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RECORD OF THE THREE HUNDRED AND EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING

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President: Mr. HALIM (Malaysia)

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GENERAL DEBATE AND ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1987 (GC(XXXII)/835) (continued)

1. Mr. GLEISSNER (Austria) noted that during the past 12 months the future of nuclear energy had continued to be the subject of discussions and even controversies. On the one hand, 22 new nuclear power plants had entered into service during 1987 in 9 Member States, bringing the total number of nuclear power plants in operation to 417 in 26 countries and the total annual nuclear capacity worldwide to nearly 300 000 MW(e), or more than 16% of the world's total electricity production; that increase had taken place despite the risks involved in nuclear power technology and the existence of other problems related to nuclear energy, for example radioactive waste management and physical protection. On the other hand, only a small number of the Member States in which nuclear power was at present an economically viable option had an energy policy which involved steady development of their nuclear energy potential. Other countries, guided by economic or safety considerations, had adopted a more cautious approach which involved imposing a freeze, or virtual freeze, on the growth of their nuclear power potential. Other countries had gone even further and had decided to phase out nuclear power gradually, while some, including Austria, had deliberately renounced the use of nuclear energy for electricity production.

2. There were also very different, even diverging attitudes and positions within countries, and in some cases government options in favour of nuclear power were opposed by large sectors of the population. It was interesting to note that, in January 1988, the European Parliament had adopted by a large majority a recommendation on nuclear accidents which was severely critical of nuclear power. Among the measures included in that recommendation were: a moratorium on all new construction of nuclear facilities until international standards on design, safety and operation rules had been established; the closure of facilities which did not meet international standards; the preparation of principles of public international law on liability, as well as regulations providing for adequate compensation by the responsible government for damage in the event of an accident; recognition of the rights of neighbouring States when nuclear facilities were built inside a 100-km-wide frontier zone; and arrangements providing for consultations with the

neighbouring States and populations concerned, prior to any decision to build nuclear facilities in frontier regions.

3. During the general debate at the General Conference in 1987, his delegation had stated that the central element of any expanded nuclear safety programme undertaken by the Agency should be the adoption of internationally binding nuclear safety standards and mandatory control of their application by the Agency on a global scale in all countries. His delegation was aware that that was a minority position. All that could be expected from the Agency in that area was the revision and updating of the NUSS Codes and the preparation of new basic safety principles for nuclear power plants, neither of which would be legally binding on Member States. However, his delegation was unwilling to accept the argument that since nuclear safety was considered to lie exclusively within the field of national responsibility and jurisdiction, it must necessarily be outside the scope of international regulations with binding standards. Obviously any matter under national responsibility could be made subject to international control, provided there existed an appropriate legal commitment. Since nuclear facilities all over the world were subject to international inspection under Agency safeguards, it was difficult to understand why there could not be a parallel system of inspection and control in the area of nuclear safety.

4. Those who lamented the negative effects of public opinion on the development of nuclear power should realize that the existence of internationally binding safety standards and a mandatory control mechanism through the intermediary of the Agency would increase confidence in nuclear technology. It had been very clearly demonstrated that state frontiers provided no barrier against the potential for radioactive contamination of the environment inherent in nuclear power plants, and that such contamination could affect a whole continent. Public concern about the risks associated with such facilities was therefore justified, not only in relation to plants located within the national territory, but also in relation to foreign plants, particularly those in neighbouring countries. Foreign plants could, and often did, cause more concern than those built within national territory. For that reason, another argument used in favour of making nuclear safety exclusively a

matter of national responsibility - the claim that no one could be more interested in the safety of a plant than the authorities of the country in which it was situated - did not seem convincing. One should not forget that the population of a country which had given up the nuclear option for energy production expected its government to secure a particularly high standard of protection against nuclear risks.

5. The question of liability for nuclear damage was one of the major problems which had to be resolved by the Agency. Considerable achievements had already been made in that area, but further important work remained to be done. Austria welcomed the formulation of the Joint Protocol relating to the application of the Vienna and Paris Conventions and would be pleased to concur in the adoption of that instrument. His delegation thanked the joint IAEA/NEA working group of government experts for its efforts, which had enabled an effective bridge to be established between the two Conventions and had thus brought about a considerable expansion of their scope of application. The time had come to take a further step and to deal with the question of State liability with a view to drawing up an international convention on that subject.

6. Such an instrument was essential. The concept of civil liablity seemed fully applicable only between States with comparable legal systems, and in any case it would be inadequate in the event of large-scale accidents which caused damage not only to large numbers of people but also to the environment in general. Since the previous session of the General Conference, his Government had noted with satisfaction the positive reaction by a large majority of Member States to considerations formulated within the Agency on the question of drawing up an international instrument on State liability for damage arising from nuclear accidents.

7. On several occasions his delegation had cited the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects as an excellent example of a widely accepted international instrument dealing with liability and compensation for damage. Therefore, in its view, the essence of a new convention, namely the principle of State liability for nuclear damage and the mechanism for settling claims, should be based on the provisions of that

Convention. The necessary definitions and provisions relating to the scope of the new instrument could be based on the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability. State liability should be subsidiary to the existing international regimes on civil liability, but its provisions should nevertheless be strict, and, in the light of the potentially catastrophic effects of a nuclear accident, should not only provide for reparation in respect of damage to persons and property but also for preventive measures, as well as reasonable measures aimed at restoring the environment. As to the argument that a system of liability which made someone other than the polluter himself liable would inevitably encourage pollution, it seemed obvious that the national law of the State in which a facility was situated could, in turn, provide for recourse against the operator.

8. His Government sincerely hoped that, at the present session of the General Conference, Agency Member States would be able to reach agreement on the establishment of an open-ended working group of government experts to draw up a draft convention. Austria would fully support such an endeavour and was ready to submit an initial draft. His delegation was firmly convinced not only of the possibility but also of the necessity of settling the difficult question of State liability for nuclear damage by means of an appropriate instrument.

9. The Agency had an impressive record of formulating the international legal instruments covering various aspects of nuclear energy. One of its great achievements in that area was the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, which had entered into force the previous year. That Convention had been submitted to the Austrian Parliament for approval and the instrument of ratification would be deposited shortly after approval had been given. His delegation therefore did not hesitate in joining the appeal made to governments to ratify that important Convention or to accede to it. His country would also support any initiative to establish internationally binding regulations regarding physical protection measures to be applied to nuclear material at the national level. In March 1988, Austria had ratified the Early Notification Convention and the Austrian authorities were at present preparing parliamentary approval procedures for the Emergency Assistance Convention.

10. Apart from seeking to associate itself with multilateral legal instruments, his country had a policy of promoting bilateral treaty arrangements - particularly with neighbouring countries - on matters of mutual interest related to nuclear energy, especially nuclear safety and radiation protection. The first such agreement had been concluded with Czechoslovakia, and Austria had recently received assurances concerning the application of that agreement to all nuclear power plants in Czechoslovakia. The agreement with Hungary covering nuclear facilities everywhere in the territory of the two contracting parties had entered into force in November 1987, and the joint commission established by that agreement was to meet for the first time the following week. An agreement between Austria and the German Democratic Republic on the exchange of information and experience in the field of radiation protection had been signed on 3 May 1988. Lastly, on 13 September 1988, an agreement had been signed between Austria and the USSR on the early notification of nuclear accidents and the exchange of information on nuclear facilities.

11. His Government was convinced that the development of international law through bilateral agreements establishing systems of information and consultation on issues associated with nuclear power could make a substantial contribution to the positive development of bilateral relations, particularly between neighbouring countries, and especially if those countries followed different policies with regard to the use of nuclear power. As in the past, his country would contribute actively to the expansion of that new and important type of international legal commitment.

12. As in the previous year, the Director General had stressed, in his opening statement, the view that nuclear power would inevitably become the most important source of energy worldwide during the coming decade, in view of the lack of other ecologically and economically acceptable solutions. Austria believed, however, that the range of technical options should be expanded so that the world was not confronted one day with a single scenario excluding all alternatives. In the report which it had submitted to the United Nations General Assembly, the World Commission on Environment and Development, in dealing with aspects of future energy development, had concluded not only that ways of increasing the safety of nuclear energy must be found, but also that

the highest priority should be given to research on and development of environmentally sound and ecologically viable alternatives. His country supported that recommendation.

13. Mr. SASTROHANDOYO (Indonesia) said that the thirty-second session of the General Conference was taking place at a time of renewed hopes for the establishment of international peace and security, although a number of problems remained to be solved and potentially explosive situations still existed. The delegation of Indonesia wished to thank the Director General for his opening statement, which had done much to clarify the basic issues of nuclear energy and had laid stress on various alternative energy options.

