear and radiation safety and security regulations based on the Act. The Agency had supported the Regulatory Authority through human and material capacity building.

176. The Sudan was continuing to develop the infrastructure required to implement its nuclear programme and build its first NPP. It had drawn on the Agency’s expertise in organizing national workshops on funding, integrated management and the regulatory framework, together with professional training courses. Sudanese personnel had also attended training courses, technical meetings, seminars and workshops organized by the Agency. Initial surveys had been conducted to identify a site for the plant and further detailed studies would be undertaken in late 2017.

177. The Sudan had prepared a self-assessment report on its nuclear programme and had hosted an Agency mission in the first quarter of 2017 to review the report, which had been updated in light of the Agency experts’ observations. It was planned to host an INIR mission in 2018.

178. Memoranda of understanding and agreements had been signed with China and the Russian Federation with a view to boosting relations with two States that possessed reliable nuclear technology. The Sudan looked forward to cooperating with them in building its first NPPs.

179. The Sudanese Government had developed a national project with the Agency on the establishment of a reference laboratory for food security, with a view to measuring the residue of insecticides, fertilizers and antibiotics in animal and plant products, thereby helping to prevent the spread of malignant tumours. In view of the importance of the project, the Sudan was covering 80% of the cost of its establishment.

180. The Sudan had hosted an international meeting of member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Islamic Development Bank and the Agency to study cancer control programmes and bridge funding gaps in the participating countries. Budget funds had been allocated under the Sudanese national cancer control programme for the establishment of five new centres. It was hoped that donor States and organizations would provide support for the implementation of the programme.

181. A number of food security projects were being implemented under the TC programme, particularly with a view to inducing plant mutations to address problems stemming from the extremely high temperatures and water shortages so prevalent in the Sudan.

182. FAO and the Agency had cooperated with the Sudan in developing highly successful small-scale agricultural projects for rural women with a view to rationalizing the use of water and fertilizers.

183. The Sudan welcomed the Agency's close cooperation in building national capacity in priority areas under the national CPF signed in 2015.

184. The Sudan and the Agency had developed a joint plan on nuclear security, combating terrorism and illegal trafficking. It included a strategy to detect unregulated radioactive sources and nuclear material, and a cost-sharing project to equip border crossing points. Staff training courses had been launched and the first portion of the requisite equipment had been received. The project would support local, regional and international peace and security.

185. The Sudan was committed to full compliance with its obligations under all relevant instruments that it had ratified. It was essential to urge all States that had acceded to such instruments to ratify them in order to create an environment conducive to nuclear and radiation safety and security. The Sudan was deeply concerned by recent events in the Korean Peninsula and called on the DPRK to abide by all international instruments and resolutions, to return to the NPT and to cooperate with the Agency.

186. Mr YAMANI (Saudi Arabia) said that his country had always taken measured steps to ensure the success of its nuclear energy programme in accordance with the highest international standards, based on its conviction that nuclear energy was a motor for stability and sustainable development. It could likewise be a factor in Saudi Arabia's INDC under economic diversification and adaptation. In that regard, Saudi Arabia had sought to develop advanced programmes geared towards the peaceful use of nuclear energy in power generation, seawater desalination and health care in order to maximize the economic benefit that the country drew from its energy resources, principally oil, in order to meet the expected rise in domestic consumption, while maintaining the highest environmental and safety standards, transparency and regional and international cooperation.

187. Saudi Arabia had approved a national nuclear energy project designed to achieve sustainable development at the domestic level. As the project envisaged the installation of large-scale nuclear reactors, Saudi Arabia was conducting technical and economic feasibility studies and a detailed site selection study for the construction of NPPs in line with Agency standards and global best practices. The project also included the construction of SMRs and capacity building in the associated techniques and, to that end, Saudi Arabia had forged strategic SMR partnerships, including with the Republic of Korea on a project for the construction of a system-integrated modular advanced reactor (SMART) which had an outstanding safety profile and could be built in remote areas independent of power grids. In addition, Saudi Arabia was cooperating with China in the development of high temperature gas-cooled reactors, which offered advantages through various non-power applications in the petrochemical industries and seawater desalination.

188. The project also included a uranium procurement and domestic production programme, representing the first step on the path to self-sufficiency in nuclear fuel and to the building of capacity in uranium ore recovery. Lastly, it foresaw the establishment of an independent nuclear and radiological safety regulatory commission, which should be in place by late 2018 and would benefit from experience Saudi Arabia had garnered from its long-standing collaboration with the Finnish Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority.

189. A package of laws to regulate the domestic nuclear energy sector in Saudi Arabia was currently at the final stage of approval, following an Agency review mission in February 2017. Saudi Arabia was also developing a human resource development programme, which involved sending participants to advanced countries to attain higher technical qualifications.

190. Any investment in nuclear energy must consider safety culture as a crucial component of ensuring safety around the world. Saudi Arabia called on all States that either already possessed or were planning to develop nuclear energy programmes to accede to and apply the Convention on Nuclear Safety and expressed its concern that there were nuclear activities being conducted in its region that were not subject to international conventions or oversight.

