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President: Mr. HALIM (Malaysia)
later: Mr. CHAPMAN (United States of America)

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ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CONFERENCE

(c) TIMING OF CONFERENCE SESSIONS (GC(XXXII)/GEN/73)

(d) REVIEW OF THE CONFERENCE'S WORKING PRACTICES (GC(XXXII)/GEN/74)

1. The PRESIDENT announced that the General Committee had recommended that an inter-sessional working group be set up to consider ways of streamlining the General Conference's working practices and timing. As Chairman of the General Committee, he would hold consultations with regional groups and other interested parties and would set up a small but representative group which would report to the General Conference the following year.

2. Furthermore, the General Committee had recommended that, in the interests of economy, summary records of the plenary sessions and meetings of committees be issued only once, and any corrections requested by delegates be issued separately in consolidated form for the entire series of meetings. Such a change would involve an amendment to Rule 89 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference (which could be formally considered the following year), but since the Agency's budget for 1989 had been prepared on the assumption of savings on that account, it was proposed that the new practice be initiated with immediate effect.

3. The General Committee's recommendations were accepted.

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

4. Mr. ETTINGER (Israel) said that the past decade had seen a slow-down in the growth of nuclear energy usage, apparently as a result of economic and ecological considerations and of the controversy surrounding nuclear energy. In a number of European countries, the anti-nuclear movement had gained ground after Chernobyl. In many countries, the public believed that the national and international investigations carried out had underestimated the accident's impact on technology and health. Yet, responsible studies had indicated that economic and environmental protection considerations made it necessary to increase reliance on nuclear energy in the next few decades.

5. Israel commended the Agency for the many constructive actions it had taken following the accident. Now that the causes of the accident were well understood and the Agency's expanded nuclear safety and radiation protection programme was well advanced, the Agency should devote more attention to educating and reassuring the public. The collection and dissemination of reliable information on the benefits and risks of nuclear energy compared with alternative energy sources would be useful in that connection.

6. His delegation welcomed the additional steps taken by the Agency pursuant to its responsibilities under the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident, especially the establishment and testing of the Global Telecommunications System (GTS) of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). Once the early notification system was fully operational, an important stage in the international effort aimed at improving readiness to deal with severe nuclear accidents would have been accomplished.

7. Recently, and especially after the Bhopal accident, a universal need had been felt for the safety standards of chemical plants to be brought closer to those of the nuclear industry. The Agency, which had accumulated vast knowledge and experience in the field of nuclear safety, could contribute significantly to a global effort to transfer such safety-related know-how to the chemical industry. Some effort in that direction had already begun as a joint project with UNEP and WHO, but a much broader scope of activity should be undertaken.

8. Israel endorsed the Agency's work in promoting the development of small- and medium-power reactors that used passive safety features. The Agency could help define appropriate safety features for the next generation of nuclear reactors, promote an independent evaluation of critical safety issues, and assist developing countries in studying whether specific reactor concepts matched their needs. Agency leadership in the field of advanced nuclear reactors would unquestionably help win wider public acceptance for those designs.

9. The crisis in the nuclear industry had resulted in a substantial decrease in the number of persons choosing nuclear engineering as a profession and might lead to a severe shortage of nuclear engineers and technicians in

the future. To forestall such an event, which would have considerable implications for safety, the international nuclear community should tackle that issue now to ensure that human resources would be available when needed. The Agency could play a helpful role in that area.

10. During the past year, Israel had continued its efforts to achieve a proper balance between innovative basic research and economically viable practical applications. Noteworthy achievements had been attained in radiopharmaceuticals, while in the field of radiation protection sophisticated instruments such as multipurpose radiation monitors and detectors had been developed. The Israeli Atomic Energy Commission had, through the Agency, donated a set of such instruments as part of international efforts to deal with the radiological emergency at Goiania. Israel had also presented to the Agency a set of two monitors and five types of detector for use by the Division of Nuclear Safety and for training purposes. The food irradiation programme had reached the stage of commercial implementation, with over 50 t of spices and condiments being treated in 1987.

11. Member States' representatives convened annually at the General Conference to enhance international co-operation in nuclear science and technology. It was therefore regrettable that much valuable time was wasted on irrelevant political issues that the Agency had never been meant to deal with and which could not possibly be solved in that assembly. It seemed that narrow national politics were more important to Iraq, Syria and their supporters than the promotion of the peaceful uses of atomic energy. He hoped that common sense would prevail and that the General Conference would reject decisively the destructive proposals put forward under agenda item 7. The concept of a nuclear-weapon-free zone - advocated by Israel for years - was now receiving international attention. A draft resolution referring to it had been introduced by the Egyptian delegation. The question of such a zone was of great significance and deserved to be discussed on its own merits, not under the item entitled "Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat". Israel did not threaten the existence of any State in the region. Discussing a nuclear-weapon-free zone under the item relating to Israel undermined the constructive approach that such an important and sensitive issue required.

