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Abbreviations used in this record:

AAEA	Arab Atomic Energy Agency
ABACC	Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials
AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
AFRA-NEST	AFRA Network for Education in Science and Technology
ARCAL	Co-operation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
AU-PATTEC	African Union's Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CSA	comprehensive safeguards agreement
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
CTBTO	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EU	European Union
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
FORO	Ibero-American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies
GCC	Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf
GEM	Group of Eminent Persons (CTBTO)
IMS	International Monitoring System
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
INSSP	Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan
IRSN	Institut de Radioprotection et de Sûreté Nucléaire (Institute for Radiological Protection and Nuclear Safety France)
ITER	International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
LEU	low enriched uranium
NPP	nuclear power plant
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review and Extension Conference	Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NSF	Nuclear Security Fund
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group
NTI	Nuclear Threat Initiative
NUSSC	Nuclear Safety Standards Committee
NWAL	Network of Analytical Laboratories
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
NWS	nuclear-weapon State
OAS	Organization of American States
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD/NEA	Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OIE	World Organisation for Animal Health
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
OPANAL	Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PUI	Peaceful Uses Initiative
RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ReNuAL	Renovation of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories
Revised Guiding Principles	The Revised Guiding Principles and General Operating Rules to Govern the Provision of Technical Assistance by the Agency

Abbreviations used in this record (continued):

RSA	Revised Supplementary Agreement Concerning the Provision of Technical Assistance by the International Atomic Energy Agency
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TC	technical cooperation
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
WMD	weapons of mass destruction

8. General debate and Annual Report for 2016 (resumed) (GC(61)/3 and additional information)

1. Mr KOIRALA (Nepal), complimenting Mr Amano on his re-election, said that under his leadership the Agency had made significant progress. The Agency had promptly responded to Nepal's request for support after the 2015 earthquake, helping to verify the integrity of key infrastructure and cultural heritage sites. Mr Amano's visit to Nepal in 2017 had brought new momentum to Nepal's fruitful cooperation with the Agency.

2. His country said that the Agency's motto, "Atoms for Peace and Development", reflected Nepal's own principles and aspirations. Nepal had firmly maintained that facilitating peaceful nuclear activities and furthering the research and development of that vital technology was in the common interest of humankind. A globally recognized framework was necessary to attain those goals. The Agency's safeguards system was just that — a framework that could effectively channel achievements in nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes.

3. As one of the original signatories to the NPT, Nepal had signed the agreement on the application of safeguards with firm conviction. The country's active involvement with the Agency had come rather late; it had become a Member only in 2008, joined its Technical Assistance programme in 2012 and established its residential Mission in Vienna at the end of 2016.

4. As the first step in creating a robust national regulatory framework to ensure global nuclear security and safety, a nuclear law had been drafted and circulated among national stakeholders. It was now in the process of being submitted for approval.

5. Since signing the RSA and Fifth Agreement to Extend the 1987 RCA in 2012, Nepal had received valuable support for its 31 capacity building projects in such areas as national infrastructure for radiation safety; radiation health-service infrastructure; animal productivity; trans-boundary diseases; improved crop yields for food security; education in nuclear physics and chemistry; and non-destructive testing. Those projects had involved training sessions, workshops, fellowships and scientific visits. They had also secured the provision of equipment to a few leading academic and scientific institutions in Nepal.

6. In addition, the Agency had deployed several expert missions to Nepal to address nuclear science and technology under the project framework, providing additional training for Nepali professionals in that field. Nuclear medical services had expanded, leading to the more effective and affordable diagnosis and treatment of cancer. Animal productivity had increased and improvements made in the control of transboundary diseases.

7. Technical cooperation had played a central role in developing the peaceful uses of atomic energy in countries such as Nepal, which were lagging behind in nuclear science and technology. Technical cooperation was of great importance in helping countries to attain the SDGs and comprehensively to comply with the safeguard regime. Nepal called upon all Member States to further strengthen the Agency's TC programme.

8. Safeguards and global non-proliferation were crucial to attainment of the goals of atoms for peace and development. While there was wide adherence to those principles, they had been repeatedly flouted by the DPRK. Nepal regretted that the DPRK had disregarded the repeated calls by the UN Security Council and the international community and had persisted in its nuclear tests, in grave

detriment to international non-proliferation efforts and to peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. Nepal appealed to the DPRK to return to the NPT framework and open itself up to the Agency's verification regime.

9. Mr SOW (Senegal) congratulated Mr Amano on his re-election as Director General of the Agency. His country also welcomed Grenada, whose application for membership of the Agency had been approved.

10. Senegal was fully satisfied with the Agency's endeavours to promote peaceful nuclear technology, safety and security and to strengthen the application of safeguards and response capabilities. Senegal was committed to using nuclear energy for peaceful applications in a transparent, safe and sustainable manner. Having ratified most international conventions and agreements on nuclear safety and having acceded to the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources it could thus participate fully in strengthening international cooperation on transport control and in combating nuclear terrorism and trafficking in radioactive sources and nuclear material.

11. Senegal would participate actively in strengthening the international nuclear safety and security and non-proliferation regimes and had made the necessary arrangements to ratify the 2017 Amendment to the CPPNM and the additional protocol to its safeguards agreement. Senegal invited all Member States to respect their obligations to the NPT.

12. Senegal reaffirmed its resolve to respond in a comprehensive manner to all nuclear threats. While aware that nuclear security was the responsibility of each State, his country was of the opinion that collective action and sustained international cooperation was necessary to keep attention focused on the matter.

13. Senegal expressed its gratitude to the Agency for assisting it to adopt an INSSP in 2014. Likewise, it expressed its gratitude to the US Department of Energy and the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission for their support in nuclear security and to the Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Authority for its national inventory of ionizing radiation sources in Senegal.

14. In company with most developing countries, Senegal was having to deal with the management of disused sources and sources left over from pre-independence days. In both cases the issue at hand was repatriation to the country of origin. Senegal called on supplier countries and the Agency to help find a solution to the problems that temporary storage was posing to radiation protection.

15. Senegal had welcomed the creation of AFRA-NEST to encourage national and regional collaboration in viable nuclear education. His country intended to set up an AFRA-NEST network using the capacities of the Virtual University of Senegal, which had opened in 2013. A diploma for special studies in nuclear medicine and radiotherapy had been introduced in Cheikh Anta Diop University in 2016. Elementary education modules in radioprotection and nuclear security had already been offered in Senegal's Institute of Applied Nuclear Technology and specialized courses on nuclear applications in health, industry and other sectors, were in the pipeline.

