

# General Conference

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## Sixty-third regular session

# Plenary

## Record of the Third Meeting

*Held at Headquarters, Vienna, on Tuesday, 17 September 2019, at 10.05 a.m.*

**President:** Mr SIVAGURUNATHAN (Malaysia)

**Later:** Mr GIERVELD (Netherlands)

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## Abbreviations used in this record

2030 Agenda	Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
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
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
CTBTO	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
ECAS	Enhancing Capabilities of the Safeguards Analytical Services
EPREV	Emergency Preparedness Review
EU	European Union
FORO	Ibero-American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies
HEU	high enriched uranium
ICONS 2020	International Conference on Nuclear Security: Sustaining and Strengthening Efforts
imPACT	integrated missions of PACT
INSSP	Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan
IPPAS	International Physical Protection Advisory Service
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
ITDB	Incident and Trafficking Database
JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
LEU	low enriched uranium
NLO	National Liaison Officer

**Abbreviations used in this record (continued)**

NPP	nuclear power plant
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NSF	Nuclear Security Fund
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
RBMK	high-power channel-type reactor
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
TC	technical cooperation
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
TW·h	terawatt-hour
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
WHO	World Health Organization
WMDs	weapons of mass destruction

## **7. General debate and Annual Report for 2018 (continued)** (GC(63)/5 and additional information)

1. Mr SCHALLENBERG (Austria) expressed his country's sincere condolences to the family and friends of Mr Amano, the late Director General, and to the Agency. He said that Austria was proud to support the naming of the new laboratory building at Seibersdorf as the Yukiya Amano Laboratories, in gratitude for all that the late Director General had achieved.
2. The main focus of the Agency's heavy political agenda remained the JCPOA, preservation of which was critical for reducing the risk of nuclear proliferation both in the Middle East and globally. Austria therefore deeply regretted the withdrawal of the USA from the plan and the reimposition of sanctions on Iran. At the same time, Austria remained concerned about activities that it considered to be inconsistent with Iran's commitment under the JCPOA. A critical point had been reached and all parties must urgently demonstrate the political will to recommit to the plan. There was no way out of the deadlock other than through negotiation, and no solution other than a negotiated one.
3. Nuclear activities in the DPRK also continued to give serious cause for concern. His country fully supported the call on the DPRK to cooperate with the Agency and fully comply with its obligations under the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. It encouraged all parties to continue on the path towards a complete and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.
4. The situation on the Korean Peninsula showed that non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament had to go hand in hand. The link between them was also clearly set out in the NPT and was the logic that had led to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The latter was not only necessary from an ethical and security point of view, but was also the implementation of a legal commitment under Article VI of the NPT. Once it entered into force, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons would complement and reinforce the Agency's safeguards systems with regard to non-proliferation.
5. Acknowledging the international divergence of views on nuclear power, Austria did not consider it to be a sustainable way of generating electricity or fighting climate change. The enormous risks and costs to people and the environment had been shown by the Chernobyl and Fukushima accidents. His country therefore advocated a controlled phasing out of nuclear power worldwide and encouraged others to make full use of renewable sources to improve their energy efficiency and make savings.
6. For as long as nuclear power continued to be used, however, Member States shared the common goal of ensuring that the highest standards of nuclear safety and security were applied. Austria welcomed the Agency's tireless efforts in that regard and encouraged Member States to become party to all relevant international legal instruments.
7. Notwithstanding its reservations regarding the use of nuclear power, Austria fully supported the Agency's activities in the wider field of peaceful, non-power applications and considered the TC programme to be an integral part of the Agency's activities. Austria would therefore continue to contribute to the TCF in 2020.
8. In closing, he underlined that his country was honoured and privileged to host the Agency in Vienna and deeply appreciated the Agency's work.

9. Ms RICHARD (Madagascar) said that, following the death of Mr Amano, the late Director General, her country offered its condolences to his family, the Agency and Japan.

10. Madagascar was grateful to the Agency for its efforts in the fields of nuclear safety and security, which contributed to peace and development. It had a long and fruitful history of cooperation with the Agency in numerous areas, having signed its first CPF in 1995. Under that cooperation, it had established several internationally recognized research laboratories, including the National Institute for Nuclear Science and Technology, the Radioisotopes Laboratory, the National Environmental Research Centre, the National Oceanographic Research Centre and the National Centre for Applied Research in Rural Development.

11. With financial support from the Agency, her country was improving the quality of rice and maize seeds, along with their resistance to the *Striga* parasite and to climate change, with a view to increasing agricultural production by 50%. It was also working to improve animal reproduction and milk production and to increase exports of citrus fruits by eradicating the fruit fly.

12. Various national ministries had also benefitted from the Agency's financial support. The ministry responsible for health had received two gamma cameras and a hot laboratory for the early diagnosis of thyroid cancers and cardiovascular events with the aid of nuclear medicine. It had also received assistance from architects and radiotherapy experts in the design and accreditation of a bunker that would house the new radiotherapy centre at Joseph Ravoahangy Andrianavalona Hospital, including a pledge to fully equip the brachytherapy unit by the end of the year. As a result, patients would be able to receive cancer treatment in public hospitals.

13. The ministry responsible for energy had received special software for energy planning and human resource training in its use, while the ministry responsible for mining had benefited from capacity building in the management and exploitation of radioactive ores. Furthermore, the ministry responsible for defence and customs had received training on nuclear security and portable equipment for the detection of illicit sources of radiation at border crossing points.

14. Madagascar hosted and organized various regional and international conferences and training activities for the Agency. In August 2019, it had held an interregional workshop on communication to raise awareness of the peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology in LDCs, followed up by a national knowledge-sharing workshop for the heads of research centres in September 2019. Her country was also preparing to hold a regional workshop on radioactive waste storage in October. With regard to its future radioactive waste storage centre, Madagascar had selected a site and hoped for logistical support from the Agency in equipping the centre.

15. Technical cooperation with the Agency provided Madagascar with a powerful tool to assist in its efforts towards emergence. With that in mind, she intended to engage with the Secretariat imminently to explore how they might work together over the subsequent five years.

16. Mr KABI (Lesotho), paying tribute to the late Director General, said that Mr Amano had left a lasting legacy. He also expressed his country's condolences to South Africa on the untimely death of its Deputy Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy.

17. During its ten years of Agency membership, Lesotho had strengthened its peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology and had benefited tremendously from the provision of equipment under various projects in fields such as agriculture and water management.

18. Lesotho had demonstrated its steadfast support for nuclear security through its frequent participation in various nuclear security-related training courses and through the assistance it received from the Agency under the INSSP. It had also recently committed to joining the ITDB.