12. Mutual assistance and free and direct negotiations among the States in the region constituted the basis for any agreement on a nuclear-weapon-free zone. That subject had been thoroughly studied by the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues (the Palme Commission) and the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. Those studies, together with the precedents established by the Tlatelolco and Rarotonga Treaties could offer a firm basis for devising appropriate modalities to be negotiated and agreed upon, thus ultimately providing mutual assurances for all the States concerned.

13. Mr. FITZGERALD (Ireland) said that the utilization of nuclear energy in both the military and civilian sectors carried with it great risks which had to be recognized and abated by every means possible. The year 1988 marked the 20th anniversary of the opening for signature of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and the 30th anniversary of the initiative taken by Ireland at the United Nations which had led to its elaboration. The special role that Ireland had played had been marked by the fact that Ireland was the first country to sign the new Treaty in 1968. The NPT was the centrepiece of a world system aimed at limiting the dangers posed by nuclear weapons by preventing their proliferation and achieving nuclear disarmament under international control. The commitment undertaken by the non-nuclear-weapon States party to NPT had undoubtedly had the effect of limiting horizontal proliferation and avoiding an even more serious escalation of the problem of nuclear weapons. The Treaty had been adhered to by some 140 States. However, several countries had chosen to remain outside NPT, and some of those might have acquired nuclear-weapon capability.

14. A universal and effective nuclear non-proliferation regime was in the best interests of international peace and stability and of all countries. The Agency had a crucial role to play in that process, for without the safeguards provided by the Agency it would not have been possible to implement the non-proliferation regime. Ireland welcomed the recently approved voluntary offer agreement between China and the IAEA, and noted with satisfaction that agreements had now been concluded by the Agency with all five nuclear-weapon States. Furthermore, all countries in which a nuclear reactor was operating had now accepted Agency safeguards on all or part of their nuclear activities. All countries should co-operate fully with

the Agency by permitting and facilitating full inspection of all their civil nuclear installations. It was cause for grave concern that there were still a number of States with sensitive installations not under safeguards. He appealed to those States, in the interests of international peace and stability, to submit their facilities to safeguards.

15. Ireland had over the years made significant contributions to the Technical Assistance and Co-operation Fund (TACF) in the belief that it would help less prosperous countries acquire basic nuclear technology and facilities for peaceful purposes. He found the Agency's promotional work in the fields of medicine, agriculture, environmental studies and life sciences to be especially valuable, and noted with approval that two thirds of the resources available for technical assistance were currently being devoted to non-power projects. Ireland had also hosted training courses and would be glad to assist in organizing further courses for the Agency.

16. Ireland's continued support for technical assistance had to be viewed in the context of the large-scale and costly restructuring of essential radiation protection facilities in Ireland. At a time of increasing domestic budget stringency, which had resulted in a significant reduction in overall public expenditure, the Irish Government had been forced to increase the level of funding for radiation protection almost four times over its level of three years previously, and was now in the middle of a large re-equipment programme. So far, that programme was being implemented without help from the TACF. The programme had been necessary owing to the serious threat to the health and economic well-being of the Irish population posed by the large concentration of nuclear facilities in north-west Europe and the effects of the Chernobyl accident on international trade in food products. The scope of the TACF should be broad enough to support such intensive programmes for radiation protection in Member States.

17. With regard to nuclear safety, the Director General, in his wide-ranging and thought-provoking address, had discussed issues which were of fundamental importance to all governments in planning future long-term energy systems in a way which would be compatible with an acceptable environment and meet the real needs and expectations of citizens. Clearly, there was no

single or ready-made solution to such problems. The Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development was a useful starting point for consideration of the issue. It had been stressed by some speakers that increased reliance on nuclear power would avoid the adverse effects attributed to continued large-scale use of fossil fuels. That, of course, was only one side of the picture. Certainly in its present stage of development, nuclear energy had and would continue to have for many years to come real risks. It was the potential scale of the damage that had to be judged and not its measured impact so far.