16. Senegal had adhered to the objectives of INPRO and had actively participated in the International Framework for Nuclear Energy Cooperation and the Agency's regional African project (RAF2010) on capacity development and energy planning. For the next budget cycle his country had introduced a training project on creating a research reactor.

17. Expressing his country's gratitude to the Agency for its continued support to make the Niayes area a tsetse-free zone, he noted that Senegal had become the leader in tsetse fly control in the West African subregion.

18. Under the guidance of the President of Senegal, the Minister of Higher Education and Research had been setting up a technical support platform for research and innovation and an Institute of Advanced Science and Technology which would lead to the creation of a platform for nuclear physics and applications.

19. Senegal would make every effort to develop its cooperation with the Agency and international community in line with the Agency's motto "Atoms for Peace and Development".

20. Ms NGIRABLOSCH (Palau) expressed appreciation for the continued support and assistance provided to Palau by the Agency. Efforts needed to be made to strengthen the Agency so as to ensure that future generations lived in peace and prosperity and that nuclear dangers were a distant memory. Palau supported fully the Agency's work and was strongly committed to its goals of promoting the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear energy and preventing nuclear proliferation.

21. As a non-nuclear-weapon State, Palau supported the Agency's work to achieve a world without nuclear weapons. She called on Member States to strengthen the role played by the Agency in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in a safe and secure manner, consistent with the international non-proliferation norms, and to ensure that the Agency had the necessary resources and was able to use its full authority to verify compliance with the safeguards agreements.

22. Expressing full support for the Agency's Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, Palau called on the Agency continue to increase its focus on nuclear security while helping each Member State develop an INSSP.

23. Although challenges remained, Member States should take the opportunity to reaffirm their commitment to pursuing peace and security and to strengthening the vital role played by the Agency in preventing nuclear proliferation, addressing non-compliance and expanding access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

24. The demand for nuclear energy was continuing to grow rapidly. Nonetheless, many challenges remained, one of the biggest of which was climate change. The effects of climate change were felt daily and the costs were large in terms of lives lost and economic damage. In that connection, Palau expressed its condolences to the Caribbean islands and Mexico on their recent losses.

25. She expressed her country's appreciation to all the donor countries who had contributed to the PUI, in particular the USA, the members of the EU, Australia and New Zealand. She thanked the Director General for his outstanding leadership in the effort to use the Agency's resources to support global economic development goals. Palau had benefited from those efforts, in particular in the areas of agricultural productivity, food security, health and nutrition, underground water resources management, environmental protection, air pollution, marine coastal areas, sustainable energy development, radiation infrastructure safety and nuclear safety and security.

26. All States shared responsibility for improving nuclear safety. More resources were needed, however. Palau had paid its share to the TCF, as it was vital that the Agency continued to ensure that nuclear energy was used safely and securely to promote peace and prosperity throughout the world.

27. Palau was committed to adhering to all relevant international legal instruments and processes, including the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage.

28. The need for collective action extended beyond safety concerns. Nuclear terrorism, for example, remained one of the greatest threats to global security. Nonetheless, the Agency's achievements were a testament to the shared commitment of Member States to ensuring that their worst fears were not realized. Despite the tremendous progress that had been made, however, work remained to be done, as the attention paid to nuclear security needed to be commensurate with the gravity of the threat faced.

Palau congratulated the Agency on maintaining momentum by convening the International Conference on Nuclear Security, at which many States had witnessed first-hand the active discussions held between policy and technical groups. Palau looked forward to continuing its international cooperation with the Agency with the aim of ensuring that its verification activities yielded profound and tangible benefits.

29. The safeguards system had helped foster an international security environment that paved the way for nuclear disarmament by building confidence among neighbouring States and among nuclear suppliers and by raising warning flags in countries seeking to skirt the rules regarding the development of nuclear weapons. Palau called on all Member States to increase the level of financial and technical support provided to the Agency's safeguards support programmes. It also commended the Agency's efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the safeguards system and welcomed the report on the State-level concept set out in document GOV/2013/38.

30. Lessons must be learned from the events of the past while pursuing humanitarian goals in order to address current global threats — ranging from nuclear accidents and proliferation to climate change — which were as serious as any other challenge that humans had ever faced. Recent history had shown that adversity could become a catalyst for innovation. Member States needed to support the important work of the Agency by dedicating their collective resources to its activities. All countries that played by the rules should be allowed to benefit from peaceful nuclear cooperation and failure to follow the rules should not go unpunished.

31. Mr PIANO LÓPEZ (Uruguay) said that his country supported the inalienable rights of States to the peaceful use of nuclear energy within the cooperation framework established in the Agency and pursuant to the safeguards enshrined in the Statute.

32. He reaffirmed Uruguay's unwavering commitment to universal and full disarmament within the multilateral framework. Uruguay had consistently supported all forms of disarmament in relation to conventional weapons and WMDs, such as chemical, biological and, above all, nuclear weapons. It therefore welcomed the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which had been opened for signature the previous day. Uruguay considered that the Treaty supplemented the NPT.

33. Uruguay encouraged all Member States to comply fully with their arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation obligations as a means of contributing to international peace and security. It strongly condemned the nuclear tests and the short, medium and long-range ballistic missile launches conducted by the DRPK in 2017 in clear violation of Security Council resolutions and the non-proliferation regime.

34. The Agency's safeguards regime should be further strengthened to address proliferation risks and achieve progress on the disarmament front. Uruguay honoured its commitment to nuclear safeguards and verification processes and stressed that multilateral dialogue and negotiations were the appropriate means of resolving international tensions in those areas. In line with those basic principles, Uruguay continued to participate actively in the Agency and had served as a member of the Board of Governors during the 2015–2017 term.

35. As Uruguay faithfully implemented international agreements and attached the utmost importance to radiation protection and safety, it had established an independent regulatory authority to monitor all types of equipment using ionizing radiation. It had also adopted a national strategy for safe radioactive waste management and a revised version of its basic regulations for radiation protection, prepared a draft manual on process management, and sent its revised National Radiological Emergency Plan to the Council of Ministers for adoption. Workshops had been held on radiotherapy, the authority's quality management procedures, radiological emergencies and the review of standards.

36. Uruguay drew attention to FORO activities designed to maintain the highest level of radiation and nuclear safety and security in the Ibero–American region. It urged FORO and the Agency to work with other organizations that shared their objectives, such as PAHO and WHO, to disseminate information about its work in the fields of radiation and nuclear security.