19. His country was grateful to the Agency for its unwavering support under the TC programme. Projects relating to nutrition, agriculture, human health and regulatory infrastructure had been approved for the 2020–2021 TC cycle.
20. Earlier that week, Lesotho had deposited its instrument of acceptance of the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Atomic Energy Agency, thus demonstrating its commitment to providing an environment that was conducive to Agency experts during missions.
21. Lesotho had enacted its nuclear law in November 2018. The Government was committed to establishing a regulatory authority and had commenced the process of appointing a board and allocating funding for the authority. Later, it would also provide staff. It continued to seek the Agency’s guidance in that process.
22. In connection with the current Scientific Forum ‘A Decade of Action on Cancer Control and the Way Forward’, he noted that his country was planning to construct a radiotherapy facility and build the associated human resources through a TC project.
23. In closing, he emphasized that Lesotho’s CPF for 2018–2023 reinforced its close working relationship with the Agency in various development sectors. His country pledged its unwavering support to the Agency in fulfilling its mandate.
24. Mr KUMA (Ethiopia), paying tribute to the late Director General, said that Mr Amano had dedicated his life to pursuing the goals and fulfilling the mandate of the Agency. The Agency’s motto of ‘Atoms for Peace and Development’, as modified under his leadership, would be part of his legacy.
25. He also offered his country’s condolences to South Africa on the sudden death of its Deputy Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy, who had been scheduled to attend the General Conference.
26. Ethiopia had legislative and regulatory frameworks covering all aspects of radiation and nuclear safety, security, safeguards and liability for nuclear damage. It had also established legal and institutional mechanisms for the registration and licensing of all nuclear safety and security-related activities. The country’s regulatory authority was building its competence in control over the use of ionizing radiation and other related practices. In that context, it was cooperating with the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission on the safe and secure use of radiation and nuclear technologies.
27. His country highly valued the Agency’s role in enhancing the peaceful use of nuclear energy and technology. Ethiopia had signed and ratified several treaties on the peaceful use of atomic energy, which contributed to global nuclear safety and security.
28. With regard to technical cooperation, Ethiopia had signed a CPF for the period 2018–2023 to ensure the Agency’s continued support in such areas as agriculture, health, energy and human capacity building. In that connection, Ethiopia was grateful to the Agency for its provision of two high-endurance drones for the release of sterile flies, with a view to controlling and eradicating tsetse flies and tsetse-borne trypanosomosis. The Agency had also provided on-site training on the maintenance and operation of the drones, and was in the process of procuring mass rearing equipment for the insectary.
29. Ethiopia had one of the fastest-growing economies in Africa and was set to become a middle-income country by 2025. The Government had embarked on an economic reform policy to widen the participation of the private sector in certain areas, thus liberalizing them from state control. Moreover, under the leadership of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, Ethiopia had ended its 20-year stalemate with Eritrea, bringing peace, friendship and trust to the Horn of Africa.
30. The field of science and technology was also undergoing reform. The SDGs could not be achieved without the use of technology, including nuclear technology for peaceful uses. In that connection,

Ethiopia had been cooperating with the State Atomic Energy Corporation “Rosatom” to establish a centre of nuclear science and technology for radioisotope production and human capacity building. As part of that cooperation, a road map had been devised for the establishment of nuclear power in Ethiopia.

31. Ethiopia kindly requested the Agency to scale up its support for the country’s ongoing projects. For its part, his country had finalized and concluded the amendments to the small quantities protocol and would be signing an additional protocol with the Agency later that week.

32. Given its long-standing position in favour of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, Ethiopia sought strong leadership from the Agency in that regard.

33. Mr TRUT (Croatia) said that his country’s Civil Protection Directorate had been established earlier that year through the reorganization of various government agencies in order to create a more effective and efficient civil defence system, particularly in the area of radiological and nuclear safety. Serious efforts were needed to regulate and control the use of ionizing radiation sources to stop the uncontrolled spread of nuclear material and to reduce the risk of a major nuclear incident.

34. In its efforts to ensure global peace and security, Croatia implemented the provisions of international treaties on weapons control and on the non-proliferation of WMDs and took part in numerous informal initiatives and regional instruments. It had also revised its legal framework in accordance with the recommendations of an IRRS mission.

35. Croatia continued its bilateral cooperation with Slovenia and Hungary on the early exchange of information in the event of a radiological emergency. In 2018, it had renewed its arrangement with the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission on the exchange of technical information. Croatia also exchanged information with Bosnia and Herzegovina in the event of the detection of undeclared cross-border traffic of nuclear or other radioactive material, based on the protocol signed between the two countries in 2013.

36. With regard to the Krško NPP in Slovenia, Croatia fulfilled all its partner commitments, including the management of radioactive waste and spent fuel. His country had adopted a national programme for managing radioactive waste, disused sources and spent nuclear fuel and planned to build a national centre for radioactive waste management.

37. Under the current TC cycle, Croatia had implemented five national projects in the areas of medicine, radioactive waste management and the implementation of IRRS recommendations related to the country’s legal framework. In the subsequent cycle, three national and three regional projects were planned, in accordance with the CPF, and were at the final stage of adoption. Croatia had also drafted its national report for the Eighth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, which would take place in March 2020.

38. During the IRRS follow-up mission in October 2019, Croatia would present the progress made in implementing the recommendations of the 2015 IRRS mission and would demonstrate the effectiveness of integrating radiological and nuclear safety activities into the Ministry of the Interior. Croatia aimed to continue harmonizing its legislation with international norms.

39. The Civil Protection Directorate was working hard to raise awareness of nuclear and radiological risks through various prevention programmes and educational activities.

40. Ms DRÁBOVÁ (Czech Republic) said that the loss of the late Director General at such a complex and tense time required the Agency to evaluate the situation objectively and impartially and to take decisions that were carefully considered. Mr Amano would be greatly missed for his tireless determination to ensure that nuclear energy was used for the benefit of all.

41. Nevertheless, the Agency must not allow that loss to weaken its position or endanger its mission. It was of utmost importance that a new Director General was appointed without undue delay and was fully supported by all Member States. She therefore noted with satisfaction that all four of the nominated candidates were strong, reputable and highly experienced professionals who would bring new ideas and perspectives for the benefit of all Member States. In particular, Ms Žiaková of Slovakia could contribute long-standing technical expertise to the role.

42. The Czech Republic had long been a staunch supporter of the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology, based on intense bilateral and multilateral cooperation. She recalled that, following the agreement of the JCPOA, she had held talks with the Vice President and Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, and they had agreed that cooperation in the area of civil use of nuclear energy and nuclear safety could further contribute to enhancing the transparency of the Iranian nuclear programme and to strengthening mutual trust. Although the situation had changed substantively in the time that had passed, it remained essential to support the JCPOA framework and the Agency's irreplaceable role in monitoring and verifying Iran's commitments. Only the unimpeded implementation of the JCPOA and sincere cooperation in the area of peaceful uses of nuclear energy would lead to confidence building on all sides.

43. Nuclear power had produced 30 TW·h of electricity in the Czech Republic in 2018, which corresponded to 34% of total electricity production. New NPPs were provided for under the State energy policy and one was planned for commissioning between 2035 and 2040, primarily to replace its predecessors. Her country consequently attached significance to ensuring an effective and robust nuclear regulatory and legislative framework.

44. She was honoured to serve as President of the Eighth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety to be held in 2020. She was committed to building on the outcomes of previous meetings, continuing with efforts to promote and strengthen the framework of the Convention and using the platform as an opportunity to discuss in greater detail technical issues of mutual interest.

45. The Agency's advisory and other services were invaluable tools for improving national regulatory and institutional frameworks and their regular use should therefore be encouraged. Her country would host an IPPAS mission in 2020, which would provide an excellent opportunity to evaluate its new nuclear security regime and demonstrate the high level of protection to which nuclear materials were subject.

46. Documents drafted under the auspices of the Agency represented a gold-standard in health protection and safety. Having chaired the Commission on Safety Standards for many years, she had seen the careful vigilance with which such documents were drafted. For that reason, the Czech Republic had decided to make a political commitment to act in accordance with one such document, namely the Guidance on the Management of Disused Radioactive Sources.

47. Her country paid its Regular Budget and TC contributions in full and on time, in recognition of the importance of ensuring regular and predictable funding for the Agency. The Czech Republic was pleased to be a net contributor to the TC programme, providing extrabudgetary contributions to assist Armenia in upgrading its national regulatory infrastructure for nuclear safety.

48. Ms SABAITIENĖ (Lithuania) said that the death of the late Director General was a great loss for the Agency and the international community. Mr Amano's wisdom should continue to be a driving force behind the Agency's nuclear safety-related decisions and activities.

49. The decommissioning of the Ignalina NPP remained strictly on schedule, with the highest level of nuclear safety maintained. In 2018, the core of the Unit 2 reactor had been completely defuelled, and

the spent fuel from the pools of both units was being moved to the interim storage facility. Lithuania was now preparing for the pioneer dismantling of the RBMK reactors, which represented a huge and long-lasting technological challenge.

50. Agency peer review missions were excellent tools for strengthening nuclear safety throughout the NPP life cycle, which was why Lithuania had invited the Agency to conduct a follow-up IRRS mission in 2020 and an ARTEMIS mission in 2021. The stress tests carried out by the European Union could contribute significantly to strengthening nuclear safety in participating countries. She therefore called on those countries to respond appropriately to and fully implement the assessment findings and recommendations in a timely manner.

