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President: Ms ŽIAKOVÁ (Slovakia)

Later: Ms ACCILI SABBATINI (Italy)

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Abbreviations used in this record

AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARCAL	Co-operation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
ARTEMIS	Integrated Review Service for Radioactive Waste and Spent Fuel Management, Decommissioning and Remediation
CIEMAT	Research Centre for Energy, Environment and Technology
CNS	Convention on Nuclear Safety
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CSA	comprehensive safeguards agreement
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EPR	evolutionary power reactor
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FORO	Ibero-American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies
imPACT	integrated missions of PACT
INIR	Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review
INSARR	Integrated Safety Assessment of Research Reactors
INSSP	Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan
IPPAS	International Physical Protection Advisory Service
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
ITER	International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor
JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
Joint Convention	Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management
MeV	megaelectronvolt
MW(e)	megawatt (electrical)
MW(th)	megawatt (thermal)

Abbreviations used in this record (continued)

NPCs	national participation costs
NPP	nuclear power plant
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NSSC	Nuclear Security Training and Support Centre
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
OECD/NEA	Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OMARR	Operation and Maintenance Assessment for Research Reactors
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
Pre-OSART	Pre-Operational Safety Review Team
PUI	Peaceful Uses Initiative
R&D	research and development
RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ReNuAL	Renovation of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIT	sterile insect technique
SLA	State-level safeguards approach
SQP	small quantities protocol
TC	technical cooperation
TCDC	technical cooperation among developing countries
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization

Abbreviations used in this record (continued)

UNSCEAR	United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation
USA	United States of America
WHO	World Health Organization
WMD	weapon of mass destruction

6. General debate and Annual Report for 2017 (continued) (GC(62)/3 and additional information)

1. Mr MSISKA (Zambia) said that, over the 49 years of its membership of the Agency, nuclear science and technology had substantially contributed to Zambia's development. The country had implemented initiatives to develop human resource capacity in nuclear safety, security and safeguards, health, industry, energy, regulatory infrastructure and food and agriculture and was very appreciative to the Agency for the technical support provided in that regard, including in the framework of AFRA. It looked forward to continued support for those and other national programmes in the peaceful, safe and secure use of nuclear science and technology.
2. Attainment of the objectives of nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes was contingent on adherence to the relevant international legal instruments under the Agency's framework. Accordingly, Zambia had identified key instruments which required ratification and those were currently under legislative review. The legislative procedure for ratification had been considerably simplified and he was therefore confident that the instruments in question would be ratified very soon.
3. The process of transforming the radiation protection authority into an independent regulatory institution was at an advanced stage. In that context, Zambia had prepared a national nuclear and radiation safety bill which comprehensively covered the peaceful, safe and secure use of nuclear science and technology and would be enacted during 2019.
4. The Zambian nuclear science and technology programme would be implemented in line with the Agency's milestone approach and would comprise two phases. The first was the establishment of a centre for nuclear science and technology, to facilitate the building of institutional and human capacity in the application of nuclear technologies, and the second the construction of an NPP as part of the country's diversified energy mix. In that context, he expressed his country's gratitude to the Director General for his support and, in particular, his visit to Zambia in January 2018, which had instilled in the country renewed enthusiasm for its nuclear programme.
5. To comply with the 19 infrastructure elements prescribed by the Agency, Zambia had engaged the Agency to assess the status of its nuclear infrastructure and the first INIR mission had taken place from 3 to 7 September 2018 in Lusaka. Zambia also benefited from the technical assistance provided by the Agency through the TC programme. To supplement that assistance, Zambia had designed a co-financing mechanism to provide local counterpart funding to TC projects. In addition, Zambia had entered into bilateral cooperation arrangements with Rosatom of the Russian Federation and other partners to ensure successful implementation of its nuclear programme.
6. Reiterating his country's appreciation for the support which it enjoyed from the Agency, he reaffirmed its commitment to its international obligations in the peaceful, safe and secure use of nuclear science and technology.
7. Mr TESANOVIC (Bosnia and Herzegovina) said that, as a member of the Agency since 1995 and having adopted the most important international instruments related to its work, Bosnia and Herzegovina fully supported the Agency's mandate in promoting nuclear safeguards and verification, safety and security and cooperation in science and technology. Current challenges to the nuclear non-proliferation regime rendered all the more imperative attainment of the highest standards in nuclear security and non-proliferation. His country was also committed to the universalization and effective implementation of

the NPT and recognized that the Agency safeguards system was the only mechanism that could verify the non-diversion of nuclear activities to military purposes and compliance by States Parties to the NPT with their non-proliferation obligations.

8. Bosnia and Herzegovina set particularly high store by the TC programme as one of the principal instruments for transferring nuclear science and technology to Member States, in furtherance of their overall development. Over the years it had benefited from a number of projects, training measures and scientific visits and, with the Agency's assistance, had been constantly upgrading its capabilities in the use of nuclear technologies, in radiation protection and in compliance with the Agency's nuclear safety and security standards. Valuable support had been provided in the form of equipment urgently requested by the country to upgrade its capabilities in all fields where radiation processing technologies were employed, notably health protection and veterinary and food safety control.

9. Highlights of his country's cooperation with the Agency and its Department of Technical Cooperation had included visits by the Director General in May 2017 and another senior official in January 2018. It now looked forward to the visit in October 2019 by the Director of the Department's Division for Europe. For its part, his country was strongly committed to continued cooperation with the Department in building its capabilities in the use of nuclear technology in medicine, industry, agriculture and veterinary science and in radiation protection and nuclear safety and security.

10. Bosnia and Herzegovina had participated in the Sixth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention, held in May 2018, and, as a State party to the Joint Convention, reiterated its concern regarding activities conducted near its border by a neighbouring country, involving the construction of storage and disposal facilities for radioactive waste of low and intermediate activity, which had an adverse environmental impact on Bosnia and Herzegovina.

11. In conclusion, he commended the Director General and Agency staff on their hard work and professionalism over the previous year.

12. Mr SIVAGURUNATHAN (Malaysia) said that, given the importance of nuclear energy to Member States in meeting their development needs and goals, it was vital for them to surmount the increasingly evident challenges and risks associated with the peaceful use of nuclear science, applications and technology. While responsibility for so doing rested with Member States, the Agency's role was of paramount importance in facilitating their activities and giving guidance.

13. As a member of the Agency since 1969, Malaysia had extensively benefited from its technical assistance. He therefore reaffirmed its commitment to building further cooperation with the Agency and with interested partners in areas of mutual benefit and its support for the TC programme and the PUI. As demonstrated by a feasibility study, the applications of nuclear science and technology had significantly enhanced Malaysia's competitiveness and capacities in many sectors, including healthcare and agriculture. Accordingly, Malaysia looked forward to participating at the highest level in the 2018 IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology: Addressing Current and Emerging Development Challenges, at which it would share its experience in such areas as radiation processing and non-destructive testing.

14. Noting with appreciation the recognition extended by the Agency and the FAO to Malaysia's expertise in agriculture, he reaffirmed the country's hope that its gamma greenhouse would be designated an Agency Collaborating Centre. In view of the major role played by research and development in realizing its long term goals and the contribution made by coordinated research projects to building its capabilities, Malaysia fully supported the Agency's efforts to modernize the nuclear applications laboratories under the ReNuAL project.

15. The importance attached by Malaysia to strengthening nuclear safety was demonstrated by its hosting of the Agency's 15th postgraduate educational course in radiation protection and the safety of radioactive sources and its aspiration to serve as a regional training hub for the postgraduate course on medical physics. Similarly, in fulfilment of its commitment to the strengthening of global nuclear security, in August 2018 Malaysia had hosted a trilateral exercise jointly with Indonesia and the Philippines on detecting and responding to nuclear security events, the video recording of which would serve as a model in future Agency training.

16. Malaysia had recently upgraded its National Centre for Nuclear Response Management and, in an effort to promote synergies between nuclear safety and security, had forged closer interfaces between the Centre and the National Security Council for nuclear security and the National Disaster Management Agency for radiological emergencies.

17. Recognizing the NPT as the cornerstone for the pursuit of general and complete nuclear disarmament, Malaysia considered the adoption of the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons as a historic milestone, driving the momentum to meet long-standing NPT obligations. As the Chair of the 2019 Preparatory Committee for the NPT Review Conference, Malaysia would engage with all stakeholders in preparing the ground for the NPT Review Conference in 2020. In that context, it recognized Agency safeguards as the fundamental pillar of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and, in fulfilment of its safeguard obligations, had reviewed its own unmodified SQPs and in 2019 would jointly host an expert mission with the Agency on the State system of accounting for and control of nuclear material.

18. Turning to the JCPOA, he commended the Agency and remaining parties on their efforts to ensure implementation of that deal and stressed the importance of their continued dialogue and transparency to assuring the international community that the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear activities were exclusively peaceful in nature.