37. Uruguay recognized the importance of the Agency’s transfer of technology under its TC programme in the form of equipment, expertise and training. The President of Uruguay, Tabaré Vázquez, had attended the opening session of the International Conference on the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme. Uruguay had also participated in many national and regional TC projects. The country’s priority project areas were specified in the CPF for the 2017–2021 period, which had been signed with the Agency on 31 May 2017.

38. Uruguay appreciated the Agency’s support in important areas such as regulatory infrastructure and training in nuclear security, inspections, radioactive waste, medical applications, and the use of new equipment and technology.

39. Uruguay had established a multi-institutional working group on nuclear security, which was producing an assessment document on risk detection and response, developing a project to move radioactive sources to a more secure storage location, and considering the possibility of geo-positioning all radioactive material transport vehicles. Uruguay was also interested in monitoring foreign radioactive emissions and other emissions and hoped to expand its real-time environmental monitoring system to cover the entire country with the Agency’s support.

40. Uruguay stressed the importance of ARCAL as a key instrument for regional cooperation and projects.

41. The enhancement of nuclear safety and security was a continuous process. Uruguay welcomed the recent adoption by consensus of the Nuclear Security Plan 2018–2021 and the progress made in implementing relevant legal instruments, in particular the entry into force on 6 May 2016 of the Amendment to the CPPMN.

42. Measures to strengthen nuclear security should not hamper international cooperation, Uruguay believed that the Agency’s increased activities in the field of nuclear security should be funded primarily through the NSF, given the constraints on the Agency’s Regular Budget, thus preserving the balance between the Agency’s promotional and non-promotional activities.

43. Mr GHAFUORI (Afghanistan) said that, as mandated by its Statute, over the past 60 years the Agency had been pursuing the commendable task of promoting worldwide peace, health and prosperity through peaceful uses of nuclear technology. It played a key role in maintaining, improving and promoting the application of nuclear and radiation technology and ensuring its safe transport and waste management globally.

44. As the world drifted towards increasing insecurity and violence, the Agency faced a tremendously challenging situation in monitoring and controlling nuclear energy fully and ensuring that it was not misused. The cooperation of Member States with the Agency in that regard was essential as the Agency’s role remained indispensable, as provided for in Article III of its Statute.

45. As a State party to the NPT and one which had signed a CSA, Afghanistan strongly supported the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East, which would be a positive and complementary step towards achieving the nuclear weapons-free objectives of the United Nations.

46. The TC programme remained very important in supporting the peaceful, safe and secure application of nuclear science and technology for sustainable social and economic development and

the appreciation was due for the efforts to align the CPFs more closely with the specific needs and priorities of Member States.

47. As a founding Member State, Afghanistan had benefited from excellent cooperation with the Agency since its establishment. Thus, notwithstanding the country's many difficulties and conflicts over the past decades, it had benefited from the Agency's TC programme in recent years, as the programme provided an excellent cooperation framework in various priority areas such as human health, water resources management, human resources development in nuclear physics, the establishment of a national regulatory framework and energy planning.

48. The Agency was supporting the Afghan Atomic Energy High Commission and other relevant national agencies in implementing projects, such as the establishment of a radiation oncology centre, a radiology diagnostic centre and radiotherapy and radiology services in Kabul, and providing training courses and capacity building for officials of various government institutions.

49. The Nuclear Act, drafted by the Afghan Atomic Energy High Commission with the support of the Agency, had been passed by Parliament in 2015 and draft regulations for radiation safety in the areas of waste management and the transport of radioactive materials, radioactive and radiation sources were being developed with technical support from the Agency. Such efforts would further improve the legal and regulatory framework, in particular the regulatory system for radiation safety and protection required for the application of nuclear science and technology in Afghanistan.

50. The country's national peace and development framework had been presented at the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan on 5 October 2016, at which an ambitious reform agenda to support the Afghan Government and bolster political and economic stability, State-building and development had been unanimously endorsed. In presenting the framework, the Afghan Government had set out its vision for the future and showcased the progress already made on reforms, while the international community reaffirmed its long-term commitment to Afghanistan's future peace, stability and prosperity.

51. As the Agency was striving to use its technological and scientific experiments for the benefit of all humankind, it was imperative that all Member States should cooperate with it fully and honestly in order to ensure the success of its endeavours to promote security, peace, health and prosperity among all the nations of the world.

52. Mr EL GHOUL (Palestine) congratulated the Director General on his election for a third term. Palestine commended the Agency on the vigorous action it had taken to build its human and infrastructural capacities. It was also deeply grateful to the Secretariat for its support for the planning, organization and implementation of TC projects in areas such as radiation protection, agriculture, medicine and the environment. Palestine hoped to implement further projects in the near future, in such areas as strategic agricultural products, production of a radiation map of Palestine, and children's nutrition.

53. Palestine had acceded to the NPT in early 2015 and had participated actively in the 2015 NPT Review Conference. It had also attended meetings in 2017 of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference. In addition, Palestine had submitted a request to the Agency to sign a CSA and hoped to do so as soon as possible, in company with States party to the NPT.

54. Palestine was still occupied by a State that possessed nuclear installations that were not subject to a CSA. Furthermore, according to expert reports and recently released documents, that State possessed a large nuclear arsenal, which clearly posed a direct threat to the security of the people of Palestine, the region and the world as a whole.

55. While Member States were strengthening the nuclear safety regime and UN Member States and observers were preparing to sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which was regarded as an important supplement to the nuclear non-proliferation regime, Israel's nuclear arsenal was ignored and it was permitted to continue exposing the people of Palestine and the peoples of the region to the potentially disastrous consequences of an accident at one of its nuclear facilities.

56. Palestine was seriously concerned at Israel's growing military capability and at its continued rejection of all calls to accede to the NPT and place its nuclear programmes and facilities under comprehensive safeguards, like all other States in the region. The denial by certain States of Israel's military nuclear capability was unacceptable and contradicted by the reality of its hostile behaviour in Palestine and elsewhere.

57. Palestine regretted that the conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East, which had been called for in the final document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, had not been convened in 2012, despite the efforts and flexibility deployed by the Arab States. Palestine considered that the five nuclear powers and the States organizing the conference were duty-bound to persevere with their efforts to universalize the NPT and to expedite the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and WMDs in the Middle East.

