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¹ GC(61)/25.

Abbreviations used in this record:

| | |
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| CSA | comprehensive safeguards agreement |
| EU | European Union |
| IRSN | Institut de Radioprotection et de Sûreté Nucléaire (Institute for Radiological Protection and Nuclear Safety France) |
| ITER | International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor |
| NAM | Non-Aligned Movement |
| NCD | non-communicable disease |
| NGO | non-governmental organization |
| NPT | Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons |
| NWFZ | nuclear-weapon-free zone |
| UN | United Nations |
| USA | United States of America |
| WMD | weapons of mass destruction |

– Report on the Scientific Forum 2017

1. The PRESIDENT, recalling that the theme of the Scientific Forum 2017 had been “Nuclear Techniques in Human Health: Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment”, invited the Rapporteur of the Scientific Forum 2017, Mr Minoshima, to report on the Forum.
2. Mr MINOSHIMA (Rapporteur of the Scientific Forum 2017) read the report, which is annexed hereto.
3. The PRESIDENT thanked Mr Minoshima for the report and commended him and the Secretariat on the success of the Scientific Forum 2017.

21. Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East (GC(61)/15 and L.6)

4. The PRESIDENT said that item 21 had been included in the agenda pursuant to resolution GC(60)/RES/15 and that the Director General had accordingly submitted the report set out in document GC(61)/15, which had been considered by the Board. Document GC(61)/L.6 contained a draft resolution submitted by Egypt.
5. Mr YOUSSEF (Egypt) said that Egypt attached importance to achieving the universality of the comprehensive safeguards regime as a basic legal means of supporting the Agency’s verification of the peaceful nature of nuclear material and facilities and as an indispensable step towards establishing an NWFZ in the Middle East and achieving international and regional peace and security.
6. Egypt continued to take vigorous action to establish such a zone by launching initiatives and submitting draft resolutions to the Agency and other international bodies. Yet no practical steps had been taken to implement any of the resolutions, and many illogical excuses had been presented for the existing stalemate.
7. A resolution on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs had been adopted by consensus at the 1995 NPT Review Conference, in return for agreement on the indefinite extension of the NPT. The persistent efforts of Egypt and other Arab States to ensure its implementation had come to naught, owing primarily to the lack of political will. Egypt considered that the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference to agree on an outcome document had exacerbated matters and undermined the credibility of the non-proliferation regime as well as previous agreements and decisions.
8. Motivated by its unwavering aspiration to promote comprehensive Agency safeguards in the Middle East, Egypt had resubmitted the same draft resolution at the current session in the hope that all Member States would support it with the aim of upholding the non-proliferation regime and breaking the existing stalemate on the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East. Egypt considered that a vote against the resolution would violate the international community’s obligations to support the non-proliferation regime and would undermine joint action to address current challenges thereto.

9. Egypt would spare no effort to support the Director General in his efforts to implement the resolution and to report on progress achieved in 2018, and it therefore called on the Agency and all Member States to take practical and specific steps to implement the resolution immediately. It also called on the Agency to engage in consultations with the countries of the region on proposals and practical measures to implement the resolution, for it was unacceptable that no progress had been made in that regard since the 1990s.

10. Mr CHACÓN ESCAMILLO (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), speaking on behalf of NAM, welcomed the report set out in document GC(61)/15 and said that NAM was still committed to its principled position on the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East. It strongly believed that stability could not be achieved in a region in which one State threatened neighbouring and other States owing to the massive continuing imbalance in military capabilities caused by its possession of nuclear weapons. In its conviction that an NWFZ in the Middle East would be a positive step towards global nuclear disarmament, NAM reiterated its support for the establishment of such a zone in accordance with the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions.

11. NAM was also convinced that the effective and efficient application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East promoted greater confidence among States in the region. It considered that achieving universality of comprehensive Agency safeguards in the Middle East was the first practical step towards confidence building among States in the region, and was a necessary step towards the establishment of an NWFZ in that region. It was pleased that its members that were Parties to the NPT had concluded CSAs with the Agency as non-nuclear-weapon States.

12. All States in the Middle East, except Israel, were Parties to the NPT and had undertaken to accept comprehensive Agency safeguards. NAM highlighted the accession of Palestine as a Party to the NPT, and welcomed its expressed wish to conclude a CSA with the Agency under NPT Article III. NAM regretted Israel's continued insistence that the issue of comprehensive Agency safeguards could not be addressed in isolation from the regional peace process; there was no automatic sequence making the application of comprehensive safeguards to all nuclear activities in the Middle East dependent on a peace settlement there: in fact, the former would contribute to the latter.

13. NAM also regretted that the Director General had not been able to make further progress in fulfilling his mandate under resolution GC(60)/RES/15 on the application of comprehensive Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities in the Middle East. Considering that all Member States should cooperate in rectifying an unacceptable situation, NAM called on them to participate actively in, and give priority to, the campaign to achieve the universality of comprehensive Agency safeguards in the Middle East.

14. Noting that the Director General would continue consultations in accordance with his mandate on the early application of comprehensive Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities in the Middle East, NAM welcomed the Director General's efforts to encourage relevant new ideas and approaches that might help to move his mandate forward, and requested him to continue to brief Member States regularly thereon.

15. NAM Members that were Parties to the NPT, mindful of the consensus decision to convene, in 2012, a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other WMDs, had been profoundly disappointed that the conference had still not been convened, contrary to the letter and spirit of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East and the collective agreement of the Parties to the NPT enshrined in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

16. NAM Members that were Parties to the NPT feared that the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference to agree on the draft final document would have a negative impact on the NPT regime.

17. NAM requested the Director General to continue to consult Member States on arrangements for establishing an NWFZ in the Middle East and expected all Member States of the Agency to support his efforts to implement resolution GC(60)/RES/15.

18. NAM seconded the draft resolution submitted by Egypt on the item under discussion.

19. Mr NAJAFI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that more than 40 years had passed since the introduction of the Iranian initiative for the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East. The related General Assembly resolutions, adopted without a vote since 1980, had reflected the importance of the issue in the volatile Middle East. Iran had, moreover, demonstrated its determination to help to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons by acceding to the NPT and placing its peaceful nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards.