18. A number of countries had already made up their minds not to develop nuclear energy and some were considering the question. Others were pursuing active nuclear development programmes. Decisions to choose the latter road carried with them the responsibility to ensure not only the safety of their own population but also that of other countries which might be affected by their decision, and that not simply by means of statements of assurance but by positive co-operation and openness on issues related to the regulation and operation of nuclear facilities. The public would not accept assurances on safety that were not backed by full transparency, mutual inspection and verification, and without public acceptance the issue of nuclear power would remain a matter of international controversy and its role as a supplier of energy would be impeded. It was therefore essential that there be much greater voluntary acceptance of the need for mutual verification and assurance with regard to the application of safety standards and practices and the effectiveness of regulatory authorities. The Agency had already achieved a great deal in that area, and he hoped the Board would continue its positive promotion of safety.

19. Happily, many of the lessons of the several accidents of the past decade seemed to have been well learned. Ireland appreciated the essential role played by the Agency in identifying, understanding and applying those lessons at an international level. However, whereas the mistakes of operators, maintainers and designers had been readily pointed out and accepted, the shortcomings of regulators and legislation had not been identified in all cases, nor was it clear that appropriate corrective action had always been taken. The Agency symposium on safety standards and practices

for nuclear power plants to be held in Munich in November would, he hoped, help to correct that deficiency. He also expressed the hope that Ireland's proposal concerning independent review of regulatory practices in Member States along the lines of OSART missions would gain greater recognition as being a practical and useful way forward in that area, and he emphasized that the proposal was aimed at reinforcing rather than undermining the competence and responsibility of national regulatory authorities.

20. In his opening address, the Director General had referred to the often heard suggestion that nuclear power would be more acceptable if new reactors incorporating greater inherent safety were available; but the 400 or so existing reactors still had to be taken into account. While it was necessary to continue work aimed at improving the safety of existing reactor types, it was most important that the Agency's work should encourage the introduction, wherever possible, of newer, safer and smaller reactors. Also, future development should not be determined exclusively by the producers or users of equipment, influenced by commercial considerations.

21. In parallel with the safe development and operation of nuclear facilities, acceptable solutions had also to be found for the problems associated with transport, particularly by air, and with the storage and final disposal of nuclear materials and waste. Ireland was opposed to any solutions which involved continuing regular discharges or dumping of waste material at sea or in the sea-bed. A rigorous control system was essential to prevent any possibility of unauthorized disposal of nuclear or other dangerous toxic wastes.

REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING ON NUCLEAR SAFETY AND RADIOLOGICAL PROTECTION

22. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee had recommended that the outcome of the Special Scientific Meeting on Nuclear Safety and Radiological Protection should be reported to the Plenary meeting. He would therefore ask Sir Edward Pochin, Chairman of the Special Scientific Meeting, to address the Conference.

23. Sir Edward POCHIN said that the Special Scientific Meeting on Nuclear Safety and Radiological Protection had been very successful and informative. It had comprised four sessions: current issues of scientific and practical importance in radiation protection; the need for better control of small radioactive sources used in industry; the Agency's work in a wide range of important fields; and, lastly, public perception of ionizing radiation and the distorted use of resources which could result from exaggerated anxiety about the effects of small radiation exposures as compared with other sources of much greater public danger.

24. The meeting had noted the increasing precision with which the effects of low radiation doses could be estimated. Several authoritative reports reviewing available epidemiological data were nearing completion and suggested that, in the case of occupational exposure, the frequency of fatal cancers caused by radiation was 2 or 3 times greater than had been thought 11 years previously. The completion of the study by the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR) at the end of 1988, and of other authoritative studies the following year, would probably have implications for the review of dose limits. In the case of occupational exposure, the increasingly accurate estimate of risk was much less likely to affect working practices than the dose limits themselves, since in most forms of occupational exposure the average dose rate was commonly less than one twentieth of the annual dose limit.

25. Participants at the meeting had also reviewed the appropriate precautions to be taken after severe accidents when, for example, it might be desirable to restrict food supplies to avoid unduly high doses. Obviously, the harm associated with such restrictions should be less than the harm which they prevented. There had also been discussion of exposures which were so small as to be exempt from consideration since the risk involved was trivial. A possible limit of 10 μ Sv was suggested for exposures which could be exempt from consideration. Such a radiation dose would be equal to a dose received in any two weeks from natural sources.

26. In the second session, which dealt with small industrial sources, it had emerged that on 10 occasions in the past 28 years such sources had been abandoned, often on building sites, and picked up by people, frequently children, who were unaware of the danger. Twenty-six deaths had occurred as a result. Such accidents could easily be avoided by improved education of those responsible for the use of such sources. The session had also emphasized the need in many countries, not only in developing countries, for assistance in the disposal of radium sources which had formerly been used for medical purposes and were no longer used for those purposes. It was gratifying to note that the Agency was in the process of publishing advice on ways of dealing with such sources.