19. Malaysia also welcomed the assurances by the DPRK, reaffirmed at the recent inter-Korean Summit, that it would halt all its nuclear and ballistic missile tests. Malaysia further hoped that the Summit would inspire progress towards complete denuclearization and regional stability. It joined others in calling on the DPRK to meet its international obligations, return promptly to the NPT and offer undivided cooperation to the Agency for the full and effective implementation of Agency comprehensive safeguards.

20. Noting the importance of providing the Agency with sufficient, assured and predictable resources to ensure its effective functioning, Malaysia reiterated its support for the Agency through its timely and full contributions both to the Regular Budget and to the TCF.

21. Mr MEZGHANI (Tunisia) said that, given the pivotal role played by science and technology in achieving added value, supporting production and meeting a wide range of national requirements, his country aspired to incorporate nuclear science and technology into its development strategies. To that end, Tunisia had organized a scientific seminar to identify the short term and long term prospects for nuclear science and technology in diverse socioeconomic activities with a view to developing comprehensive strategies for all national sectors and institutions, specifying diverse priorities and rationalizing the distribution of available means among them in order to achieve maximum benefits.

22. Tunisia had given special attention to the harnessing of nuclear power for electricity generation and seawater desalination owing to the country's medium term and long term needs in those areas. Top priority would be given to energy and water in the country's Horizon 2030 sustainable development programme.

23. Action was currently focused on the meticulous development of a national strategy at various organizational and sectoral levels. It comprised wide-ranging plans for the institutional and regulatory organization of nuclear activities, including the requisite nuclear safety and security safeguards, and clearly specified roles and responsibilities. The strategy also established pivotal objectives and structural projects, and specified the procedures to be followed for their progressive implementation and the principles governing the optimal distribution of resources.

24. Tunisia had sought from the outset to establish sustainable cooperative relations with the Agency. Important programmes implemented in recent decades had strongly supported socioeconomic development in the areas of health, agriculture and industry. Tunisia appreciated the existing level of cooperation with the Agency and hoped to bolster it in the years ahead, inasmuch as technical assistance and cooperation were key components of the Agency's mandate.

25. Tunisia had amended its legislation on combating terrorism, which now included provisions concerning nuclear terrorism that were in conformity with UN Security Council resolutions, especially resolution 1540 (2004), and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. It had also intensified training and capacity-building measures and taken steps to acquire essential equipment on the scale permitted by available resources and support from international cooperation programmes, particularly the INSSP and bilateral cooperation. A large number of national and regional training workshops on nuclear security had been organized in Tunisia, and the Agency and other bodies had been provided with facilities for the convening of meetings and workshops on behalf of Tunisian and other participants.

26. Tunisia was currently establishing a Nuclear Security Support Centre in the National Centre for Nuclear Science and Technology based on relevant Agency norms. The Support Centre would form part of the International Network for Nuclear Security Training and Support Centres, of which Tunisia was already a member. His country was grateful to the Agency and the United States Nuclear Security Administration for their support for the project.

27. Tunisia continued to take constitutional steps to enact a framework law on peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology. The law would provide for the establishment of a national regulatory authority to oversee all activities relating, in particular, to nuclear safety and security and safeguards, in order to ensure that they complied with international norms and conventions, especially the Convention on Nuclear Safety. Tunisia would then be in a position to ratify its additional protocol.

28. Tunisia appreciated existing efforts to promote nuclear disarmament and to expedite the establishment of a zone free of WMDs, in particular nuclear weapons, in the Middle East. It urged the General Conference to take appropriate steps to achieve that goal and, in particular, to have all nuclear facilities placed under Agency safeguards.

Ms Rayos Natividad (Philippines), Vice-President, took the Chair.

29. Mr JUMA (Kenya) said that his country was actively participating in TC projects with the Agency and, in collaboration with the Agency, had prepared its CPF for 2017–2022. Among the four priority areas identified in Vision 2030, the country's development plan, the Government had singled out energy as a key enabler for economic growth and had committed itself to the inclusion of nuclear power in its energy mix to meet future electricity demand.

30. Under the TC programme, Kenya had received help in capacity building and the provision of equipment to develop the necessary infrastructure for nuclear energy for peaceful use. That support, including training programmes in a wide range of fields, would be invaluable in developing Kenya's nuclear power programme and supplementing Government efforts to attain the SDGs.

31. In its awareness that the safety and security of nuclear materials and facilities were the responsibility of each Member State, his Government would ensure establishment of the legal and regulatory infrastructure necessary to support development of its nuclear power programme. Accordingly, a nuclear regulatory bill had been approved by the Cabinet and was undergoing legislative processing by Parliament before being signed into law. Kenya also recognized the importance of joining the relevant international agreements on nuclear safety and, to that end, had initiated the legal process of acceding to the four conventions on nuclear safety and security.

32. The security and safety of nuclear material and facilities necessitated public participation and confidence building. With the support of the Agency, the Government was therefore conducting meetings at national and local level for the public and community leaders and its representatives were participating in various international awareness-raising forums. With Agency assistance, the local media were also being encouraged to disseminate accurate information on nuclear power for peaceful use and Kenya looked forward to such continued support from the Agency.

33. Noting the incidence and mortality rate of cancer in Kenya, he observed that, of the 3800 cancer patients needing radiotherapy services, only 2000 had access to treatment at the country's biggest referral hospital, and the remainder had to seek private facility treatment. A comprehensive national cancer control programme had been launched, which necessitated the strengthening of capacity for national and county referral hospitals and also for other health institutions so that they could adequately diagnose, treat and manage cancer and other related diseases. In that connection, the Government had undertaken to provide a comprehensive healthcare scheme for all Kenyans and planned, with TC support from the Agency, to extend radiotherapy services to other parts of the country, thereby reducing the current burden on the few existing cancer facilities.

34. Turning to agriculture, he noted the serious problems posed by drought and animal and plant pests. To tackle those challenges, the Government aimed to expand the use of irrigation, improve soil productivity and ensure efficient water use, with due consideration for potential environmental impacts.

35. In collaboration with the Agency and other partners, Kenya would continue to upgrade the physical security for facilities holding radioactive materials. The Government had updated the country's INSSP and developed a three-year national action plan for implementation. Through its TC projects, Kenya continued to benefit from the funding of training and procurement of equipment at its Institute of Nuclear Science and Technology and hoped to continue receiving such support. It also requested that consideration be given to making the Institute a designated centre for training in nuclear science and technology.

36. In fulfilment of the Government's priority to ensure the supply of clean and quality water to all Kenyans, the Ministry of Water and Irrigation was receiving TC assistance from the Agency in training and the conduct of water resource assessments. In conjunction with the Agency, the Government had established and equipped the National Isotope Hydrology Laboratory in Kenya and it requested the Agency to maintain its support for that project.

37. Kenya hoped that the forthcoming Ministerial Conference from 28 to 30 November 2018 would bring parties together in a joint search for practical solutions to current challenges faced in harnessing the atom for peace and development. In that context, he reaffirmed the country's commitment to the Agency and expressed its appreciation to the Director General and his entire team for their invaluable contribution to the promotion of nuclear science and technology for development.

38. Mr KACOU (Côte d'Ivoire), welcoming forthcoming events, said that the theme of the 2018 Science Forum, Nuclear Technology for Climate: Mitigation, Monitoring and Adaptation, would undoubtedly contribute to giving his country new tools to meet its commitment under the Paris Agreement on climate, namely, to reduce GHG emissions by 28% by 2030.

39. Côte d'Ivoire had always benefited from extensive TC with the Agency, in the form of expert missions, workshops and meetings, the award of fellowships, funding for scientific visits and the supply of equipment and consumables, which had enabled the country to make significant advances in agriculture, human health, energy planning and environmental protection. It was currently implementing four national TC projects in the areas of improving maize crops in savannah areas subject to severe soil degradation; nuclear medicine and radiation oncology; the study of respiratory diseases in small ruminants; and nuclear and radiation safety. It was also participating in some 30 regional and interregional projects in a wide range of areas.

40. Under its current national development plan, the priority projects proposed by Côte d'Ivoire for the 2020–2021 biennium related to the issues of radiation oncology and nuclear medicine; improvement of crop productivity; food safety; and nuclear safety and security, and had been included in the country's updated CPF. In December 2017, the President had inaugurated a new national oncology and radiotherapy centre in Abidjan, equipped with a simulation scanner, two linear particle accelerators for three-dimensional conformal radiotherapy and a high dose rate brachytherapy platform, and a second centre was planned for the city of Grand Bassam.

41. The Agency had provided much appreciated funding support for feasibility studies and staff support measures.

42. The new centre had received more than 735 patients from within Côte d'Ivoire and the region and carried out 2142 consultations, demonstrating the substantial need for such services. Accordingly, Côte d'Ivoire was seeking technical support from the Agency in the areas of software, equipment and human resource development.

43. Where animal health was concerned, the country's virology laboratory had been strengthened, including in the areas of biosafety and biosecurity and preparedness for zoonotic disease outbreaks, of particular importance in view of the outbreak and resurgence of Lassa fever. In the agricultural sector, the Agency and AFRA had provided support to the National Agricultural Research Centre and the Jean Lorougnon Guédé University in Daloa in the areas of mutation and biotechnology, which also covered the use of radioisotope methods and innovative agricultural practices to combat land degradation. In addition, thanks to the training provided by the Agency, Côte d'Ivoire was using SIT to control fruit pests such as the mango white fly.