20. At the 16th NAM Summit in Tehran in August 2012, Iran's Supreme Leader had stated that nuclear weapons threatened both security and political power. Iran had proposed, and was committed to, a Middle East free of nuclear weapons; it had ratified all major treaties banning WMDs, it was determined to comply with its international commitments, and it considered that the universal accession to the NPT and universal application of the Agency's safeguards would be instrumental in establishing an NWFZ in the Middle East and, ultimately, a world free of nuclear weapons. Iran had participated constructively in the United Nations Conference to Negotiate a Legally Binding Instrument to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons, Leading Towards their Total Elimination, held in June and July 2017, in order to demonstrate its full support for a nuclear weapons-free world.

21. Iran drew attention to the accession of Palestine to the NPT and Palestine's wish to conclude a CSA with the Agency, in the hope that the CSA would apply to all occupied territories of Palestine in due course. It recorded its strong reservations about the list of Middle East States set out in footnote 1 to document GOV/2017/32, as, in Iran's view, such a list could not be used in any other context or body.

22. It regretted that the NWFZ had still not been established in the Middle East, owing to Israel's refusal to accede to the NPT and to subject its unsafeguarded nuclear facilities to the Agency's verification regime, and might not be established in the near future owing to Israel's intransigence. Iran considered that Israel had ignored repeated calls by the international community because it knew that it would be supported politically and militarily by certain permanent Security Council Members and that its prohibited nuclear activity had seriously threatened regional peace and security and endangered the non-proliferation regime.

23. The impotence of the UN Security Council over past decades in addressing Israel's nuclear weapons programme had emboldened that State in 2006 publicly to acknowledge its possession of nuclear weapons, which had already been condemned by NAM.

24. Iran further regretted that the 2012 conference on the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs had been postponed unilaterally by a convener with the express purpose of shielding Israel from international condemnation and that three delegations had opposed the consensus achieved at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, thus scuppering the 2015 NPT Review Conference, with the sole aim of safeguarding the interests of Israel, a non-party that had endangered the peace and security of the region.

25. Iran therefore called on the international community to exert sustained pressure on Israel to accede promptly and unconditionally to the NPT and to place all of its clandestine nuclear activities and installations under full-scope safeguards as the only means of establishing an NWFZ in the Middle East and of ensuring universal application of the Agency's safeguards there. That approach had been taken at the 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences, when the importance of Israel's

accession to the NPT and the placement of all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards had been reaffirmed.

26. Iran supported the draft resolution on the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East submitted by Egypt.

27. Ms ZAFARY-ODIZ (Israel) said that, until 2006, the resolution under consideration had been adopted by consensus, reflecting a shared vision for regional stability and security. Israel hoped to re-establish a dialogue with the sponsors of the resolution in order to restore such a vision.

28. The current language of the draft resolution portrayed adherence to the NPT as a means of enhancing peace and security in the Middle East. Such a concept was inherently flawed as it did not take regional realities into account. While Israel had repeatedly expressed its commitment to the non-proliferation regime, four States in the region had failed to comply with their obligations under the NPT. Accordingly, while Israel shared the vision articulated by the draft resolution, the text lacked the required balance, given regional circumstances.

29. Israel attached high importance to the non-proliferation regime and shared its goals. Accession to the NPT was not a goal in and of itself and the geopolitical situation in the Middle East clearly demonstrated that the NPT did not provide a remedy for the unique security challenges of the region, especially considering the repeated violations of the NPT by several Member States. Calls for universal accession to the NPT must therefore be judged against the views held by some in the region concerning the State of Israel, the existence of which was not recognized by several Arab States, and that of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which had openly and explicitly called for Israel's destruction.

30. Inasmuch as lessons learned from other regions had shown that a regional security framework could only stem from the shared political will of all regional parties to engage directly with each other and to take into consideration the security concerns of each and every State on the basis of consensus, Israel hoped that the sponsors of the resolution under consideration would take Israel's views into account and work to find an agreed text likely to lead to the reinstatement of consensus. Until such time, Israel was obliged to vote against paragraph 2 of the draft resolution and to abstain on the draft resolution as a whole. Israel accordingly requested that separate votes be taken on paragraph 2 and on the draft resolution as a whole.

31. Mr CHACÓN ESCAMILLO (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that his country had called for general, comprehensive and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament and had voiced concern repeatedly at the situation of injustice, instability and conflict that had prevailed for decades in the Middle East, stemming from interfaith disputes and the geopolitical ambitions of some Western powers in particular. A recent additional problem was the presence in the region of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant.

32. The fourth objective of the declaration of the seventeenth summit of the Heads of States and Government of NAM held on Margarita Island, Venezuela, on 17 and 18 September 2016 recorded the resolve of the Heads of State and Government of NAM to establish an NWFZ in the Middle East in accordance with the commitments reached during the 1995 NPT Review Conference and subsequent meetings.

33. The 2015 NPT Review Conference must be considered to have been a failure as the draft Final Document, which had envisaged a conference to create a NWFZ zone in the Middle East to be held before 1 March 2016, had not been adopted.

34. By resolution 70/24, the General Assembly had reaffirmed the right of all States to acquire and develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and called on all interested parties to adopt the measures

necessary for the creation of an NWFZ in the Middle East and to accede to the NPT. It had also highlighted the need for measures to prevent military attacks on nuclear facilities and called on all countries of the region which had not yet done so, pending the creation of the zone, to agree to submit all their nuclear facilities to Agency safeguards.

35. In conclusion, he recalled that, at a number of international forums, Venezuela had stressed the urgent need for Israel to accede to the NPT immediately, place its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards and contribute to the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East.

36. Ms ARREDONDO PICÓ (Cuba) said that the achievement of nuclear disarmament had been and would remain a priority for most States, including Cuba. The great majority of Member States had welcomed the adoption of the NPT and Cuba was proud to have signed the treaty on 20 September 2017: it was a demonstration of the political will of the majority of the international community to move towards nuclear disarmament.

