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President: Mr. OTHMAN (Syrian Arab Republic)

Later: Mr. BUTTIGIEG SCICLUNA (Malta)

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The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(44)/INF/18/Rev.2.

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Delegates are kindly requested to bring their own copies of documents to meetings.

Abbreviations used in this record

AFRA	African Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
Agreed Framework	Agreed Framework between the United States of America and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Assistance Convention	Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency
CRP	Co-ordinated research programme
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EU	European Union
EURATOM	European Atomic Energy Community
HTGR	High-temperature gas-cooled reactor
INSAG	International Nuclear Safety Advisory Group
ITER	International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor
Joint Convention	Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management
KEDO	Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization
LWR	Light-water reactor
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NEA	Nuclear Energy Agency
Notification Convention	Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
Nuclear Safety Convention	Convention on Nuclear Safety
NWFZ	Nuclear-weapon-free zone
OECD/NEA	Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
Paris Convention	Paris Convention on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy (July 1960)
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
R&D	Research and development
RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
SAGSI	Standing Advisory Group on Safeguards Implementation
SIR	Safeguards Implementation Report

Abbreviations used in this record
(Contd.)

TCF	Technical Co-operation Fund
UNMOVIC	United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission
Vienna Convention	Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage) (May 1963)
WWER	Water-cooled and -moderated reactor (former USSR)

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GENERAL DEBATE AND ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1999 (continued)
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1. Ms. FERRERO-WALDNER (Austria) said that the number of serious incidents that had occurred in recent years illustrated the high risks associated with nuclear installations, especially power plants. Maximum levels of nuclear safety should therefore be maintained throughout the world at all stages of the nuclear fuel cycle. States engaged in nuclear activities bore a special responsibility not only to their own citizens but also to those of other countries, especially their neighbours. Austria viewed nuclear safety as a key issue in the negotiations on the enlargement of the European Union; safety levels in candidate countries should correspond to the technical, regulatory and operational state of the art in the Union. She asked the Agency for assistance in ensuring that the highest safety standards were observed and that an environmental impact assessment was carried out at the Temelin nuclear power plant in the Czech Republic.

2. She was pleased that INSAG was scrutinizing the safety implications of the early closure of a number of reactors of Soviet design. The period between the closure decision and the beginning of decommissioning was particularly sensitive. The problems that some countries were experiencing with the early decommissioning of non-upgradable nuclear power plants indicated that the provisions for decommissioning and radioactive waste disposal were inadequate. She encouraged the Agency to pursue that issue with determination and to keep Member States informed.

3. Austria appreciated the Agency's efforts to promote an effective worldwide safety regime comprising international treaties, internationally accepted standards and measures to assist States in their implementation. The Agency should perhaps be entrusted with similar responsibilities in the area of safety to those it discharged in the area of safeguards. She stressed the importance of the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention, and their review proceedings. Austria hoped to complete the process of ratification of the Joint Convention that year and she was pleased to note that only three further ratifications were needed for its entry into force. Welcoming the focus in that year's Scientific Forum on radioactive waste management, she expressed the hope that it would lead to the creation of a multi-stakeholder forum in which experts and the general public could share their views and concerns.

4. Austria was seriously concerned about the increasing age of research reactors and the large number that had been shut down but not yet decommissioned or placed under the control of regulatory authorities. It urged the Agency to give priority to the question of the elaboration of a legal instrument on the safety of nuclear research reactors, perhaps as a protocol to the Convention on Nuclear Safety.

5. Austria did not consider nuclear power to be compatible with the concept of sustainable development or a viable means of combating the greenhouse effect. Sustainable development called for substantial increases in energy efficiency and a switch to renewable sources of energy. Aspects such as the participation of civil society in decision-making, radiological

impacts, human capital and cost-effectiveness should also be taken into account. High-level nuclear waste could remain hazardous for thousands of years; that prevented future generations from making their own choices and ran counter to the definition of sustainable development.