58. In view of the deferral of the 2012 conference, the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference because certain States had insisted on Israel's exemption from accountability in international forums, and action to thwart the adoption of a resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities at the past three sessions of the General Conference, it was essential for the Arab States to conduct a comprehensive review of their nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament policies to ensure that the international community faced up to its legal and moral responsibilities and put an end to the policy of double standards.

59. In view of the Agency's key role in promoting the non-proliferation regime and the application of safeguards, maintenance of the item on Israeli nuclear capabilities on the agenda of the Policy-Making Organs constituted an additional Arab diplomatic effort to prevent Israel from flouting the non-proliferation regime and from disregarding the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

60. Mr THOMAS (European Atomic Energy Community) welcomed the comprehensive role played by the Agency in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy and advancing global nuclear safety and security. The cooperation between the IAEA and Euratom was long and well-established.

61. Among the EU's policy priorities and actions, particular importance was attached to nuclear safety, as reflected in Euratom's amended Nuclear Safety Directive. Euratom had conducted concerted actions in that area, including the first topical peer review on ageing management in Europe from February 2017 to August 2018, introduction of a nuclear safety objective for implementing safety improvements in line with the Vienna Declaration and securing commitments from participating parties to update their National Action Plans by the end of 2017.

62. He also stressed the importance of an efficient nuclear supply chain with appropriate quality control. Several initiatives had been launched to facilitate standardization and better regulation. He expressed approval of SMRs, as they had the potential to ensure both high nuclear safety and production sustainability, and emphasized the importance of making decisions on the long-term management of radioactive waste and spent fuel.

63. The European Commission was actively contributing to the implementation of the JCPOA. It had helped to organize a successful high-level seminar looking at the links in Iran between nuclear governance and nuclear safety, would provide further support to the Iranian Nuclear Regulatory

Authority and the operator of the Bushehr NPP, and was providing assistance to Iran so that it could accede to those international nuclear governance conventions to which it was not yet party.

64. Euratom welcomed the successful outcomes of the December 2016 Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Security and the recent opening of the Agency LEU Bank in Kazakhstan, to which the EU had made a €25 million contribution. The Commission had continued its support and collaboration with the Agency in the detection of nuclear materials, nuclear forensics and training for front-line offices. The EU Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) centres of excellence had taken a stronger role in the regions.

65. Regarding nuclear safeguards, the Commission cooperated closely with the Agency in implementing the State-level approaches within the EU and in promoting safeguards outside Europe. Euratom safeguards had established that, in the Euratom Community in 2016, there had been no diversion of nuclear materials from their intended use nor any failure to meet all legal obligations towards third countries or the Agency.

66. The EU continued to support the development of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the advancement of nuclear science in fields such as medicine, industry and technology. The European Commission had signed practical arrangements with the Agency in February 2017 to enhance technical collaboration in those areas. In the first half of 2018, the Commission would organize an international conference to discuss the challenges in those fields and plans to develop proposals for action under the EU's strategic agenda for medical, industrial and research applications of nuclear and radiation technology.

67. The Euratom Research and Training Programme for the years 2014–2018 continued to focus on improving nuclear safety, radioactive waste management, radiation protection and nuclear education and training.

68. The EU had assumed a leading role in the ITER project as fusion energy research was part of its energy policy agenda. On 14 June 2017, the European Commission had published a communication detailing recent developments with the ITER project, which included the progress on construction at the site and the impact of the project's revised schedule on the European contribution. The project was expected to achieve first plasma in 2025. Euratom reaffirmed Europe's commitment to the success of ITER.

69. Nuclear safety, security and safeguards were matters of concern for all countries, whether or not they used civil nuclear power. A common understanding of the relevant issues was needed, in addition to close cooperation in resolving them. Full advantage must be taken of the Agency's accumulated experience and its continuous contribution to developing nuclear power in a safe and sustainable manner.

70. Mr CASTELLANOS (Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean) said that Article 1 of the Tlatelolco Treaty required nuclear material and facilities that were under the jurisdiction of the contracting parties to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and prohibited the use of nuclear weapons by the parties themselves, directly or indirectly, on behalf of anyone else or in any other way.

71. With a view to ensuring compliance with its obligations, the Treaty established a control system to be operated by the contracting parties with the participation of OPANAL and the Agency. Pursuant to Article 14 of the Treaty, OPANAL systematized compliance by means of semi-annual reports in which the parties stated that no activity prohibited by the Treaty had occurred in their territories. Moreover, OPANAL was a political and intergovernmental forum comprising a General Conference, a

Council and a Secretariat, in which the parties held periodic and extraordinary consultations on the purposes, measures and procedures set forth in the Treaty.

72. The Agency's role focused on the technical aspect of the control system. Pursuant to Article 13, the parties undertook to negotiate multilateral or bilateral agreements with the Agency for the application of its safeguards to their nuclear activities. All 33 contracting parties had concluded safeguards agreements with the Agency.

73. Pursuant to Articles 12 and 16 of the Treaty, the Agency was authorized to conduct special inspections at the request of any Contracting Party, with the authorization of the OPANAL Council. No such inspections had been required to date.

74. During the negotiation of the Tlatelolco Treaty, the States of Latin America and the Caribbean had decided that the future control system would require a close relationship with the Agency. On 3 October 1972, OPANAL and the Agency had signed a cooperation agreement pursuant to Article 19 of the Treaty. The specific roles of OPANAL and the Agency, and also their coordination, were essential for the functioning of the NWFZ in Latin America and the Caribbean.

75. The continuous and effective operation of OPANAL for nearly 50 years and its role as a political forum were sources of active support for nuclear disarmament at the global level. By means of their special declarations on nuclear disarmament, the Heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States had designated OPANAL as the specialized body in the region for articulating common positions and joint action on nuclear disarmament.

76. In spite of setbacks and the rigid position of nuclear weapon States, the vast majority of UN Member States had persisted with their efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament. OPANAL welcomed the opening for signature on 20 September 2017 of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, whose effective implementation would require meaningful participation on the part of the Agency. Such a prohibition had been in force for the Latin American and Caribbean countries for at least a quarter of a century. They would actively endeavour to extend the prohibition to the world as a whole.

77. Mr SARAIVA MARZO (Brazilian–Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials) said that the bilateral agreement establishing the Brazilian–Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials demonstrated the clear and defined commitment of Argentina and Brazil to the exclusively peaceful use of all nuclear materials and facilities under their jurisdiction and recognized the sovereign right of each country to develop nuclear technology for its own social and economic development.