44. To strengthen its legal and regulatory framework, Côte d'Ivoire had acceded to and ratified a number of conventions and was in the process of ratifying the Convention on Early Notification in the Event of a Nuclear Accident, the Convention on Assistance in the Event of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency, and the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the IAEA. In addition, it had designated its national representative to the CPPMN and its 2005 Amendment.

45. From 16 to 19 October 2018, the country's Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety and Security Authority, working in cooperation with the Agency, would be organizing a major subregional exercise on security in the transport of radioactive materials in West Africa.

46. Mr BASU (India) said that, as in earlier years, India's interaction with the Agency had remained very extensive. It had placed under Agency safeguards two Russian-designed pressurised light water reactors and two pressurised heavy water reactors that were being built with Indian technology, bringing to 26 the total number of Indian nuclear facilities under safeguards. In addition, India was hosting the 27th IAEA Fusion Energy Conference in October 2018.

47. With a view to further enhancing its international cooperation in the field of nuclear power and its applications, India had signed agreements with the relevant State corporations of France, for the establishment of six nuclear power reactors with EPR technology; Canada, on science, technology and

innovation; and Viet Nam, on training and capacity building. In addition, during the visit of the US Secretary of Energy to India in April 2018, an inter-governmental collaboration agreement on collaboration in the area of neutrino physics had been signed with the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory.

48. On the multilateral front, India had taken over the chair of the ITER Council for a period of two years and its Government had approved an increase in the in-kind contribution component of the project.

49. He confirmed that India's programme to build 21 reactors by 2030 was well on track and that discussions were in progress with foreign partners on the technology inputs. He also reported that, by reaching 859 days of continuous operation, reactor unit 1 at the Kaiga plant had become the third longest running plant in the world and four other reactors had been in continuous operation for 450 days and longer. Those achievements demonstrated the soundness of the technology and efficiency of their operation and maintenance.

50. Units 1 and 2 at Kakrapar Atomic Power Station had experienced pressure tube leaks but, following a detailed assessment by the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board and coolant channel replacement in Unit 2, the units had been restarted. India's indigenously developed prototype fast breeder 500 MW(e) reactor was currently undergoing sodium commissioning and expected to attain criticality in 2019. An upgraded swimming pool-type reactor, Apsara-U, had become operational that month at the Trombay campus. The reactor was designed to produce a large variety of isotopes and its state-of-the-art facilities were equipped to serve nuclear physicists, material scientists and reactor designers. India stood ready to share that technology with newcomers to the nuclear field.

51. In response to the growing burden of cancer in developing countries, the Tata Memorial Centre was offering short term and long term training in cancer care to Agency participants, and over 150 beneficiaries from Africa and Asia had undergone such training. Earlier that month, Cyclone-30, India's largest medical cyclotron, had delivered a 30 MeV beam for the first time. The cyclotron was capable of meeting all the radioisotope needs of eastern India and the palladium-103 and germanium-68 requirements of the entire country. The facility would also have dedicated beam lines for research in materials science and nuclear physics.

52. The development of cost-effective cancer drugs had always been a priority for India, which had developed 21 different radiopharmaceuticals for diagnosis and therapy. In addition, it had been able to extract clinical grade yttrium-90 in ⁹⁰Y acetate form from high-level nuclear waste and to introduce it for patient care.

53. India's Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership, established in 2010, had run ten international programmes in different aspects of nuclear safety, security and safeguards. He invited interested Member States to join that initiative, either by providing teaching assistance or by identifying relevant training programmes, which it could develop in consultation with the Agency.

54. In conclusion, he conveyed his country's support for the Agency's leadership in the safe, secure and sustainable use of nuclear power.

55. Mr ALKAABI (United Arab Emirates) said that, in its conviction of the importance of nuclear power in meeting the world's growing energy demands and achieving the SDGs, the UAE had hosted the fourth International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century, in Abu Dhabi in October 2017, which had highlighted the challenges faced by, and the prospects for, nuclear power and its essential role in mitigating climate change.

56. The UAE was currently in the commissioning phase of its nuclear power programme, with construction of the first unit at the Barakah NPP completed and units 2, 3 and 4 nearing completion. The construction and commissioning process was in full accordance with the Agency's guidance and

international best practices, ensuring that the Barakah NPP met the highest standards of operational safety, security, transparency and non-proliferation. In line with its commitment to those standards, the UAE had to date hosted ten major Agency peer review missions, including Pre-OSART and INIR Phase 3, and it encouraged other Member States with existing or future plans for nuclear power to take advantage of such missions.

57. In addition, the UAE had received significant support through the Agency's TC programme, which had supported its nuclear infrastructure development and capacity building for nuclear power and applications in the health, agricultural and environmental sectors. Over the previous ten years, more than 5000 participants had received Agency training in various fields in the UAE. The TC programme must be adequately supported and funded to facilitate assistance to Member States, in fulfilment of the Agency's mandate.

58. The UAE attached the utmost importance to maintaining the highest standards of nuclear safety and had therefore joined all international conventions in that area and participated actively in the review process of both the CNS and the Joint Convention, under which it had recently submitted its third national report. In that context, his delegation urged the Islamic Republic of Iran, the only country with significant nuclear activities that had yet to join the CNS, to accede to that instrument at the earliest possible opportunity.

59. Welcoming the Agency's efforts in the area of nuclear security, through both national actions and international cooperation, the UAE looked forward to the forthcoming International Conference on Nuclear Security. It reaffirmed its support for the CPPNM and encouraged Member States to join and ratify that important instrument. It also welcomed the increased number of countries that had signed and ratified additional protocols and encouraged the Agency to continue its open dialogue with Member States on strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of the safeguards system.

60. With regard to the JCPOA, the UAE regretted that the agreed instrument had failed to allay long held nuclear concerns and moderate Iran's behaviour in the region. It therefore called on Iran to build confidence in the peaceful nature of its nuclear activities and to refrain from continued actions that threatened the peace and stability of the region.

61. Lastly, the UAE hoped that significant progress would be achieved during the current NPT Review Cycle towards implementing the agreed 2010 action plan and the early convening of a Conference on a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, with the participation of all countries in the region.

62. Mr HAMMER (Australia) said that the civil applications of nuclear science had a key role to play in efforts to meet all 17 SDGs. As the civil uptake of nuclear energy increased across the world, ever growing demands were being placed on the Agency, which was therefore required to adopt approaches that maximized its effectiveness. Greater efficiencies and better outcomes would be achieved through a recognition by the Agency of the mutually reinforcing and interdependent nature of nuclear security, safety, safeguards and TC and the consequent adoption of a one-house approach.

63. In its awareness that gender parity contributed to greater organizational effectiveness, Australia commended the Agency on its efforts to enhance the status of women by increasing their representation and furthering opportunities for them in nuclear science.

64. Australia maintained its strong support for and involvement in the Agency's TC programme and, in that context, drew attention to its Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Sri Lanka, under which the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation was helping Sri Lankan researchers to investigate chronic kidney disease of unknown aetiology.

65. Reaffirming his country's commitment to nuclear safety and radiation protection, and to the application of international best practices in that domain, he reported that Australia would be hosting an IRRS mission in November 2018. In addition, its successful nomination of a vice-president for the Sixth Review Meeting of the Joint Convention demonstrated its strong commitment in the area of radioactive waste safety. Recording his country's appreciation to the Agency for holding a follow-up IPPAS mission in Australia in late 2017, he commended that service to all States.

66. Achieving the full potential of the peaceful uses of nuclear technology was contingent upon securing the confidence of the international community that nuclear material and technologies were not being diverted to non-peaceful uses. It was therefore crucial for the Agency safeguards system to be independent, credible and adequately resourced. Accordingly, Australia wholeheartedly welcomed the Director General's recent report on the costs and benefits of SLAs and fully supported the Agency's efforts to improve the effectiveness of the safeguards system through application of the State-level concept. In addition, as the first country to bring an additional protocol into force, Australia also strongly supported the universalization of additional protocols and called upon those countries yet to bring an additional protocol into force to do so as soon as possible.

67. Welcoming the commitment to denuclearization expressed by the DPRK in the Panmunjom Declaration and in the Joint Statement from the USA–DPRK summit, Australia hoped that those commitments would signal a permanent cessation of that country's flagrant disregard of successive Security Council and Agency resolutions. It called upon the DPRK to take tangible, verifiable and irreversible steps towards denuclearization, to return to the NPT and to sign and ratify the CTBT. Until it saw such steps, Australia would maintain full economic and diplomatic pressure on the DPRK, both through current sanctions under the relevant Security Council resolutions and through application of its own autonomous sanctions.

68. Australia also welcomed the Director General's reports that the Islamic Republic of Iran was continuing provisionally to apply its additional protocol, to cooperate with the Agency and to meet its obligations under the JCPOA and it called on Iran — and all remaining parties to the JCPOA — to continue fully to implement that instrument's provisions. In closing, he pledged Australia's continued constructive and tangible support for the Agency.