6. The 2000 NPT Review Conference had reaffirmed the central role of the Agency's safeguards system in the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Austria supported efforts to strengthen the regime and welcomed the gradual implementation of the integrated safeguards system, which would allow the Agency to draw well-founded conclusions about the non-diversion of declared nuclear material and the absence of undeclared nuclear activities. Its success would depend to a large extent on the number of countries, especially those with significant nuclear activities, that signed additional protocols. Austria reiterated its appeal to all States that had not yet done so to conclude safeguards agreements and additional protocols with the Agency.

7. The reduction of nuclear stocks, as envisaged in the final document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, could present the Agency with new challenges, particularly in respect of the limitation and control of access to fissile material. She hoped that the Conference on Disarmament would soon begin negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty and invite the Agency to assist in developing the corresponding verification system.

8. She encouraged the Agency to continue playing a pivotal role in co-ordinating international efforts to increase the security of nuclear materials and radioactive sources. As protection against unauthorized access was clearly the most effective way of combating illicit trafficking, it was essential to put in place effective national physical protection systems based on international norms. Austria was an active participant in the discussions on a possible revision of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and was in favour of broadening its scope to cover, inter alia, the use, storage and transport of nuclear material within countries.

9. The 2000 NPT Review Conference had stressed the importance of the Agency's technical co-operation activities, a view that Austria fully endorsed. While remaining sceptical about the future role of nuclear power, Austria supported the Agency's promotion of non-power applications of nuclear energy, especially in the areas of health, hydrology and the environment, and would continue to pay its full share of the TCF target figure.

10. While Austria appreciated the Secretariat's efforts to achieve further budgetary savings, it realized that the Agency's ongoing and future commitments placed a strain on the limited resources available; the Agency needed a budget commensurate with additional needs, especially in the safeguards area. She welcomed the agreement reached by the Board of Governors on the future financing of safeguards and technical co-operation and hoped that the same spirit of compromise would prevail in future discussions of the Agency's budget. She assured the Director General of Austria's full support in meeting whatever challenges the future held.

Mr. Buttigieg Scicluna (Malta) took the Chair.

11. Mr. BADDOU (Morocco) said nuclear energy faced major challenges in the new millennium. Its expansion would be rapid, especially in the developing countries with their growing needs in energy and potable water, yet never before had it been the object of such trenchant criticism, weak political support and public scepticism. The current session offered a chance for careful review of the Agency's activities against the backdrop of controversy over its priorities, future directions and allocation of resources.

12. The 2000 NPT Review Conference had confirmed the Treaty as the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime, of which the Agency's safeguards system was an essential instrument. Morocco had been one of the first countries to ratify the NPT and to conclude a comprehensive safeguards agreement; also, it had ratified the CTBT in May 2000, it had supported the Agency's efforts to strengthen the safeguards regime through the additional protocol and had signed the Pelindaba Treaty.

13. In contrast to the Arab States, Israel persisted in its refusal to sign the NPT and submit its installations to Agency safeguards. The conclusion of comprehensive safeguards agreements by all the States in the Middle East, including Israel, would contribute to confidence-building within the region and facilitate the establishment of a NWFZ. Morocco was confident that the situation would improve in the near future.

14. The time had come to put in place an integrated mechanism for nuclear safety comprising binding legal instruments and rigorous standards that were regularly brought up to date. International and regional co-operation were essential in such domains as nuclear safety, radiation protection and radioactive waste management. The early entry into force of the Joint Convention would reinforce the international legal regime in that regard.

15. It was chiefly by establishing training institutions with adequate human and technical resources and subregional servicing capacity that lasting results in nuclear safety would be achieved. His country was ready to offer two national centres to serve as centres of excellence in sub-Saharan Africa and to provide post-graduate instruction in radiation protection for participants from French-speaking countries. Existing conventions on the safe transport of nuclear materials must be respected and transit countries, of which Morocco was one, must be notified of shipments so that governments could guard against threats to the population and the environment.