191. In Saudi Arabia's view, a balance should be maintained between States' nuclear security obligations and their right to the peaceful applications of nuclear energy, but there should be no encroachment upon their legitimate right to nuclear techniques: such encroachments could negatively affect collaboration in nuclear security.

192. His country was equally troubled by the lack of progress towards universal nuclear disarmament, as the continued presence and proliferation of nuclear weapons posed a constant threat. It was vital to agree on a unified global strategy to limit that threat by placing restrictions on high-risk nuclear material and working towards complete disarmament, specifically in the Middle East, which was the ultimate goal of global non-proliferation and nuclear security efforts. In that regard, Saudi Arabia had called for the adoption of a legally binding international instrument for nuclear disarmament.

193. As announced at the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit, Saudi Arabia had pledged \$10 million for the establishment of an international anti-nuclear terrorism centre at the Agency. As a nuclear security training and support centre for major public events, it would provide all Member States with the necessary training programmes to deal with potential nuclear threats to major public gatherings, including in the detection and proper handling of radioactive sources. Saudi Arabia called on Member States to make material contributions to the centre and support in the form of the exchange of experiences and of research and development in the area.

194. In closing, he expressed his country's hope that the common goal of a world in which stability prevailed and humanity flourished could one day be achieved.

195. Ms MINDAOUDOU SOULEY (Niger) expressed concern at recent acts by State and non-State actors that had undermined global peace and security and posed a serious threat to humanity. The Niger called on all parties to show greater respect for their fellow humans, and to conclude and comply with international agreements. For its part, the international community should provide the Agency with the appropriate means to perform its duties. As CSAs and additional protocols were a vital part of that process, the creation of a West African network, as recommended at a meeting held in Niamey in the context of the Niger-Japan initiative, should be supported in order to promote regional peace and security.

196. The country's highest authorities were committed to implementing a sustainable, balanced, participatory and inclusive process of social and economic development, encompassing nuclear sciences and technologies, safety and environmental protection for the benefit of current and future generations. The Niger planned to conduct its nuclear activities in a transparent manner, and to assume its responsibilities in line with the policy adopted in the context of strengthened international cooperation.

197. Her country had taken a number of decisive steps towards the safe and secure use of nuclear sciences and technologies thanks to the support and assistance provided by technical partners. The

broad lines of technical cooperation between the Niger and the Agency were defined under the CPF for 2016–2021. The relevant conventions and treaties had been ratified, an independent nuclear regulatory and safety authority was being set up, the Government had adopted a law on safety, security and the peaceful use of atomic energy, and several national plans and strategies had been produced and implemented.

198. In the area of food security, nuclear techniques had made it possible to combat major livestock diseases and emerging zoonoses, increase the productivity of the millet and cowpea growing system, and develop improved varieties of drought-resistant millet, thereby contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the country's drive towards self-sufficiency, known as the 3N Initiative.

199. Her country was actively participating in the regional project on the integrated and sustainable management of aquifer systems and shared basins in the Sahel region. In that context, the Niger had significantly improved the understanding of the water resources that it shared with Chad, Mali and Nigeria, and had discovered new shallow aquifers in the west and centre of the country. Her country would continue to explore other areas, in particular those highlighted in the preliminary stage of identification of sites in which it might be possible to build nuclear power stations under the nuclear power programme.

200. Nuclear activities in the area of human health were well established, and had had a positive impact through the treatment of certain diseases and the reduced cost of medical evacuations. Cooperation with the Agency had strengthened the work of the Nuclear Medicine Department, which had become a regional reference centre. The Niger had also established and equipped a national cancer centre, acting in line the recommendations of an Agency-led assessment mission. Her country was following with close interest the efforts to adapt the SIT to the anopheles mosquito, and urged the Agency to continue its work in that area.

201. Identification and assessment of the nuclear potential of the Niger, which was already a major global producer and supplier of uranium, had led to the discovery of significant new thorium and uranium deposits. Following an analysis of its energy supply and demand, the Niger had drawn up a national strategy on implementing the nuclear power programme, based on the Milestones approach. It had also recently conducted a self-assessment exercise and a comprehensive pre-feasibility study to analyse the 19 essential areas, and one non-essential area, in relation to water resource availability, and had requested an INIR mission. Working through the West African Integrated Nuclear Power Group, the West African region also planned to combine national efforts and pool capacities, thus ensuring maximum social and economic benefits. In view of the particular circumstances of the Sahelo-Saharan region, the Government was obliged to strengthen both general and nuclear security through the implementation of an effective and sustainable national nuclear security regime that formed part of the national domestic security strategy. In that context, the Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan had recently undergone its second review. The actions, measures and new priorities and facts had been taken into account in all functional areas.

202. The National Science, Technology and Innovation Policy included the setting up of modules in the nuclear sciences and technologies as part of diploma courses, the acquisition of a nuclear research reactor, the pooling of national capacities, and taking advantage of opportunities offered by the AFRA Network for Education in Science and Technology. The Niger had benefited from training and other types of support provided by the Agency in priority areas, through national, regional and interregional projects. In addition, a number of national and regional activities had successfully been held in Niamey in collaboration with the Agency and other partners.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.