37. Regrettably, the same could not be said in relation to the commitments entered into by all States Parties to the NPT to hold an international conference in 2012 to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other WMDs, which had been a key element of the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and which was yet to be held. The soonest possible establishment of such a zone would constitute a significant contribution to peace and stability, not only in that region but throughout the world. That could be achieved if the only State that was not party to the NPT acceded thereto and placed all of its nuclear facilities under the Agency's safeguards. Cuba therefore urged all concerned to convene the conference without delay.

38. Mr NASUTION (Indonesia) said that his country regretted deeply that resolution GC(60)/RES/15 could not yet be implemented and called for the active commitment of States in the Middle East to achievement of the universality of Agency CSAs in that region, which should be adhered to unconditionally.

39. Indonesia expressed its serious concern that progress in the realization of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other WMDs, a key element in ensuring security and stability in the region, remained elusive and urged the States in the region to reach an agreement on the substance and methods of establishing such a zone. The establishment of such a zone was an important step towards the bolstering of peace and security in the region and beyond and would contribute significantly to the maintenance of international peace and security.

40. Mr PITSWANE (South Africa) said that the Director General's report on the current item noted that all States in the Middle East region except for Israel were Parties to the NPT and had undertaken to accept comprehensive safeguards in accordance with Article III of the Treaty. The report also referred to the process initiated by the State of Palestine to conclude a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the Agency. All States Parties should warmly welcome that demonstration of the State of Palestine's commitment to the objectives of the NPT. South Africa hoped that the agreement would be finalized as soon as possible.

41. South Africa had consistently reiterated its full support for the NPT, particularly the balance between its three pillars of nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It also continued to be a strong advocate of the universalization of the NPT in order to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.

42. South Africa therefore reiterated its call for Israel to join the NPT and to place its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards. Such action would facilitate the implementation of the resolution adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference on the establishment of a

Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other WMDs, which had been reaffirmed at the NPT Review Conferences in 2000 and 2010.

43. South Africa was disappointed that the 2012 conference to facilitate the establishment of such a zone, which had been agreed upon by consensus at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, had not been convened. The failure to implement decisions taken and commitments made could have a negative impact on the credibility of the Treaty and the nuclear non-proliferation regime in general.

44. It was important to recall that the resolution was an essential element of the outcome of the 1995 Review Conference and one of the objectives that had motivated States to agree on the indefinite extension of the Treaty. South Africa underscored that the 1995 resolution on the Middle East remained valid until such time as its goals were realized. It was strongly convinced that the implementation of the resolution would greatly contribute towards achieving the peace and security that the people of the region and the international community had long advocated. South Africa therefore continued to support the adoption of the current resolution.

45. Mr AL-KHAIRALLA (Iraq) called on the Agency and the international community to take the necessary steps to implement the resolutions adopted by the 1995 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences, in particular the decision to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East. That key demand would ensure the practical application of comprehensive Agency safeguards in the region on a fair and equal basis.

46. Iraq welcomed the measures taken by the State of Palestine and the Agency to conclude a safeguards agreement following that State's accession to the NPT in 2015. That development would support the joint efforts of the Arab States to promote peace, safety and security in the Middle East region and in the world as a whole.

47. The PRESIDENT recalled that Israel had requested that a separate vote be taken on paragraph 2 of the draft resolution set out in document GC(61)/L.6.

48. At the request of Egypt, a roll-call vote was taken.

49. Argentina, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

50. The result of the vote was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Holy See, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab

Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: Israel.

Abstaining: Canada, India, Malawi, Rwanda, Togo, United States of America.

51. There were 123 votes in favour and 1 against, with 6 abstentions. Paragraph 2 of the draft resolution was adopted.

52. Mr BADHE (India), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation had abstained because it believed that paragraph 2 of the draft resolution contained elements that were extraneous to the Agency.

53. The PRESIDENT noted that Israel had requested a vote on the whole of the draft resolution contained in document GC(61)/L.6.

54. At the request of Egypt, a roll-call vote was taken.

55. As the Marshall Islands, which was drawn by lot by the President, was absent, Mauritania was called upon to vote first.

56. The result of the vote was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Holy See, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Abstaining: Canada, Israel, Malawi, Togo, United States of America.

57. There were 123 votes in favour and none against, with 5 abstentions. The draft resolution was adopted.

58. Ms HULAN (Canada), speaking in explanation of vote, said that her country continued to call on all States that had not already done so to sign and bring into force a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol. Furthermore, it had consistently supported the establishment of a verifiable NWFZ in the Middle East.

59. Canada was disappointed that wording had been introduced into the resolution at recent sessions of the General Conference that prevented its adoption by consensus. The resolution unduly politicized a forum that had historically adopted a more technical approach to such issues. It also failed to address

serious non-compliance issues in the Middle East, thereby ignoring a critical aspect of the application of safeguards in the region. Canada was unable to support a resolution that failed to address fundamental concerns of non-compliance, while drawing erroneous connections between NPT ratification and safeguards applications. Canada had therefore decided to abstain on paragraph 2 and on the resolution as a whole.

60. Mr REED (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his country strongly supported the long-term goal of a Middle East free of WMDs and their delivery systems, together with comprehensive and durable peace in the region. It remained convinced that progress towards that goal could only be achieved through direct dialogue among all States of the region aimed at building confidence and addressing all parties' legitimate concerns. If States lacked the political will to engage in direct dialogue with their regional neighbours, little or no progress would be made, regardless of the number and scope of relevant resolutions adopted in multilateral forums. With regard to the resolution, the USA noted that the NPT was the sole relevant nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation instrument that underpinned the Agency's role in any WMD-free zone in the Middle East.

61. The USA was cognizant of the political and security obstacles that continued to impede regional dialogue on such a zone, including the lack of trust in the region, the non-recognition of Israel by many regional States, and the continuing conflict and non-compliance in the region. It urged all States in the region to pursue direct dialogue without delay or preconditions so that those challenges could be addressed in a constructive and cooperative manner. The USA remained prepared to support such dialogue, based on the principles of consensus and mutual respect, when the States of the region were ready to pursue such an approach.