16. Morocco consistently paid in full its share of the target for voluntary contributions to the TCF and contributed actively to activities carried out under AFRA. While it supported the Agency's technical co-operation strategy and was satisfied with its activities, it would like to see a qualitative evaluation of the results as a supplement to the quantitative data provided. A more practical approach to technical co-operation would ensure that it had a real impact on the lives of countless people in fields such as nuclear desalination.

17. The recent discussions on the financing of the Agency's technical co-operation activities had shown that the Agency stood at a crossroads. In his delegation's view, Member States were having to choose between an organization that was concerning itself more and

more with safeguards and less and less with technical co-operation, or one that fostered peaceful development throughout the world, fulfilling its dual mandate for nuclear non-proliferation and the promotion of peaceful uses of atomic energy. Morocco believed the Agency would help to inaugurate a new world atomic order in which access to the benefits of nuclear technology was democratic and where safeguards were reinforced and applied in a universal and equitable manner.

18. In conclusion, he said that his country had deposited its instrument of acceptance of the amendment to Article VI of the Agency's Statute.

19. Mr. GARCIA (Philippines) joined previous speakers who had noted the urgency of achieving universal adherence to the NPT and its implementing instruments. His delegation welcomed the comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols, including that of Cambodia, that had been signed since the previous General Conference and once again called on all NPT States Parties that had not yet done so to conclude, and bring into force, safeguards agreements with the Agency. Also, he urged the Secretariat to increase its efforts to conclude additional protocols and to develop integrated safeguards approaches for different facilities.

20. In reaffirming its commitment to the NPT, his country reaffirmed the responsibilities the Treaty placed on nuclear and non-nuclear weapon States. In his country's view, the former had a special responsibility that should be reflected in their safeguards undertakings. His delegation was disappointed that the proposed revised arrangements for financing safeguards considered only a country's capacity to pay, and also that no weight was attached to membership of the Agency's Board of Governors.

21. His delegation supported the 2000 NPT Review Conference's confirmation of the central role played by the Agency in developing peaceful applications of nuclear energy and welcomed the Secretariat's continuing endeavours to strengthen technical co-operation. He hoped that improved programme quality and management would encourage greater donations from major contributors.

22. For its part, the Philippines appreciated the technical assistance it received from the Agency and was proud of its successes under the Partners in Development concept. In agriculture and industry, nuclear applications introduced through technical co-operation projects, were acquiring commercial value. The Departments of Agriculture and of Science and Technology had approved a three-year sterile insect technique programme to establish a fruit fly free zone on the mango-producing Island of Guimaras. More ambitiously, a large-scale, commercial cobalt-60 irradiation facility was to be established, partly through private funding, to meet increasing local demand for the sterilization and decontamination of medical and food products. Agency technical assistance would be required, particularly in the initial loading of the source.

23. In the realm of public health, nuclear techniques were being used in the Philippines to assess air pollution and "red tide" contamination in coastal areas. With regard to the latter, the effective assay technology that had been developed was being shared with other RCA

Member States through training programmes hosted by the Philippines. With a view to building predictive capacity, extension of the technical co-operation project in the “red tide” phenomenon in 2001-2002 was being sought. Further progress in the field included the development, as part of a CRP, of cheap, non-allergenic, sterile hydrogels, derived from carageenan using radiation techniques, as a possible substitute for hydrocolloids in the treatment of burn patients.

24. Among its regional sustainable development activities, the Philippines was the lead country in a regional project on isotope use in managing and protecting drinking water and planned to hold a workshop on geochemical modelling for water resource assessment and management in October 2000.

25. His delegation shared the hopes expressed by the Director General in his statement the previous day about achieving the global objectives of freedom from fear and from want and also his confidence in the Agency’s contribution to making the world safer and more humane.