27. It had been seen at the third session, which dealt with the Agency's work, that the Agency was carrying out an impressive range of important activities. Several general points had been raised such as the value of a national protection structure or organization in countries to act as an interface between, on the one hand, international bodies which offered advice (e.g. the Agency, UNSCEAR and ICRP) and, on the other hand, national bodies such as scientific advisory authorities and regulatory services, which accepted aspects of such advice.

28. The last session, reviewing the communication and acceptance of information on safety procedures, had shown the continuing need for education of the public at various levels. The issue of waste disposal had been raised and the opinion was expressed that it involved more political than technical problems. It had also been noted that the evaluation of risk by the public and in the media tended to be more in terms of the source and cause of the risk than in terms of the size of the risk. As a consequence of the sometimes confused attitudes about the size of risks, there was a much greater expenditure of resources to prevent a single death from radiation than to prevent many deaths from more familiar hazards of modern civilization.

29. Finally, the meeting had expressed the hope that similar scientific sessions could take place on a regular basis in future years.

30. Mr. KABBAJ (Morocco) noted that there had been an appreciable increase in the preceding year in the use of nuclear energy for power production and in nuclear applications in the economic and scientific fields.

During the year 22 nuclear power plants had been commissioned and the total installed capacity had risen by 8%. That increase had not resulted in any significant radiation exposure, thanks to design improvements and other measures.

31. In the area of safety, the International Nuclear Safety Advisory Group (INSAG) had done commendable work on the basic safety principles for nuclear power plants, and the NUSS Codes had been revised. The Agency had continued to contribute greatly to the safety and to the improvement of nuclear power plant design and operation by organizing technical meetings, publishing codes of practice and sending operational safety review teams (OSARTs) to Member States. In that connection, he emphasized the great importance of those documents for Morocco and considered that the latter, and especially the basic safety principles, should be accepted by all Member States. Although safety standards were a matter that lay within States' competence, the consequences of the Chernobyl accident and the new dimensions of nuclear safety clearly showed that international co-operation was vital in that area.

32. It was satisfying to observe that in 1987 there had been no nuclear power plant accidents with radiological consequences for human health or the environment. However, the Goiania accident underlined that safety must be taken seriously in the case of all uses of nuclear energy. The Agency had therefore an important role in helping the developing countries to establish and to strengthen their infrastructures and capabilities in the field of safety and radiation protection.

33. As regards waste management, which was closely related to safety and protection, he appreciated the information given in the Director General's statement on the modern techniques of waste treatment and disposal. His country had full confidence in the Agency's expertise in the area. He welcomed in particular the establishment of the Waste Management Advisory Programme (WAMAP).

34. Morocco strongly condemned the activities of some multinational companies involved in the dumping of toxic waste in developing countries, without regard to the possible dangerous consequences, taking advantage of the

economic weakness of those countries. He urged Member States and the Agency to withhold any co-operation in those activities and hoped that the latter would continue to help the developing countries to counter such irresponsible acts.

35. The Moroccan delegation was highly appreciative of the Agency's support for the implementation of the nuclear programmes of developing countries and of its assistance in strengthening their infrastructure for that purpose. He commended the Senior Expert Group on Mechanisms to Assist Developing Countries in the Promotion and Financing of their Nuclear Power Programmes for its report, and supported the idea of participation of international financing institutions in those programmes.

36. He wished to thank the Agency and in particular its Department of Technical Co-operation for the fruitful collaboration and valuable help which his country had received in a number of areas, and hoped that the collaboration would be further strengthened.

37. Morocco attached importance to co-operation between developing countries and especially in Africa, where regional co-operation within the Agency was lacking. In that connection, he suggested the establishment of a regional programme in Africa on the lines of the co-operative arrangements which countries in Asia and Latin America had concluded, namely RCA and ARCAL. His country was willing to make available its not inconsiderable experience in the uses of nuclear energy, including human and material resources, for such a programme, and could in particular set up a regional radioimmunological laboratory with the assistance of the Agency.

38. Referring to the recent developments in Morocco's nuclear programme, he pointed out that a site had finally been selected for its first nuclear power plant, which was to be commissioned at the beginning of the following century. The one-megawatt research reactor for its nuclear research centre was expected to go into operation at the end of 1992. Generally speaking, Morocco had made great progress in its nuclear programme and had acquired considerable human and material potential, thanks to its co-operation with the Agency and friendly States.