51. The Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety and revised safety standards should be strictly followed, as the future of nuclear energy depended on the proper implementation of Agency standards and recommendations. She encouraged all Member States, especially embarking countries, to make use of Agency peer review missions and advisory services and to implement the resulting recommended actions. Lithuania proposed the development of an integrated package of Agency services, including the full scope of specialized Agency missions and follow-up missions, the use of which by embarking countries should be encouraged.

52. Lithuania was concerned by continuing reports about the detection of the artificial radionuclides in the atmosphere, whose sources of emission were not declared by the State responsible in a timely fashion. Although the quantities observed were small, their presence undermined public confidence in the safety of nuclear energy. She therefore urged all Member States to take steps to further develop international legal instruments and practices in the area of early notification.

53. The fulfilment of safety standards on the use of radiation sources was a high priority for her country. It attached great importance to the justification and optimization of medical exposure, deployment of new technologies in medicine and the creation of nuclear research centres for medical purposes. Lithuania therefore made a political commitment to implement the Guidance on the Management of Disused Radioactive Sources.

54. Lithuania was looking forward to the 2020 NPT Review Conference, which would mark the Treaty's 50th anniversary. The credibility and effectiveness of the NPT in the areas of nuclear disarmament, global non-proliferation and cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy must be upheld.

55. Her country supported international efforts towards the full, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. It was of utmost importance that the DPRK maintained its declared suspension of nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches, complied with its obligations under multiple UN Security Council resolutions and returned to full compliance with the NPT.

56. Lithuania also strongly urged Iran to return to full and indisputable compliance with relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the JCPOA, and to cooperate fully and in a timely manner with the Agency.

57. Her country remained strongly committed to the objective of increasing nuclear security and looked forward to ICONS 2020. The international community must remain vigilant in the face of nuclear security challenges, such as nuclear terrorism, the misuse of nuclear and radioactive material, and cyber threats against nuclear facilities, and ensure effective international cooperation in those areas.

58. Mr HALVORSEN (Norway) said that his country welcomed the decision to name the Flexible Modular Laboratory at Seibersdorf after Mr Amano, the late Director General, in recognition of his great contribution to enhancing the Agency's efforts for international peace and security.

59. Norway supported the manner in which the Agency carried out its statutory functions and saw the Agency's safeguards system as a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. It therefore called on all Member States to conclude comprehensive safeguards agreements with the Agency and to sign and ratify the additional protocol. His country supported efforts to develop and implement State-level safeguards approaches, which the Director General was fully mandated to do by virtue of the existing safeguards agreements.

60. Norway fully supported the JCPOA and remained firmly committed to UN Security Council resolution 2231 (2015). The Acting Director General should continue to report on the Agency's monitoring and verification activities in Iran. For its part, Iran should cooperate fully and in a timely manner with the Agency.

61. The DPRK's nuclear weapons programme continued to be an unacceptable violation of international law and obligations under the NPT. Norway welcomed the Agency's continued readiness to play its role in nuclear verification in the DPRK.

62. His country recognized the inalienable right of all NPT States Parties to the peaceful use of nuclear technology, which was made possible by enforcing the highest standards of safeguards, safety and security. Norway was fully committed to the Agency's TC programme and was a strong supporter of the Peaceful Uses Initiative. Through such activities, the Agency had an important role to play in the realization of the SDGs.

63. Norway strongly supported the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. All Member States were encouraged to participate at the Eighth Review Meeting of the Convention on Nuclear Safety in 2020. Norway had long assisted several Member States in improving their safety framework and culture, and continued to cooperate on nuclear safety issues internationally to the benefit of the global safety regime and its own national capabilities. Norway also participated in international coordination forums such as the Agency's European and Central Asian Safety network.

64. All Member States should carry out regular self-assessments and host peer review missions. Norway welcomed the suggestions and recommendations resulting from its IRRS mission in June 2019.

65. Welcoming the briefing held by the Secretariat earlier that month on transportable NPPs, Norway suggested that the Agency intensify its consideration of the safety and security aspects of such plants. The scope and applicability of existing requirements and instruments needed to be clarified and developed, including through dialogue with the International Maritime Organization.

66. Norway's research reactors had recently been closed, and the decommissioning process was being overseen by a new government agency. It would make use of international standards and experiences throughout that process.

67. He commended the Agency's efforts to promote the universalization of the amended CPPNM ahead of the review conference in 2021. Norway welcomed the ongoing preparations for ICONS 2020 and called on Member States to make substantive ministerial statements at the conference.

68. Norway supported enhanced international cooperation to prevent the smuggling of nuclear and other radioactive material and encouraged the Agency to work with relevant international organizations and initiatives to assist Member States in that regard.

69. As part of its long-standing efforts to minimize and eliminate stocks and the use of HEU, Norway had presented its national report on current inventories of civilian HEU in August 2019. He encouraged other Member States to submit their own national reports.

70. As a member of the Group of Friends of Women in Nuclear, Norway had been encouraged to learn that the Agency had achieved a 30% proportion of women in the professional and higher staff category, and expected continued efforts in that regard.

71. A robust safety, security and safeguards regime was necessary for the peaceful use of nuclear energy and technology. It was therefore vital that all the Agency's core activities continued to receive the necessary funding.

72. Mr SANTANA NUÑEZ (Cuba) offered his country's condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of Mr Amano and said that the late Director General had made a great contribution to nuclear disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear technologies.

73. Over the preceding 40 years, Cuba's technical cooperation with the Agency had primarily focused on irradiation technologies, cutting-edge technologies for managing chronic non-communicable diseases such as cancer, and climate change. As a result, Cuban specialists had been able to participate in many expert missions, particularly in the Latin American and Caribbean region, and help in the training of fellows from other countries on nuclear and radiological applications.

74. Cuba had recently assumed the ARCAL presidency and had hosted the 20th meeting of the ARCAL Technical Co-ordination Board in May 2019. In that role, his country was committed to further strengthening existing cooperation, creating new alliances, and developing peaceful nuclear applications in the region. Cuba thanked the Agency for supporting national capacity building and urged it to continue seeking new ways to meet Member States' growing needs.

75. His country condemned the intensification and extraterritorial application of the embargo imposed by the USA, which threatened development and well-being in Cuba, violated international law and undermined the sovereignty of all States. Cuba also rejected the coercive unilateral measures that the USA had taken against various other countries.

76. Cuba denounced the unilateral and unjustified decision of the USA to withdraw from the JCPOA and to reimpose sanctions on Iran. It rejected any attempt to deprive a sovereign nation of its inalienable right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

77. The Agency helped to bolster nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety in Latin America and the Caribbean and to strengthen the bodies responsible for regulation and control in those fields. It also provided support for the introduction of new technologies, human resources training, and ensuring compliance with nuclear safety and security in nuclear applications. In that regard, the priorities for Cuba under its INSSP were border protection and training of front-line officers.

78. The EPREV mission hosted by Cuba in November 2018 had returned positive results, which had been made public to demonstrate the country's commitment to the issues raised.

79. He drew attention to FORO's work, in particular the results of projects related to medicine and nuclear safety culture, which it was working with the Agency to disseminate. Cuba supported the continued inclusion of FORO's work in the General Conference resolutions on measures to strengthen international cooperation in nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety.

80. Cuba's continuing commitment to nuclear disarmament was borne out by 12 consecutive years of double certification, satisfying results in Agency inspections, and its accession to, and compliance with, all Agency-related treaties and conventions.

81. Mr BALSEVICS (Latvia) said that his country had highly valued the skilful leadership and dedication of Mr Amano, the late Director General. Latvia hoped that his legacy would live on in the Agency's work, as Member States worked together to uphold his spirit of commitment.

82. A strong rules-based international order and effective cooperation were crucial to tackle proliferation and other transnational security challenges. In that regard, the Agency's safeguard system ensured the implementation of non-proliferation obligations under the NPT. In support of global non-proliferation efforts, Latvia had chaired the Nuclear Suppliers Group in 2018–2019. As such, it had worked to enhance the Group's relevance to the broader non-proliferation regime, raise awareness of its role internationally and show the importance of its activities.