69. Mr AL-THANI (Qatar) said that, in its commitment to upholding the Agency's standards on nuclear safety and security policies, combating terrorism and illicit trafficking in nuclear materials, Qatar had recently promulgated a law on the national system for the accounting and control of nuclear materials and had designated the regulatory authority responsible for application of that law. On 31 July 2018, Qatar had joined the Nuclear Security Contact Group and it reaffirmed its commitment to the Group's objectives.

70. As a State which attached great importance to the Agency's TC programme, Qatar stressed the need for sufficient resources to be allocated to the programme for it to carry out its tasks in an optimal manner.

71. Undiminished security for all required the pursuit of nuclear disarmament, since the only absolute guarantee against the threat or use of nuclear weapons was their total elimination. Accordingly, Qatar stressed the need to give effect to measures in pursuit of nuclear disarmament, such as Article VI of the NPT, the United Nations Millennium Declaration and, above all, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons adopted in July 2017.

72. Given the importance of nuclear-weapon-free zones as a step towards the total renunciation of nuclear weapons, Qatar regretted the lack of political will to implement the 1995 NPT Review Conference resolution on the Middle East. The Arab countries, all of which were members of the NPT,

had called on the sponsors of that resolution to work for its implementation, since continued failure to implement it undermined the very credibility of the NPT.

73. Qatar accordingly called for genuine efforts to implement the resolution and for practical arrangements, in accordance with an agreed timetable, to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, a goal that could only be achieved with Israel's accession to the NPT. Progress in that area would be conducive to a positive outcome for the 2020 Review Conference and help to avert repeated failure of the Conference which, as had happened at the 2015 Review Conference, would damage the credibility of the NPT and the non-proliferation regime as a whole.

74. Ms MEBARKI (Algeria) said that her country appreciated the timely theme of the forthcoming Scientific Forum, "Nuclear Technology for Climate: Mitigation, Monitoring and Adaptation", and also looked forward to the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology in November 2018.

75. Algeria appreciated the Agency's capacity-building programmes for developing countries, particularly in Africa, which it hoped would be developed further. Under AFRA, it continually shared its own expertise and infrastructure with other Member States, especially in training for radiation protection, dosimetry and medical physics, nuclear medicine, veterinary medicine, nuclear instrumentation and non-destructive testing. Algeria was pleased to announce that later in the day it would sign a Practical Arrangement with the Agency in furtherance of TCDC.

76. Algeria was firmly convinced that States were responsible for nuclear safety and security on their own territory, while measures to strengthen those areas must not hamper international cooperation in peaceful nuclear activities or jeopardize the priorities set for the Agency's TC programme. Algeria was currently finalizing the legislation to establish its nuclear safety regulatory authority and had commenced a multi-cycle TC project with the Agency to enhance its human resources training in that field. Algerian experts had participated in Agency technical committees, notably on radiological safety and waste management, and had contributed to Agency expert missions and to the work of UNSCEAR.

77. Algeria welcomed the adoption of the Nuclear Security Plan for 2018–2021. Having ratified the CPPNM, its Amendment, and the Nuclear Terrorism Convention, Algeria underlined the importance of universal accession to all the international instruments governing nuclear security.

78. In accordance with its international commitments in that field Algeria had approved an INSSP, developed with Agency assistance, and had strengthened its nuclear security infrastructure, notably through the addition of a national nuclear security training and support centre, which would also have a regional focus acting as part of the international NSSC network for sharing information and knowledge.

79. Algeria had signed an additional protocol to its CSA in 2018. It considered the Agency to be the only body able to ensure that non-nuclear-weapon States met their non-proliferation obligations. The dire human and environmental consequences of the decades of nuclear testing conducted on its territory in the past had convinced Algeria that only the complete elimination of nuclear weapons could protect humankind from the danger they posed.

80. Algeria had signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and encouraged other Member States to do likewise. It called for the universalization of the NPT and full implementation of the decisions, resolutions and action plans emanating from its review conferences. Algeria considered those two instruments to be complementary and dedicated to the same objective, namely the total elimination of nuclear weapons, and regretted the current stalemate in the negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

81. Algeria called on all signatories to the CTBT that had not done so, particularly those under Annex 2, to ratify the treaty without delay. As part of the process of strengthening the capacities of

signatory States, Algeria had hosted the third workshop for national data centres in May 2018, attended by over 80 experts drawn from some 40 countries worldwide.

82. As a party to the Pelindaba Treaty, Algeria believed strongly in the role that NWFZs could play in maintaining international peace and security and in strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regimes. It strongly advocated the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East and was deeply concerned at the threat that Israel's nuclear capability posed to the region. The very cradle of humanity risked annihilation as long as the Israeli leadership continued to ignore the relevant UN Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and the decisions of NPT review conferences. It was Algeria's hope that reason would prevail in the Middle East as elsewhere, enabling humanity to move forward in peace and security.

83. Ms ROBERTON (New Zealand) said that, in the face of the current challenges to multilateralism and the global rules-based order, support for cornerstone institutions such as the Agency and the wider non-proliferation system would be critically important in shaping the future. The Agency, whose members shared common goals despite their disagreements, represented an excellent example of multilateralism in action, something which should not be taken for granted.

84. All Member States had a stake in the success of the JCPOA, which New Zealand considered to be essential to reducing the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East and worldwide and an important example of what committed, multilateral action could achieve. Her country was disappointed by the decision of the USA to withdraw from the Agreement and welcomed the remaining signatories' continued and determined commitment to its implementation. The Islamic Republic of Iran must continue to fulfil its obligations under the Agreement and refrain from placing it under any further strain.

85. New Zealand welcomed the recent progress made towards reducing tensions on the Korean Peninsula and encouraged all parties to build further trust towards resolving the longstanding security issues there. It urged the DPRK to demonstrate its commitment to the goal of achieving complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Peninsula by returning to compliance with the NPT, signing and acceding to the CTBT and reengaging with the Agency to allow its inspectors to return.

86. The international community's expectations of Iran and the DPRK underscored the importance of the safeguards system, in which the CSA together with the additional protocol constituted the gold standard. New Zealand welcomed the Secretariat's use of the State-level concept in seeking ever more efficient and effective ways to support its safeguards work, and looked forward to further updates on progress.

87. Having not opted for nuclear power, New Zealand nevertheless respected the right of other countries to include nuclear in their existing or planned energy mix. Like many of its Pacific neighbours, New Zealand was keenly aware of the damage that might result from a nuclear accident at sea if the highest possible standards of safety were not in place. It therefore greatly valued the levels of confidence and communication achieved in recent years through the Dialogue between Coastal and Shipping States and strongly supported all efforts to improve the international nuclear liability regime and to address the concerns of non-nuclear States, in particular, through mechanisms such as INLEX. Regarding the difficulties raised by the transboundary implications of nuclear security, New Zealand was optimistic that Member States were nearing a solution that reflected Member States' strong shared interest in an integrated approach ensuring the secure management of nuclear materials.

88. As an active participant in the negotiation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and having recently ratified it, New Zealand could not agree with those who argued that the Agency was not the place to discuss the Treaty. It was dangerous to deny the close link between disarmament and non-proliferation or to claim that the Treaty in some way undermined the NPT. On the contrary, the new Treaty strengthened the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime by providing a

legal framework for Article VI of the NPT, strengthening the Agency safeguards system based on the NPT, reaffirming the safeguards standard enshrined in Article III of the NPT, and obliging States that already had a higher standard in place to maintain it. New Zealand called on all those present to reflect on how disarmament and non-proliferation could best be made to function in partnership, not least through the implementation of Article VI.

Ms Accili Sabbatini (Italy), Vice-President, took the Chair.

89. Mr FLORENSA PALAU (Spain) said that nuclear energy was essential to progress and that the safeguards system was key to global peace and stability, at a time when the non-proliferation regime was under great pressure. Spain currently had the twelfth largest pool of energy-related nuclear facilities in the world in terms of installed nuclear capacity, and nuclear energy accounted for around one fifth of its electricity production, which helped to secure energy supply, optimize costs and reduce GHG emissions.

90. As the world's nuclear reactors grew older, Spain's nuclear industry constituted a reference point for reactor maintenance and dismantling and in nuclear and radioactive waste management. It was pleased to offer the Agency the benefit of that experience through the TC programme.

91. Spain's regulatory authority, the Nuclear Safety Council, contributed to a range of Agency technical and cooperation projects and peer review missions and to the planning, drafting and revision of Agency standards, as well as ensuring their translation with the aim of enhancing regulatory capacity in Spanish-speaking countries. Spain planned to host IRRS and ARTEMIS missions in October 2018.

92. In TC, the country's regulatory body was also developing and managing programmes to improve regulatory infrastructures in Ibero-American and North African countries, and had led interregional initiatives on radioactive source monitoring.