14. Indonesia's foreign policy aimed to establish a peaceful world based on justice and prosperity. In South East Asia, Indonesia had always stressed the importance of regional security. In December 1987, the heads of Government of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations had reaffirmed their commitment to make South East Asia a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality, one main element of which would lie in its being declared a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

15. World peace was not possible without sustained development, particularly in Third World countries. Indonesia had helped to define the concept of sustainable development, since it was firmly convinced that that was the right path. It was essential to ensure accelerated growth and development in order to meet the present needs of countries without compromising the well-being of future generations. As the Director General had said, it was important that those in favour of the use of nuclear power and those who had doubts about it or were opposed to it, should discuss without acrimony practical measures to avert disaster. In the area of nuclear energy, his country believed that the Agency's experience and knowledge would be the appropriate basis for establishing internationally accepted criteria for the use of nuclear energy for electricity production. Provided proper safety precautions were taken and the impact on the environment was kept to an acceptable minimum, nuclear power would remain a viable energy alternative and there would not be any reason to regard it as incompatible with sustainable development. Indeed, recourse to nuclear power might prove to be absolutely essential in the interests of furthering that concept. To be sure, nuclear

energy posed certain problems, but the level of technology was continuing to improve. It must also be acknowledged that no form of energy was without risk to the environment, not even new and renewable sources.

16. Since it was already using nuclear energy, his country attached great importance to safety and had been able to benefit greatly from the Agency's assistance in that area. It was also benefiting from the Agency's commendable efforts to assist developing countries in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The results of research carried out with radioisotope tracers had enabled the National Atomic Energy Agency to transfer to the Ministry of Agriculture the necessary know-how for making animal feed supplements and a coccidiosis radiovaccine during the past year. Indonesia, which was already operating two research reactors, had a new multipurpose 30 MW reactor which had been commissioned in 1987, as well as several other support facilities which would become fully operational by 1991. It intended to make that reactor and its related facilities available to countries in South Asia, East Asia and South East Asia for research and training activities.

17. Indonesia had benefited from technical co-operation under the Regional Co-operative Agreement (RCA) for Asia and the Pacific and had acted as host to training courses and other activities organized under that agreement. It had recently played host to a seminar which had established several draft recommendations on the applications of nuclear energy in developing countries. Those recommendations would be studied in greater detail at the meeting of representatives of parties to the RCA which was to be held concurrently with the present session of the General Conference.

18. One of the problems associated with nuclear power lay in convincing the public of its acceptability, and in that regard his delegation commended the Agency's information activities which, in association with similar activities in Member States, had made it possible to re-establish confidence in nuclear power after Chernobyl. The remarks made by the Director General himself on that question had helped significantly to clarify the facts and to dispel many unfounded fears about nuclear power. Indonesia had also undertaken major information campaigns with a view to enlightening the public on energy options. Nuclear energy required sophisticated technology and involved high

investment costs, but the country had to recognize that the hydroelectric potential of the island of Java had already been exhausted, the country's geothermal possibilites were limited and the use of coal raised environmental problems. Therefore, Indonesia had no choice but to prepare to embark on the use of nuclear power. As far as the risks in terms of safety were concerned - of which it was fully aware - Indonesia believed that the only way of keeping them to a minimum was to ensure that, when it was in a position to make use of nuclear power, it would have mastered the necessary technology and management capability.

19. It was comforting to note that technical assistance, which was one of the Agency's two main functions, was continuing to develop and that an increasing number of experts from developing countries, including Indonesia, had been selected as consultants.

20. His delegation was particularly pleased to announce that the Indonesian Parliament had before it a Government recommendation concerning ratification of the Conventions on Early Notification and on Emergency Assistance. Member States would recall that Indonesia had already ratified the Convention on Physical Protection.

21. As far as safeguards were concerned, his country had of course signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and had also set up its own national system of control. It was pleased to hear that all countries operating a nuclear reactor had agreed to submit all or part of their nuclear facilities to safeguards. In that context, the voluntary offer agreement between China and the Agency was particularly welcome.

22. With regard to a revision of Article VI of the Statute as a whole, his delegation's position was that any consensus on increasing the number of seats on the Board should be based on the principle of maintaining balanced geographical representation. Although the efforts made so far had not been very successful, his delegation supported the idea of establishing a new working group to continue examination of the problem.

23. No organization could survive and operate without healthy financial resources and it was regrettable that the Agency had experienced serious difficulties during the past two years. As many delegations had indicated,

the problem was due to slackness in the payment of contributions. While some countries were not in a position to pay their contributions owing to real economic difficulties, that was not always the case. It was therefore essential that all Member States should fulfil their financial obligations. His delegation was grateful to the Secretariat for having provided information on the systems of incentives currently being used in other international organizations. It would be useful for the Secretariat to study those systems in greater detail, particularly those used by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) which had been in operation for several years.

24. Mr. WALKER (New Zealand) said that the Agency was a unique organization which had very important responsibilities in the area of nuclear energy applications. However, it should also take into account the fears generated throughout the world by the dangers of nuclear weapons proliferation and the improper or unsafe use of nuclear technology.

25. The Agency's record was a good one. It was a well-run organization with a highly competent staff. It administered the safeguards system, which was a crucial aspect of the non-proliferation regime effectively, and discharged its responsibilities properly towards developed and developing countries by helping them to benefit from the peaceful applications of nuclear technology. Some people in New Zealand were suspicious about the Agency's activities. They feared the consequences of widespread development of nuclear power, questioned the safety standards applied in that sector, and drew attention to the problem of waste management, which, it seemed, had not yet been resolved. Those fears could not be disregarded or discounted, because there was too much evidence which suggested that they were well-founded. In that light the Agency's work seemed all the more important. Efforts to improve nuclear safety standards, the intensification of international co-operation in the area of radiation protection and the role played by nuclear medicine and the other peaceful uses of nuclear energy to ensure better standards of living all helped to dispel distrust about nuclear energy and, what was more important, to make its utilization safer.

26. The Agency's most important task was its crucial verification role under the non-proliferation regime. Its responsibilities in the area of safeguards under NPT and its Statute constituted the corner-stone of security in the modern nuclear world. It was comforting to note that, in 1987, the Agency had not detected any anomaly which would indicate the diversion of a significant amount of safeguarded nuclear material.

27. Preparations for the Fourth NPT Review Conference would begin shortly. Once again, the operation of the safeguards system would be examined in terms of its non-proliferation objectives. His country would contribute actively to consolidating and strengthening the role of NPT in international security.

28. The fact that 52 States party to NPT had not concluded a safeguards agreement with the Agency called for comment. Although a large number of those countries did not have significant nuclear activities, to conclude such an agreement would be consistent with their professed support for NPT. Despite the fact that his country had no nuclear material requiring a safeguards agreement of that kind, it had concluded an agreement which had been in force since 1972.

29. It should not be forgotten that the absence of international safeguards would greatly undermine world stability. The way to encourage other States, particularly those which had advanced nuclear programmes, to submit them to appropriate inspections, was by demonstrating one's own attachment to that regime. That applied particularly to those NPT States with significant nuclear fuel cycles.

30. Nuclear-weapon States had already recognized the "back-stopping" role of nuclear safeguards by submitting some of their nuclear activities to inspections. The United Kingdom and the United States had led the way by voluntarily submitting all their nuclear activities to safeguards, except for those which had direct national security significance. An agreement concerning designated nuclear material had been concluded with France and another concerning certain designated peaceful nuclear facilities had been concluded with the Soviet Union. A voluntary offer agreement had just been concluded with China, and New Zealand welcomed that fact. All peaceful nuclear activities in all nuclear-weapon States should, in due course, be submitted to Agency safeguards.

31. Of course, drastic reductions in nuclear arsenals would make the biggest contribution of all to the non-proliferation regime. However, his country could not accept the argument put forward by some, that nuclear-weapon States must first reduce their arsenals before other States renounced the nuclear weapons option. Both should occur without conditions. So long as nuclear threshold States retained their nuclear weapons option, they were undermining both the Agency's valuable work in maintaining the non-proliferation regime and the spirit of NPT supported by the 137 States which had signed it.

32. His country welcomed Saudi Arabia's announcement of its intention to accede to NPT, as well as the moves undertaken by South Africa towards accession. It was imperative that those moves should result soon in an unconditional commitment on the part of South Africa to NPT. More generally, his country believed that all nuclear facilities in all non-nuclear-weapon States should be submitted to Agency safeguards through accession to NPT. In his statement of 1 July 1988, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of NPT and of New Zealand's signing of that Treaty, New Zealand's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Disarmament and Arms Control had appealed to those States remaining outside NPT to reconsider their position.

33. The Agency's non-proliferation activities extended beyond the framework of NPT and the Agency's Statute. His country was pleased to note that, during the past year, the Agency had agreed to assume safeguards responsibilities under the South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone Treaty (Rarotonga Treaty) under which all parties were to conclude safeguards agreements with the Agency in the 18 months following the entry into force of the Treaty for them. Together with the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Tlatelolco Treaty), the Rarotonga Treaty constituted an important regional supplement to NPT.

34. It was important that adequate resources should continue to be available to ensure thorough implementation of Agency safeguards, in view of the increasing number and growing sophistication of the facilities to be safeguarded. All Member States should support the Agency in the pursuit of further productivity gains in the safeguards and inspection areas.

35. The safe development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes was a major element in the non-proliferation process. The United Nations Conference for the Promotion of International Co-operation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy (UNCPICPUNE), held in 1987, had shown how difficult that task was. Although New Zealand did not need to use nuclear energy owing to the abundance of its other energy sources, the Chernobyl accident had served as a reminder of the interdependent nature of the modern world. The Agency and its Member States had carried out valuable work in strengthening the existing nuclear safety standards and by improving the related operational monitoring techniques.