62. Unfortunately, the manner in which the issue of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East had been raised at the General Conference in recent years had not been consistent with a cooperative and consensus-based approach. It was regrettable that the sponsors of the resolution had yet again made no effort to produce a text that could garner consensus among all the States of the region. That unilateral approach, accompanied by divisive statements and the frequent introduction of a politicized resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities, merely served to undermine trust and confidence among the regional parties and to diminish the prospects for a much-needed regional dialogue on the issues. While the USA had abstained on the resolution at the current session, it hoped that the General Conference would return to a consensus-based approach to Middle East issues in the future, so that those important issues could be addressed in a more collaborative and productive manner.

63. Mr HALL (United Kingdom), speaking also on behalf of France, said that both countries had supported the resolution in the same spirit as at previous sessions. They viewed it exclusively in the context of the NPT and the Agency. The word "relevant" in operative paragraph 3 clearly related solely to the application of safeguards, in line with the title of the resolution. The United Kingdom and France continued to support efforts to promote a Middle East free of nuclear weapons and all other WMDs and their delivery systems.

64. Mr DÄUBLE (Germany) said that his country had voted in favour of the resolution, as at previous sessions. Its understanding of the resolution was the same as that just enunciated by the representative of the United Kingdom.

22. Israeli nuclear capabilities

(GC(61)/1/Add.1 and Corr.1, GC(61)/17)

65. The PRESIDENT said that item 22 had been included in the agenda at the request of the Sudan on behalf of the Arab States that were Members of the Agency. It was covered by an explanatory memorandum in document GC(61)/1/Add.1 and by document GC(61)/17.

66. Mr AL-KHAIRALLA (Iraq), speaking on behalf of the Arab Group, said that the Arab States had striven for more than four decades to seek a solution to their concerns about nuclear material, programmes and facilities that were not under international safeguards and thus posed a threat to their security and stability. The Arab States had preferred to join the international non-proliferation and disarmament regime rather than join a regional arms race that could be disastrous for international peace and security.

67. Desiring to promote dialogue and cooperation with the international community, the Arab States had ratified the NPT, believing that all other Parties were seriously committed to achieving universality of the Treaty and to mutual security for all States without discrimination. They had welcomed Palestine's request to sign a CSA with the Agency following its ratification of the NPT, and called on the Agency to conclude that agreement at the earliest opportunity as that would further bolster efforts to strengthen regional and international peace and security.

68. As Israel was the only State in the region that declined to accede to the NPT and to place its nuclear programmes and facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards, the Arab States had appealed to the NPT Review Conferences, the Agency, the UN General Assembly and the Security Council to take action to promote Israel's accession to the NPT and to ensure compliance with the Agency's norms and regulations in furtherance of international peace and security, while reaffirming their aspiration to the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East.

69. The Arab Group regretted that the support vested in the various international bodies that had adopted dozens of supporting resolutions had proved to be merely rhetorical owing to the lack of genuine international will to take effective action. The Arab States underscored that implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East was a matter of the utmost priority, and emphasized the responsibility of the co-sponsors of that resolution to achieve its implementation. Attempts by any international party to delay implementation must be rejected. The Arab States affirmed their support for the outcomes of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and the 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences, particularly with regard to the Middle East.

70. Israel's categorical refusal to accede to the NPT constituted a threat to peace and security in the Middle East, particularly in the light of its development of nuclear weapons, the existence of which had been acknowledged by numerous Israeli officials and discussed in many international reports.

71. The unprecedented protection provided to Israel by certain international powers, which enabled it to flout international law without fear of being called to account, had undermined and weakened the global non-proliferation regime. Indeed, while the international community inexplicably remained silent, Israel extracted concessions and received technical and military support that was denied to Parties to the NPT.

72. It was critically important that Israel acceded to the NPT because of the significant security and safety risks stemming from the lack of Agency oversight over Israel's ageing nuclear facilities, including, in particular, the nuclear reactor at Dimona, which had the potential to cause a nuclear accident with catastrophic repercussions for the entire Middle East region.

73. The Arab States considered that such treatment of an issue that adversely affected Arab security and the stability of the Middle East was totally unacceptable and they were indignant that the 2015 NPT Review Conference had been scuppered in order to safeguard the interests of a non-party to the NPT. They stressed that it was a core responsibility of the Agency's General Conference to request a State to accede to the NPT and to place its nuclear facilities and programmes under comprehensive international safeguards, and warned that attempts to stifle such requests had undermined the credibility of the NPT and the non-proliferation and disarmament regime and had eroded confidence in the regime's ability to achieve the aims of related international treaties to which they had acceded.

74. Faced with continuous attempts to thwart their efforts to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East, the Arab States were continuing consultations on ways to facilitate the successful adoption of a draft resolution on Israel's nuclear capabilities. Although no draft resolution on that subject would be submitted at the current session, that did not mean that no such resolution would be submitted at future sessions.

75. The Arab States thanked those Member States that had supported the draft resolution on the current agenda item in previous sessions and trusted that, in the light of Arab States' flexibility and their decision to refrain, for the second year, from submitting a draft resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities, their efforts to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East would be viewed favourably at the 2020 NPT Review Conference.

76. Mr CHACÓN ESCAMILLO (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), speaking on behalf of NAM, said that NAM strongly believed that stability could not be achieved in a region in which one State threatened neighbouring and other regional States, owing to a massive continuing imbalance in military capabilities, due to its possession of nuclear weapons.

77. NAM was pleased that its members that were Parties to the NPT had concluded CSAs with the Agency as non-nuclear-weapon States, under Article III.1 of the NPT. NAM noted that all States in the Middle East, except Israel, were Parties to the NPT and had undertaken to accept comprehensive Agency safeguards.

78. NAM considered that the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East would be a positive step towards attaining the objective of global nuclear disarmament and reiterated its support for the establishment of such a zone in accordance with relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and Security Council. It also considered that the selective approach to the issue of nuclear capabilities in the Middle East had undermined the viability of the Agency's safeguards regime and had resulted in the preservation of unsafeguarded Israeli nuclear facilities and activities, despite repeated calls on Israel to place them under comprehensive Agency safeguards.

79. NAM was gravely concerned about the dire consequences for international security of Israel's nuclear capabilities, which posed a serious threat to neighbouring and other States, and about the continuing provision to Israeli scientists of access to the nuclear facilities of one nuclear-weapon State.