83. Latvia continued to support the JCPOA, which was an important multilateral achievement. It was deeply concerned, however, by Iran's recent announcements and its decision to increase uranium enrichment above the prescribed levels. Iran's full implementation of the JCPOA was essential to provide assurances of the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme. Latvia encouraged the Agency to continue its verification activities in that regard and to report to Member States accordingly.

84. His country strongly supported a peaceful and diplomatic resolution of the situation on the Korean Peninsula. To that end, international pressure on the DPRK had to be maintained until real and verifiable progress had been made towards nuclear disarmament. The continuation by that country of its nuclear programme was a flagrant violation of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Latvia therefore welcomed the Agency's readiness to verify the nuclear disarmament of the DPRK.

85. Turning to nuclear safety and security, he emphasized the importance of compliance with the highest safety standards and nuclear security guidance, with support from the Agency. International agreements and standards set the right conditions for the construction of NPPs, bearing in mind that the safe construction, use and maintenance of nuclear facilities could have a broad impact on regional and global security. Stress tests and the principles set out in the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety were also important in that regard.

86. Global nuclear safety could be achieved through transparency, international cooperation and efficient information exchange among neighbouring countries. Latvia, for its part, regularly updated its relevant regulatory framework and was due to host both an IRRS and an ARTEMIS mission later that year. Preparations for those missions were well under way and Latvia looked forward to the outcomes, which it would draw upon to bolster its regulatory infrastructure in the area of radiation and nuclear safety.

87. The Secretariat provided invaluable guidance to Member States on adjusting their regulatory frameworks to ensure the highest standards of safety, security and safeguards. Latvia had benefitted from the TC programme for over 20 years and had implemented three national projects during the 2018–2019 cycle. It had submitted two more projects for the 2020–2021 cycle, aimed at improving radiation safety in medicine and enhancing the competence and infrastructure for national training on radiation technologies and safety.

88. Latvia was prepared to host Agency events related to regional projects. In February 2020, it would host a regional workshop on the review and improvement of decommissioning plans for small nuclear facilities. In that respect, it was grateful to the Agency for the support it had provided to Latvian institutions on capacity building in the areas of radiation and nuclear safety and security.

89. Mr MÜNT (Estonia) offered his country's deepest condolences to the Agency on the passing of Mr Amano, the late Director General.

90. Estonia supported the Agency's valuable role in the non-proliferation regime and in ensuring that nuclear material and technology were used exclusively for peaceful purposes. That could only be achieved by implementing the highest standards of safeguards, and nuclear and radiation safety and security. Estonia therefore supported the universal and effective implementation of the NPT, in which the Agency safeguards system played an essential role. With the 2020 NPT Review Conference

approaching, maximum efforts should be made to uphold and further reinforce the role of the NPT as a key multilateral instrument for international security.

91. His country strongly supported the JCPOA and the Agency's long term verification and monitoring of Iran's nuclear-related commitments. It was therefore deeply concerning that Iran had exceeded its stockpile limit of enriched uranium, was enriching uranium above the levels prescribed by the JCPOA, and was engaging in centrifuge-related research and development activities. Estonia urged Iran to reverse those steps and return to full compliance with the JCPOA.

92. The missile and nuclear weapon programme of the DPRK continued to pose a threat to global peace and security. Estonia urged all States to maintain the current sanctions regime until the DPRK had taken the necessary steps towards complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization.

93. Although nuclear power was not part of Estonia's energy mix, the country benefited from nuclear applications in medicine, industry and education, where they helped improve quality of life and contributed to socio-economic development. Estonia appreciated the focus on cancer control for the 2019 Scientific Forum. It had received support for over 25 years through the TC programme to establish well-equipped and well-staffed cancer diagnosis and treatment facilities and nuclear medicine centres and was now sharing its knowledge and expertise with other Member States.

94. His country was aiming to build a radioactive waste disposal facility by 2040. The site selection and strategic environmental impact assessment procedures for the facility had already begun.

95. Estonia was committed to the fight against global climate change, which would be one of its priorities as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council in 2020–2021. It acknowledged the increasingly important role of nuclear power in ensuring energy security and of nuclear science and technologies for socio-economic and environmental benefits. His country looked forward to the International Conference on Climate Change and the Role of Nuclear Power to be held in Vienna in October 2019.

96. The Agency's safety standards were key to ensuring nuclear safety worldwide, and its safety peer review missions had proven to be invaluable tools for Estonia in updating its nuclear safety regulatory framework. Estonia had hosted an IRRS follow-up mission in March 2019, which had concluded that the country was making progress in its regulatory system improvements, and an ARTEMIS mission in March and April 2019 on radioactive waste management.

97. Estonia recognized the Agency's central role in strengthening the international nuclear security framework through promoting the implementation of relevant international legal instruments, enhancing international cooperation and assisting states in nuclear security capacity building.

98. Mr COULIDIATI (Burkina Faso) offered his country's sincere condolences to the family of Mr Amano and to Japan and the Secretariat, and said that the Agency had made great progress under the leadership of the late Director General.

99. He also extended condolences to South Africa following the tragic death of Ms Hlongwa, Deputy Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy, earlier that month.

100. Under the 2018–2019 TC programme cycle, Burkina Faso was conducting six projects related to nuclear medicine, radiotherapy, animal production, crop production and trypanosomosis management, radiation protection, and nuclear safety and security. The implementation rate as of June 2019 was 54.06%.

101. He thanked the Agency for the imPACT mission to his country earlier that year to assess the progress made in constructing the cancer centre in Ouagadougou, due to be operational by 2020. The

mission team had also visited the site of a new radiotherapy centre expected to be operational by April 2020.

102. Three radiotherapists and two nuclear physicians from Burkina Faso were currently being trained, and four radiotherapy operators would begin their clinical training in October 2019. He thanked the host countries — Morocco and Algeria — and the Agency for sharing the cost of that training.

103. His country had made significant progress in the use of SIT, becoming the first West African country where that method had been tested successfully. The Insectary of Bobo-Dioulasso was now fully operational and provided insect pupae to certain countries in the subregion on a weekly basis.

104. With the Agency's technical and financial support, Burkina Faso had been able to use nuclear applications to develop more than 120 high-yield mutant rice varieties, including two varieties of low-amylose waxy rice and three high-protein varieties.

105. Agency support had also enabled his country to establish a sequencing platform for the characterization of animal breeds at the Institute for the Environment and Agricultural Research. The National Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Authority had also been strengthened considerably through technical assistance from the Agency and AFRA.

106. The threat of nuclear terrorism was a particular concern for countries in the Sahel region. Every effort had to be made to prevent terrorist groups from gaining access to radioactive material. Burkina Faso appreciated the radioactive and nuclear material detection and identification equipment provided by the Agency under the INSSP, with a view to helping the national defence and security forces combat nuclear terrorism and illicit trafficking in such material.

107. Burkina Faso welcomed the Agency's technical and financial support to AFRA and looked forward to participating in the high-level AFRA policy meeting due to be held in Egypt in November 2019.

108. With the backing of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy, his country was nominating Mr Zerbo for the position of Director General, with a view to maintaining the independence and prestige of the Agency. Mr Zerbo had the necessary skills to rise to current challenges, adapt to a constantly changing global landscape and build a relationship of trust with Member States and regional groups. He was a scientist with extensive leadership experience, including as the Executive Secretary of the CTBTO since 2013. His passionate commitment to promoting nuclear non-proliferation would contribute significantly to implementing and developing the Agency's mandate.

109. Ms ROSABRUNETTO (Monaco) expressed her country's sorrow at the death of Mr Amano, who had worked tirelessly to promote the safe and peaceful use of nuclear science and technology. Monaco would continue to support the Agency to ensure that the work that Mr Amano had begun was continued.

110. Tensions surrounding nuclear programmes should not distract from the urgent need for greater efforts to achieve the SDGs, to which end international cooperation would be essential. Every effort must be made to ensure that nuclear material was not diverted from peaceful uses and defend against the threats that the unchecked development of nuclear technology might pose. Through the Agency, Member States could rise above their differences and establish efficient standards in order to work together. The Agency also helped States meet their commitments related to sustainable development and socio-economic progress for the benefit of all.