78. ABACC's mission was to manage and apply the Common System of Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials in order to ensure that no nuclear material was diverted for the fabrication of nuclear weapons or any other nuclear explosive device. Since its creation in 1991, it had developed a solid technical and administrative structure and built a team of some 100 highly qualified inspectors that operated in both countries. ABACC owed its success to the continued political, economic and technical support provided by both countries, in particular by Argentina's Autoridad Regulatoria Nuclear and Brazil's Comissão Nacional de Energia Nuclear. ABACC had performed 111 inspections in 2016, its 25th anniversary year, and continued to guarantee the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear activities in Argentina and Brazil.

79. The Quadripartite Agreement, which had entered into force in March 1994, had well defined provisions for coordinating activities between ABACC and the Agency, thus minimalizing duplication of work and yet allowing for independent conclusions. The good results obtained, particularly in joint inspection procedures and common use of equipment, reflected a high level of understanding between

the two organizations. ABACC believed, however, that efficiency could be increased if the Agency took ABACC's conclusions into full consideration when implementing its safeguards under the Quadripartite Agreement.

80. Mr DONÁ (Sovereign Order of Malta) commended the Director General and his team on their tireless efforts to ensure that nuclear technology was used exclusively for peaceful purposes. The peaceful uses of nuclear technology continued to play a pivotal role in improving the lives of the least privileged peoples around the world, in particular in the areas of health and agriculture in developing countries. As health and agricultural development was also a central aim of the Sovereign Order of Malta, it fully supported the Agency's work in that regard.

81. The Sovereign Order of Malta was a recognized subject of international law. It maintained bilateral and multilateral relations at ambassadorial level with over one hundred countries, most of which were Member States of the Agency, and with the EU and the UN, where it held permanent observer status. As a long-standing institution with a mission to provide care without discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, origin or age, the Sovereign Order of Malta was active in many countries, where it provided assistance to refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons who were the victims of war, civil violence, religious persecution and natural disaster. It provided a unique humanitarian network which served both as an example of its sovereignty and as an operational instrument for its humanitarian activities, which it referred to as 'humanitarian diplomacy'.

82. The Sovereign Order of Malta conducted charitable missions around the world. Malteser International, its international medical and humanitarian relief organization, was particularly involved in providing aid in countries troubled by civil war and in assisting refugees and migrants who had attempted to cross the Mediterranean Sea, which had become a mass grave for people desperate to reach the relative safety of Europe. The Sovereign Order of Malta patrolled the sea in Italian navy vessels and was required, on a daily basis, to rescue survivors in dramatic circumstances.

83. The Sovereign Order of Malta appreciated the Agency's 2017 Scientific Forum on the topic of nuclear techniques in human health, which would highlight how nuclear science could be used to improve the health and well-being of all individuals in line with SDG 3.

84. For many decades, the Agency had played an important technical role in promoting peace, security and development, based on a multilateral approach and a collective sense of security that had helped develop a climate of peace and trust among all parties. The Sovereign Order of Malta took a similar approach, in particular through its work with the most vulnerable and marginalized members of society.

85. The Sovereign Order of Malta set great store by the cooperation between the Agency and other relevant international organizations with the aim of ensuring the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear technology. The Agency deserved to receive continuous support as it sought to perform, in ever more effective ways, its indispensable role in international security.

86. Mr FAYEZ (Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf) congratulated the Director General on his election for a third term.

87. The General Conference was being held at a time when energy source prices were constantly fluctuating, so that it was necessary to seek alternative sources of energy for peaceful purposes to replace and supplement traditional sources. With that end in view, the GCC States had for some time been devising a strategy to acquire nuclear energy. They were assiduously developing their infrastructure and natural resources and investing the output in pioneering development programmes.

88. The large quantities of oil and gas in the Gulf States and their associated industries played a major role in the countries' economies, enabling them to build their capacities and expedite the

implementation of ambitious development plans. The region possessed approximately 46% of global oil reserves and 23% of global gas reserves. As the reserves were currently facing depletion, however, it had proved strategically necessary to diversify GCC energy sources in a manner that did not have a negative impact on the oil and gas industry. The new approach would actually increase supplies of oil and gas to world markets, thereby enhancing their stability. The use of nuclear energy by the GCC States would also enable them to develop technology, industries and services in areas such as medicine, agriculture, natural resource management and environmental protection.

89. Nuclear energy was required primarily for electricity generation and water desalination, since the average consumption of electric energy and desalinated water in the GCC States was extremely high in global terms because of high population growth rates and expanding development plans. The use of nuclear energy would also reduce carbon dioxide emissions, which were a prime cause of global warming.

90. The major progress achieved in nuclear safety through improved technology, safety regulations and technical expertise had allayed public concern about the construction of NPPs.

91. The need for reliable energy sources was steadily increasing to meet aspirations for regional and international economic prosperity. The GCC States had therefore undertaken joint studies on the use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, in accordance with international standards. The Secretariat General of the GCC maintained contact with the Agency, and its participation in the General Conference and other meetings played a major role in the preparation of such studies, especially on electricity generation and water desalination. Special joint teams had produced terms of reference for the studies, specified their aims and recommended action plans for their achievement.

92. Mr GRENARD (Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization) said that an event picked up in the DPRK on 3 September 2017 by CTBTO monitoring stations probably constituted yet another breach of the universally accepted norm against nuclear testing — a norm that had been respected by all countries but one in the 21st century.

93. That event had taken place in the area of the DPRK's nuclear test site, as shown by the analysis of over 100 CTBTO stations. With a magnitude of 6.1, it had been significantly larger than earlier events recorded by the system. Those facts revealed that the DPRK's nuclear programme was advancing rapidly. Tensions had escalated and security challenges mounted since the event, which underlined yet again the urgent need for the international community to put in place a definitive legally binding ban on nuclear testing.

94. The CTBTO had gathered for the General Conference under a cloud of apprehension and uncertainty. The vision, which it shared with the Agency, of the safe and peaceful use of the atom excluded, by definition, the explosive testing of nuclear weapons.

95. For both the Agency and the CTBTO, science was the elementary foundation of their activities and verification the sine qua non condition for credibility. Both elements formed the bedrock of the international community's confidence in the work of the Agency and the CTBTO, in such areas as verifying compliance by States with their safeguards agreement or the collection of data by the IMS to be transmitted by the International Data Centre to all CTBTO Member States.

96. Although verification formed a major pillar of the Agency's mandate, the General Conference was always an opportune reminder of the many other activities of the Agency in the field of nuclear safety, security, energy and nuclear applications, shared by Member States through TC projects.