80. It called on all Member States to cooperate in rectifying that unacceptable situation and in achieving the universality of comprehensive Agency safeguards in the Middle East by implementing resolution GC(53)/RES/17 as a first step to that end. NAM regretted Israel's continued insistence that the issue of Agency safeguards could not be addressed in isolation from the regional peace process. There was no automatic sequence rendering the application of comprehensive safeguards to all nuclear activities in the Middle East dependent on a peace settlement; in fact, the former would contribute to the latter.

81. NAM reiterated its call for the transfer to Israel of nuclear-related equipment, information, material, facilities, devices and other resources, and for the provision to Israel of other assistance in nuclear-related scientific or technological fields to be totally and completely prohibited.

82. Referring to past statements by Israel to the effect that it valued the non-proliferation regime, acknowledged its importance and had conducted a responsible policy of restraint in the nuclear domain, NAM noted with regret that Agency documents had attested to the contrary, notably, General Conference resolutions adopted prior to 1994 condemning Israel's military and nuclear collaboration with the racist regime of apartheid South Africa.

83. Mr NAJAFI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the Final Document of the 16th NAM Summit meeting expressed serious concern over the acquisition of Israel's nuclear capability and condemned Israel for continuing to develop and stockpile arsenals, which posed a grave threat to the security of neighbouring States and the international community. In the same document, NAM reiterated its support of efforts by the Arab Group in Vienna to keep the issue of Israeli nuclear capabilities under the consideration of the Agency's General Conference.

84. Since 1982, the Agency had adopted a number of resolutions and decisions calling upon the Israeli regime to promptly accede to the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities under Agency comprehensive safeguards. Regrettably, the legitimate concerns of the international community had been ignored owing to objections raised by the allies of the irresponsible Israeli regime, which were prepared to support it at any price. That clearly not only jeopardized regional and global security, but also undermined the Agency's verification mechanism.

85. Iran called for a total prohibition on the transfer of nuclear-related equipment, information, material, facilities, devices, other resources and scientific and technological assistance to Israel. Iran was particularly concerned that Israeli scientists were being granted access to the nuclear facilities of certain nuclear-weapon States, while nuclear scientists of Parties to the NPT were being assassinated.

86. The failure of the NPT 2015 Review Conference due to the position of three countries, in support of a non-party to the NPT, was a serious setback. States Parties to the Treaty had expressed concerns about that failure at a meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the forthcoming NPT Review Conference, held in May 2017 in Vienna. His country was of the view that, until such time as Israel heeded the call by the international community for it to adhere unconditionally to the NPT and to place all its clandestine nuclear facilities under full-scope Agency safeguards, it was reasonable that the issue of Israeli nuclear capabilities, as a real threat to international peace and security, remained on the Agency's agenda.

87. Mr AL HUSSEINI (Jordan) said that Jordan's approval of the credentials of the delegate of Israel did not imply recognition of Israel's occupation since 1967 of Arab territories, in particular Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. Jordan considered that the State of Israel lay within the borders as at 4 June 1967 and the borders defined in the peace agreement that it had concluded with Jordan and Egypt.

88. His country attached great importance to the comprehensive safeguards regime as the cornerstone of international endeavours to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to confine the use of nuclear energy to peaceful applications.

89. Pointing to the scale of the threat posed by nuclear weapons and WMDs to world peace and security and to stability in the Middle East, which continued to suffer from the failure to implement resolutions on the establishment of an NWFZ in the region, Jordan stressed the need for Israel to accede to the NPT and to place all its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards, thus universalizing the NPT in the region and facilitating the establishment of an NWFZ. Such action would contribute to

peace and security and create an incentive for States to focus on economic and social development, rather than on an arms race that would hinder development and exacerbate tensions.

90. Jordan gave maximum priority to the universalization of the NPT in the Middle East and considered that Israel's refusal to accede to the Treaty and place its nuclear facilities and military programmes under international control fuelled distrust, and threatened regional and international peace and security.

91. The international community had adopted dozens of resolutions in international forums calling for the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East, including, first and foremost, the resolution on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs that had been adopted at the 1995 NPT Review Conference. No progress had been made towards implementation of that resolution, however, because of the refusal of Israel to accede to the Treaty. Jordan considered that the time had come for the international community to take affirmative action on the Middle East NWFZ initiative.

92. Ms ARREDONDO PICÓ (Cuba) said that her country attached great importance to the agenda item on Israeli nuclear capabilities, as the issue had serious implications for regional and international peace and security.

93. Israel was still the only country in the Middle East which had not acceded to the NPT in spite of the international community repeatedly urging it to do so. That was a serious obstacle to creating an NWFZ in the Middle East. Establishing such a zone would represent a considerable step forward towards nuclear disarmament and would be a contribution to the peace process in the Middle East.

94. Transforming the Middle East into a zone of peace and security for all required genuine political will, the elimination of double standards, rejection of the indulgent attitude towards Israel shown by a number of States and unanimous insistence on the destruction of Israel's nuclear arsenal under international control.

95. Mr AL-KHAIRALLA (Iraq), speaking in his national capacity, said that all States enjoyed an inalienable right to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, without let or hindrance by a particular group or imposition of mandatory, international conditions prejudicial to a State's interests. In the Middle East, however, a region in which all NPT States Parties remained strongly committed to the Treaty, the application of the standards and principles of the non-proliferation regime continued to be subject to double standards. Although the NPT was the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime, certain States continued to disregard the fact that Israel, alone in the region, refused to accede to the NPT.

96. Iraq considered that all States, including, in particular, developing States, had an inalienable right to develop nuclear programmes for peaceful purposes in furtherance of their development.

97. All parties must shoulder their ethical and political responsibilities by taking the necessary steps to compel Israel to accede to the NPT and place its nuclear programmes and facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards. That key step would help build the trust that Israel itself called for, strengthen regional peace and security and pave the way for the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East.

98. The establishment of that zone was one of the most important steps that could be taken to promote regional security and stability. It was therefore of the utmost importance to exert all efforts to convene the conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East, pursuant to the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and in accordance with the terms of reference set forth in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference.