36. The Conventions on Early Notification and on Emergency Assistance had gained further support and his country hoped that all countries which had not yet done so would accede to them.

37. In the area of radioactive waste management in accordance with environmentally sound principles, his country was particularly concerned about the possibility of radioactive pollution of the South Pacific Region. Provisions governing the dumping of radioactive waste at sea were contained in both the Rarotonga Treaty and in the Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific. His country strongly supported a stricter international regime to protect the marine environment against the dumping of hazardous wastes, including radioactive wastes. His country's concerns were not confined to the marine environment or to its own region, and it would welcome international measures aimed at establishing a code of conduct governing the dumping of hazardous wastes.

38. His country welcomed the initiation of the waste management advisory programme and was pleased to see that the Agency's efforts were continuing, in liaison with other international organizations, to improve the operating and safety standards governing radioactive waste disposal.

39. Like all Member States, his country benefited from the Agency's role as a centre for the exchange of information, advice and experience and recognized the importance of its technical assistance and co-operation activities. New Zealand experts had participated in regional training projects in the past

and they hoped to do so in the future. New Zealand was following with interest international activities in the area of food irradiation under the Agency's auspices.

40. In 1988, New Zealand had had the pleasure of welcoming the Director General, and that visit had provided a further opportunity of emphasizing the country's commitment to the Agency's principles and objectives.

41. Mr. ANTONOPOULOS-DOMIS (Greece), recalling the provisions of United Nations General Assembly resolution 42/24, urged the Agency to continue its efforts and its central role in strengthening and broadening international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

42. He applauded the entry into force, in 1987, of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency. He expressed full support for the Joint Protocol relating to the application of the Vienna and Paris Conventions and urged all Member States to sign it.

43. The United Nations General Assembly, in resolutions 42/186 and 42/187, had stressed the paramount importance of "environmentally sound development", and had urged all the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to consider the Environmental Perspective to the Year 2000 and Beyond when making medium-term plans. Thus, he fully supported the intention of the Agency to take into account that study when drawing up its future programmes. Equally, he welcomed the launching of the IAEA/UNEP/WHO joint project on the management of risks associated with complex industrial systems.

44. As to Agency activities in 1987 in the waste management area, he welcomed the increased provision of aid to Member States through the Waste Management Advisory Programme and the programme concerning the management and disposal of sealed radiation sources.

45. With regard to nuclear safety, while it was the duty of each country to guarantee the highest standards of quality in that area, the Agency should play a central role in encouraging and facilitating international co-operation. For that reason, he firmly supported the extended programme which had been undertaken by the Agency in 1987 in the nuclear safety and radiological protection areas.

46. The Agency's indispensable role in the safeguards area had of course to be mentioned. That Agency activity was one of the most important since it contributed significantly to non-proliferation. He noted with satisfaction that no anomalies had been detected such as might indicate that there had been diversion of significant quantities of safeguarded nuclear material, or misuse for illicit purposes of facilities, equipment or non-nuclear material subject to safeguards under certain agreements, whether for the manufacture of nuclear weapons or for other military purposes, for the manufacture of any other type of nuclear explosive device or for unknown ends.

47. Greece, both as a donor and as a recipient of technical assistance, greatly appreciated the Agency's assistance in many areas (uranium prospecting, research reactor safety and radiological protection, development of radiopharmaceuticals, and so on).

48. The Greek Government firmly intended to continue its support for the Agency's activities. Thus, Greece had already pledged to meet in full the increased share of voluntary contributions to the Technical Assistance and Co-operation Fund for 1988 corresponding to its base rate of assessment.

49. Mr. SAKO (Côte d'Ivoire) said his delegation was pleased to see that the Agency's assistance had contributed to increasing electricity production from nuclear sources, which currently constituted just over 16% of world electricity production. Equally, he commended the Agency's contribution to the improvement of agriculture and food production in developing Member States, and the help given to those countries in the application of nuclear techniques in medicine and in nutrition and health ecology studies, in applied radiobiology work and work in the radiation dosimetry area. He noted with pleasure that, in 1987, the use of isotopes and radiation in agriculture had occupied second place in the assistance provided by the Agency to Member States, and that agriculture had been the main activity area in Africa; nevertheless, he deplored the fact that the proportion of technical assistance supplied to Africa by comparison with the technical co-operation programme as a whole as approved by the Board of Governors had gone down from 24% to 18.5%. Measures should be taken to put a halt to that trend, which had been going on for several years, and he hoped that the new method of drawing

up the programme would help remedy the situation. Moreover, Côte d'Ivoire continued to be of the opinion that the zero growth principle should not be applied to promotional activities.

50. He applauded the exemplary co-operation between the Agency and Member States. The moment seemed to have arrived where co-operation between African States in nuclear science and technology should be instituted on the same model as in Latin America and Asia. He therefore urged the Secretariat to help draw up appropriate regional agreements.

51. The use of nuclear energy was inconceivable without nuclear safety and radiation protection measures. Particularly welcome, therefore, was the work the Agency had done in 1987 on radiation protection of the population, as well as the various meetings it had organized on the treatment of radiation injuries and epidemiological studies subsequent to a nuclear accident. The accidents which continued to occur in places throughout the world were a clear incentive to devote ever greater attention to those problems.

52. He noted with pleasure that, in 1987, in the course of executing the Agency's safeguards obligations, the Secretariat had not detected any anomaly which might indicate that a diversion of significant quantities of safeguarded nuclear material had taken place. The threat posed by certain situations to international peace and security invited, as a reaction, the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones, and the placing of the nuclear facilities situated there under Agency safeguards.

53. In line with other African countries, Côte d'Ivoire was extremely concerned by the fact that firms from certain advanced countries were disposing of industrial and toxic waste in Africa. Such practices not only undermined the efforts of African Governments to preserve the balance of nature by means of environmental protection programmes implemented at the national and regional levels, they also caused direct harm to human beings. It seemed highly desirable that such practices should stop. Moreover, the Agency, in close co-operation with the United Nations Environment Programme and other interested organizations, should assist African countries with a view to setting up appropriate mechanisms for detecting and controlling the disposal of industrial, nuclear and toxic waste.

54. In conclusion, he recalled that co-operation between Member States remained the only way of meeting future challenges to the Agency and ensuring the triumph of nuclear energy.

55. Mr. KONGSIRI (Thailand) said that the Agency was one of the most efficient organizations in the United Nations system. Thailand derived great benefit from the Agency's programmes, for the group of countries in Asia and the Pacific to which Thailand belonged had been receiving assistance from the Agency for four years. Thailand had benefited greatly in its national development from the technical assistance and co-operation programme, and it had, in its turn, actively co-operated with other Member States.

56. The visit to Thailand of the Director General and the Deputy Director General for Technical Co-operation had helped to alert decision-makers to the importance of nuclear energy in various sectors.

57. Thailand attached importance to regional projects, particularly those which came under the Regional Co-operation Agreement for Asia and the Pacific. In that area, Thailand had collaborated with the Agency during the current year, playing host to several regional courses or meetings, notably under the UNDP Regional Industrial Project. It was also carrying out a new regional demonstration project for the Agency related to coal processing, which was receiving finance from an extrabudgetary contribution of the Australian Government.

58. For some years, the implementation of technical assistance projects had been proceeding more expeditiously, and the rate of implementation could now be described as satisfactory; he paid tribute to the efforts of the Department of Technical Co-operation, the worldwide co-operation effort of the Agency, and to the Governments of the United States, the United Kingdom and the Federal Republic of Germany for their extrabudgetary contributions which had made it possible to implement several footnote-a/ projects.

59. Thailand was continuing its efforts with regard to the use of ionizing radiation to preserve and treat food; pilot installations were under construction as part of a bilateral project concluded with Canada and made possible by the Agency. Those installations, which should be ready by the end

of the year, would be used to demonstrate to Thai industrialists from the food sector the technological viability of the commercial use of food irradiation in the local food industry, and would also be used to conduct advanced research in that area.

60. Thailand had played an enthusiastic part in the Agency's waste management programme, and particular commendation was due for the organization of the interregional course on the management of radioactive waste which had taken place in Karlsruhe (Federal Republic of Germany) in 1987.

61. Thailand attached great importance to the high technology area of nuclear medicine. In the previous year it had organized a national workshop on quality control of nuclear medicine instruments.

62. He expressed unreserved support for the Agency's activities in the nuclear safety area, which constituted an indispensable element of all programmes. Thailand had hosted a study mission from the Agency as part of the preparations for the IAEA/UNEP/WHO project on the evaluation and management of the risks posed by energy systems and other complex industrial systems to human health and the environment. Thailand had, moreover, hosted an INSARR mission which, in 1987, had assessed the safety of the research reactor of the Thai Office for the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy. The preparation of documents on safety criteria and principles for research reactors and safety assessment was already well under way.

63. Thailand was a signatory to the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency, and applauded the fact that the Agency had been able to give concrete and efficient support to Brazil during the Goiania accident, as had several countries.