93. The Nuclear Safety Council was an active member of FORO, which continued its endeavours to attain high levels of nuclear and radiation safety and nuclear security in its 10 member countries. Spain welcomed the recognition by the General Conference of the strategic partnership between FORO and the Agency, which enabled FORO's results to gain further international exposure.

94. Threats to nuclear security from criminal or terrorist acts required the continuous updating of prevention, detection and response measures in order to maintain confidence in the safe uses of nuclear energy. Rapid and effective application of the measures included in the Conference resolution on nuclear security was therefore essential.

95. Spain had continued its efforts to develop standards for the application of the CPPNM and its Amendment, with a view to enhancing the response to and preventing sabotage and terrorist attacks against means of transporting nuclear and radioactive materials and the facilities and hospitals that used them. Spain's Guardia Civil and the Agency had finalized a plan of operations to develop the country's security capacities and thence support those of other Member States.

96. Based on its conviction that international cooperation was key to tackling the challenges of the modern world, through the Agency's TC programme Spain was engaged in activities to promote technologies, strengthen regulatory infrastructures and train human resources in Member States, as well as help them comply with international standards.

97. He noted the strategic partnership between the CIEMAT research centre and ARCAL and cooperation in the field of nuclear medicine under the agreement between the Spanish Medical Association and the Agency.

98. Spain considered that CSAs and their additional protocols provided an essential framework for the maintenance of global confidence in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In that regard, it welcomed all Agency initiatives, in particular the SLA, aimed at enhancing safeguards efficiency and effectiveness.

99. Spain was convinced that the international community's longstanding objective of achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world could not be met without universalization of the NPT — the keystone of the international non-proliferation regime — the early negotiation and ratification of a treaty for the cessation of fissile material production, the entry into force of the CTBT, and the convening of a summit on an NWFZ in the Middle East. Those steps called for the building of bridges between countries' differing sensibilities, in the knowledge that nuclear weapons posed a threat to all and that the elimination of WMDs was a shared objective.

100. Spain deeply regretted the withdrawal of the USA from the JCPOA, but continued to be committed to the implementation of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015). It regarded the Agreement as one of the greatest achievements of multilateral diplomacy in recent years, and one which was buttressed by a robust Agency verification system.

101. His country welcomed the ongoing process of dialogue with the DPRK, whose nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes posed one of the gravest threats to international peace and stability. To achieve the aim of complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula it would be essential to proceed with all caution and to maintain pressure on the DPRK as long as no tangible results were forthcoming.

102. Spain called on the Syrian Arab Republic to collaborate with the Agency. The mere passage of time must not be the pretext for non-completion of the Agency's verification tasks.

103. In conclusion he emphasized that, in the face of the Agency's continuing success and Member States' ever growing demand for its services, balanced budget management would be of vital importance, as would effective coordination under the one-house approach.

104. Mr DJUMALA (Indonesia) welcomed the Agency's progress in its overarching activities, in particular the development of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, which contributed positively to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world.

105. Nevertheless, the threat of nuclear weapons persisted even as the gap between nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament efforts continued to widen. Indonesia supported the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which had brought significant momentum towards achieving the general and complete disarmament referred to in Article VI of the NPT and also strengthened the NPT safeguards system.

106. Turning to the JCPOA, he noted with regret the setback presented by the USA's withdrawal, but commended the Agency on its impartial and objective verification and monitoring of the Islamic Republic of Iran's implementation of the Agreement. Indonesia encouraged all the parties to remain committed to full and effective implementation of the Agreement and called upon the international community to maintain its support.

107. Indonesia welcomed the outcome of the inter-Korean high-level talks, as set forth in the Panmunjom Declaration, as well as the results of the USA–DPRK summit in Singapore, and called on the DPRK to take action by returning to the NPT and cooperating in good faith with the Agency.

108. Indonesia was eager to support the Agency in strengthening its valuable contribution to the achievement of the SDGs, including through the TC programme, and stood ready to continue working with the Agency, both as beneficiary and as provider of TC for other Member States. He welcomed the results of the Director General's working visit to Indonesia in 2018, during which his country and the

Agency had signed Practical Arrangements with a view to enhancing TCDC and strengthening South–South cooperation.

109. Indonesia welcomed the positive developments in its national nuclear applications, including its ongoing cooperation with the Agency, FAO and UNIDO to achieve soybean self-sufficiency and an Agency project to enhance livestock nutrition and reproduction in smallholder communities. In health, Indonesia continued to make progress in cancer therapy and radiopharmaceuticals and was grateful for the Agency assistance provided during the current year in telemedicine and through an imPACT mission.

110. Indonesia recognized and supported the Agency’s assistance provided to Member States to ensure the security of their nuclear and other radioactive materials, but believed firmly that such measures must not hamper international cooperation in peaceful nuclear activities or undermine the established priorities of the TC programme.

111. In nuclear energy, Indonesia was currently drafting a roadmap for its nuclear power programme and working to complete the engineering design for its 10 MW(th) pebble-bed experimental power reactor. It was grateful to the Agency and the international community for their assistance with the safety-related aspects of the project.

112. In closing, Indonesia encouraged the Agency to maintain its focus on increasing the numbers of its Professional and managerial staff from underrepresented Member States and reiterated its readiness to support the Agency’s work, including through the provision of high-quality audit services.

113. Mr GÜN (Turkey) said that his country was in the process of establishing its nuclear power infrastructure and was committed to working closely with the Agency to promote the highest standards in nuclear safety, security and safeguards for promoting peaceful uses of nuclear technology.

114. In the past year Turkey had made important progress towards its aim of incorporating nuclear electricity into its energy mix by 2010 and achieving a 10% share of its power production for nuclear by 2030. With the help of the Russian Federation, the first reactor unit at the Akkuyu NPP was expected to go online in 2023, to be followed at one-yearly intervals by the remaining three units. Work on the Sinop NPP project being implemented with Japan was at the feasibility stage and a third NPP project was at the planning stage.

115. The past year had also seen significant reorganization of the Turkish nuclear sector, including the establishment of the Turkish Nuclear Regulatory Authority, the restructuring of the Turkish Atomic Energy Authority into an R&D organization with additional responsibility for radioactive waste disposal, and the creation of a General Directorate within the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources to coordinate the nuclear power programme and associated projects.

116. The Turkish nuclear programme continued to benefit from Agency review services and expert missions, and Turkey actively supported the Agency’s nuclear safety programme by hosting capacity-building activities for the benefit of counterparts from other countries. His country believed that more flexible deployment of the Agency’s safety advisory services and an increase in its modular review and advisory services would help to encourage Member States to apply the IAEA Safety Standards more widely.

117. Turkey supported the Agency’s central role in facilitating and coordinating international cooperation on nuclear security and welcomed the 2018–2021 Nuclear Security Plan.

118. Turkey attached great importance to the globalization and full implementation of the CPPNM and its Amendment and looked forward to the review meeting in 2021 and also to the International Nuclear

Security Conference in 2020, the previous version of which had successfully maintained political momentum and raised nuclear security awareness among all stakeholders.

119. Concerning the additional pressures affecting the Agency's safeguards system from rapidly advancing technologies and increased worldwide use of nuclear applications and nuclear power, Turkey welcomed the Secretariat's adoption of the SLA in seeking to keep pace. Recognizing that additional time was needed to gain a more comprehensive picture of that approach, Turkey encouraged the Secretariat to continue sharing information with Member States through technical briefings and supplementary reports.

120. Turkey believed that the JCPOA made a significant contribution to regional and international security, and should be maintained and implemented fully and transparently. It commended the Agency on successfully fulfilling its mandate under the Agreement.

121. Regarding the diplomatic process to create an environment of confidence and achieve nuclear disarmament on the Korean Peninsula, Turkey hoped that the latest developments would be seized upon as an important opportunity for peace. In order to achieve complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization, however, the DPRK must now take specific steps.

122. Mr BENEDEJČIČ (Slovenia) commended the Agency on its professional and impartial role in monitoring and verifying the Islamic Republic of Iran's implementation of its nuclear commitments under the JCPOA, which Slovenia regard as an integral part of the international non-proliferation architecture.

123. Slovenia also welcomed the positive outcomes of the recent high-level talks between the Republic of Korea and the DPRK and the USA–DPRK summit, which had raised the prospects for denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. His country called on the DPRK to ratify the CTBT and return to the Agency's safeguards system. It encouraged the Agency to stay abreast of developments and maintain its readiness for further verification in the DPRK.

124. Slovenia appreciated the Agency's TC programme, which provided invaluable support to Member States for harnessing nuclear power and safely applying nuclear techniques. It was important to maintain a diversity of TC projects in order to foster inclusion, and to continue tackling more demanding areas such as nuclear safety and technology. The resources for the TCF must remain sufficient, assured and predictable, in which connection Slovenia was proud to have been entrusted with the role of co-facilitator for the review of the due account mechanism.

125. Turning to recent internal developments, he highlighted the adoption of the Ionizing Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Act, which represented the culmination of a demanding process to align domestic legislation with the latest requirements in radiation protection. The post-Fukushima upgrade programme at the Krško NPP was set to maintain the plant's excellent safety and production record, its dry spent fuel storage facility would begin operations in 2020, and an OSART mission to follow up on recommendations made in 2017 would take place in October 2018.