97. The CTBTO encouraged its own Member States to make full use of the civil, scientific and industrial applications of the approximately 15 gigabytes of data collected each day by the IMS, which was used to detect and provide real-time warnings of earthquakes and tsunamis, track severe storm

systems or radiation dispersal from nuclear accidents, or advance the study of meteorology, climate change and ocean life. The 2017 Science and Technology conference had been the largest CTBTO conference of that nature to date with some one thousand participants from over 120 countries and had clearly demonstrated the broad range of IMS contributions.

98. To leverage more fully those capabilities, the CTBTO participated in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, which was closely aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It also collaborated with the World Meteorological Organization, the Volcanic Ash Advisory Centres of the International Civil Aviation Organization, the Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and many scientific and academic institutions. By strengthening those partnerships the CTBTO sought to make its work more accessible and visible to the international scientific community. Particular attention was being given to those who could still succeed in shaping the future of a world without nuclear tests and, ultimately, without nuclear weapons.

99. Established in 2016, the CTBTO Youth Group had become a dynamic network of over 170 members from 52 countries. In parallel with the Group of Eminent Persons (GEM), the Youth Group's goal had been to revitalize the discussion around the CTBT and raise awareness about the importance of the nuclear test-ban. Accordingly, GEM and the CTBTO Youth Group shared the same final objective: using an innovative and focused approach to promote the Treaty's entry into force.

100. Eight Annex 2 States, including the DPRK, had yet to ratify the CTBT for the Treaty to become global law. The nuclear test announced on 3 September 2017 was a stark reminder of the human and environmental risks that lay ahead if a ban on nuclear test explosions was not drawn up without further delay. It was hoped that it would serve as a remedy to the lack of resolve among Member States to bring the CTBT into force for a safer and more peaceful world.

101. Mr HAMDI (Arab Atomic Energy Agency) said that the AAEA had made great efforts to develop peaceful nuclear applications in its 15 member States and to strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation in science and technology in those States. It had met many of its objectives, including the development of human resources through training courses, workshops, symposiums, study groups and conferences.

102. Eight years previously, the AAEA had begun to implement the strategy approved at the 2009 Arab Summit for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy until 2020, with emphasis on regional and international cooperation, including with international organizations. The Agency had provided valuable financial and technical support to the AAEA to that end and had been an excellent partner in the conduct of joint activities. The cooperation programme for 2018 was being finalized. The AAEA hoped that developed countries would similarly assist the Arab States in training and capacity building.

103. Some Arab States were planning to build NPPs, on account of their high power output, oil and gas price fluctuations and the need to use those resources sensibly to preserve them for future generations. The Arab States required support from the Agency and countries with developed nuclear industries in order to extend nuclear applications to health care, industry, agriculture, environmental protection and water resource management.

104. The AAEA had held regular conferences and meetings to explore the strategic use of nuclear energy for power generation and for seawater desalination, to tackle the shortage of drinking water in the arid conditions in the Arab States. That was particularly important in view of the fact that the electricity and drinking water requirements of those States were expected to double by 2050 as a result of population growth and rising living standards.

105. The AAEA hoped that greater interest in nuclear safety and security worldwide, and in reactor design in particular, would lead to the highest standards of quality and safety in the next generation of reactors, which would allay public fears about nuclear energy.

106. Recognizing the importance of regulating all nuclear and radiation-related activities, the AAEA had made efforts to bolster the Arab States' regulatory authorities, preserve their independence and provide them with the necessary financial and human resources. The AAEA had collaborated with the Agency in establishing the Arab Network of Nuclear Reactors (ANNuR), a platform for the exchange of experience, lessons learned and good practices, for regulatory capacity building in the area of nuclear and radiation legislation and for the establishment of emergency preparedness and response and regulatory systems.

107. The AAEA commended the Republic of Korea on the assistance that it had provided to the Arab States in capacity building in nuclear and radiation regulation. It also commended China on its provision of assistance and expertise and the Russian Federation on the support it had provided for scientific research in the Arab States.

108. From 2010 to 2017, the AAEA had implemented training programmes and held numerous expert meetings and conferences; some 4000 trainees, from both AAEA member States and other countries, had attended the 68 training courses and 50 workshops that it had organized. Over that period, the AAEA had also facilitated 15 scientific visits and 28 technical meetings, through which 51 Arab experts had been sent on mission and some 500 experts from the Agency and supporting countries had been received.

109. The AAEA distributed its quarterly journal on the role of the atom in development to specialist bodies and held a biennial Arab conference on the peaceful applications of nuclear energy, at which some 200 Arab and non-Arab researchers, academics and students presented their research. In addition, the AAEA periodically convened forums on the outlook for power generation and seawater desalination in order to facilitate discussion and exchanges among experts and decision makers from Arab States on the potential for nuclear energy to meet growing energy requirements.

110. As Israel's nuclear capabilities posed a clear and present danger to the States in the Middle East, pressure must be brought to bear on Israel to place all of its facilities under Agency safeguards, to accede to all non-proliferation agreements and to embark on the path of peace and security.

111. The PRESIDENT expressed appreciation for the consideration shown by Member States in respecting the time limit of seven minutes that had been introduced that year for statements: for the first time in years the Agency had been able to avoid holding night sessions and had therefore saved time and money.

112. She invited the Conference to observe a minute of silence for the victims of the devastating earthquake in Mexico the members of their families, and as an expression of sympathy and solidarity with the Government and peoples of Mexico.

All present rose and stood in silence for one minute.

12. Appointment of the External Auditor (GC(61)/10)

113. The PRESIDENT, referring to document GC(61)/10, said that the tenure of the current External Auditor would end with the completion of the audit of the Agency's accounts for the financial year 2017 and a new External Auditor would therefore need to be appointed to audit the Agency's accounts for the financial years 2018 and 2019. After discussing the matter in June 2017, the Board of Governors had agreed to recommend the appointment of the Audit Board of the Republic of Indonesia as the External Auditor to audit the Agency's financial statements for the financial years 2018 and 2019.

114. She took it that the General Conference wished to appoint the Audit Board of the Republic of Indonesia as the External Auditor to audit the Agency's accounts for the years 2018 and 2019.