39. The international conventions prepared by the Agency constituted a organizational framework which effectively contributed to the enhancement of safety. The Conventions on Early Notification and on Assistance, which had demonstrated their effectiveness in the case of the Goiania accident, dealt with one aspect of international co-operation. The Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material was concerned with protection during transfer between States, while physical protection within States was always the responsibility of the States themselves. As for civil liability for nuclear damage, the Vienna and Paris Conventions provided a satisfactory legal framework. Morocco was satisfied with the work of the working group which had drafted the Joint Protocol relating to the application of those two conventions. However, the question of international liability continued to lack a legal framework, and it was necessary to take steps at the international level so that an international liability regime could be arrived at. He had pleasure in announcing that his Government had decided to sign the Joint Protocol at the current session of the Conference, and that the process of ratification of the aforementioned four conventions was in its final stage and would shortly be completed.

40. On the subject of non-proliferation, his delegation welcomed the treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union on banning medium- and short-range nuclear missiles, signed in December 1987. He hoped that similar agreements would be concluded in the future with a view to extending the non-proliferation regime.

41. As concerned the application of safeguards, he wished to congratulate China on its decision to conclude a safeguards agreement with the Agency. With that, the latter would have such agreements with all the nuclear-weapon States. He also welcomed the accession of Saudi Arabia and Spain to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and hoped that their example would be followed by other States which had not done so.

42. Extension of the scope of application of NPT and also universality of the safeguards system, which was one of the hopes cherished by a majority of Member States, were bound to strengthen the non-proliferation regime and its credibility and lead to greater international control of the use of nuclear energy.

43. In that context, Morocco deeply regretted the obstinate stand of Israel with regard to the resolutions of the General Conference and those of the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly. Israel had recently declined to comply with General Conference resolution 470 and continued its refusal to renounce possession of nuclear weapons and to place all its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards. At the same time, it persisted in its policy of aggression and expansion in the Middle East and that of suppression of the Arab people in the occupied lands. It had of late sought to link the full application of safeguards, a technical matter within the Agency's competence, to the quite separate political question of a nuclear-free zone, which was the concern of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

44. He also condemned the existing nuclear co-operation between the Israeli entity and the racist Government of South Africa as it was a threat to the safety and security of Africa and the Middle East. The latter Government's refusal to place all its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards in accordance with General Conference resolution 485 and those adopted before it was a matter of grave concern. It was to be recalled that, in view of that Government's expression of readiness to sign NPT, the matter of its suspension from the Agency had been postponed from the preceding to the current session. However, since it was clearly persisting in defying the General Conference resolutions, he called upon Member States to take appropriate decisions in the matter.

45. In conclusion, he reiterated the Moroccan Government's support for the Agency's efforts and wished it every success in fulfilling its basic objective of promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for the progress and happiness of mankind.

46. Mr. ZANNAD (Tunisia) said the peace process hailed by many delegations and characterized by détente, the end of certain regional conflicts and the signature of the treaty on nuclear-weapons reduction between the United States and the Soviet Union had, unfortunately, not benefited all countries throughout the world. In the Middle East, Israel was still refusing to place its nuclear installations under Agency control and continued to occupy Palestine and other Arab territories, subjecting their populations to savage repression.

47. Practising what was actually State terrorism by exporting its attacks beyond the Middle East, Israel had committed aggression against Tunisia on 16 April 1988 with the assassination of the Palestinian leader Abu Jihad - a criminal act which had created a number of innocent victims and been unanimously condemned by the Security Council. That event pointed to the growing danger represented by the Israeli nuclear installations run by irresponsible and aggressive elements and made the institution of Agency safeguards on those installations a matter of utmost urgency.

48. In another part of the world, South Africa was still refusing to comply with the United Nations and IAEA resolutions calling on it to place its nuclear installations under Agency safeguards. It was highly regrettable that a number of Member States nevertheless continued to co-operate with Israel and South Africa in the field of nuclear energy and technology.

49. While drawing attention to those sources of concern, his delegation welcomed the courageous and efficacious role played by the Agency in a number of areas. Be it in nuclear safety, safeguards, radiological protection or technical assistance, the Agency was making a contribution everywhere, permitting Member States to draw on its resources and on the competence of its experts.

50. While nuclear safety was an important concern, as the events at Chernobyl had clearly demonstrated, his delegation hoped that it would not be pursued to the detriment of promotional activities. Environmental protection - in particular, careful supervision of the handling, transport and storage of radioactive waste - was just as important as nuclear power plant safety and deserved additional attention from the Agency. For example, the recent initiatives aimed at transforming certain developing countries into the "waste basket" of the industrialized countries should be condemned.