111. The TC programme was an essential tool for transferring nuclear science and technology to Member States to help them meet their development needs. In that connection, Monaco welcomed the IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology: Addressing Current and Emerging Development Challenges held in November 2018, at which Prince Albert II had been invited to speak,

owing to his commitment to the environment and sustainable development. He had stated that, with the undeniable effects of climate change now visible on a daily basis, peaceful applications of nuclear energy had an essential role to play in supporting sustainable development, in particular with regard to environmental protection and global health.

112. Recognizing the importance of health in the SDGs, her country would continue to support the Agency's efforts in that regard, in particular in the area of cancer control which Mr Amano had established as a priority. Monaco therefore welcomed the focus placed on cancer control at the 2019 Scientific Forum. Effective cancer prevention and control systems were needed in order to beat that disease. For that reason, Monaco had long supported PACT to help those countries most in need improve their cancer care services. It also planned to join the Women's Cancers Partnership Initiative to be announced at the Scientific Forum. Women took an unprecedented central role in the 2030 Agenda; ensuring their health and well-being was essential for the sake of future generations.

113. Expressing concern at the threats posed to the seas and oceans, she called for greater efforts to ensure their sustainable management. Her country had been strongly motivated by the Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate drawn up by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Experts from the panel were scheduled to travel to Monaco later that month to present their conclusions.

114. Monaco was proud to have hosted three of the IAEA Environment Laboratories since 1961. The laboratories had made a major contribution to environmental understanding and protection, including in relation to seas and oceans, through the use of nuclear science and technology. That was of particular importance in the run up to the 2020 UN Ocean Conference aimed at reinforcing the implementation of SDG 14.

**Mr Gierveld (Netherlands), Vice-President, took the Chair.**

115. Mr AMBATENNA DEVAYALAGE (Sri Lanka) expressed his country's heartfelt condolences to the Agency on the death of its Director General. Mr Amano had been an outstanding diplomat and principled supporter of strengthening international security and stability, who had contributed greatly to enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Agency.

116. He recalled the visit of the Deputy Director General for Technical Cooperation to Sri Lanka in March 2019, where he had participated in the inauguration of the 41st national representatives' meeting of the RCA and visited several institutions in which TC projects were being implemented.

117. Sri Lanka welcomed the assistance provided by the Agency in nuclear safety and security to strengthen local infrastructure and train officials. He noted that his country's additional protocol had been endorsed by the Board at its meeting in August 2018.

118. The Atomic Energy Regulatory Council of Sri Lanka had taken a number of steps to strengthen the national regulatory infrastructure with regard to safety, security and safeguards, and to step up enforcement of the Atomic Energy Act. It had drafted ionizing radiation protection regulations and source security regulations in line with Agency model regulations; they would be promulgated in 2020.

119. The country's Atomic Energy Board had taken initial steps to establish a nuclear security support centre which would operate as the main technical and scientific counterpart in Sri Lanka's nuclear security regime.

120. The Agency's continued assistance to Member States in radioisotope and radiopharmaceutical production, through capacity building and the dissemination and transfer of knowledge, contributed to improved health care and sustainable industrial development. His country looked forward to participating actively in the 2020–2021 TC cycle, with four new national projects approved

preliminarily. They included projects related to the establishment of a medical cyclotron facility for the production of radiopharmaceuticals needed for molecular imaging techniques in cancer management, the strengthening of the national regulatory infrastructure for radiation safety and source security, and the integration of radiation techniques into the tea cultivation process to increase yield and disease resistance.

121. During the 2018–2019 TC cycle, the project to establish a radioimmunoassay laboratory at the University of Jaffna would be immensely beneficial to the people of the Northern Province. Technical assistance was also being provided for a project to enhance water resource management and the supply of clean drinking water in the country's dry zones.

122. Throughout 2018, the Agency had continued to help low- and middle-income Member States improve the effectiveness of their radiation medicine services as part of a comprehensive cancer control strategy which focused on strengthening national capacities and mobilizing resources for the Agency's own activities. In that regard, a team of Agency experts would visit Sri Lanka in October 2019 under PACT.

123. Lastly, Sri Lanka welcomed the Agency's assistance in drafting its CPF for 2019–2025, which would be signed during the current General Conference.

124. Mr FEICHT (Germany) said that the Agency played a central role in nearly every matter related to nuclear technology, and his country would continue to be a constructive and reliable partner to the Secretariat and all Member States. His country highly valued the objectivity and independence of the Agency's work.

125. While Germany had decided to phase out nuclear power by the end of 2022, it respected the sovereign right of every country to choose its own energy mix and supply. His country would continue to carry out research on nuclear safety and waste management and strive for a leading position in the use of nuclear technology in such fields as medicine, food, energy storage, industry, materials science and research.

126. In addition to paying its share of the Regular Budget, Germany voluntarily contributed to the Agency's specific needs. It had supported the modernization of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories at Seibersdorf through ECAS, ReNuAL and ReNuAL Plus since 2011, with contributions amounting to almost €11 million. His Government had decided to contribute a further €600 000 towards the remaining sum required for the completion of the project. He appealed to all Member States to make a financial contribution towards the successful conclusion of the project.

127. In view of the extraordinary importance of effective and efficient Agency safeguards, Germany funded one of the first Member State Support Programmes. His country welcomed the fact that Liberia and Serbia had recently brought into force additional protocols. Together with its EU partners, Germany promoted the universalization of the additional protocol as the international verification standard. At the same time, it supported the further evolution of individual State-level approaches in a structured and objective manner.

128. Given the fundamental importance of nuclear safety, Germany strongly encouraged cooperation among regulators, and a worldwide system of mutual controls. Self-assessments and international peer reviews conducted in cooperation with the Agency were of particular importance.

129. Germany had consistently contributed to improving the security of radioactive sources, which was a responsibility shared by all States. In view of the increasing problem of digital attacks on critical infrastructure worldwide, Germany was fully committed to enhancing the security of its nuclear facilities with respect to computer security and fostering international cooperation. In that regard, it would host a Technical Meeting on Computer Security Approaches and Applications in Nuclear Security in Berlin

later that month. There was a need for better inclusion of computer security in the Nuclear Security Series as well as in the relevant conventions.

130. His country welcomed the progress that had been made in relation to the Agency's LEU Bank.

131. He reaffirmed his country's strong commitment to full implementation of the JCPOA, which made an important contribution to the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and was an essential asset to international security. His country strongly urged Iran to stop and reverse all actions contrary to the JCPOA and return to full compliance without further delay. Together with all JCPOA participants, Germany would pursue its efforts to preserve the plan. It highly commended the Agency's professional and impartial work to monitor and verify Iran's nuclear-related commitments. Iran should extend full and timely cooperation to the Agency on all issues related to safeguards and the JCPOA. So far, Germany had contributed some €4.83 million in extrabudgetary funding to support crucial activities under the JCPOA and its predecessor, the Joint Plan of Action. Since the previous General Conference, Germany had made available €350 000 for that purpose and stood ready to make further substantial contributions in the future. It encouraged all Member States to ensure that the Agency was able to conduct its long-term verification and monitoring mission in Iran.

132. Germany had decided to support the Agency financially in enhancing its readiness to play an essential role in verifying the DPRK's nuclear programme once the political conditions allowed. The complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization of the DPRK in line with relevant UN Security Council resolutions remained the ultimate objective. That was also crucial for the credibility of the NPT. The international community must remain united in its policy of steadfast pressure through the effective implementation of sanctions. It was the responsibility of the DPRK to finally take up expert-level negotiations with the USA in good faith.

133. Since the passing of Mr Amano, the Agency had mourned the loss of the late Director General and his outstanding personality and distinguished leadership. The naming of the Flexible Modular Laboratory at Seibersdorf as the Yukiya Amano Laboratories to honour his efforts in relation to the ReNuAL and ReNuAL Plus projects, served as a dignified tribute to him. Germany stood ready to support the Agency through those difficult times and was pleased to see that the highest standards of professionalism in all areas of its crucial work were being maintained.