115. It was so decided.

116. Mr DJUMALA thanked the Member States for their support and confidence in the Audit Board of the Republic of Indonesia to carry out the important task of auditing the Agency's accounts. The period 2018–2019 was the Audit Board's second term as the Agency's External Auditor. Over its previous term in 2016 and 2017, the Audit Board had strived to execute its duties in keeping with the Agency's high standards of excellence. He reaffirmed his country's commitment to enhancing the quality of auditing services with a view to further promoting accountability and transparency and the Agency's work for the safe, secure and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Indonesia was committed to helping the Agency to achieve greater efficiency within its current budgetary constraints.

28. Examination of delegates' credentials (GC(61)/29)

117. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee had met earlier in the day as a credentials committee to examine the credentials of all delegates, as provided for in Rule 28 of the Rules of Procedure. The Secretariat had since received credentials in due form for the delegates of Peru. After discussion, the Committee had recommended that the General Conference adopt the draft resolution set out in paragraph 8 of its report, contained in document GC(61)/29, with the reservations and positions expressed therein.

118. The PRESIDENT took it that, with the observations and reservations expressed, the Conference was prepared to adopt the draft resolution contained in paragraph 8 of document GC(61)/29.

119. It was so decided.

120. Mr ESHRAGH JAHROMI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the Islamic Republic of Iran had joined the consensus on the adoption of the draft resolution, but that did not by any means constitute recognition of the Israeli regime.

121. Mr YOUSSEF (Egypt) said that his country took note of the delegates' credentials submitted to the present session of the General Conference. He stressed the fact that Egypt's approval of Israeli credentials did not by any means constitute recognition of Israel's occupation of the 1967 territories, which included the western part of Jerusalem. The borders of Israel were limited to those set out within the Peace Agreement between Israel and Egypt.

9. Election of Members to the Board of Governors (GC(61)/6 and 26)

122. The PRESIDENT recalled that in 1989 the General Conference had approved a procedure under which no secret ballot would be held when there was agreement on the candidate or candidates from a particular area. Balloting would take place only in respect of those areas for which there was no agreed slate. That procedure considerably facilitated the efficient use of the Conference's time but required that Rule 79 of the Rules of Procedure be suspended in respect of the areas for which no secret ballot would be held.

123. She announced that all area groups had reached agreement on their candidates for the vacancies to be filled and, after thanking all area groups on behalf of the Conference, drew attention to document GC(61)/6, containing the designations of Member States to serve on the Board from the end of the 2017 regular session of the Conference until the end of the 2018 regular session.

124. Recalling that, under Rule 83 of the Rules of Procedure, the presiding officer must indicate to the General Conference those elective places on the Board which must be filled, she referred to document GC(61)/26, paragraph 2, which indicated, for each geographical area, the number of Member States that must be elected so that the Board would be constituted in accordance with Article VI.A of the Statute. There were 11 seats to be filled: 2 for Latin America; 2 for Western Europe; 2 for Eastern Europe; 2 for Africa; 1 for the Middle East and South Asia; 1 for the Far East; and 1 floating seat — it being the turn of South East Asia and the Pacific to fill the floating seat.

125. Document GC(61)/26, paragraph 3, listed the 24 Member States that had been either elected by the General Conference in 2016 in accordance with Article VI.A.2 of the Statute, and which would therefore continue to serve on the Board until 2018, or designated by the Board in June 2016 for membership of the Board pursuant to Article VI.A.1 of the Statute for the one-year period 2017–2018.

126. In order to facilitate the election, an informal note had been distributed to delegates, showing the results of consultations among the area groups regarding their candidates for the vacant seats. She stressed that the note was purely informal in character and for information purposes only.

127. The PRESIDENT, suspending Rule 79 of the Conference's Rules of Procedure, requested Member States to formally elect candidates.

128. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Chile and Venezuela to the two vacant seats for Latin America.

129. Chile and Venezuela were duly elected.

130. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Belgium and Portugal to the two vacant seats for Western Europe.

131. Belgium and Portugal were duly elected.

132. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Armenia and Serbia to the two vacant seats for Eastern Europe.

133. Armenia and Serbia were duly elected.

134. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Kenya and the Sudan to the two vacant seats for Africa.

135. Kenya and the Sudan were duly elected.

136. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Jordan to the one vacant seat for the Middle East and South Asia.

137. Jordan was duly elected.

138. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect the Republic of Korea to the one vacant seat for the Far East.

139. The Republic of Korea was duly elected.

140. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Indonesia to the one vacant floating seat, which for that year would be filled by South East Asia and the Pacific.

141. Indonesia was duly elected.

142. The PRESIDENT congratulated the 11 Member States elected to the Board and recalled that, under Article VI.D of the Statute, they would hold office from the end of the 61st regular session of the General Conference until the end of its 63rd regular session.

– **Interim oral report by the Chair of the Committee of the Whole**

143. Mr STALDER (Switzerland), Chair of the Committee of the Whole, reported on the outcome of the deliberations of the Committee of the Whole on agenda items 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25 and 26.

144. Under item 10, “The Agency’s financial statements for 2016”, the Committee had recommended that the Conference adopt the draft resolution set out in document GC(61)/2, on the Agency’s financial statements for 2016.

145. Under item 11, “The Agency’s Programme and Budget for 2017”, the Committee had recommended that the Conference approve a regular budget figure for 2018 of €365 262 275 for the operational portion of the Regular Budget and €8 059 381 for the capital portion of the Regular Budget and accordingly adopt draft resolution A set out in document GC(61)/4, on the Regular Budget appropriations for 2018; that the Conference approve a target for voluntary contributions to the Technical Cooperation Fund for 2018 of €85 665 000 and accordingly adopt draft resolution B set out in document GC(61)/4, on the Technical Cooperation Fund allocation for 2018; and that the Conference approve the level of the Working Capital Fund in 2018 at €15 210 000 and accordingly adopt draft resolution C set out in document GC(61)/4, on the Working Capital Fund for 2018.

146. Under item 13, “Amendment to Article XIV.A of the Statute”, the Committee had recommended that the Conference adopt the decision set out in document GC(61)/L.7.

147. Under item 14, “Scale of assessment of Member States’ contributions towards the Regular Budget for 2018”, the Committee had recommended that the Conference adopt the draft resolution set out on page 3 of document GC(61)/13.

148. Under item 15, “Measures to strengthen international cooperation in nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety”, the Committee had recommended that the Conference adopt the draft resolution in

document GC(61)/L.1. He said that no specific issues had been raised by delegations during the discussion of the text and he thanked Australia for the excellent preparatory work.

149. Under item 16, “Nuclear security”, the Committee had recommended that the Conference adopt the draft resolution set out in document GC(61)/L.5, the text of which largely comprised technical updates. During the discussion, the proposal of one delegation on a substantive issue had been discussed and consensus had been achieved.