64. He also commended the Agency's achievement in drafting the Joint Protocol relating to the application of the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage and the Paris Convention on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy. The Thai delegation was planning to take part in the conference to adopt that protocol. Regrettably, that instrument was not complete, because it dealt only with civil liability and not with the liability of the States that might be involved in a nuclear accident. He was

therefore in favour of the Secretariat's proposal that a working group be set up to examine further the question of State liability with a view to drafting a specific convention.

65. With regard to the financial situation of the Agency, he appreciated the measures taken to resolve the financial problem caused by late payment or non-payment of regular contributions on the part of certain Member States, but he thought that such measures could only alleviate the problem to a certain extent and would not remedy it. The only real and lasting solution was full and punctual payment of contributions. For that reason, he called upon all Member States to co-operate. The Thai Government had just announced its contribution to the Agency's Technical Assistance and Co-operation Fund, which would be $37 800.

66. Turning to the question of safeguards, another fundamental function of the Agency, he recalled that no nuclear programme could obtain the support of the public or command international confidence if it were not accompanied by concrete assurances that its aims were strictly peaceful, and that it would not be deflected under any circumstances from those ends towards military activities. As a party to NPT, Thailand noted with satisfaction the reassuring conclusion of the Safeguards Implementation Report (SIR) for 1987. In addition, he noted with pleasure that the number of safeguards agreements in force in 1987 was greater than in 1986. He welcomed in particular the recent conclusion of a safeguards agreement between the People's Republic of China and the Agency.

67. Mr. DHARMAWARDENA (Sri Lanka) said that the Sri Lankan nuclear programme had developed significantly during the 1980s, most notably in areas which brought direct benefits to the population. The national resources allotted to the programme since 1980 had enabled it to be effectively implemented. The University of Colombo and the University of Moratuwa were currently giving licentiate courses in nuclear engineering and science. Several other courses were being given in a number of specialist areas: instrument maintenance, non-destructive testing and the use of ^{15}N in agriculture, for example. With the help of the Agency, it had proved possible to lay on the first course in radiation protection in Colombo, in 1988, and

that course would in future be run regularly for students. The number of institutions or establishments using nuclear techniques had more than doubled since 1980. Among those who had started to use nuclear techniques during the previous eight years were industries, hospitals, organizations for the management of water resources, and pollution regulation services. All those institutions were more closely involved in the economic development and the general well-being of the population than the research institutes which, up to 1980, had been the principal users of the techniques under consideration. That meant that nuclear energy was contributing directly to economic development and the improvement of the living conditions of the population.

68. Sri Lanka had made steady progress in various directions during the first five years of the decade, but during the previous two to three years the activities of terrorists operating principally in the north, east and south had engulfed everyday life. A number of problems had had to be faced, in particular, the impossibility of gaining uninterrupted access to certain experimental zones where projects on soil erosion, hydrology and agriculture were being conducted and the emigration of a large number of Sri Lankan scientists. However, the authorities thought that a point had been reached where those difficulties were beginning to diminish. Despite all the setbacks, the Sri Lankan nuclear programme would soon enter a new phase. To date, Sri Lanka had made use of the Radioisotope Centre, which came under the Faculty of Sciences of the University of Colombo, for most of its basic activities such as training, repair of instruments, provision of services and radiation protection. Indeed, other institutions using nuclear energy for various purposes made use of that centre and carried on their activities with its assistance. The Sri Lankan authorities now intended to break up that establishment into two distinct units: a nuclear science department whose job it would be to train undergraduates on a large scale, and a nuclear science institute which would have more extensive premises and laboratories better equipped than those currently available.

69. As to electric power generation, Sri Lanka was largely dependent at the present time on hydro power but had just about reached the limits of its potential: any further development would inevitably require imported coal or petroleum, or else nuclear energy. In the first instance there were plans to

install coal-fired stations with an aggregate capacity of a few hundred megawatts; subsequently, towards the beginning of the next century, the country would have no alternative but to go on with coal or to accept nuclear power.

70. His country was pleased at the success of regional co-operation programmes. In the region to which it belonged, regional co-operation had developed in such a way as to make a real contribution to economic development and the well-being of the population.

71. The Agency had succeeded in improving safety in the uses of nuclear energy on a global scale. The measures taken during the two years after Chernobyl were truly commendable. The Agency and its Director General had been able to create a climate in which humanity could, in the future, go forward and use the enormous potential of nuclear energy for its own well-being on an ever greater scale. That would, no doubt, make a significant contribution to the reduction of hunger, suffering, and the effects of illness, in particular in the Third World. And that was the ultimate goal and purpose of the Agency.

72. In conclusion, he declared the intention of his Government to contribute its full share to the Technical Assistance and Co-operation Fund, an amount of US $42 000.

73. Mr. CHULTEM (Mongolia) noted that the thirty-second regular session of the Agency's General Conference coincided with a détente in international relations: that was evident, in particular, from the signing of the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty by the USSR and the United States. Détente favoured the intensification of international co-operation, particularly with regard to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The growing place occupied by nuclear power, an option which permitted rising energy requirements to be satisfied, posed various safety problems. Mongolia had adhered to the two Conventions adopted in 1986 during the extraordinary session of the General Conference, thus supporting the efforts of the Agency in the safety area. In addition, it was in favour of establishing an open-ended working group of governmental experts to study the question of liability for nuclear damage. Finally, he recalled that the deliberate

destruction of nuclear facilities and nuclear terrorism represented great dangers. It would not be enough simply to discuss that topic: practical measures would have to be taken to counter such dangers. In that respect, the Agency should draft a complementary protocol to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

74. Stressing the particular importance which his delegation attributed to the Agency's activities in the safeguards area - activities aimed at ensuring international peace and security - he declared his approval of the Annual Report for 1987, and his support for the recommendations of the Board of Governors with regard to the Agency's programme and budget and the Technical Assistance and Co-operation Fund for 1989. The draft regular budget for 1989 respected the principle of zero growth, and was the result of painstaking work on the part of the Secretariat and the Board of Governors aimed at maintaining programme priorities and improving the Agency's work efficiency.

75. With regard to the amendment of Article VI.A.2 of the Statute and the revision of Article VI as a whole, he doubted whether such moves were opportune but would nevertheless not oppose further consultations aimed at improving the structure of the Board. Mongolia had always attached great importance to the technical co-operation activities of the Agency, and it had benefited itself from various projects related to agriculture, medicine, geology, research, education and environmental protection. The Agency provided it with modern equipment and sent qualified experts to help it make use of nuclear techniques to aid development. Mongolia wanted to thank those experts, and hoped the Agency would continue to provide it with technical assistance and approve the projects it submitted. The country would do its utmost to make the best possible use of the Agency's assistance, and would participate actively in activities aimed at promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

76. Mr. ERNER (Turkey) said that the unique nature of nuclear energy had led politicians and technicians to create a unique international organization, the International Atomic Energy Agency. During the three decades which had gone by since its creation, it had made a major contribution to world peace and to strengthening the collective security of Member States.

77. The first of July 1988 had marked another important anniversary: the opening for signature, twenty years earlier, of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The international community had devoted particular attention to nuclear energy because it could be used equally well for peaceful and for hostile purposes. When it had been used for the first time in an atomic bomb during the Second World War, it had produced the greatest catastrophe humanity had ever experienced. In subsequent years, there had been a move towards the development of nuclear armaments. The NPT had been drawn up at that time in order to protect the planet from a new holocaust of the same type, and to check the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Turkey was most desirous that nuclear energy should be used for peaceful purposes, for the well-being of humanity, and that developing countries should be able to benefit from it. Accordingly, it urged all countries which had not yet done so to adhere to NPT, conscious as it was of the importance of securing universal acceptance of NPT if the peace and safety of the world were to be guaranteed. However, NPT should not be seen as an obstacle to the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in developing countries, nor should it be used as such. On the contrary, the international community should work towards remedying the present imbalance to be found throughout the world in that area.

78. It would be recalled, in that connection, that the Committee on Assurances of Supply, which since 1980 had been busy trying to draw up generally acceptable principles of international co-operation in the field of nuclear energy, had been created to remedy that situation. Although the Committee had achieved a number of commendable results, it had not yet been able to lay down such principles in final form owing to persistent political and technical differences of opinion. Turkey hoped that consultations would be finished by June 1989 and that the Committee would be able to meet again.

79. Turkey had always supported, and continued to support strongly, all initiatives aimed at making the use of nuclear energy more safe and at strengthening public confidence, which had been somewhat shaken after the Chernobyl accident. Safety levels had to be kept as high as possible in all nuclear activities and, as the regrettable accidents which had taken place had shown, openings for international co-operation in that area were immense. As

everyone knew, Turkey was among the countries that had signed the Early Notification and Emergency Assistance Conventions, and its instruments of ratification would be deposited once the required formalities - which were under way - had been completed.

80. The catastrophic consequences of the Chernobyl accident had made the international community take more notice of the need for co-operation to guarantee safety in the design, maintenance and operation of nuclear facilities, and to strengthen co-operation between neighbouring States in an emergency. In that context, he took pleasure in informing the General Conference that Turkey had just negotiatied two bilateral agreements, one with the Argentine Government on co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, which had been signed on 3 May 1988, and the other with the Soviet Union on early notification of a nuclear accident and the exchange of information on nuclear facilities.