126. With regard to nuclear security, in its role as Chair of the Forum for Security Cooperation, one of the two decision-making organs of the OSCE, Slovenia had hosted a special event earlier in 2018 concerned with nuclear security in the OSCE area, which related in particular to the fact that most of the world's nuclear facilities were located in OSCE participating States. He thanked the Deputy Director General for Nuclear Safety and Security for his active participation in that event.

127. As one of the founders of the Vienna chapter of the International Gender Champions initiative, Slovenia welcomed the fact that all the heads of the international organizations in Vienna had now joined and that agreement had recently been reached to establish the steering group for an IGC Hub in Vienna. Slovenia appreciated all the gender mainstreaming work done by the Secretariat, a recent outstanding

example of which had been the event on “Unconscious Bias” hosted on International Women’s Day by the Deputy Director General for Management. Slovenia would remain a strong partner and supporter of the Agency in its efforts to increase the number of women on its staff, and looked forward to seeing gender parity among its most senior officials by 2021.

128. Mr DE ALMEIDA RIBEIRO (Portugal) said that his country looked forward to the forthcoming Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology, which would highlight Member States’ support for the Agency in its role as the leading intergovernmental forum for scientific and technical cooperation in the nuclear field and in its work to ensure the safe, secure and peaceful use of science and nuclear technology in the cause of international peace and security and the achievement of the SDGs.

129. Portugal underscored the continuing importance of the NPT as the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation regime and essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. It was vital to ensure full, complete and effective application of the Treaty and the Agency’s central role in that endeavour by implementing the safeguards regime, promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and establishing and upholding international standards in nuclear safety and security. Portugal accordingly called on all States that had not done so to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear States.

130. Portugal was satisfied that the JCPOA was so far functioning as expected, and would remain committed to its full and effective implementation, provided that the Islamic Republic of Iran continued to carry out its nuclear-related commitments under the Agreement. The importance of the Agency’s role could not be overemphasized, its long term verification activities being essential to building necessary confidence and mutual trust.

131. Portugal welcomed the outcome of the recent inter-Korean high-level talks contained in the Panmunjom Declaration, and also the Joint Statement emanating from the DPRK–USA summit in Singapore. Provided the DPRK engaged seriously in the subsequent negotiations, those could be seen as positive steps towards complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the dismantling of the DPRK’s ballistic missile, nuclear weapon and related programmes. Portugal urged the DPRK to return to the NPT and the Agency’s safeguards system as soon as possible and to sign and ratify the CTBT.

132. His country regretted the continuing failure of the Syrian Arab Republic to comply with its NPT safeguards agreement and endorsed the Director General’s request to the Syrian authorities to cooperate fully with the Agency to resolve all outstanding issues.

133. At a time when people and planet were facing daunting challenges, knowledge-based international cooperation and nuclear science and technology had a crucial part to play in shaping humankind’s common future.

134. In that context, Portugal was determined to help further strengthen the involvement of national stakeholders in the Agency’s TC programmes aimed at achieving sustainable and safe use of ionizing radiation in medicine, industry and other sectors, establishing a robust system of preparedness and response to radiological and nuclear emergencies and securing all radiation sources.

135. Portugal was very grateful to the Agency for the technical support provided to its research reactor and for the installation of a cyclotron, which would be used in medical diagnosis, training, research and scientific development.

136. Portugal was working to assist other members of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries, namely Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe, to become full Members of the Agency so that they could benefit from assistance in the key areas of agriculture, water resource management, mosquito control and cancer therapy.

137. Portugal was committed to promoting the applications of nuclear science and technology, with particular focus on radiation oncology and health. Large-scale international public and private efforts would be needed to promote nuclear science and biomedical engineering, train medical physicists and nuclear health professionals, and improve Member States' health systems.

138. He commended the Agency, in particular the Seibersdorf Nuclear Sciences and Applications Laboratories, for its work to further develop SIT for the control and eradication of mosquitoes that transmitted malaria, dengue, Zika and other diseases.

139. In collaboration with the Agency, Portugal had organized a side event at the Conference, entitled Nuclear Analytical Techniques in Forensic Science, intended to help strengthen its own and other Member States' capabilities to apply those techniques in food safety, health, crime investigation, cultural heritage and environmental sampling.

140. His country welcomed the theme chosen for the forthcoming Scientific Forum, Nuclear Technology for Climate: Mitigation, Monitoring and Adaptation, which would showcase the potentially decisive contribution that those technologies could make in formulating approaches to addressing climate change.

141. Portugal fully supported the Dialogue between Coastal and Shipping States, which had successfully provided Member States with a forum for promoting transparency and building confidence regarding the transport of sensitive radioactive materials.

142. In closing, he thanked the Director General for his visit to Lisbon in April 2018, during which he had signed an MoU and Action Plan with the Portuguese Government which would greatly help to further develop Portugal's participation in the Agency's activities.

143. Mr HEVA MUAKASA (Democratic Republic of the Congo), expressing his country's satisfaction with the assistance it received under the TC programme, said that in the very near future it would sign its third CPF with the Agency for the period 2018–2023. In that connection his country had submitted five new TC projects relating to human health, agriculture, human resources development, nuclear technical applications and research reactor safety.

144. Under AFRA, the Democratic Republic of the Congo had submitted two projects, on nuclear industrial applications for non-destructive testing and research reactor safety, in partnership with the Agency and the Kingdom of Morocco, with the aim of promoting South–South cooperation. His country had received an IPPAS expert mission in 2017 and pre-OMARR and INSARR missions in 2018, which testified to its concern not only over nuclear and radiation safety issues prior to bringing its research reactor back into operation, but also over the important issue of the nuclear security of nuclear and radiological facilities. A visual inspection of the reactor's internal structures would take place in the coming month, followed by a full OMARR in March 2019. His country thanked the Agency for its close attention to those concerns and pledged to resolve all matters raised by the various missions as soon as possible.

145. In the realm of human health, the Democratic Republic of the Congo thanked the Agency for agreeing to share the cost of a new gamma camera unit for use in nuclear medicine. The country had undertaken to establish its first national oncology centre for the prevention and treatment of cancer and was preparing to host an impACT mission involving the Agency and the WHO, intended to evaluate the feasibility of the arrangements planned for radiotherapy.

146. His country's nuclear and radiological regulatory infrastructure had been in place since 2002. In the past year the National Nuclear Act had been revised, and contained new provisions on safety, security, safeguards and civil liability in the event of nuclear damage. Regulations were due to be

approved and published for various sectors which used ionizing radiation, notably in relation to radiological protection for medical exposure.

147. The Democratic Republic of the Congo looked forward to the Scientific Forum on Nuclear Technology for Climate: Mitigation, Monitoring and Adaptation and would endeavour to implement the recommendations from that and another event of high scientific and political importance, the Global Climate Action Summit held recently in San Francisco.

148. In its determination to ensure the peaceful and exclusively development-oriented use of nuclear energy, the Democratic Republic of the Congo had ratified the NPT in 1972, signed its additional protocol in 2003, ratified the Pelindaba Treaty in 2005, and in 2011 had acceded to the CPPNM and signed the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. It urged States which had not done so to make comparable commitments towards a world without nuclear weapons.

149. In 2016, at the request of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Agency had organized a national workshop on threat assessment and design basis threat. The country would host an INSSP review mission in early 2019, which it envisaged would strengthen the nuclear security regime in its nuclear and radiological facilities in line with the recommendations of the IPPAS mission it had hosted in December 2017.

150. The Democratic Republic of the Congo called once again for a multilateral approach to issues of common interest and looked forward to the Agency's continued work to promote the peaceful applications of nuclear energy, in particular in pursuit of the SDGs and a world free of nuclear weapons.

151. Mr SOLANO ORTIZ (Costa Rica) said that the forthcoming Scientific Forum on Nuclear Technology for Climate: Mitigation, Monitoring and Adaptation was of particular interest to his country, which was home to 5% of the world's biodiversity and dedicated 25% of its territory to its protection. Costa Rica looked forward to advancing its understanding of ways in which nuclear technology could help reduce GHG emissions, work that it knew would continue beyond the Forum as part of the Agency's contribution to achieving the SDGs.

152. Costa Rica highly appreciated the assistance it had received from the Agency in a range of areas under the TC programme. As a TC partner since 1965, Costa Rica had achieved exceptional rates of attainment and implementation in its projects, and led its region in terms of the cost-sharing it had been able to sustain over the previous three TC cycles.

153. Costa Rican public universities acting as IAEA Collaborating Centres were making a valuable contribution to achieving SDG targets. One such example was the Centre for Research into Environmental Pollution, a regional reference laboratory for environmental protection and the proper use of agricultural pesticides. Similarly, the Fusion Energy and Applications Laboratory, part of the Costa Rican Technology Institute, was seeking accreditation as the world's first Collaborating Centre in nuclear plasma and fusion and to become the regional reference centre in that field.