51. The growing interest of developing countries in the Agency added new urgency to the questions of the expansion of the Board of Governors and of more equitable representation of Member States on it. The consultations being carried out within the ad hoc working group established by the Board in September 1987 for the purpose of drafting amendments to Article VI and, in particular, Article VI.A.2 of the Statute should be pursued: those amendments should aim at achieving broader representation of African States on the Board.

52. In general terms, Tunisia was satisfied with its fruitful co-operation with the Agency. Far-reaching reforms undertaken by the Tunisian authorities since 7 November 1987 would stimulate the development of structures and expertise that could take advantage of all the opportunities offered by the Agency and some of its Member States concerning the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The climate of understanding now prevailing among Arab Maghreb States could result in large-scale joint projects which, owing to the financial, technological and human resources required, could not be undertaken by a single State. The Arab Maghreb States hoped that a regional co-operation agreement similar to those already existing in Asia and Latin America would be concluded with the Agency for the African continent. Such an agreement should lead to the elaboration of a programme for Africa in such fields as radiation protection and the use of isotope techniques in industry, agriculture, medicine, food preservation and basic nuclear science, a programme that would promote co-operation among African States in those areas and facilitate closer co-ordination of their policies regarding the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

53. Mr. El MADANI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) commended the Agency's active role in strengthening the infrastructure and in transferring the technology needed by Member States, which had helped them in using nuclear energy in various fields for progress and prosperity. Libya appreciated the Agency's assistance in building up its scientific and technical infrastructure for its ambitious programme on the use of nuclear energy in power production, industry, agriculture and medicine. As a result, there was a greater need for assistance and advice especially as regards technology transfer, know-how, integrated training and improvement of operating and maintenance capability.

54. The economic and industrial growth that was taking place in Libya had increased the demand for electricity, making it necessary to consider other sources of energy in addition to the main source which was petroleum. His Government attached importance to the nuclear option and had resumed the economic, financial and technical studies initiated with the Agency's help. He hoped that the Agency would render effective assistance and that other Member States would provide the advice, training and technology needed in the

area of nuclear power production on a non-discriminatory basis under conditions and at a cost which were reasonable and consistent with the world economic and financial situation.

55. While he approved in principle the Agency's programme for 1989-1990 and the budget for 1989, he shared the misgivings of the other developing countries about the zero-growth budget and about the fluctuations in the technical co-operation programme and the fall in the implementation rate, one reason for which was the slowness and reluctance on the part of some industrialized countries to respond to the requirements of developing countries and the delay in supplying equipment under contract. Libya was also concerned at the increasing appropriations in respect of manpower and material resources in the safeguards budget at the expense of other activities.

56. As regards the Agency's efforts fully to carry out its safeguards functions, one could not but mention the activities of the Zionist entity, which was occupying Palestine, and of the racist régime in South Africa relating to the development of nuclear destructive capability. Those were a clear threat to peace and security in the world. They ignored international conventions and instruments and rejected the world community's demand to cease those activities and to comply with its demands. Libya called upon the Conference to apply deterrent sanctions against them and to deprive them of their membership in the Agency, and appealed to all peace-loving countries to persuade those co-operating with the Zionist entity in strengthening its nuclear potential to refrain from such co-operation.

57. He recalled that the current year was the 20th anniversary of the conclusion of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which defined the Agency's role in ensuring that nuclear energy was not used for non-peaceful purposes. In that connection, he supported the Director General's statement about the Agency's willingness to play an active part in the preparation of the Fourth NPT Review Conference. He emphasized that the comprehensive safeguards system had become an element of security and was essential in international relations and must be supported by all lovers of peace.

58. He strongly condemned the dumping by many States and companies of industrial and nuclear waste in many areas of the world, especially in Africa and in the Mediterranean, where it posed a threat to the future of the population, and urged the international community to take a strict stand with regard to that criminal act.

59. An item which had been on the Conference's agenda for many years was the question of amendment of Article VI.A.2 of the Agency's Statute. Libya's stand on the issue had remained unchanged since 1977, when it had submitted, together with other States, the proposal about increasing the representation of Africa and the Middle East and South Asia on the Board by three and two seats respectively. The time had come to repeat that demand. Another long-standing issue was the staffing of the Secretariat. His delegation considered it necessary to strike a geographical balance in the appointments to posts in the Secretariat, taking into account the qualifications and experience of applicants from developing countries, who were in no way inferior to those from developed countries. The selection of candidates should therefore be based only on technical competence.

60. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that Member States would be more responsive to the aspirations of the developing countries to make use of nuclear energy and that the Agency would continue its efforts to help them in mobilizing science and technology for the benefit of their peoples and for mankind as a whole.