81. Turkey applauded the adoption and opening for signature of the Joint Protocol relating to the Application of the Paris and Vienna Conventions, which would improve the protection of victims from a nuclear accident and would extend the field of application of the liability regimes established by those two Conventions, thus enabling the gaps in international law in that area to be filled. Turkey had taken part in all the meetings which had led up to the drafting of the Joint Protocol and would be one of the signatory States.

82. As all Members of the Agency recognized, the strictest possible safety standards had to be applied to the applications of nuclear energy. The Agency was fulfilling its tasks in the safety, safeguards, technical co-operation and research and isotopes areas to the best of its ability, in view of the prevailing financial restrictions. Turkey applauded the activities of the operational safety review teams (OSARTs), the radiation protection advisory teams (RAPATs), and the analysis of safety-significant events teams (ASSETs), who were making a notable contribution to the efforts of national operators and governmental authorities to maintain safety in nuclear facilities.

83. Before concluding, he recalled that Turkey had already announced a voluntary contribution for 1989 to the Technical Assistance and Co-operation Fund corresponding to its share of the assessed budget. It had paid in full

its contribution for 1988, during which year Turkey had, moreover, hosted a research co-ordination meeting in Ankara, a technical committee meeting, and the fifteenth meeting of the INIS liaison officers in Istanbul. In addition, a workshop and interregional seminars on sampling procedures would take place in Istanbul during the following month. The technical assistance activities of the Agency had been carried on in a satisfactory manner in 1988, and he thanked the Department of Technical Co-operation and Member States who had offered extrabudgetary contributions.

84. Mr. van GORKOM (Netherlands) said that the Agency was vitally important in three distinct but interrelated areas: the promotion of the peaceful applications of nuclear energy under adequate safety conditions; the transfer of nuclear science and technology to developing countries through technical assistance and co-operation; and the prevention of misuse of nuclear material for military purposes, through the deterrence of the safeguards system. The Agency had performed its role excellently for 31 years.

85. Following the Chernobyl accident, the area of nuclear safety had, quite rightly, received particular attention, both within and outside the Agency. There was certainly still much to do to make nuclear energy entirely safe. However, as the Fourth NPT Review Conference approached, it would be particularly important to focus attention most sharply on the Agency's non-proliferation mission. The NPT was the corner-stone of the Netherlands' policy in that area. The Agency had a specific and vital role to play, and many of the recommendations of the Third NPT Review Conference were of relevance to the Agency and were yet to be implemented. They pertained primarily to Article III of the Treaty, but the Netherlands also considered the Agency to have a clearly defined and important role under Article IV. The Netherlands had noted with satisfaction that the number of parties to the Treaty had again increased, and hoped that the recent decision of Saudi Arabia to accede to it would encourage other countries to do so. The Netherlands Government urged the Republic of South Africa to sign the Treaty as soon as possible, and fully supported the statement of the Depositary Governments.

86. Referring to the annual report and the statement of the Director General, he noted that 1987 had, on the whole, been a year of steady growth; the growth of nuclear power and total installed capacities; an increase in the

number of installations and the quantity of material safeguarded; and finally, expansion of the Agency's activities, particularly in the nuclear safety area, with the approval of a Supplementary Nuclear Safety Programme.

87. Communication to a wide audience was of great importance for an international organization dealing with sensitive areas. The annual report should be supplemented by other publications covering a wide range of subjects in a convincing and accessible form. The Agency should be seen for what it was: an organization engaged in strengthening nuclear safety and effectively safeguarding the peaceful use of nuclear energy. His delegation had noted improvements in several areas, particularly the more active stand taken on safeguards. It supported that stand, for, although not wishing to take part in a lobbying campaign on behalf of nuclear energy, it was concerned to correct or prevent the misrepresentations and distortions appearing in the media.

88. He then referred to the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, which his Government considered an impressive attempt to map out the problems in those two areas. The Netherlands had fully accepted the need for sustainable development. However, the remarks of the Director General concerning the energy chapter of the World Commission's report were very pertinent. The Netherlands shared the view that nuclear energy, together with energy savings and renewable energy sources, could contribute to reducing the environmental problems caused by the emission of sulphur, nitrogen oxides and CO_2 and the Agency had an essential role to play in the creation of a sustainable energy system. The World Commission's report had clearly shown the areas of concern surrounding the use of nuclear power: safety, waste disposal and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

89. Safety matters were absolutely vital to the future of nuclear energy. His delegation had pleaded in the past for them to be given a structurally and financially stronger base in the Agency, and it was still in favour of establishing a Nuclear Safety Committee within the Board of Governors, analogous to the Technical Assistance and Co-operation Committee and the Administrative and Budgetary Committee.

90. The Netherlands had advocated binding international safety standards based on the NUSS Codes. Although consensus had not yet been reached on that point, his country proposed to use those Codes as a basis for its national reactor safety legislation, which was at present being drafted. The Agency was to be commended on completing the Codes on schedule, and the idea of a further revision of the Safety Guides and the preparation of other safety documents relating to interpretation of the Codes had the full support of the Netherlands delegation. In order to emphasize the consensus that had been reached on nuclear safety standards - something which had not been made clear in the World Commission's report - his delegation had taken the initiative of submitting a draft resolution on the subject to the General Conference.

91. The operational safety review teams (OSARTs) had proven to be a very useful instrument for strengthening nuclear safety. He appreciated that many Member States had requested such missions, and appealed to those who had not yet done so to share in that form of collaboration.

92. The Netherlands had followed closely the implementation of the Conventions on Early Notification and Mutual Assistance, had participated in the testing of the WMO Global Telecommunication System, and had given a preliminary indication of its potential resources for assistance in the event of a nuclear accident. It had been able to provide Brazil with some equipment under the Mutual Assistance Convention following the accident in Goiania. Ratification of the two Conventions by the Netherlands should follow shortly, but meanwhile their provisions were being fully implemented. He noted that many Member States had not yet designated the points of contact foreseen in the Conventions and hoped that that would be done as soon as possible.

93. The adoption and signature by 19 States of the Joint Protocol linking the Paris and Vienna Conventions signified good progress, and it was to be hoped that many other States would thereby be encouraged to accede to the two Conventions. The scope and content of the agreements on liability could also be expanded and strengthened. His delegation felt that the possibility of bringing certain provisions of the Vienna Convention up to date should be studied, and favoured the establishment of a working group to analyse other aspects of international liability, particularly State liability. It welcomed

the draft resolution submitted by Poland on the subject and hoped that a consensus would be reached.

94. The problems of waste disposal were of growing concern, although there had been no reports of any illegal dumping of nuclear material. However, concern was justified and it would be prudent for the Agency to give due attention to the problems of illegal shipments of nuclear waste.

95. As to safeguards, the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons was by its very nature a factor making for instability. Twenty-five years earlier, it had been feared that many States would acquire "the bomb"; that fear had proved ungrounded, but the risk of proliferation remained. There had been positive developments in the last few years: some States had accepted new non-proliferation commitments, and others had accepted inspection of their nuclear installations. Nevertheless, in some areas the situation was still a source of concern to his Government. Agency safeguards were an essential mechanism to inspire mutual confidence between States regarding nuclear weapons capabilities. It was gratifying that the Agency had once again reached positive conclusions as a result of its safeguards activities and had removed all doubts by unequivocally declaring that no nuclear material had been diverted for nuclear weapons purposes. Similarly, the Agency had been able to react swiftly and decisively to state that no nuclear material had been diverted in the Federal Republic of Germany. The Netherlands delegation had undertaken to do everything within its power to preserve and strengthen the safeguards system so that the Agency's authority in that area would persist.

96. It was gratifying to note that, after several years of zero growth, the Department of Safeguards had been allowed a modest 3% budget increase. From the very start of the 1989 budget deliberations, his delegation had been convinced that the arguments in favour of growth in the Safeguards Department were justified. Some savings were perhaps possible, and the Netherlands would co-operate in the search for reasonable savings and ways to rationalize the programme - for example by strengthening procedures and encouraging a more positive political response among Member States to the needs of the safeguards system.

97. The Netherlands Government had decided to re-evaluate the nuclear option following the Chernobyl accident, which had happened just as parliament - having already approved a nuclear development programme - was about to decide on the sites for the new plants. Twenty reports covering various aspects of the accident and safety matters in general had been published by mid-1988 as part of the Netherlands nuclear energy review project, and various bodies had been asked to submit their recommendations. The Government was expected to reach a decision on the new nuclear power plants in 1989, taking into account the studies, external recommendations and public opinion.

98. The national body responsible for radioactive waste management, COVRA, had submitted a licence application at the end of 1987 for the construction and operation of a central interim storage facility near the Borssele nuclear power plant. During the licensing process it had emerged that another site within the same municipality would be more appropriate, and licensing procedures were to resume in 1989.

99. He was pleased to announce that the Netherlands had pledged US $722 400 to the Technical Assistance and Co-operation Fund for 1989. His Government was prepared to consider the financing of extrabudgetary projects in keeping with the priorities defined in its own overall development co-operation policy, and at present a project for the eradication of the tsetse fly was under consideration.