154. Another project of high scientific value was the collaboration between the National Children's Hospital and the Costa Rican Technology Institute on medical uses of nuclear plasma, which his country hoped would commence as part of the 2020–2021 TC cycle. With the aim of strengthening radiological safety in its region in line with Agency standards, Costa Rica was also involved with other States in a number of coordinated research projects and in the Regulatory Infrastructure Development Project for Latin America and the Caribbean.

155. Costa Rica was grateful to the Agency for its assistance to prepare the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy Act, which updated the country's 50-year-old regulations to take account of its international commitments and the latest technological innovations. In 2019, the National Regulatory Authority for Radiological Protection hoped to publish its policy and strategy, and Costa Rica also planned to update

as soon as possible the information in its INSSP to reflect its current international obligations and the Agency's recommendations.

156. Costa Rica supported the Agency's efforts to meet its obligations concerning the application of safeguards and the conduct of other nuclear verification activities. The integrity, impartiality and technical objectivity of the safeguards system were essential to the stability and sustainability of the international non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

157. Costa Rica was paying close attention to the implementation of the JCPOA, whose monitoring and verification activities were crucial to international stability, peace and security. It welcomed the rapprochement achieved thus far between the countries of the Korean Peninsula as part of the process to bring about its complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization, and looked forward to further positive developments.

158. His country believed firmly in international multilateral verification and the Agency's safeguards system as means to bring about non-proliferation. Significant and tangible progress towards a world free of nuclear weapons could only be achieved if all States respected their obligations under the relevant disarmament and non-proliferation agreements. Costa Rica continued to support the Agency's central role in impartially and objectively carrying out its monitoring, safeguards and verification responsibilities. It trusted that any other attempts at disarmament and non-proliferation would be based on multilateral monitoring, safeguards and verification.

159. In the year since the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons had opened for signature, 60 States had signed and there had been 15 ratifications and accessions. The implementation of disarmament obligations under the NPT was unsatisfactory — existing commitments had not been fulfilled and certain States were questioning them in both word and deed.

160. It was more urgent than ever to strengthen the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime with the NPT as its cornerstone. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was compatible with and bolstered the NPT, establishing a legal framework for the implementation of its Article VI and strengthening the Agency's safeguards system. It also reaffirmed the safeguards standards enshrined in Article III of the NPT by encouraging all States to further deepen their commitment to safeguards.

161. Recalling that 48 Member States had issued a joint statement at a recent Board of Governors' meeting expressing their conviction that banning and eradicating nuclear weapons was the only way to ensure that they were never used again, he urged all Member States committed to complete nuclear disarmament, which included the overwhelming majority that had supported the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, to sign and ratify that Treaty as soon as possible.

162. In conclusion, he appealed to the Agency to enhance geographical representation among its staff, in line with its Statute, and to promote gender equity and equality as cross-cutting policies in its TC and other programmes.

163. Mr ISTRATE (Romania) said that, as a non-nuclear-weapon State, his country remained fully committed to the NPT, which it regarded as the key multilateral instrument for strengthening international peace, security and stability. Romania encouraged all parties to the Treaty to adopt a forward-looking approach by striving to minimize their differences and seeking a compromise that would advance their shared objective of enhancing the Treaty's integrity and authority across all its three pillars.

164. His country fully supported the Agency's efforts to implement its verification function under the NPT, for which it needed legal authority, strong verification tools, the cooperation of States and sufficient resources. Romania strongly believed that the Agency was able to provide credible assurances

on the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in a State only if that State had a CSA and an additional protocol in force. Those should therefore become the verification standard for non-nuclear-weapon States party to the NPT.

165. Romania fully supported the Agency's long term mission of verifying and monitoring the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear-related commitments and welcomed the Agency's monitoring work under the JCPOA. Continued full and rigorous implementation of the Agreement, as well as Iran's full cooperation with the Agency, were crucial factors.

166. Romania fully supported the diplomatic efforts to de-escalate tensions on the Korean Peninsula and persuade the DPRK to abandon its nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner and resume cooperation with the Agency. Until that time, the existing sanctions must be strictly enforced.

167. The risk of nuclear terrorism was a worldwide concern, and Romania commended the significant work of the Nuclear Security Contact Group, which was meeting in the margins of the Conference, in carrying out in a more extensive format the objectives of the Nuclear Security Summit process, under the auspices of the Agency. Romania had ratified all the main international instruments in that field, including the CPPNM and its Amendment and the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and encouraged all States to do likewise.

168. Regional and international cooperation were vital to ensuring nuclear security, and Romania therefore fully welcomed the objectives of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism as a valuable contribution to the global nuclear security architecture.

169. Romania participated fully in international efforts to prevent nuclear terrorism and, in close collaboration with the Global Initiative, had hosted the Olympus Reloaded Regional Exercise on Nuclear Forensics in Support of Investigations in Bucharest in 2017, as a follow-up to Exercise Olympus in 2016. Both events had underscored the essential role of preparedness in facing the threat of nuclear terrorism. In April, Romania had hosted an important international conference on nuclear security issues in the Black Sea region, aimed at enhancing regional cooperation.

170. Romania recognized the importance of adopting and implementing the international safety standards, and reaffirmed its commitment to implementing the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. The annual inspections carried out by Euratom and the Agency to verify the country's physical inventory had not identified any undeclared nuclear material or diversion of nuclear material from peaceful uses.

171. Mr LE (Viet Nam) said that, over the previous ten years, his country had continued with its peaceful policy of using atomic energy to promote research and employing radiation and radioactive isotopes for socioeconomic development.

172. Under its CPF for 2016–2021, Viet Nam continued to receive Agency assistance through TC projects. In the period 2017–2018, Viet Nam had implemented eight national TC projects and been involved in 16 RCA projects as well as a number of interregional projects and, together with the Agency, had cooperated on initiatives to establish trilateral TC projects in the atomic energy field with counterparts from Laos and Cambodia. For the next TC cycle, it had proposed six new national projects and was contributing actively to the design of new regional and interregional projects.

173. In agriculture, nuclear energy was being harnessed for plant quarantine, agricultural product preservation, production of bioactive ingredients from agricultural by-products, soil, fertilizer and plant nutrition management, and plant protection. SIT was being used to control insect damage to dragon fruit plantations, and many Vietnamese scientists had been trained in the technique.

174. In healthcare, the Dalat research reactor had produced radioisotopes for use in nuclear medicine and other economic and technical fields. Viet Nam continued to give prominence to the application of isotopes and nuclear techniques for research on radioactive emissions, ground and surface water studies and climate change research.

175. In the field of nuclear safety, his country had contributed to the success of the Sixth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention and fulfilled all its obligations as a Contracting Party.

176. Viet Nam was currently enhancing its infrastructure for emergency preparedness and response. Following governmental approval of the national radiation and nuclear emergency response plan in 2017, more than 40 of the country's 63 provinces had approved their own plans.

177. In 2017, Viet Nam had collected a large number of disused radioactive sources scattered among uncertified facilities and brought them to a central location belonging to the Ministry of Science and Technology. In 2018, with Agency help it had conditioned and safely stored some 800 disused sources of categories 3, 4 and 5.

178. Turning to nuclear security, he said that the Agency had helped to enhance his country's capacity, in particular by setting up radiation detection portals at Noi Bai International Airport and providing an expert mission to help complete its nuclear security legal framework.

179. Following three years of broader conclusion findings concerning its safeguards implementation, Viet Nam had begun implementing its national safeguards approach in 2017.

180. As well as strengthening its cooperation with the Agency, Viet Nam continued to cooperate with the USA, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, India and the European Commission in the fields of nuclear safety, security, safeguards and compensation liability. With Russia it was currently preparing a project to establish its Centre for Nuclear Science and Technology.

181. Viet Nam had always fulfilled its obligations to the Agency by providing the necessary TC resources and paying its NPCs, and had made an in-kind contribution in 2018. Together with the Agency, Viet Nam had organized a number of workshops and training sessions.

182. Viet Nam thanked the Agency's staff for their dedication and efficiency and hoped that the Agency would continue to focus its efforts on helping developing Member States achieve their goals relating to the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear energy.

183. Ms HULAN (Canada) said that, as the world celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the NPT, Canada's determination to uphold its principles was unwavering. As a direct result of the Treaty, fewer States possessed nuclear weapons than had been predicted half a century previously, and the threat of nuclear war had diminished. However, although the world was unquestionably a safer place, there was no room for complacency. To continue enjoying the benefits of nuclear technology while remaining confident in its security, the international community must spare no effort in reaffirming its commitment to the Treaty, ensuring its full implementation, achieving its universal application and strengthening the non-proliferation regime.