99. Mr BADDOURA (Lebanon) said that Israel's nuclear capabilities had been included in the agenda because the Arab Group was committed to the principles of non-proliferation and the use of nuclear energy for exclusively peaceful purposes. Israel's nuclear capabilities had impeded meaningful discussion on the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East.

100. Contrary to any logic, certain influential powers, while voicing their support for the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East, had opposed inclusion of the current agenda item, even though they were fully aware that Israel was the sole party hindering efforts to achieve the establishment of that zone. Indeed, certain States that championed the universality of the NPT for certain regions did not do so for the Middle East. Noting that all Arab States were Parties to the NPT, he encouraged the Agency to work with Palestine, the most recent Arab State to accede to the Treaty, with a view to concluding a CSA at the earliest opportunity.

101. Lebanon regretted that certain States had believed Israel's fallacious and flimsy protestations and accepted the status quo, with Israel's nuclear material and activities remaining outside the scope of Agency safeguards in the Middle East. Indeed, the politicized application of the principle of non-proliferation allowed Israel to continue to act with impunity.

102. The resolutions on the NWFZ in the Middle East adopted at the various NPT Review Conferences had all come to naught and efforts to convene the conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East remained deadlocked. The international community must dispel the impression that it was incapable of implementing the 1995 resolution on the Middle East; failure to implement that resolution had undermined the credibility of the non-proliferation regime and, to restore credibility and ensure the sustainability of that regime, it was crucial to adopt a balanced approach in international relations and avoid double standards.

103. Noting that the States and people of the Middle East were beset by crises that threatened their existence and thus looked to the international community to restore some hope for the future, Lebanon stressed that the international community's indifference to the issue of Israeli nuclear capabilities had only exacerbated the Middle East's sense of pessimism.

104. Lebanon stood ready to consider any serious initiative to reinvigorate international efforts to convene the conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East, in accordance with the terms of reference set forth in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference. It called for those factors to be given due attention in the deliberations of the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference, to be held in Geneva in 2018, with a view to ensuring the success of that Conference, and for every effort to be made to ensure the sustainability of the non-proliferation regime.

105. Mr ALOBAIDI (Kuwait) said that his country attached great importance to the universalization of the Agency's comprehensive safeguards regime in the Middle East and stressed that the Agency was the only authority mandated to enforce regional States' compliance with their safeguards agreements. Kuwait stressed that Israel's continued refusal to accede to the NPT and to place its nuclear installations under the Agency's comprehensive safeguards constituted a major obstacle to all efforts to establish an NWFZ in the Middle East and adversely affected security and stability.

106. Noting that the Middle East still faced major challenges to the establishment of an NWFZ, Kuwait pointed out that the road map for convening the conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East had highlighted the importance of ensuring that Israel acceded to the Treaty and placed all of its nuclear installations under Agency safeguards, and of initiating a process for the full implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East.

107. Vigorous action taken by the Arab States to those ends had been scuppered by unilateral decisions taken in order to preserve the interests of a non-party to the NPT. Kuwait therefore called on the co-sponsors of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East to shoulder their responsibility to ensure implementation of that resolution. Kuwait also called on the international community to urge Israel to accede to the NPT and to sign a CSA with the Agency with a view to establishing an NWFZ in the Middle East.

108. In closing, he welcomed Palestine's request to sign a CSA with the Agency, and urged the Agency to conclude such an agreement with Palestine at the earliest opportunity.

109. Mr NASUTION (Indonesia) said that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation remained high on his country's agenda. The ultimate aim was general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. Furthermore, efforts to achieve nuclear non-proliferation should be made in parallel to nuclear disarmament efforts. The universality of the NPT was an important element in that regard.

110. Indonesia strongly supported the speedy establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East, in accordance with resolutions of the UN General Assembly and Security Council. The establishment of such a zone would enhance peace and stability in the region and contribute to the achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons. Indonesia considered that permitting a country to develop nuclear weapons capabilities outside the NPT and to keep its nuclear material and facilities outside the Agency's comprehensive safeguards regime was tantamount to betrayal of the commitment to nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation in general and, in particular, the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East, while endangering peace and stability in the region.

111. Mr SABBAGH (Syrian Arab Republic) said that, for decades, Israel's clandestine efforts to strengthen its nuclear military capabilities had been shielded from international oversight by certain nuclear-weapon States, in clear violation of their obligations under the NPT. The Arab States had repeatedly expressed their grave concerns regarding Israel's nuclear capabilities and the danger that they posed to the peace and security of the Middle East, particularly in the light of Israel's continuing aggression in the region. All Arab States had acceded to the NPT and continued to work with the international community with a view to promoting the universality of the Treaty. Israel, however, steadfastly refused to accede to the NPT and to place its nuclear programmes and facilities under the Agency's comprehensive safeguards regime.

112. The adoption by the General Conference in September 2009 of resolution GC(53)/RES/17 on Israeli nuclear capabilities had reflected the deep concerns of many Member States and had delivered a clear message from the international community, namely that Israel should accede to the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards. Israel had persistently ignored the resolution, just as it ignored all other relevant resolutions adopted by international organizations and forums. It was regrettable that several influential Member States, including nuclear-weapon States, applied flagrant double standards, advocating the universality of the NPT, on the one hand, and disregarding that principle when it came to Israeli nuclear capabilities, on the other.

113. Strongly believing in the need to eradicate all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, Syria had tabled a draft resolution in 2003, during its membership of the UN Security Council, calling for the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East. It had also supported the adoption of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, which formed part of the package for the indefinite extension of the NPT, and had facilitated efforts to adopt the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference, which had established a mechanism for the implementation of the 1995 resolution. Regrettably, because certain parties had sought to protect Israel, that mechanism had also not been implemented.

114. Israel obstinately refused to heed the appeals of the international community, and was continuing its efforts to strengthen its nuclear arsenal, as had been acknowledged by numerous Israeli officials. Meanwhile, it was offered unprecedented protection by certain influential countries. Furthermore, in a statement in December 2006, the Israeli Prime Minister had included Israel among the world's nuclear powers.