134. Ms MUDYIWA (Zimbabwe) said that, following the passing of Mr Amano, her country offered its deepest condolences to his family and the Government and people of Japan. She also offered condolences to South Africa in connection with the recent passing of Ms Hlongwa, Deputy Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy.

135. Zimbabwe attached great importance to the mandate and work of the Agency, and welcomed the assistance that it continued to render. Nuclear technologies remained important in the fight against the increasing cancer burden in her country. The Government continued to invest in infrastructure and the development of competences to ensure the safe and high-quality delivery of radiology and oncology services. A nuclear medicine centre in the second largest city of Bulawayo had been restored and was now fully operational.

136. Training had also been initiated to strengthen Zimbabwe's medical physics capabilities through the introduction of a Master of Science in Medical Physics programme. It would produce its second cohort of graduates in November 2019, among them foreign students from the wider African region. Her country aimed to become a centre of excellence for the region and attain regional designated centre status in various fields of expertise.

137. In June 2019, Zimbabwe had hosted a regional meeting on developing diagnostic reference levels for adult computed tomography. Her country was very grateful to the Agency for its support in that area through the TC programme.

138. To combat the effects of droughts that had affected food security in the southern African region, Zimbabwe had enhanced efforts to develop and promote drought-resistant seeds with the support of the Agency. Experiments were being conducted with new varieties of maize — the country's staple food. At least 200 mutant lines had been screened for fall armyworm infestation, and advanced to M<sub>4</sub> generation. As a result of collaboration with the Agency, a mutant cowpea variety would soon be available to farmers, which was expected to produce a yield at least 30% higher than other local varieties.

139. Additionally, her country had developed its capabilities and expertise in using radiotracers for assessing soil erosion in agricultural and forested areas. Important improvements had been noted and international stakeholders, including researchers and development partners, had shown interest in learning and sharing experience in managing land degradation across Africa.

140. The Radiation Protection Authority of Zimbabwe excelled in ensuring the safe use of radiation technology and was recognized as one of the best such agencies in Africa. The Government was fully funding the construction of an interim disused radioactive source management facility. In that regard, Zimbabwe was grateful to the Agency for its ongoing advice on technical design, its commitment to assist in security planning after the completion of construction, and capacity building of the future facility managers.

141. In 2019, the Agency had organized an expert mission to Zimbabwe that had led to the successful conditioning of disused sources and provided technical equipment to ensure their safe interim storage while repatriation to the country of origin was being arranged. The Agency's Division of Nuclear Security continued to support nuclear security enhancement through the implementation of the INSSP. Her country had recently initiated the revision of its Radiation Protection Act to accommodate all national obligations in that regard and to strengthen safety, security and safeguards provisions. The process was expected to be completed in 2020.

142. Zimbabwe was also in the process of ratifying the CPPNM, the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident, the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency, the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, and the additional protocol to its safeguards agreement.

143. The Agency was working with relevant institutions in her country on a project to determine and assess sources of groundwater to promote improved and sustainable water use in Zimbabwe. The physical and chemical parameters of water samples collected from study sites in Harare and the Eastern Highlands were being analysed at the University of Zimbabwe and Environmental Management Agency laboratories and, with Agency assistance, would be sent to countries with capacity for further isotope analysis.

144. As the current President of the Conference on Disarmament, Zimbabwe noted with regret the erosion of multilateral disarmament architecture and the retreat from commitments made in that area. The collapse of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and the JCPOA had worsened the international security situation. In that respect, Zimbabwe called for cooperation, dialogue and peaceful co-existence among all countries.

145. Mr TAGHI-ZADA (Azerbaijan), paying tribute to the late Director General, said that during his tenure, Mr Amano had made an enormous contribution to the development of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and had strengthened both the nuclear security and non-proliferation regimes. He had demonstrated professionalism and leadership in coordinating the efforts of the international community

following the Fukushima Daiichi accident. Under his leadership, the Seibersdorf laboratories had been modernized to meet the future development needs of Member States.

146. The entry into force of the Amendment to the CPPNM had provided additional mechanisms for the enhancement of the global nuclear security regime. Azerbaijan was currently working to bring its regulatory acts in line with that international instrument.

147. The INSSP provided his country with a blueprint for a national strategy aimed at strengthening nuclear security and for a cooperation strategy with the Agency. In May 2019, a national seminar on threat assessment and design basis threat had been held in Baku, organized together with the Agency and attended by 27 representatives from 15 State bodies and organizations. His country would continue cooperating with the Agency in that vein to establish an effective and sustainable national regime for the physical protection of nuclear material.

148. Azerbaijan was committed to its obligations under the NPT and the safeguards agreement and viewed Agency safeguards as a crucial and effective instrument to support the non-proliferation regime. Close cooperation with the Secretariat had facilitated the implementation of a plan of action on advancing the national safeguards system. Agency inspectors frequently confirmed that Azerbaijan was fully complying with its safeguards obligations and, earlier that year, the country's Subsidiary Arrangements had entered into force. Furthermore, Azerbaijan had been one of the first countries to use the Agency's State Declarations Portal, allowing it to submit electronic declarations and reports in good time, and to communicate with the Department of Safeguards in a prompt and effective manner. His country attached great importance to further developing safeguards implementation mechanisms and stood ready to help strengthen them.

149. Technical cooperation with the Agency had contributed to the successful introduction of peaceful nuclear technologies in Azerbaijan. Their successful development and use in all areas of human activity was only possible, however, where safety culture was given paramount importance. With that in mind, his country had adhered strictly to the Agency's standards and recommendations in implementing the project to create a sterilization complex for the radiation processing of materials. The complex was now in operation, having had the cobalt-60 sources installed earlier that year. Under the same project, a radiation facility had been modernized and its cobalt sources replaced. In accordance with international standards and the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, the necessary measures had been taken to ensure the safe transport, installation and use of the sources, and security and emergency preparedness at all times. Measures for the safe decommissioning of the sources at the end of their useful life had also been established.

150. With the help of the Agency, Azerbaijan was implementing a programme to assess and reduce radon risk in the country. Through a TC project, it planned to establish a radon standard laboratory, acquire metrological and measuring equipment, train staff in developing procedures to calibrate and check radon measurement equipment, hold a national seminar on radon issues, and organize a training course on preventing and eliminating radon risk.

151. At a meeting between the late Director General and the President of Azerbaijan in 2018, the subject of cotton production had been discussed. It had been noted that there was a need to broaden cooperation with the Agency in the area of agriculture and learn from international experience to increase the quantity and quality of products using new methods and nuclear techniques. In 2019, Azerbaijani experts had attended a training course on that topic in Turkey, 2 experts had visited the country, and 12 000 irradiated cotton seeds had been planted for experimental purposes. Azerbaijan looked forward to further developing its cooperation with the Agency in priority areas and achieving the objectives set out in its Country Programme Framework.

152. Mr MSISKA (Zambia) conveyed his country's condolences to the family of the late Director General, to the Japanese Government and to the Member States of the Agency. The advice that Mr Amano had given to Zambia during his visit to the country in 2018 had inspired the Government to accelerate its nuclear programme, taking into account international standards.

153. He also offered his country's condolences to South Africa on the tragic loss of its Deputy Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy.

154. Zambia would continue to implement initiatives to develop its human resources capacity in the areas of nuclear safety, security and safeguards, and it understood the importance of adherence to the Agency's legal instruments in that regard. It was in the process of ratifying a number of key instruments, which it intended to complete by 2020. Since the previous session of the General Conference, his country had presented the Agency with its letter expressing support for the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. Several legal instruments, including the additional protocol, were scheduled for approval by Zambia's Cabinet.

155. His country had also made progress towards the adoption of a comprehensive nuclear law, pursuant to which the radiation protection authority would be transformed into the nuclear and radiation safety authority with a view to increasing its regulatory independence. An overall coordinating agency would also be established to ensure that the national nuclear programme complied with international standards. Zambia planned to commission a centre for nuclear science and technology within five years and its first two nuclear power units by 2040.