184. The DPRK's pursuit of an illegal nuclear weapons programme posed an unacceptable threat to its region and the world. Its actions were destabilizing and provocative and undermined the legitimate uses of nuclear technology. Despite being encouraged by recent diplomatic efforts to achieve a political solution, Canada could accept no outcome other than the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

185. Canada supported the Agency's role in monitoring and verifying the JCPOA, which constituted an important framework for reinforcing the non-proliferation regime and a clear indication that multilateral diplomacy worked. Canada called on the Islamic Republic of Iran to continue fulfilling its commitments under the Agreement and to consider early ratification of its additional protocol. Monitoring and verification of the Agreement remained the key to its credibility, and she was pleased to announce that Canada would make an additional extrabudgetary contribution of US \$1.5 million to support the Agency's efforts in that regard.

186. Canada remained deeply concerned that, seven years after the Board of Governors had reported the Syrian Arab Republic to the UN Security Council over its clandestine construction of a nuclear reactor, the country had yet to respond to the Agency's repeated requests for it to resolve its non-compliance. As long as that situation stayed unchanged, the Agency must remain seized of the matter.

187. Canada welcomed the continued evolution of the SLA for Member States with a safeguards agreement in force, and looked forward to working closely with the Agency to finalize the SLA for Canada.

188. Noting the International Energy Agency's projection that nuclear energy generation must double by 2040 to meet global climate goals, she emphasized that commitment to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy formed a key pillar of her country's nuclear policy. To help ensure that nuclear energy was given full consideration in the global transition to clean energy, Canada, together with the USA and Japan, had launched the Nuclear Innovation: Clean Energy Future initiative at the Ninth Clean Energy Ministerial meeting in May 2018. A number of Clean Energy ministerial members had already joined the initiative, and she encouraged other members to do so. Canada had continued to build on its longstanding leadership in peaceful nuclear energy based on innovation in SMRs, which provided her country with a wide range of on- and off-grid applications.

189. Canada welcomed the Agency's continued efforts to help Member States fulfil their nuclear security responsibilities, and was pleased to announce an additional contribution of US \$9.65 million to the Nuclear Security Fund to enhance the sustainable management of disused sealed radioactive sources in Latin America, Africa and the Pacific.

190. In the field of nuclear safety, Canada welcomed the Agency's constant efforts to help Member States maintain and enhance their national standards and would continue to underscore the importance for Member States of becoming Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention.

191. Canada was firmly committed to the principles of openness and transparency in nuclear safety, and encouraged all Member States to host international peer reviews and to publish their results as well as their national reports made under the Convention on Nuclear Safety. Canada continued to contribute significantly to international nuclear safety by hosting, leading and participating in Agency review missions, and encouraged other Member States to do likewise.

192. Canada remained convinced of the Agency's unique ability to support international peace and security, promote the benefits of nuclear energy and contribute to the attainment of the SDGs. Canada pledged its fullest support to the Agency in the implementation of its mandate and in enhancing its membership's efforts to promote nuclear power for peaceful purposes.

193. Ms KUMLIN GRANIT (Sweden) said that, in challenging times, the role of the Agency was becoming even more important to worldwide peace and security, with the strengthened safeguards system at the heart of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. In that regard the additional protocol, together with the CSA, had become the current verification standard under the NPT. Universalization

of the Treaty remained a top priority, and Sweden welcomed the fact that 132 States now applied additional protocols, the latest being Thailand and Honduras.

194. Sweden welcomed the Agency's efforts to apply the SLA to all Member States with a safeguards agreement in force. Sweden noted that the Board of Governors, through its approval of safeguards agreements, delegated authority to the Secretary General to implement those agreements and that individual SLAs were internal documents designed and developed to translate that authority into action.

195. Sweden welcomed the recent diplomatic developments relating to the DPRK and called on that country to promptly resume cooperation with the Agency for the complete and effective implementation of comprehensive Agency safeguards. Sweden was pleased to announce a contribution of SEK 3 million to strengthen the Agency's readiness to resume its key verification role in the DPRK.

196. Sweden remained a steadfast supporter of the JCPOA, whose cessation would be seriously detrimental to the global non-proliferation regime. Sweden deeply regretted the withdrawal of the USA from the Agreement. Sweden would make an extrabudgetary contribution of SEK 3 million to the Agency's verification activities under the Agreement, and emphasized the importance of the Islamic Republic of Iran's early ratification of its additional protocol as a crucial confidence-building measure.

197. Sweden had recently updated its Radiation Protection Act and was reviewing its Law on Nuclear Activities in the light of changes to European Union legislation; it would publish new regulations in 2019.

198. Sweden's most important recent investment in nuclear safety and security had been the decision to implement bunkered independent core cooling systems in all its reactors in operation after 2020. In an initiative earlier in 2018 intended to advance the general understanding of safety culture, the Swedish regulator had held a forum with OECD/NEA and the World Association of Nuclear Operators, the outcome of which had been presented at a side event during the Conference.

199. Nuclear science and technology, transmitted through the Agency, had a key role to play in advancing the 2030 Agenda. In 2018 Sweden had provided SEK 3 million in voluntary contributions to the PUI for projects to tackle water resource management in the Sahel, ocean acidification and marine plastic pollution.

200. In nuclear safety and security, Sweden had long been involved in TC with Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

201. Sweden attached great importance to the achievement of gender equality in the Agency's Secretariat and to gender mainstreaming in its programmes and activities. It strongly supported the Director General's intention to achieve gender parity in senior Agency posts by 2021.

202. Mr KYRÖLÄINEN (Finland) said that his country attached great importance to equal opportunities for men and women at the Agency, and was grateful to all its staff for their professional and impartial work.

203. While the NPT assured all its States Parties the inalienable right to enjoy the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the Agency's safeguards system, for which the Treaty provided the framework, was fundamental to maintaining confidence in the peaceful nature of nuclear activities and preventing nuclear proliferation.

204. However, nuclear proliferation continued to pose a serious threat to international security. Finland urged the DPRK to comply with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, return promptly to compliance with the NPT and the Agency's safeguards system, and sign and ratify the CTBT as an indication of genuine commitment to cease nuclear testing.

205. Finland deeply regretted the withdrawal of the USA from the JCPOA, which it regarded as an important milestone in non-proliferation. Finland remained fully committed to the Agreement, under which the Agency's role in verifying the nature of the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear programme was fundamental.

206. As a non-nuclear-weapon State, Finland had benefited from nuclear energy and applications for forty years, thanks to the NPT and the Agency's safeguards system. One third of its electricity now came from nuclear power. Finland therefore fully supported the TC programme as a means to bring the benefits of nuclear technology to millions worldwide, helping countries to achieve their sustainable development targets, assure the security of their power supplies and reach their agreed emission targets.

207. To ensure continuing benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies in accordance with the highest standards of safety and security, Finland urged all States to commit fully to their NPT obligations and to sign and ratify protocols additional to their safeguards agreements.

208. Finland had invested heavily in developing the expertise to ensure the best possible standards of safety, security and safeguards, and for thirty years had been lending that expertise to the Agency and its Member States through its bilateral safeguards support programme with the Agency. An example of Finland's willingness to share its experience and knowhow on nuclear safety, security and safeguards was the current bilateral agreement between the Finnish Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority and the nuclear authorities of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

209. He was pleased to note that Finland had recently been ranked top for preparedness against theft and sabotage in the Nuclear Security Index prepared by the Nuclear Threat Initiative.

210. The Finnish authorities were currently confronting new challenges in constructing the world's first geological repository for spent nuclear fuel. The safeguards concept was being developed in close technical cooperation with the European Commission and the Agency. The application of the Agency's SLA, once finalized, would enable cost-effective and efficient implementation of safeguards for the new facility.

211. Finland believed strongly that, if Member States were to make the most of the opportunities in the nuclear field offered by new technologies such as SMRs, 3D printing and augmented reality, they must continue to provide the necessary resources and cooperation platforms to ensure they were used safely and securely.

212. In closing, he pledged Finland's continuing support for the Agency's valuable work in promoting safe, secure and peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology.

213. Mr ALI ABADI (Islamic Republic of Iran), exercising his right of reply, said that the irrelevant, inaccurate and misleading remarks made by the representative of the UAE on regional issues came from a member of a coalition bent on perpetuating war crimes in Yemen and destabilizing the region. Having failed in its attempted military aggression against a sovereign State, the coalition now sought to distract the attention of the international community away from the catastrophic humanitarian situation in Yemen resulting from its relentless and brutal attacks over the past three years.

214. In exercising its legitimate right to develop nuclear energy technology, the Islamic Republic of Iran took its responsibilities under the NPT seriously and remained committed to the non-proliferation regime, as repeatedly confirmed by the Agency.

215. In planning, constructing, commissioning and operating its NPPs, Iran was committed to fulfilling its nuclear safety and security obligations. Iran had developed and maintained the necessary knowledge and expertise to make safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear technologies.

216. Iran had always placed a high priority on nuclear safety and attached great importance to strengthening the relevant safety standards. In that regard, it had achieved tangible progress in establishing an advanced nuclear safety centre equipped with modern technology and equipment.

217. By contrast, Iran was concerned that the UAE was in the process of introducing nuclear power and radiation technology to its region, without having developed the necessary national infrastructure and expertise in nuclear safety and security. That was a responsibility of individual member States which could not be outsourced.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.