61. Mr. CEIRANO (Holy See) said that the Holy See - a founder Member of the Agency - had, whenever appropriate, sought to draw attention to the moral aspects of what could be termed the nuclear problem and to the associated responsibilities of the international community.

62. Throughout the history of the Agency the key word "responsibility" had been used mainly in relation to the matter of nuclear armaments and to the ways and means of reducing the threat of nuclear war. One such means, although certainly not a sufficient one, was the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), together with the Agency's safeguards system. The Holy See had subscribed to both, not because the Vatican City State posed any danger in that connection, but in order to add its support and moral encouragement to

the provisions of the Treaty. Under NPT, nuclear-weapon States pledged their intention to achieve full disarmament as soon as possible, and it was to be hoped that the present superpower détente would facilitate and accelerate the disarmament process, now reinforced by the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles.

63. Over the previous 10 to 15 years, however, the idea of responsibility had also come to be associated with the grave risks involved in the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Nuclear safety had also become a moral issue. Just as in the military field the task was to avoid a nuclear holocaust, so, in the field of the peaceful use of nuclear energy, it was to avoid accidents with disastrous consequences for humankind and the environment.

64. Nuclear safety - a primarily, but not exclusively, national responsibility - was a major factor in the siting, construction and operation of nuclear installations. Nuclear safety activities were aimed at protecting plant personnel, the general public and the environment from the potentially harmful effects of ionizing radiations, as well as from their actual effects in the event of a nuclear accident. National decision-makers had a grave responsibility in relation to nuclear safety, not least because the fate of future generations would to a very large extent depend upon its continued improvement.

65. Nuclear safety was also an international responsibility, since a nuclear accident could have serious transboundary consequences. Minor incidents during the operation of a nuclear installation could, moreover, give rise to transboundary effects when the reactor site lay close to the national border. States operating peaceful nuclear installations therefore had a serious international responsibility, especially toward those countries which had decided, for whatever reasons, not to build or to discontinue the operation of nuclear power plants on their territory.

66. Clearly, then, international co-operation in the field of nuclear energy - with emphasis on the exchange of information, as well as on assistance, should the need arise - was more than ever essential. However, while the two Conventions that had been drawn up following the Chernobyl

accident represented a step in the right direction, the question of transboundary effects was still far from resolved, since there remained the very serious matter of international liability for damage arising from a nuclear accident. Any State in which a nuclear accident involving transboundary consequences occurred had a duty to indemnify the people in other States who had also suffered from that accident and who had not previously enjoyed the economic benefits of the nuclear industry in the country where the accident had occurred. In such a case, while operating a nuclear power plant could obviously not be regarded as an illegal act, it would at the same time be unfair to burden the other States affected by the accident with the task of proving negligence on the part of the State in which it had occurred. Rather, liability following a nuclear accident should, in accordance with a principle generally recognized by most legal systems, rest with the party which was engaged in an activity that was hazardous by its very nature. That certainly applied to States which utilized nuclear energy, even for peaceful purposes.

67. The Agency, with its leading role in the continuing enhancement of nuclear safety, was in a position to provide national authorities with the best information available and to assist individual States in solving their particular nuclear problems, which need not always be at the level of a national catastrophe, such as at Chernobyl; there were also more limited incidents like the one in Goiania, Brazil, where the Agency had helped to locate and eliminate a small but dangerous radiation source.

68. Combined international efforts were also required to deal with the increasingly serious problem of nuclear waste disposal. It was unacceptable to use developing countries, the oceans or other areas of vital concern for the future as dumping-grounds for nuclear waste. Nor was it acceptable to establish nuclear waste disposal sites without first informing the surrounding population.

69. Finally, it was common knowledge that nuclear power was a dangerous form of energy. If, however, the international community believed that it should continue to be used, then there was a moral obligation on the part of all involved to do all in their power to guarantee its safety.

70. Mr. BADRAN (Jordan) noted that the thirty-second session of the General Conference was taking place at a time of internationally and historically important events. The past twelve months had witnessed a political détente between the two major powers and a general tendency to attempt to solve political conflicts by means of negotiations. There were great hopes that such a spirit of international understanding and peaceful co-operation would prevail for a long time. The progress of talks between the two major powers and the signing of an agreement between them to eliminate their intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles invited optimism and confidence in the future of the human race. The session also coincided with the 20th anniversary of NPT to which included 136 States were signatories. Furthermore, the Agency, for its part, was playing a role of increasing importance in co-ordinating international efforts in the use of nuclear technology.