156. Within the framework of creating strategic partnerships between newcomer countries and those with more experience, the Zambian regulator was about to sign an interagency agreement with its Russian counterpart. Zambia was also in the process of establishing a local chapter of Women in Nuclear Global.

157. With regard to technical cooperation, Zambia was working with the Agency to establish a radiotherapy centre in every province of the country. Thus far, one centre had been opened and a further two were under development. It had also expanded its capacities in the area of food safety; three provinces were now covered by toxin monitoring laboratories, and a further ten laboratories were scheduled for construction across the remaining seven provinces.

158. Thanks to its cooperation with the Russian State Atomic Energy Agency Corporation "Rosatom", his country had developed a 200-year road map for the entire life cycle of its nuclear programme and had completed a nuclear infrastructure assessment and an environmental brief. In addition, 110 Zambian students were studying nuclear science-related subjects in the Russian Federation.

159. Zambia had designed a co-financing mechanism to provide local counterpart funding for technical cooperation. The Government's coordinating agency, once established, would work with the Agency to review and harmonize TC projects.

160. He expressed his country's appreciation for the technical cooperation that the Agency had provided and reaffirmed its commitment to all its international obligations regarding the peaceful, safe and secure use of nuclear science and technology.

161. Ms ABDULLA (United Republic of Tanzania) expressed her country's sincere condolences to the Agency on the passing of Mr Amano, an outstanding diplomat and champion of peace who had worked tirelessly to ensure that atomic energy was used solely for the benefit of humankind. She said that Mr Amano's wisdom, foresight and fruitful work had rightfully earned him recognition and respect throughout the world.

162. Tanzania was confident that the Agency would continue to achieve its development objectives, including in the areas of health, food, energy and nuclear security, and support appropriate strategies and programmes for the advancement of the peaceful applications of nuclear technology and its control.

163. Her country had always played an active role in implementing the Agency's mandate to ensure the peaceful use of nuclear technology. In March 2019, it had hosted the African NLO meeting aimed at enhancing the delivery of the Agency's TC programme activities through improved coordination among countries. Tanzania had been benefiting from TC projects in various areas, including agriculture, health, water and nuclear safety and security.

164. Welcoming the choice of cancer control as the theme for the 2019 Scientific Forum, her country noted the importance of its partnership with the Agency in implementing its national cancer control strategy. Technical cooperation in the areas of nuclear medicine, radiotherapy and human resources development had produced tremendous results in health care provision; Tanzania looked forward to more cooperation in that regard.

165. Cancer was the fifth leading cause of death in Tanzania and the number of cancer cases was increasing annually. Her country was committed to strengthening its cancer control infrastructure, as demonstrated by the inauguration in July 2019 of the country's second radiotherapy centre, in Mwanza. President Magufuli was sincerely grateful to the Agency for the support it had provided in that connection.

166. With increased nuclear power prospects and a significant rise in nuclear energy applications on its territory, Tanzania was committed to strengthening its national infrastructure for nuclear safety, security and safeguards.

167. Noting the strengthened partnership between her country and the Agency thanks to technical assistance, she reaffirmed Tanzania's commitment to honouring its obligations and boosting its support to the Agency, allowing it to achieve its mandated objectives.

168. Ms HULAN (Canada) said that the passing of Mr Amano, following ten effective and consequential years as Director General of the Agency, was a great loss to the international community. Her country had admired and wholeheartedly supported his efforts to modernize the Agency's management practices, improve the gender balance, carry out the Agency's non-proliferation mandate and promote the peaceful uses of nuclear technology for the benefit of all. Canada hoped that his successor would demonstrate the same sustained level of professionalism that he had shown.

169. Welcoming the swift selection of the Acting Director General, she extended her country's sincere appreciation to Mr Feruță for his capable leadership during the transition period and expressed the hope that a timely consensus on the formal appointment of the subsequent Director General would be achieved through a fair and transparent process.

170. Canada recognized the NPT as the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation and disarmament regime and would continue to advocate its universalization and full implementation. Her country would work with all State Parties to find the common ground required to ensure a successful 2020 NPT Review Conference.

171. Compliance with the non-proliferation obligations set out in the NPT was one of the most fundamental responsibilities of a State. In that regard, the DPRK's illicit nuclear weapons programme posed an unacceptable threat to the region and the world, and undermined the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Canada therefore strongly urged the DPRK to return to compliance with all relevant UN Security Council resolutions, the NPT and its comprehensive safeguards agreement. Her country would continue to support all diplomatic efforts to achieve a political solution leading to the complete, verifiable and

irreversible denuclearization of the DPRK and would support the Agency in verifying any denuclearization agreement reached. It welcomed the Agency's preparations for that possibility.

172. Expressing regret at the recent decisions of Iran to exceed key limits set out in the JCPOA, she reiterated the importance of ensuring the full implementation of the plan and its verification by the Agency. As a strong supporter of the JCPOA and all diplomatic solutions that helped reduce tensions and facilitate compliance, Canada urged Iran to recommit immediately to the full implementation of all its JCPOA commitments, to cooperate fully and in a timely manner regarding the implementation of its safeguards agreement and additional protocol, to respond promptly to the Agency's questions concerning the completeness of its safeguards declarations and to ratify its additional protocol in order to increase transparency regarding its nuclear activities.

173. Canada remained deeply concerned that Syria had yet to respond to the Agency's repeated requests to resolve its non-compliance with its non-proliferation obligations. The Agency must remain seized of the matter until all unresolved questions had been answered definitively. Failure to do so would severely undermine the integrity and credibility of the NPT and the Agency.

174. In line with the objectives of the NPT, her country welcomed the continued evolution of effective safeguards and supported the progress made by the Agency in the implementation of the State-level concept. Canada was working closely with the Secretariat to finalize the implementation of its own State-level approach and to promote the universalization of safeguards, in particular the additional protocol.

175. Canada remained strongly committed to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It had long been a pioneer in the area of nuclear science and technology while ensuring its regulation. Over the preceding years, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, had produced a series of publications and regulations to ensure safe innovation with regard to fleet refurbishment and laboratory facilities.

176. Nuclear energy could make a key contribution to the economy, to energy security and to the clean energy transition required to combat climate change. As investment by advanced economies in nuclear energy would make it significantly cheaper and easier to achieve climate change targets, her country recognized the importance of using nuclear energy to complement renewable technologies. Earlier that year, Canada had hosted the Tenth Clean Energy Ministerial and the Fourth Mission Innovation Ministerial in Vancouver. At those meetings, the potential contribution of nuclear energy to other clean technology sectors had been highlighted, along with the importance of female, indigenous and youth leadership in the energy sector.

177. Her country remained a global leader in the development of small modular reactors, which represented the next wave of innovation in nuclear energy technology. It had released a road map for their development in November 2018 and had launched projects to build a demonstration small modular reactor at its national laboratories. As a reflection of its commitment to international regulatory effectiveness, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission had recently signed a memorandum of understanding on advanced reactors and small modular reactors with the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission, which served as a prime example of a proactive approach to regulating new and innovative nuclear technologies. Canada stood ready to share its experience with interested international partners.

178. Although nuclear energy and technology could play an important role in achieving economic and environmental aspirations, the decision to use nuclear technology entailed important obligations. Her country welcomed the Agency's continued efforts to help Member States fulfil their nuclear security responsibilities, without which the continued advancement and sharing of nuclear technology would not be possible. To date, Canada had made over \$59 million in voluntary contributions to the NSF. It looked forward to ICONS 2020, which had an important role to play in sustaining and strengthening Member States' efforts to improve nuclear security worldwide.

179. Applauding the Agency's ongoing efforts to help Member States maintain and improve their national nuclear safety frameworks, Canada urged all Member States to become Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. In June 2019, her country had hosted the first meeting of the parties and signatories to the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage, at which participants had discussed the progress made in its implementation and opportunities to expand participation.