100. The Netherlands Government firmly believed that political issues with no direct bearing on the mandate of the Agency should not be introduced into the debates. The very essence of the Statute was that any State could be a member of the Agency, regardless of its political, economic or social system or policy, unless the State had clearly and repeatedly violated the Statute. For the Agency in particular, it was vital that all States, particularly those most active in the field of nuclear energy, should continue to participate in the work of the organization. The Netherlands would therefore oppose any proposal aiming to suspend the membership rights of any Member. In conclusion, he hoped that the Agency would maintain its excellent level of competence and its high reputation for efficiency and good management.

101. Mr. SAAD ABBADDI (Sudan) congratulated the Agency, the Director General and the Secretariat on the way in which they had carried out their work during the preceding year; particular praise was due to the personnel of the Seibersdorf Laboratory and to the administrative staff in technical co-operation.

102. His delegation had listened with great interest to the Director General's statement, and wished to make a few remarks concerning the Agency's activities and future programmes.

103. With regard to nuclear energy, great importance had been attached to the safe operation of nuclear power stations, which were increasing in number. The exchange of information should be promoted and training improved, if higher safety levels and standards were to be achieved. Noting that those matters were related to radiation protection measures, he recalled that the Sudan had also benefited from the Agency's assistance in that area, commended the role played by the radiation protection consultative teams and agreed that the activities of those teams should be continued and extended. He also commended the revision of the NUSS Codes, which should lead to a strengthening of nuclear safety as well as re-establishing public confidence in the peaceful applications of nuclear energy.

104. An important problem meriting wide discussion was the disposal of nuclear wastes. He appreciated the unceasing efforts of the Agency and nuclear specialists to improve techniques for disposing of nuclear wastes, while retaining the priority of safety and security; however, some western industrial and commercial interests were bringing those efforts to nought and alarming public opinion by their irresponsible behaviour, trying to get rid of nuclear wastes at any cost by sending them to developing countries. Those interests were exploiting the financial difficulties of certain less developed countries - particularly in Africa - in order to dump their nuclear and other toxic wastes in those countries. The Sudan, a vast country where border surveillance was problematic, considered those practices extremely worrying, and a serious danger to the environment and human health. His delegation therefore requested the international community to denounce those acts and condemn their perpetrators, and to co-operate closely with the Agency and the

United Nations Environmental Programme in drawing up appropriate measures to combat those practices. Those illegal acts had been taking place on such a scale that it was no longer possible to ignore them, and countermeasures were urgently required.

105. Promotional activities and technical assistance and co-operation activities in general were one of the most important aspects of the Agency's work. As a "developing" country, the Sudan attached considerable importance to training as well as the transfer of technical skills, particularly in the areas of medicine, foodstuffs and hydrology. It was grateful to the Secretariat for the consultative services provided under technical co-operation programmes, and emphatically opposed the application of the zero growth principle to the budget for the Agency's promotional activities. His delegation also hoped that all States, particularly those which were not in serious financial difficulties, would pay their total financial contributions on time, so that the Agency could complete the work entrusted to it, namely the development of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. On that subject, Sudan shared the view of other African States which had called for the implementation of an African regional co-operation programme, modelled on the Regional Co-operative Agreement for Asia and the Pacific and the Regional Co-operation Arrangements for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America. It was prepared to co-operate closely with the Secretariat and other Member States with a view to taking preliminary measures to that end.

106. The Sudan, one of the first countries to sign the Mutual Assistance and the Early Notification Conventions, approved the measures taken by the Agency's Secretariat as well as the efforts made by the World Meteorological Organization for the Early Notification Convention to be fully implemented in the year to come. It hoped to ratify the two Conventions soon, and would in fact do so as soon as the protracted constitutional procedure required for ratification had been completed.

107. As a member of the group of experts responsible for drawing up the Joint Protocol establishing a link between the Paris and Vienna Conventions, the Sudan was currently considering the possibility of acceding to the Vienna Convention and was in favour of continuing efforts to define State liability.

108. The fact that the five Member States which possessed nuclear weapons had all decided to conclude safeguards agreements with the Agency was most welcome. However, in spite of that achievement, the safeguards system remained fragile and incomplete, which meant that international peace and security were still seriously threatened. In that connection, he drew attention to an important problem, namely the fact that the Zionist régime of Israel and the South African racist régime were still refusing to submit their nuclear installations to safeguards. The argument that other States had made a similar refusal was not convincing. Indeed, it was unnecessary to recall that the two régimes in question persisted in violating the territorial sovereignty of other States, practised a policy of aggression against the legitimate populations of those States, and threatened the peace and security of their regions. Those States were deliberately and persistently ignoring charters, statutes and resolutions of United Nations organizations, notably the Statute of the Agency, as well as resolutions adopted at various sessions of the General Conference. Accordingly, the Sudanese delegation requested the Director General to continue consideration of the question of Israel's nuclear capabilities and the Israeli nuclear threat and to present a report dealing with all aspects of that subject.

109. As far as South Africa was concerned, it was time the General Conference applied the recommendation of the Board of Governors contained in document GC(XXXI)/807. South Africa had had sufficient time since the thirty-first regular session of the General Conference to heed the requests made at that session. In spite of everything, that country persisted in violating the Agency's Statute and refused to apply the decisions adopted at preceding sessions of the General Conference. Until serious sanctions were imposed, the situation would not change.

110. He thanked the Agency for the technical advice and rapid assistance offered to his country at the time when a rumour had spread concerning the illegal entry of uranium into Sudanese territory. He was particularly grateful to the Agency for having contradicted reports, which had proved to be inaccurate, that a black market in uranium existed in the Sudan.

111. He concluded by saying that his country would continue to co-operate with the Agency and Member States, and hoped to receive more assistance in all areas, particularly in the monitoring of radioactive contamination of the environment and foodstuffs. He emphasized that the Sudan was at present in even greater need of assistance in view of the recent series of catastrophic floods.

112. Mr. PABON (Venezuela) said that Venezuela's nuclear policy was directed towards the regulation of activities and the promotion of technical applications, particularly in the areas of agriculture, health, and industry. Moreover, Venezuela sought to take full advantage of international technical assistance, in particular that of the Agency.

113. Although Venzuela did not intend to construct nuclear power stations in the immediate future, it had drawn up, with Agency assistance, an energy planning programme using the Model for Analysis of Energy Demand (MAED). That study, which covered a period up to the year 2010, would be extremely useful in deciding on the possible use of nuclear electrical energy. The Venezuelan Government had always firmly supported the Agency's activities, and it had received valuable and substantial technical assistance in many areas, such as the irradiation of foodstuffs, pedology, radiation protection, nuclear safety, radioimmunoassay, crop improvement, and nuclear engineering, physics and chemistry. Convinced as it was that technical assistance and co-operation from the Agency were essential for development, Venezuela had always insisted that greater resources should be allocated to technical co-operation, and that it should be considered as the Agency's main activity. It was indeed necessary to improve the balance between the Agency's promotional and normative activities, in the planning, implementation and evaluation of programmes just as in budgetary allocations.

114. Regional co-operation was of great importance, particularly for the developing countries. In that regard, Venezuela, a country which supported the Regional Co-operative Arrangements for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America (ARCAL), fully supported the Agency's activities in regional co-operation. Valuable assistance had been received within the framework of the regional programmes in relation to radiation

protection, dosimetry and application of nuclear techniques to agriculture. In 1989, Venezuela would be implementing, with Agency help, projects related to dosimetry (the second phase of a secondary standards laboratory), intracavitary therapy, X-ray fluorescence, the application of nuclear techniques to agriculture and, with extrabudgetary financing, low-intensity radiation. He reiterated his delegation's support of the ARCAL programme, congratulated the Agency on the way in which it had managed that co-operation, and thanked those countries outside the region which had contributed financially to the programme.

115. The Venezuelan Government associated itself fully with the proposals aimed at achieving more equitable participation of developing countries in the Agency's decision-making process. He supported in particular the proposal to broaden participation in the Technical Assistance and Co-operation Committee and the Administrative and Budgetary Committee, which would enable the majority of Member States to participate in debates which were of significant importance for programme development. The practice recently introduced by the Chairman of the Board of Governors, which involved wide-ranging consultations with all Member States on various questions dealt with by the Board, was in that respect very satisfying. The working group on the revision of Article VI of the Statute as a whole should continue its activities, taking particular care to preserve the technical nature of the Agency.

116. With reference to document GC(XXXII)/841 relating to the financing of technical assistance, the Venezuelan delegation felt that resolution GC(XXV)/RES/388 remained valid and that technical assistance should be financed from the Regular Budget. It also hoped that the criteria for allocating resources among the regions would be reconsidered, account being taken of fair and appropriate principles which would secure an appropriate balance in the implementation of technical assistance and co-operation projects.

117. Venezuela continued to oppose the principle of zero growth in the Regular Budget, which was incompatible with the Agency's promotional role. A formula had not yet been found which would permit that role to increase

without increasing Member States' contributions. Although Venezuela could not accept further financial obligations towards the Agency, it should be possible to use budgetary resources more efficiently to avoid such an increase. In that connection, the proposals made by the Director General in his opening statement deserved consideration. Furthermore, the amendments to Articles 5.3, 7.1 and 7.2(b) of the Financial Regulations, provisionally approved by the Board of Governors, should facilitate the implementation of programmes of direct benefit to developing countries.