150. Under item 18, “Strengthening the Agency’s activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications”, the Committee had recommended that the Conference adopt the draft resolutions set out in document GC(61)/L.3 in the following way: A. Non power nuclear applications; 1. General; 2. Support to the African Union’s Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign (AU-PATTEC); 3. Use of isotope hydrology for water resources management; 4. Renovation of the Agency’s Nuclear Applications Laboratories at Seibersdorf; B. Nuclear power applications.

151. Under item 19, “Strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of Agency Safeguards”, the Committee had recommended that the Conference adopt the draft resolution set out in document GC(61)/L.2. During the discussion, two delegations had provided their interpretations in respect of paragraph 7. In the spirit of compromise, however, those delegations had been able to join the consensus on the text.

152. Under item 23, “Promotion of efficiency and effectiveness of the IAEA decision-making process”, the importance of maintaining and promoting the efficiency and effectiveness of the Agency’s decision-making processes and strengthening the Agency and its governing bodies had been highlighted. Attention had been drawn to the expansion of the membership of the Board of Governors, the need to enhance the role and authority of the General Conference, and the importance of maintaining an appropriate balance between the two bodies. The importance of the direct engagement and participation of all Member States in the decision-making process on issues related to the Agency’s work had been emphasized. The relevance and importance of the process currently under way for the timely ratification of the amendment of Article VI of the Agency’s Statute had been highlighted, and views and suggestions had been expressed in that context. Some Members had raised the issue of the use of electronic voting in the Agency’s General Conference and suggested that the example of the UN General Assembly in that regard might be followed.

153. Under item 24, “Amendment to Article VI of the Statute”, the Committee had recommended that the Conference adopt the decision set out in document GC(61)/L.8.

154. Under item 25, “Personnel”, the Committee had recommended that the Conference adopt the draft resolution set out in document GC(61)/L.4.

155. Under item 26, “Elections to the Agency’s Staff Pension Committee”, the Committee had recommended to the General Conference that Maria Luz Melon of Argentina and Seán Ó Riain of Ireland be elected as alternate members to represent the General Conference on the Agency’s Staff Pension Committee.

156. The PRESIDENT complimented the Chair on the manner and efficiency of his work.

10. The Agency’s financial statements for 2016

157. As recommended by the Committee of the Whole, the draft resolution set out in document GC(61)/2 was adopted.

11. The Agency's Programme and Budget for 2017

158. As recommended by the Committee of the Whole, draft resolutions A, B and C set out in document GC(61)/4 were adopted.

13. Amendment to Article XIV.A of the Statute

159. As recommended by the Committee of the Whole, the decision set out in document GC(61)/L.7 was adopted.

14. Scale of assessment of Member States' contributions towards the Regular Budget for 2018

160. As recommended by the Committee of the Whole, the draft resolution on page 3 of document GC(61)/13 was adopted.

15. Measures to strengthen international cooperation in nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety

161. As recommended by the Committee of the Whole, the draft resolution set out in document GC(61)/L.1 was adopted.

16. Nuclear security

162. As recommended by the Committee of the Whole, the draft resolution set out in document GC(61)/L.5 was adopted.

18. Strengthening the Agency's activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications

163. As recommended by the Committee of the Whole, the draft resolution set out in document GC(61)/L.3 was adopted.

19. Strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of Agency safeguards

164. As recommended by the Committee of the Whole, the draft resolution set out in document GC(61)/L.2 was adopted.

165. Mr AHMED (Pakistan), speaking in explanation of his country's understanding of operative paragraph 7, said that Pakistan supported all Agency activities conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Agency's Statute. His country's support for Agency safeguards was evident from its implementation of all its safeguards obligations on all its civilian nuclear facilities and its cooperation with the Agency. Pakistan believed that the role of safeguards was to provide a framework for cooperation in the peaceful applications of nuclear energy without discrimination and unaffected by strategic or political considerations.

166. The Agency's Statute took account of the different safeguards obligations of Member States and did not accord universality to any particular model, such as the CSA. The Statute stipulated that operative paragraphs must be implemented "consistent with respective safeguards undertakings", in the light of which Pakistan believed that operative paragraph 7 applied only to States that had undertaken obligations to sign CSAs. Pakistan would continue to support the Agency's verification activities consistent with the framework provided for in the Statute.

167. Mr BADHE (India) said that his country, a founding member of the Agency, had consistently supported all Agency activities conducted within the framework of the Statute. It attached particular importance to the Agency's safeguards work and had contributed to improving safeguards effectiveness and efficiency. He wished to state for the record India's understanding of operative paragraph 7 in the resolution on which his country had joined consensus, which was that Agency safeguards should apply universally to all Member States and other relevant partners in accordance with their respective legal obligations.

168. Ms ZAFARY-ODIS (Israel) said that her country wholeheartedly supported the improvement of Agency safeguards effectiveness and efficiency. Her country regretted, however, that the endeavours undertaken the previous year to amend the wording of operative paragraph 7 in order to alleviate concerns by all Member States had not been accepted. The universal application of comprehensive Agency safeguards was beyond the scope of the Agency and derived from international obligations that each State took upon itself.

169. Mr ZONGO (Burkina Faso) said that his country welcomed the adoption of the important resolution on support to the African Union Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign. It was confident that the campaign would be a success thanks to the joint efforts by the Agency and the African Union and following adoption of the draft resolution. Burkina Faso also reaffirmed its appreciation to the Member States for their understanding, which had opened the door to consensus on that important draft, and thanked Nigeria in particular for agreeing to act as coordinator.

23. Promotion of efficiency and effectiveness of the IAEA decision-making process

170. The PRESIDENT took it that the Conference had taken note of the report of the Chair of the Committee of the Whole.

171. It was so decided.

24. Amendment to Article VI of the Statute

172. As recommended by the Committee of the Whole, the decision set out in document GC(61)/L.8 was adopted.

25. Personnel

173. As recommended by the Committee of the Whole, the draft resolution set out in document GC(61)/L.4 was adopted.

26. Elections to the Agency's Staff Pension Committee

174. As recommended by the Committee of the Whole, Ms Melon of Argentina and Mr Ó Riain of Ireland were elected as alternate members to represent the General Conference on the Agency's Staff Pension Committee.

175. The PRESIDENT said that the General Conference had completed consideration of the matters on which the Chair of the Committee of the Whole had provided his interim report.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.