26. Ms. MÖLLER (Germany) said that her Government, having decided to phase out nuclear energy, was now preparing a sustainable energy policy geared to renewable energy sources, energy conservation and greater efficiency at non-nuclear power plants. Since the 30% share of Germany’s electricity supply generated by nuclear power plants could hardly be replaced immediately, the Federal Government had agreed with the four major German utilities on a schedule for closing down the 19 plants currently in operation. A ceiling had been set for the amount of electricity to be generated by each reactor on the basis of an overall lifetime of 32 years. Transportation to reprocessing plants would cease on 1 July 2005, after which only direct disposal of spent fuel would be permitted. Work on the Gorleben final repository would be interrupted for between 3 and 10 years to clarify design and safety-related matters. It had been agreed that the utilities would build intermediate storage facilities as quickly as possible near the reactor sites.

27. Despite its decision to stop producing nuclear power, Germany still viewed the Agency’s work in safeguards, nuclear safety and technical co-operation as indispensable. With regard to universal nuclear verification, which her Government considered to be the Agency’s most important task, the 2000 NPT Review Conference had again highlighted the importance of the Agency’s safeguards in maintaining public confidence in nuclear non-proliferation. The conclusion of additional protocols would further increase confidence in the safeguards system, but only if all Member States participated.

28. The verification of weapon-origin material represented a new challenge for the Agency. Germany subscribed to the view that the verification methods must be applied on a continuing and irrevocable basis, and believed that they should be financed from a mandatory fund, with a greater financial share being contributed by the nuclear weapons states which had produced the fissile materials in question.

29. The Agency remained the most important forum in the field of nuclear safety. The first review conference of the Nuclear Safety Convention had heightened nuclear safety awareness

worldwide, and the national reporting and review process had increased transparency at both national and international levels. Germany was confident that the second review conference in 2002 would make further important contributions.

30. In conclusion, she said that Germany was confident of the Agency's ability to continue fulfilling its mission on behalf of mankind, in particular by guaranteeing the peaceful use of the fissile material under its control, offering an important forum for the definition of worldwide safety standards, and providing objective information on all aspects of nuclear technology.

31. Mr. FRANK (Israel) commended the Secretariat on choosing radioactive waste management as the theme for that year's Scientific Forum. Experts agreed that high-level waste and spent fuel could be safely isolated in certain types of deep geologic repositories. Provision was also being made for the possibility of retrievable disposal through reprocessing or repackaging of waste. An Agency-sponsored international symposium in 1999 had confirmed the existence of technologies for the safe, environmentally sound and cost-effective management of radioactive waste. The Agency should play an educational role in that regard by stimulating technical and scientific discussion so as to lay a factual basis for national decision-making.

32. A regional project for the promotion of co-operation in the peaceful use of nuclear technology had been initiated in the Middle East under the technical co-operation programme. It was designed to enhance the peace process by building confidence through the promotion of scientific and technical co-operation among the countries of the region and to address common problems such as water resource management, environmental, human health, agriculture and geological issues. He thanked the Department of Technical Co-operation for its support in that regard and looked forward to enhancing technical co-operation with Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinian Authority.

33. Israel welcomed the Agency's efforts to combat illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive materials by improving international standards for physical protection, providing training and assistance, and promoting exchanges of information among Member States. The Israeli Government was finalizing the process of ratification of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. Universal implementation of that Convention could assist in curbing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and materials, support the struggle against illicit trafficking and contribute to the overall safety of nuclear materials and facilities. Israel hoped that its neighbouring countries would soon accede to the Convention also.

34. Given the prediction of a major global increase in carbon dioxide emissions, two thirds of which would be attributable to the use of fossil fuel by developing countries to meet expanding energy demand, there was a growing awareness that only nuclear power could help achieve the emissions target agreed in the Kyoto Protocol and prevent climate change. Rational assessments by prestigious international organizations indicated that nuclear generation, far from being the problem in environmental terms, was in fact a key element in the solution. However, safety, economic competitiveness and public acceptance were crucial issues that would have to be addressed before there could be any resurgence of nuclear power.