118. Nuclear safety and radiological protection would be effectively ensured only if the standards adopted were binding for all countries. There was no doubt that the linking of the Vienna and Paris Conventions was an important step in that direction. Nevertheless, an efficient and complete civil liability regime should be universal in scope, and that in turn presupposed a general consensus for the drafting of the relevant legal instruments. After considering the Vienna and Paris Conventions with the greatest care, the Venezuelan Government had found several legal and technical difficulties which prevented its accession to either of those instruments: and so Venezuela could not participate in the limited liability regime. He nevertheless hoped that the adoption of the Joint Protocol, rather than completing the process, would mark the first stage in the elaboration of a broad and positive system of liability for nuclear damage.

119. The report of the World Commission on Environment and Development reflected Venezuela's concern to harmonize the development process with protection of the ecological balance and quality of the environment. Venezuela had undertaken in the previous year a study for the creation of a centre to measure environmental radioactivity and planned to establish a laboratory to measure low-level radiation in the environment. Environmental pollution could thus be evaluated effectively and the necessary measures taken. In that connection he recalled that States wishing to dispose of their nuclear and toxic wastes should avoid inflicting on other States the damage caused by those wastes. Having itself been a victim of the dumping of toxic wastes, Venezuela had had to adopt in 1987 regulations prohibiting that practice and obliging the Ministry of Energy and Mines to keep a register of

radioactive wastes. Those national measures were not sufficient, however, and international agreements were required to make it impossible to dump nuclear or toxic wastes in developing countries.

120. Recalling that 1988 marked the twentieth anniversary of NPT, he noted that under Article X.2, a conference was to be held in five years' time to decide on the future of the Treaty. The attitude of States would then depend on the extent to which they believed NPT had achieved its objectives: the prevention of nuclear weapons proliferation, the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and progress in nuclear disarmament. Although it was true that NPT had largely contributed to restricting horizontal proliferation, vertical proliferation had not yet been stopped, and the first task should be a complete ban on nuclear weapons tests.

121. As for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the Agency deserved the warmest congratulations for its efforts within the framework of technical co-operation programmes. On the other hand, it was only during the last few months that the world had seen some progress in nuclear arms reduction. Venezuela attached great importance to the signature and entry into force of the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty and hoped that within the next five years it would be possible to see new and definitive progress towards achieving all the objectives of NPT.

122. Mr. HOSSAIN (Bangladesh) said that, with the impetus imparted to it by its Director General, the Agency had further widened the scope of its activities and had increased its importance to the major powers, Member States and international organizations; the impact of its role in the non-proliferation sphere and in the transfer of technology was felt everywhere. Furthermore, the linking of energy and the environment was very timely and could only serve to promote the cause of nuclear power.

123. His country had just experienced the worst floods in its history and the whole nation was struggling to recover from the huge losses. The international community had provided assistance, in some cases on a large scale, and his country was grateful for that assistance. However, the Agency itself could perhaps provide support in future. Nuclear techniques could be applied to the study of river-bed movements and sediment deposition, since Bangladesh and other countries had to find ways of controlling such floods.

124. Despite everything, Bangladesh wished to continue its development work, since to delay economic progress would only impede its ability to deal with natural calamities.

125. One of the keys to rapid development was the expansion of commercial energy production, including electricity production. Bangladesh's present electricity production capacity was very small, and it was necessary to develop it as quickly as possible. With the exception of natural gas - which had other competing uses - Bangladesh had very few indigenous fuel resources for electricity production and therefore had to import them. Preparations for the introduction of nuclear power into the country had been under way for a long time; the necessary infrastructure, including personnel, had been largely established, thanks mainly to assistance received from the Agency. A 3 MW research reactor had been commissioned two years previously and institutes of computer science and electronics had been established to provide the necessary technical support.

126. The Agency had for a long time been making a survey of the nuclear power needs of developing countries and, recognizing the low-grid capacity, had undertaken to evaluate the viability of small- and medium-power reactors. The Agency had also been very active in the areas of technology, financing and personnel training. The manufacturers of nuclear power plants in some developed countries were beginning to be interested in studying small power reactors, and new reactors with passive safety systems had been developed. The future prospects of such reactors deserved to be examined seriously.

127. His country was very keen to launch its nuclear power programme with a small reactor, and had ordered a new feasibility study for that purpose. The draft final report had been submitted to the authorities. It recommended that a small reactor be linked to the grid by the end of 1995. The main obstacle to the implementation of the project was financial, and the Governments of developed countries had not yet shown any interest in assisting Bangladesh in its undertaking. In order to make a real contribution to the eradication of poverty, technical and economic assistance from developed countries to developing countries should have two components: one for long-term development programmes and the other for immediate needs. If the feasibility

study concluded that a project was economically and financially viable, then direct or indirect government support operating through commercial and export banks could greatly help in arranging the necessary finance. That was why his delegation requested the Agency to use its influence to convince developed countries and their regional groups or financial institutions - the Commission of the European Communities, the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development, the World Bank, regional banks and so on - that they should relax their attitude with regard to the financing of nuclear power projects in developing countries, particularly those which were in greatest need of electricity and lacked fuels. Their own nuclear industry could benefit at a time of some recession in orders.

128. His country favoured the idea of entrusting the establishment of nuclear power plants to an international joint venture company where the nuclear plant supplier would be the major equity partner with the local nuclear power utility: in that way, not only would the risk be shared, but the manufacturer's experience would make the project more credible in the eyes of financiers. The "build, operate and transfer" concept could also be tried.

129. His delegation commended the Agency for having acted so promptly after the Chernobyl accident to restore public confidence in nuclear power. The problems of safety and waste management did not help to promote the applications of atomic energy and were particularly detrimental to electricity production; his delegation therefore urged the Agency to continue its tireless efforts in that area. In the unlikely event of an accident in a nuclear power reactor designed and built with very stringent safety standards, the accident could be considered as one of international significance and immediate action could be taken by the Agency, which would use all its available resources. The Conventions which had earlier been drafted and signed at the Agency's instance, and the Protocol at present open for signature, could constitute the legal basis for actions to be undertaken. It would be necessary to have an effective world communications network and to ensure liaison with other international organizations. That was why his delegation requested the Agency to set up a special fund to meet any emergency assistance needs of developing countries, although it hoped that such situations would not occur.

130. Bangladesh was at present entering the practical application stage of research and development work involving the use of radioisotopes. In addition to the establishment of nuclear medicine centres and the development of new crop varieties, Bangladesh had started non-destructive analysis and quality control in industry and was using radioisotopes as tracers in hydrology; in collaboration with private-sector industry, it had recently embarked upon the construction of commercial irradiation facilities for food preservation and medical sterilization - a project made possible by the Agency through the supply of a Soviet irradiator under the technical assistance programme. That irradiator was due to become operational at the end of 1989. His delegation urged the Agency to take all the appropriate measures, together with international organizations such as FAO, WHO and ICRP, so that food irradiation would become universally accepted and international trade in irradiated food would prosper.

131. During the past year, the research reactor had operated very well; it had been used for the training of operators, neutron spectrum measurements, activation analysis, the experimental production of radioisotopes such as $^{99}Tc^{m}$ and ^{131}I and, more recently, for neutron diffraction.

132. With regard to technical assistance, his country approved the Agency's new policy which placed the emphasis on programmes rather than projects and involved establishing a multi-year programming cycle. It was thus easier to evaluate the assistance received.

133. Bangladesh welcomed the success of the Regional Co-operative Agreement for Asia and the Pacific (RCA), particularly the technical co-operation between developing countries which had now been extended to the energy field. Some time ago it had proposed the establishment of a regional centre for Asia, but without much success. His suggestion now was that the Agency should consider strengthening certain existing "centres of excellence" in Asia or in other development regions. Each of those centres could have a regional or an international status. Like the International Centre for Theoretical Physics in Trieste, an international centre could be set up in Asia for food preservation by irradiation, or a reactor technology training centre, or several such centres. Other important disciplines for developing countries,

such as nuclear medicine, nuclear instrumentation maintenance, or radiation protection and waste management could also be explored. In that connection, his delegation requested the Agency to revive its Asian regional office so that it could co-ordinate research activities under the RCA and promote technical co-operation between developing countries.

134. Mr. DOS SANTOS (Portugal) commended the Agency and its Director General and drew special attention to the excellent management of financial resources which had made it possible to establish a balanced budget for 1989-90.

135. His delegation believed that the Agency's most important activities were those related to safeguards, nuclear safety and technical co-operation.

136. Portugal regarded the Agency's safeguards system as an essential element of the non-proliferation policy. During the past year, as in previous years, the Agency had not detected any anomaly which would indicate the diversion of a significant amount of safeguarded nuclear material for non-peaceful purposes. That was a very important result which always deserved to be mentioned. However, his delegation believed that, although the Agency's activities in that area were very valuable, they were not yet sufficient: the most important thing was that all States should accede to NPT and that the Depositary States should comply with the provisions of Article VI of that Treaty.

137. It was important that safeguards should develop, but they should not do so at the expense of other activities, particularly technical co-operation. Even so, there was no reason why attempts should not be made to achieve a zero-growth budget for the Agency's programme as a whole.