115. The time had come for the international community to set aside its policy of condoning Israeli practices and to take a clear decision and serious practical steps to compel Israel to accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State and to place all its nuclear facilities, unconditionally and unreservedly, under Agency safeguards.

116. Mr SHOJA'AADIN (Yemen) said that the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East had become increasingly urgent because of the great danger posed by those weapons to the countries of the region. Israel's continued refusal to accede to the NPT and to place its nuclear installations under the Agency's comprehensive safeguards posed a very real danger to those countries, which had all acceded to the NPT and complied with all international instruments on nuclear non-proliferation.

117. Israel's insistence on maintaining its nuclear capabilities could lead to a regional arms race that would exacerbate regional instability and seriously undermine all efforts to foster peace and security. Indeed, resolution GC(53)/RES/17 had reflected the international community's deep concerns regarding Israel's nuclear capabilities and underscored the scope of the threat posed by those capabilities to the entire Middle East region. Israel's nuclear facilities also had the potential to cause a nuclear accident with catastrophic repercussions for the region's inhabitants and environment.

118. It was therefore crucial that the international community redoubled its efforts to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East, in accordance with the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and the terms of reference set forth in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference.

119. Mr REED (United States of America), welcoming the Arab Group's constructive decision not to table a resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities, said that his country regretted that the item had once again been included on the agenda, as Israel had not violated any agreements with the Agency and was a substantial contributor to the Agency's technical work. The USA noted that no other Member State in comparable circumstances was subject to similar criticism.

120. In his country's view, the statements delivered under the present agenda item were counterproductive to the shared goals of NPT universality and a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction. Rather than politicizing the issue, specific measures should be pursued, including direct dialogue among neighbours, which was key to improving regional trust and confidence in furtherance of the goal of a zone in the Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction.

121. Mr ADJABI (Algeria) said that his country remained unwavering in its view of the issue under discussion, which had a direct impact on the preservation of peace and security.

122. Mr OIDEKIVI (Estonia), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that, while welcoming the decision of the Arab States not to table a resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities at the 60th session of the General Conference, the EU was, nonetheless, disappointed that the issue had again been included in the Conference's agenda. A consensus approach was the only way forward in implementing the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and, to achieve a lasting solution, arrangements must be arrived at freely among all States of the region. Accordingly, the EU called on those States to engage constructively in the process.

123. Ms ZAFARY-ODIZ (Israel) said that, while a draft resolution had not been tabled on Israeli nuclear capabilities, her country found it extremely unfortunate that the agenda item had been repeatedly invoked by the Arab States in the General Conference since it was totally unrelated to the agenda and lay beyond the scope of the Agency's mandate. It greatly politicized the Agency, harmed its professional integrity, and diverted attention from the real problems facing the Agency and the non-proliferation regime.

124. By rejecting unconstructive and political draft resolutions under the agenda item in the past, Member States had reaffirmed their position that politically-motivated initiatives aimed at singling out any Member State had no place in the Agency's General Conference. That outcome had also sent a clear message to the sponsors of the draft resolution that the only way to advance regional security in the Middle East was through direct dialogue and consensus among all States of the region, built upon the foundations of trust and confidence.

125. Israel strived to live in a safe, secure and peaceful region and believed that its neighbours did likewise. Israel had actively attempted to generate a productive regional dialogue based on a broad range of security issues. The effort had only been reciprocated with biased resolutions, political attacks, and the continuing refusal of several states in the region, including Iran, to even recognize the State of Israel.

126. Israel wished to use the opportunity to call upon the Arab Group to honour the will of Member States, cease their obstructive behaviour, and to refrain from the inclusion of the agenda item in future General Conferences.

27. Term of office of the External Auditor (GC(61)/7 and GC(61)/DEC/14)

127. The PRESIDENT turned to item 27 of the agenda, on the term of office of the External Auditor. In document GC(61)/7, the Board of Governors had recommended to the General Conference that the appointment of the Agency's External Auditor should be made through a competitive selection process for a non-renewable six-year term, starting from the audit of the financial statements for the financial year 2022, with another appointment possible only after a break of at least one term.

128. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference agreed to the recommendation by the Board of Governors.

129. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.

IAEA Scientific Forum 2017

Nuclear Techniques in Human Health: Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment

Report to the 61st IAEA General Conference

**Mr Satoshi Minoshima
(Professor and Chair at the Department of Radiology and Imaging Sciences,
University of Utah)**

Mr President, Director General, Distinguished Delegates,

I am honoured to be given this opportunity to present to the General Conference the report on the IAEA Scientific Forum 2017, the theme of which was *Nuclear Techniques in Human Health: Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment*.

As you know, the annual IAEA Scientific Forums are organized parallel to the General Conference and seek to showcase and advance the peaceful application of nuclear science and technology to contemporary challenges.

This year, the Director General gave priority to nuclear techniques in human health, to highlight the essential role of nuclear and isotopic techniques for the management of non-communicable diseases, like cancer, neurological diseases, cardiovascular disorders, and preventing disease through better nutrition.

The Forum held during the past two days covered a wide range of topics that proved to be of great interest and relevance, as could be seen from the extensive participation of Member State representatives.

The Forum was structured into five thematic sessions and was opened by IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano, who spoke about how the use of nuclear techniques in human health has saved, and continues to save, millions of lives every year and how the IAEA works with national governments to increase countries' expertise in radiotherapy, nuclear medicine and the use of isotopic techniques in nutrition.

The keynote speaker, His Majesty King Letsie III of Lesotho, commended the work that the IAEA is undertaking in the diagnosis and treatment of a myriad of diseases, especially cancer. King Letsie also spoke of the importance of proper nutrition, an area in which nuclear science makes a contribution by helping professionals assess nutrition levels and combat malnutrition.

Next, Her Excellency Ms Madeleine Tchuinte, Minister of Scientific Research and Innovation of Cameroon, spoke about the importance of early diagnosis and access to treatment to combat an increasing cancer epidemic. She spoke about the importance of offering radiological treatment and that some countries in Africa still require appropriate material and human resources to meet their needs. She urged governments to put a higher priority on fighting cancer.