180. Strongly endorsing the principles of openness and transparency, Canada encouraged all Member States to host international peer reviews and publish the results of such reviews in addition to their national reports under the Convention on Nuclear Safety. In 2019, Canada had become the first country with a large nuclear programme to host an EPREV mission. It had also hosted its first IRRS mission in over 10 years.

181. Mr SHOJA'AADIN (Yemen), extending his country's condolences to the family of Mr Amano, the Government of Japan and the Secretariat, said that the late Director General had made substantive efforts to achieve the Agency's noble goals.

182. Yemen urged all Member States to take advantage of peaceful uses of nuclear energy while respecting their non-proliferation obligations. The role of the comprehensive safeguards agreement needed to be strengthened to ensure equality among all States in the interests of international peace and security.

183. Deeply troubled by Iran's recent escalatory actions and its violation of JCPOA requirements and UN Security Council resolution 2231 (2015), Yemen called on that country to comply fully with the plan of action and to conclude an additional protocol in order to build trust by enabling the Agency to broaden the scope of its verification and monitoring activities.

184. His country strongly condemned the cowardly terrorist attack on two Saudi Aramco facilities in Saudi Arabia. It stood united with Saudi Arabia against any assault on its security and stability.

185. Yemen was deeply grateful for the support it received through the Agency's TC programme. It strove to continue implementing TC projects despite the exceptional and demanding circumstances prevailing in the country as a result of the Houthi takeover supported by Iran. That country should desist from its irresponsible behaviour and interference; its continued support of the Houthi militia was contributing to the destabilization not only of Yemen, but also of the entire region.

186. The Secretariat's tireless efforts to continue implementing TC projects in Yemen, particularly in the areas of cancer treatment, agriculture and livestock, and science and technology, were appreciated. It should keep seeking ways to ensure that countries in exceptional circumstances, such as Yemen, could continue implementing projects.

187. The Scientific Forum on cancer control, which was currently taking place on the margins of the General Conference, was an opportunity to draw attention to the Agency's significant contribution to establishing the first radiotherapy centre and a nuclear medicine unit in Yemen. The Government was grateful for that support, given the country's increased needs in that area.

188. Yemen had welcomed the Agency's Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology held in 2018 and the resulting declaration; it hoped that the outcomes and recommendations would be translated into action conducive to the achievement of the SDGs. His country also looked forward to participating in the International Conference on Climate Change and the Role of Nuclear Power to be held in October 2019 and hoped that it would produce constructive resolutions and recommendations.

189. His country supported the Agency's measures to strengthen the nuclear security regime, to prevent terrorist groups from gaining access to nuclear material, and to combat illegal trafficking in radioactive nuclear material. Welcoming ICONS 2020, Yemen hoped that the resulting ministerial declaration would underscore the commitment of all States to supporting nuclear security.

190. Yemen endorsed all non-proliferation initiatives and the establishment of WMD-free zones, especially in the Middle East, a region fraught with instability and a sense of insecurity owing to a power imbalance and the existence of nuclear activities that were not subject to the NPT regime.

191. Fully endorsing Jordan's presidency of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction to be held in November 2019, Yemen called on all States to participate and ensure the success of the conference.

192. Mr HUSSEN (Iraq) offered his country's sincere condolences to the family of Mr Amano, the late Director General, and to the Government of Japan.

193. Despite challenges in regaining control of the country from terrorists, the Iraqi Government spared no effort in monitoring the situation at sites containing hazardous materials, in particular radioactive material and sources in areas previously under terrorist control. In that connection, steps were being taken to implement the CPPNM and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism through the committees established for that purpose.

194. Iraq was working with the Department of Technical Cooperation to build capacities and promote the best methods for applying nuclear science and technology to meet people's needs and tackle chronic diseases, in particular cancer.

195. In April 2019, his country had hosted two Agency missions to strengthen capacity building in nuclear safety and legislation on the safe transport of nuclear and other radioactive material. Numerous activities had been implemented to boost institutional capacities in the protection of nuclear material and facilities, security of nuclear data and criminal investigations. Iraq was deeply grateful to the Secretariat for its cooperation and to Member States that had helped to fund projects in that regard.

196. The Iraqi Government had made great progress in the area of nuclear regulation. In 2016, it had promulgated a law on the establishment of a nuclear energy agency and was now taking the necessary steps to establish that body. In addition, it was merging its three nuclear oversight authorities into a single body, and was taking the necessary legislative steps in that regard. Iraq had also adopted a national radioactive waste management strategy, which had been reviewed by the Agency. His country was taking urgent action to safely dispose of radioactive waste from decommissioned and destroyed nuclear facilities and radioactive material produced by medical, industrial and oil facilities.

197. The elimination of nuclear weapons and other WMDs from the Middle East was crucial to the achievement of regional security and stability. It was vital, therefore, for all States to take responsibility for ensuring the success of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, to be held in November 2019. Iraq endorsed Jordan's presidency of the conference.

198. Iraq commended the Secretariat's efforts to implement the JCPOA, in accordance with the mandate assigned to it by the Board and with UN Security Council resolution 2231 (2015). The plan of action was a success of multilateral diplomacy, and it strengthened the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. Iraq called on all participants to ensure its continuation.

199. In closing, he emphasized that it was the inalienable right of all countries to develop peaceful nuclear programmes for their development without being hindered by a specific group or having international conditions imposed that were detrimental to their interests.

200. Mr OJEDA VIGLIONE (Uruguay) said that the motto of ‘Atoms for Peace and Development’ not only summarized the mission and broad, pacifist vocation of the Agency, but also the considerable legacy left by the late Director General, Mr Amano. The Agency must honour him by preserving his strong commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and international peace and security and, above all, by promoting the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear technology.

201. Uruguay firmly defended the inalienable right of all States to the peaceful use of nuclear energy for national development and well-being, within the framework of cooperation and safeguards.

202. He reaffirmed his country’s unwavering commitment to the non-proliferation regime and verifiable, complete and universal disarmament. Uruguay had ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2018 and urged more countries to join, in order to hasten its entry into force.

203. Disarmament verification mechanisms needed to be strengthened, and the international community should respect and support the safeguards regime. Uruguay had ratified its additional protocol and strove to prevent the dissemination of nuclear material for non-peaceful uses or its appropriation by terrorist groups. His country also supported the creation of NWFZs throughout the world as an effective means of achieving disarmament objectives.

204. Nuclear safety and security had to be improved on an ongoing basis and should be taken into consideration in national contingency plans. Uruguay had a regulatory authority responsible for monitoring any equipment involved in the handling of ionizing radiation. The country remained committed to the Nuclear Security Plan 2018–2021 and to the CPPNM Amendment.

205. Commending FORO’s valuable work, Uruguay encouraged the Agency and FORO to continue working with each other and with other organizations that shared common goals and interests, such as PAHO and WHO.

206. Uruguay had participated in numerous national and regional TC projects, through which it had benefited in the priority areas identified in its CPF for 2017–2021. One such area was the regulation of activities involving radiation, where Uruguay had drawn up new requirements and guidelines based on Agency guidance. His country had also contributed to the TC programme through various projects.

207. He thanked the Agency for its support to Uruguay in fundamental areas such as regulatory infrastructure and training on security, inspections, radioactive waste, medical applications and the use of new equipment and technology. He also noted that his country had hosted various Agency events over the years.

208. His country appreciated the Agency’s ongoing efforts to apply gender policies to its training projects and organizational structure.

209. Uruguay considered ARCAL to be an irreplaceable instrument for regional cooperation and had implemented various TC projects under that agreement. Since the funds available were insufficient to meet States’ needs, his country believed that the TCF should not have to rely on voluntary contributions; those resources must be sufficient, assured and predictable in order to achieve the proposed objectives. In that connection, it was also important to ensure that measures to strengthen nuclear security did not obstruct international cooperation.

210. As a member of the world’s first NWFZ and as an NPT State Party, Uruguay was fully committed to the strengthening of the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime, including the Agency’s safeguards activities and the CTBT. All Member States should comply fully with their obligations and respect their commitments in relation to weapons control, disarmament and the non-proliferation of all WMDs and their delivery systems, with a view to promoting international peace and security.

**The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.**