138. With regard to the Agency's activities in the field of nuclear safety, his delegation felt that stress should be laid on the work which had been done following the Chernobyl accident - an effort that could well be favourably regarded by world public opinion. The strengthening of international co-operation, and particularly co-operation between neighbouring countries, was an essential element in a successful safety programme.

139. In the area of technical assistance, his delegation stressed that the procedure of submitting technical assistance requests on a biennial basis could help to make the management of programmes much more flexible. During recent years, technical co-operation had become increasingly effective as a result of multi-year programming and regional programming.

140. Mr. AL-WAHAIBI (Oman) expressed the hope that the participants in the General Conference would be successful in their endeavours. Although Oman was not a member of the Agency, it followed the Agency's activities with a great deal of interest. The transboundary consequences of any nuclear accidents and other aspects of nuclear safety were problems which affected the whole international community.

141. Countries which opted to establish a nuclear programme should assume the responsibilities and shoulder the consequences resulting from such a choice, and should try to solve the problem of nuclear waste management. Nuclear energy should be used in such a way that it did not have adverse consequences for any sector of humanity and the environment; in other words, efforts should be made to ensure that one man's meat was not another man's poison.

142. The Agency's efficient training of technical professionals from developing countries, and indeed the results of the technical assistance and co-operation programme as a whole, were very positive achievements. Oman, which was itself a developing country, attached great importance to the Agency's technical assistance and co-operation activities. The safeguards system, although it was not applied in full, made a major contribution to the prevention of nuclear proliferation.

143. His country was particularly concerned about the serious threat posed by the development of Israel's nuclear capabilities, by the refusal of Israel - a Member State of the Agency - to submit its facilities to international safeguards, by the fact that Israel pretended to ignore the will of the international community which was endeavouring to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and, lastly, by the fact that Israel and the South African Government were co-operating closely to develop their own nuclear military potential.

144. Apart from damaging the Agency's credibility, such behaviour seriously endangered a whole region of the world. That was why his delegation joined with those who felt that the situation simply had to be brought under control. Those delegations had called for adoption of the necessary measures to ensure that the two States in question complied with the will of the international community and submitted their nuclear facilities to international safeguards and inspection so that the regions of the Middle East and Africa could eventually become nuclear-weapon-free zones.

145. The latest peace initiatives, the climate of international détente and the agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States of America on the elimination of certain categories of intermediate-range nuclear weapons in Europe, which had led to the withdrawal and simultaneous destruction of a whole series of nuclear weapons, all gave hope and confidence in the noble humanist objective that nuclear energy would be used to serve humanity and that the world would be rid of all nuclear weapons. Oman supported all measures which would make it possible to devote nuclear techniques, as soon as possible and on the largest possible scale, to the service of peace and well-being in the world. It hoped that the Agency would be able to fulfil its noble ideals in the near future.

146. Mr. BUHOVECKI (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA)) said that, during its forty-third session, CMEA had decided to transform its structure in order to improve co-operation between its Members. Those changes included the establishment of a Standing Commission for Co-operation in the Field of Electricity and Nuclear Power. The Commission, which was responsible for determining CMEA policy in that area, was particularly interested in the safe operation of plants and the training of personnel in matters of design, construction and operation. Furthermore, the CMEA Secretariat had a new department, the Department of Electricity and Nuclear Power, which served as Secretariat of the Commission.

147. Nuclear power was assuming an increasing role in CMEA Member States. There were now 56 power reactors in operation in Bulgaria, Hungary, the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, representing a total installed capacity of 44 300 MW. The share of nuclear power in the

electricity production of CMEA Member States had thus increased from 5.5% in 1980 to 10.4% in 1985 and to 11.2% in 1987. A programme for the construction of nuclear power plants for combined electric power generation and district heating up to the year 2000 aimed to bring the total capacity of plants in CMEA Member States - with the exception of the Soviet Union - to 50 GW as compared with about 6.5 GW in 1985. Nuclear power would then represent 30 to 40% of total electricity production in those countries. In the USSR, the share of nuclear power would increase significantly, from 10.8% in 1985 to 30%, which would mean increasing the aggregate generating capacity of the plants by a factor of 5 or 6. Furthermore, in the USSR, as in other CMEA Member States, there were plans to construct plants for district heating. The nuclear development programme would enable CMEA Member States to save 400 to 500 million tons of fossil fuels by the year 2000.

148. Such intensive development of nuclear power required close co-operation between CMEA Member States in order to minimize the risks and consequences of nuclear accidents. In that connection, CMEA Member States had taken steps based partly on the programme to establish an international regime for the safe development of nuclear energy, presented by the Soviet Union at the special session of the General Conference in September 1986, and partly on Agency documents produced in connection with the supplementary nuclear safety and radiation protection programme. In October 1987, the Executive Committee of CMEA had adopted regulations for the transport by rail and water of spent nuclear fuel from power plants in Member States. In preparing those regulations, CMEA had consulted Agency documents, notably the Regulations for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Materials. It had also taken into account obligations deriving from NPT and the safeguards agreements concluded with the Agency by CMEA Member States.

149. With regard to nuclear law, five CMEA Member States (Hungary, the German Democratic Republic, Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union) had signed a convention on liability for damage arising from a radiological emergency situation caused by the international transport of spent fuel from nuclear power plants of CMEA Member States. Furthermore, CMEA Member States supported unreservedly the Early Notification and Emergency Assistance Conventions. Since the majority of its Members used the same type of nuclear

facility, CMEA was in the process of preparing an agreement on mutual assistance in the event of a nuclear accident. That regional agreement could complement and widen the Agency's two Conventions. It provided for technical and organizational measures to co-ordinate efforts aimed at limiting the consequences of nuclear accidents; greater speed in the transmission of information in the event of a nuclear accident; immediate assistance in the event of a nuclear accident or radiological emergency so as to minimize the consequences; and the establishment of measures to deal with the consequences of accidents.

150. CMEA was carrying out detailed studies on environmental protection. Thus, levels of radiation in the Baltic Sea had been monitored since the 1970s. In 1987, the total capacity of plants situated on the Baltic Sea had been 17 GW. Studies carried out jointly during the past ten years by Poland, the German Democratic Republic and the USSR had brought together a vast amount of information. Regular monitoring of the environment around the Bruno Leuschner plant (German Democratic Republic) and the Leningrad plant had not indicated any anomaly in the radiation levels of the Baltic Sea.

151. Seven nuclear power plants representing a total capacity of about 20 GW had been built in the Danube Basin. Since that river crossed eight countries, close radiological surveillance was obviously essential, and Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, the USSR and Yugoslavia had concluded an agreement for that purpose. The agreement provided for exchange of information on radionuclide levels in the water and river bed and in the aquatic biota, flood plains and agricultural products, as well as data on exposure doses to populations using the resources of the Danube for food, industry or leisure. The results obtained would be used to compare levels of radioactive contamination in the riparian States.

152. Under an agreement concluded in 1975, CMEA and the Agency exchanged documentation regularly. Several CMEA Member States were also participating in the Agency's research programme on the simulation of accidents in nuclear power plants. The first co-ordination meeting for that programme had taken place from 23 to 27 June 1988 in Moscow at the CMEA Secretariat with 16 participating countries, seven of which were CMEA Member States.

CMEA attached particular importance to waste management; it had sent a representative to the Agency Symposium on the Management of Low and Intermediate Level Radioactive Wastes, held in Stockholm in May 1988, who had described the co-operation activities of CMEA Members in that area.

153. Co-operation between CMEA and the Agency was thus fruitful, though CMEA believed that it could be further strengthened. To that end, the Standing Commission for Co-operation in the Field of Electricity and Nuclear Power was in the process of preparing a work programme on implementation of the co-operation agreement between CMEA and the Agency. After its approval by the Executive Committee of CMEA, that work programme would be submitted to the Agency. Its objective was to expand and clarify the areas of co-operation between the two organizations. CMEA believed that co-operation should focus on improving safety. Exchange of information could be supplemented by joint preparation of legal documents, organization of regional courses and co-ordination of technical activities.

154. Convinced of the need to develop nuclear power, CMEA Member States would continue to strengthen their international co-operation and work to promote public confidence in nuclear power and to ensure transparency of information in that area. To that end, they would develop international co-operation with other countries and with international organizations, primarily the Agency.

155. Mr. SAMIEI (Islamic Republic of Iran), exercising his right of reply in connection with a statement made the previous day by the delegate of Iraq, stressed that the factual statement made by the head of the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran had no bearing at all on the peace negotiations at present under way. The Islamic Republic of Iran was firmly attached to the establishment of genuine peace and security in the region and that was why it fully accepted Security Council resolution 598. It therefore had no intention of undermining those negotiations.

156. Moreover, the statement quoted by the Iraqi delegate which had allegedly been broadcast by Radio Tehran was completely false and his Government categorically denied that such a statement had ever been made.

157. Lastly, his delegation wished to recall that the Islamic Republic of Iran was a signatory of NPT and had accepted the application of full-scope Agency safeguards. Therefore, the Islamic Republic of Iran rejected any allegation aimed at undermining its strong commitments in that respect.

The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.