35. Using nuclear power while ruling out the option of fuel cycle infrastructure and activities, including fuel production and reprocessing, could appreciably reduce proliferation risks. The Agency could also promote R&D efforts for safer, more competitive and more proliferation-resistant nuclear power designs. Advanced technologies such as HTGRs and thorium-based reactors with long-life cores could have considerable potential, especially if their safeguards effectiveness was demonstrated.

36. Two draft resolutions submitted to the General Conference were extraneous to the Agency Statute and mission and should be viewed in their proper Middle East context. Over the past year, the Government of Israel had shown courage, creativity and flexibility in its efforts to achieve a comprehensive peace in the region. Nevertheless, the road ahead was long and arduous and all parties should show the good will and restraint required to create a climate of trust conducive to progress. There were still States in the region that opposed the peace process, denied Israel's right to exist and sought to impede the peace process by means of terror and violence, either directly or through proxies. Action on divisive draft resolutions was counterproductive since it undermined dialogue and reduced Israel's confidence in international organizations and norms.

37. Although Israel had serious reservations about the draft resolution on the "Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East" and had formally distanced itself from its modalities, it was firmly committed to the establishment of a NWFZ in the proper context and at the right time and could join a consensus. Nuclear issues such as disarmament and non-proliferation could not be divorced from the overall framework needed to bring about peace, reconciliation and security in the region through a patient confidence-building process. Nothing was gained by harassing or ostracizing those who required time to ensure that their core security interests would not be compromised. Formal NPT commitments, even when coupled with Agency safeguards, did not in themselves provide adequate guarantees of compliance.

38. Agenda item 23 entitled "Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat" had first been introduced by Iraq, whose credentials in the area of weapons of mass destruction were well recognized. None of the dangerous proliferation developments in the Middle East in recent years had involved Israel, which had neither threatened its neighbours nor acted in defiance of international norms. Yet Israel's conduct and the peace process were ignored. Provocation and attempts at political harassment were incompatible with the co-operation required for a consensus resolution on the application of safeguards in the Middle East. He therefore urged all Member States to oppose agenda item 23.

39. Israel looked forward to working with the Agency on promoting regional co-operation in the peaceful applications of nuclear energy. It hoped that the peace process in the Middle East would move forward in the months ahead and that true reconciliation, mutual security and economic growth would overcome old fears and animosities.

40. Mr. HUGHES (Australia) said that the Agency was one of the central pillars of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, the cornerstone of which was the NPT. As had been expected, the 2000 NPT Review Conference had been a landmark event and it had also

strongly endorsed the role of the Agency. Its momentum should be sustained through the Agency's vigorous pursuit of those outcomes relevant to its work.

41. On the subject of international arms control, Australia welcomed the progress towards the implementation of CTBT verification and the certification of the first international monitoring stations. His country had been working hard for the early entry into force of the CTBT and had been lobbying not only countries in the Asia-Pacific region but also members of the group of 44 countries, whose ratification was required for entry-into-force, which had not yet acceded to the Treaty. Also, it was regrettable that the Conference on Disarmament had been unable to agree on a work programme for the commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

42. There was a continuing need to remain vigilant in looking for clandestine nuclear weapons programmes and in maintaining pressure on States that the Agency deemed not to be in full compliance with their obligations. Australia was concerned that Iraq might take advantage of the cessation of the inspections under Security Council resolution 687 to reactivate its nuclear weapons programme and welcomed the Agency's commitment to resuming verification in Iraq as soon as circumstances permitted.

43. Turning to the DPRK, he welcomed the Agreed Framework and the progress that had been achieved through KEDO. His country had contributed 15.9 million Australian dollars to KEDO for the purchase of heavy fuel oil to help meet the DPRK's energy needs pending the commissioning of the LWRs. Australia had normalized its relations with the DPRK in May and welcomed the DPRK's engagement with others in the region. The single Korean team that had been entered into the Sydney Olympics had marked another major step towards a new era on the Korean Peninsula, and he hoped for a rapid resumption of the DPRK's full co-operation with the Agency so that the Agency could discharge all its responsibilities under the NPT and the Agreed Framework. Australia remained concerned at the DPRK's continued non-compliance with its safeguards agreement and trusted that the DPRK would preserve all the information required by the Agency for verification of its initial inventory.