Her Excellency Ms Veronika Skvortsova, Russia's Minister of Health, spoke about the importance of nuclear medicine and radiation therapy in Russia and how they are priorities for nuclear science in the country. Ms Skvortsova spoke about Russia's framework to develop nuclear medicine and radiation by 2020 and about the prioritization of the implementation of new technologies, safety and access throughout the country.

Panama's Vice Minister of Health, Mr Eric Ulloa, drew attention to the roles that ageing and obesity are playing in the increasing number of cancer cases in developing countries and the imperative role of early detection in combating cancer. He spoke about the increasing role nuclear medicine plays in early detection in many developing countries, but that oftentimes there is a lack of the necessary equipment, emphasizing that capacity building of medical staff needs to be made a priority.

Mr Detlev Ganten, Founder of the World Health Summit, spoke of the joint responsibility of scientists and politicians to make sure science delivers benefits to all. He spoke about the importance of international organizations and non-governmental organizations to translate cutting edge science into public health. He remarked that organizations such as the IAEA play a leading role in spreading the benefits of science in health care.

The first session, entitled "Preventing disease through better nutrition", highlighted the vital role that nutrition plays in preventing non-communicable diseases (NCDs). The presentations showcased how undernutrition and obesity coexist in communities and how, for this reason, it is important to define targeted actions that combat all forms of malnutrition. Presenters showed how, through the use of nuclear and isotopic techniques, health professionals are able to develop and evaluate actions to address undernutrition, obesity and the related risks of NCDs simultaneously. In addition, this session explained how these techniques can help us understand the impact of environmental factors on child growth and human health. The session highlighted new trends in medical imaging to better assess nutritional status.

The second session, entitled "Looking beyond the visible: New frontiers in diagnostic techniques", touched upon cutting-edge clinical applications and technologies, including the use of nuclear techniques to identify disease in its early stages, and to assess the location and spread of disease in the body, as well as patients' response to medical therapy. The integral roles of nuclear technology in the medical diagnosis of NCDs such as cancer and cardiovascular, infectious and neurological diseases, including dementia, were presented and discussed. Furthermore, the session illustrated how technologies have evolved to allow for personalized health care through medical imaging.

The third session, entitled "Addressing implementation challenges in countries", emphasized the various challenges that countries face in ensuring the safe use of nuclear medicine for the early detection, diagnosis and treatment of diseases. The impact of new medical technologies on health expenditure budgets were also considered, as well as countries' different needs in this area. Additionally, the different levels of diagnostic services available to countries — from basic infrastructure to intermediate and advanced services — were explored. This session also highlighted the use of data to support decision-making in cancer care.

The fourth session, entitled "Radiotherapy — Saving and improving quality of life of cancer patients through new approaches", explored the use of radiotherapy to treat cancer, highlighting the importance of a multidisciplinary approach for optimal patient management. It also looked at the future of radiotherapy, including personalized treatment and the latest technological innovations to improve patient care.

The fifth session, entitled "Ensuring quality and safety", focused on quality and safety aspects in all disciplines of radiation medicine, in order to ensure that patients get the best possible outcome. Issues such as the need for peer reviews, clinical audits and quantification of performance were explored. This session also reviewed the requirements for quality and safety in imaging and therapy, and the challenges that countries may face in implementing these, as well as examples of successful IAEA projects to assist in this respect.

The closing panel discussion, entitled "The future of nuclear techniques in human health: a global perspective", presented a platform for opinions and discussion on the future trends and

developments in the application of nuclear techniques in Human Health. In the presence of the IAEA Director General Mr Yukiya Amano, the closing panel discussion brought together the following experts and decision makers:

- Mr Untung Suseno Sutarjo, Secretary General of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia;
- Mr Jabbin Mulwanda, Permanent Secretary for Health Services in the Ministry of Health, Zambia;
- Mr Massimo Garriba, Director of Directorate D – Nuclear energy, safety and ITER within the European Commission’s Directorate of Energy;
- Ms Dominique Le Guludec, physician and Professor of Biophysics and Nuclear Medicine, and Chair of the Board of Directors of France’s Institut de Radioprotection et de Sûreté Nucléaire (IRSN);
- Ms Neerja Bhatla, Founder President of the Asia Oceania Research Organisation in Genital Infection and Neoplasia, India;
- Mr Andrew Scott, President of the World Federation of Nuclear Medicine and Biology.

The panel discussion highlighted the importance of partnerships and collaboration between governments, NGOs, professional societies and international organizations as well as with the private sector. Furthermore, the expansion of education and training to ensure a qualified workforce of health professionals was emphasized.

The importance of government support and recognition of the imperative role of nuclear medicine and radiotherapy in health care, especially cancer, was particularly highlighted. Policy and law makers were urged to place human health at the top of their list of priorities. Challenges, including receiving recognition and mobilizing resources to help countries introduce modern radiotherapy and nuclear medicine services, were addressed.

During the closing panel discussion, IAEA Director General Mr Yukiya Amano highlighted the long-term loan to the IAEA of a linear accelerator for its Dosimetry Laboratory, which will be put to great service for capacity building in Member States. He stressed that Member States should also explore more private-public partnership as an option to increase the availability of equipment in their countries, for example, by approaching foundations and funding organizations with bankable documents. The IAEA remains ready to assist them in this regard. Panellists agreed that the integration of equipment purchase and maintenance in broader health plans was a condition for mobilizing funds and to ensure the sustainability of related health services. The Panel recognized that the gravitas of the IAEA actually gives the Agency a lot of weight to assist its Member States in building partnerships to offer nuclear medicine equipment, training and services to countries in need. The Director General finally emphasized that human health will be a priority for the IAEA during his next term.

Mr President, Director General, Distinguished Delegates,

In summary, the Forum has contributed to a better understanding of the vital role of nuclear techniques in the prevention, detection, diagnosis and treatment of major diseases, including cancer, cardiovascular and neurological conditions. Furthermore, we gained an excellent insight into the role of nuclear and isotopic techniques and their contribution to better nutrition, which is the foundation of all good health. There are clear links between the work of the IAEA to improve people’s health and well-being, and support countries’ efforts in the area of human health and the contribution of these efforts to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 3, namely to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

Thank you for your attention.