71. However, despite those encouraging indicators, there were still a number of issues which were causing concern to a great number of countries. The attitude of Israel towards peace in the Middle East caused particular anxiety. Israel continued to practise all forms of suppression in the occupied Arab lands and continued to enhance its co-operation with the South African apartheid régime in the field of nuclear weapons. Both countries continued to ignore the repeated requests and resolutions of international organizations and conferences that called upon them to subject their nuclear facilities to the Agency's safeguards system.

72. Israel was attempting to link the application of the safeguards system to the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Israel was the only State in the Middle East which had the means or the capability to develop or deploy nuclear weapons. Consequently, if Israel were to abandon its schemes to develop nuclear military facilities, the area would in fact become a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Furthermore, all Arab countries of the Middle East were signatories to Agency safeguards agreements and NPT and therefore none of those countries possessed or had the intention of developing nuclear war capabilities. If Israel wished to demonstrate its sincerity and the seriousness of its intentions, it should immediately accept the Agency's safeguards system and sign NPT.

73. The Agency and the international community should take measures and establish regulations to deal with the transfer of radioactive waste. His country believed that an international convention should be established prohibiting the export of toxic chemicals and radioactive wastes except in cases where a full and clear declaration regarding the nature of those wastes and the dangers involved was issued jointly by the importer and exporter and signed by the relevant institutions responsible for the environment and radiation protection in both countries. The export and import should be carried out in accordance with a public contract between the parties involved and a copy of the contract should be deposited with the Agency. Shipping, transport, handling or burial of such wastes should be performed under the supervision of a competent international body such as the Agency having the facilities for checking radioactivity levels and so on.

74. In his statement, the Director General had indicated that the share of nuclear power had increased to 16% of total world electricity production, although the share of nuclear power in electricity production in developing countries was still very small. Technical, financial, political and legal obstacles preventing developing countries from making proper use of nuclear technology still existed and no substantial progress had been made towards overcoming those obstacles. The efforts made to develop simpler reactors with inherent safety characteristics were greatly appreciated, but additional efforts would have to be made to make such reactors available to developing countries without additional economical, technical or contractual burdens.

75. The Agency's work in developing the scientific and technological capabilities of developing countries was much appreciated by Jordan. However, there were a number of ways in which those activities could be improved. Firstly, technical assistance programmes, experts and training, should be a part of a national medium-range plan of the recipient country and the Agency should help in preparing such a plan and in defining its local and external requirements as well as the means of implementation. Secondly, the Agency should emphasize group or team training, instead of individual training. Thirdly, technical assistance and training should be directed towards comprehensive training with the objective of creating local trainers and instructors capable of taking the lead in national nuclear projects. Lastly,

regional co-operation, which was highly appreciated by Jordan, should become more comprehensive, although such co-operation programmes should not replace or duplicate normal country training. In particular, regional co-operation should be strengthened in areas such as nuclear safety, radiation protection and environmental monitoring.

76. With regard to the suggestion put forward by some Member States to allow those countries which were not represented on the Board of Governors to attend the meetings of the Board as observers, his country supported that idea and requested the Director General and the Board of Governors to take the necessary steps. The General Conference should take decisive measures to ensure better representation on the Board for the Middle East and Asian region as well as for Africa.

77. Whilst his delegation approved the Agency's programme for 1989, it was concerned about the adoption of the principle of zero growth. Such a principle did not allow the Agency to respond to the responsibilities and tasks entrusted to it in the light of the Agency's increasing role in nuclear safety, radiation protection and the spread of nuclear technology. The prevailing international atmosphere of détente and co-operation would perhaps help to overcome that obstacle of zero growth.

78. In conclusion, his delegation was pleased to declare that Jordan was committed to paying its contribution to the Agency's Regular Budget and its voluntary contributions to the Technical Assistance and Co-operation Fund.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS (GC(XXXII)/857)

79. The PRESIDENT said that, pursuant to Rule 79 of the Rules of Procedure, the elections would be conducted by secret ballot. The elective places on the Board which had to be filled were indicated in document GC(XXXII)/857. Paragraph 2 of that document set forth, for each of the geographical areas, the number of Member States to be elected so as to ensure that the Board would be constituted in accordance with Article VI.A of the Statute. Paragraph 4 contained a list of 24 Member States which had been either designated by the Board of Governors at its June meetings for membership of the Board pursuant to Article VI.A.1 of the Statute, or elected

by the General Conference in 1987 in accordance with Article VI.A.2 of the Statute, and which would therefore be serving on the Board during the year 1988-89.

80. A vote was taken by secret ballot to elect 11 Members to the Board of Governors.

81. At the invitation of the President, a member of the Egyptian delegation and a member of the Hungarian delegation acted as tellers.

82. The PRESIDENT, noting that the counting of votes would take some time, suggested that the meeting be adjourned.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