44. The strengthening of safeguards was a priority objective. Australia, the first State to sign and bring into force an additional protocol, urged universal adherence to additional protocols. It was participating actively in the Agency's ongoing work on integrated safeguards and had agreed an arrangement with the Agency for their application. It was very pleased that the Agency's SIR for 1999 had concluded that in two States with comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols in force (one of which was Australia) there was an absence of undeclared nuclear materials and activities.

45. He expressed satisfaction with the new financing mechanisms for safeguards and technical co-operation and looked forward to their adoption by the General Conference. In the light of the Agency's recent difficulties, it was even more important for all Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full and on time.

46. The Agency's technical co-operation programme was an important part of nuclear non-proliferation enabling many countries to derive benefits from nuclear technology in a wide

variety of areas. For its part, Australia paid its contribution to the TCF on time each year, and also contributed on its own account to technology transfer and technical co-operation.

47. Commitment to internationally accepted standards of nuclear safety and the development of a strong nuclear safety culture were key factors in the successful development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The Convention on Nuclear Safety's review process had had a discernible impact on the safety programmes of a number of Contracting Parties. He urged all States with existing or planned nuclear power reactors that had not yet acceded to the Convention to do so. Greater attention should also be paid to the safety of research reactors given the increasing numbers of ageing or inoperative reactors. Also, all States should commit themselves to the highest standards in the management of radioactive waste. For its part, Australia was currently in the process of ratifying the Joint Convention and had been actively involved in consultations on the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, which should reduce the number of accidents involving such sources.

48. With regard to the prevention of illicit trafficking in nuclear material, he said that, while the secure custody of nuclear material was primarily the responsibility of the State concerned, the Agency could make a major contribution to international security by co-ordinating the development of national systems for nuclear accountancy and control and physical protection. All trade in nuclear material should be conducted in accordance with the safeguards requirements of the NPT and the conditions set out in the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. Australia would favour the application of appropriate physical protection standards to domestic activities, and welcomed the current discussions on the possibility of reviewing the Convention. In Australia's immediate region, countries were concerned about the potential harm arising from the maritime transport of nuclear material. Despite the good safety record associated with the shipment of nuclear material, coastal States had a right to expect shipping States to observe strict safety standards and ensure compensation for damage in the event of an accident. His country recognized the need to foster a global liability regime and had participated in discussions with States involved in the shipment of nuclear material through the South Pacific region to explore ways of addressing particular concerns.

49. Lastly, he reiterated Australia's endorsement of the Agency's work, and pledged its technical, financial and political support in the future.

50. Ms. DRÁBOVÁ (Czech Republic) expressed satisfaction with the results of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. As for its own non-proliferation efforts, the Czech Republic had signed the additional protocol to its new safeguards agreement on 28 September 1999 and the legislative steps required to implement it had already begun. From the start, the Czech Republic had supported review of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and welcomed the informal open-ended meeting of experts organized by the Director General to discuss that issue. It also welcomed related Agency activities, particularly workshops on illicit trafficking in nuclear material and on design basis threats, one of which it had hosted in September 1999. The Czech Republic remained ready to organize, in

co-operation with the Agency, events relating to the physical protection of nuclear materials and facilities as well as safeguards implementation.

51. Her country's new energy policy envisaged future electricity generation using nuclear power as it would help to diversify energy sources, decrease carbon dioxide emissions and reduce the exploitation of limited fossil fuel deposits. For the Czech Government, the highest possible level of nuclear safety and radiation protection was a precondition for nuclear power facility operation. To that end, its legislative and regulatory framework for the use of nuclear energy and ionizing radiation had been reformed in recent years. The new legislation reflected experience gained in the operation of the Dukovany nuclear power plant, current international practice, including Agency recommendations, and the latest findings of scientific research.

52. The recent startup of the Temelin nuclear power plant - based on the WWER-1000 reactor design but extensively modernized - had given rise to much discussion. Each step had been preceded by intensive reviews and inspections by the national regulatory authority and the Czech Government had also ensured independent review using expert missions organized by the Agency. The reports of the two expert missions which had taken place in February 2000 had unequivocally stated that the licensing process in the Czech Republic followed the world's best practice and that the Temelin plant was ready for startup. All the recommendations made by the experts with a view to increasing the safety level had been implemented without delay. Another precondition for startup was fulfilment of all the Agency's safeguards requirements. New arrangements for implementing safeguards at the Temelin and the Dukovany plants had been drawn up in consultation with the Agency.

53. The Czech Republic's participation in international nuclear safety activities included involvement in the review process of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, co-operation with OECD/NEA and the working and advisory bodies of the European Commission, bilateral contacts and joint projects. She reiterated her country's readiness to maintain a broad dialogue on cross-border aspects of the safety of the Temelin power plant.

54. Over the years, her country had striven to balance its involvement in the Agency's technical co-operation programme as both a beneficiary and a donor. At a time of zero real budgetary growth, it had been increasing both its voluntary financial contributions to selected projects and its assistance in kind and she called on other countries, especially those in the region, to consider similar steps. Specifically, it had supported projects in Ukraine and Armenia, and interregional Model Projects to strengthen radiation protection infrastructure in some Member States. Also, her country's Model Project to build a centre for short-lived radiopharmaceutical production for use in cardiological and oncological diagnostics would be completed on schedule in 2000.

Mr. Othman (Syrian Arab Republic) resumed the Chair.

55. Mr. SHANGULA (Namibia) expressed appreciation for the assistance received from the Department of Technical Co-operation, which had made a significant contribution to Namibia's main objective of poverty alleviation. In the past year, several expert missions had

been sent to the country to help in such fields as human health, animal diseases, water resources and safeguards. A Country Programme Framework linked to the national development strategy had been prepared and Namibia was confident that it would be given positive consideration by the Agency.

56. The Agency's potential was illustrated by the assistance it had given Namibia in the following areas: strengthening the capacity for diagnosis of animal diseases, establishment of a central radiation therapy unit, improved monitoring of water flow and the introduction of isotope hydrology, automatic tracer flow gauging and fertilizer and water resource management. An important new project had been developed using nuclear technology for monitoring veterinary drug residues in livestock. The aim was to eradicate animal diseases in subsistence farming areas to enable farmers to improve the quality of their products and to market their animals without restrictions. Furthermore, in the area of human health, Namibia supported the Agency's efforts to introduce the use of isotopes for the control of communicable diseases, primarily diagnosis of drug resistant malaria and tuberculosis. Also, his delegation noted with satisfaction that the Model Project for the improvement of regulatory authority infrastructure in Member States had been extended.

57. His country had assumed the chairmanship of AFRA for one year and believed that the Agreement had achieved tangible results in the short period it had existed. He appealed to all Member States of AFRA and the Agency to consider funding AFRA projects.

58. Namibia had signed an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement with the Agency on 20 March 2000 and was finalizing the constitutional requirements for its entry into force.

59. The daunting challenges facing the Agency could be met only if all Member States honoured their financial obligations. His delegation viewed with concern the arrears accumulated by some Member States. While mindful of the financial constraints faced by all, particularly the developing countries, he urged Member States to pay their assessed and voluntary contributions on time and in full. Namibia, for its part, had done so and would continue to honour its obligations in the future.

60. Mr. GRÖNBERG (Finland) said that in the rush to use nuclear technology in the early days of the nuclear era, little attention had been paid to the limited lifetime and potential obsolescence of nuclear installations and radiation sources. The incentive to take care of such facilities and any resulting waste material diminished considerably once they were no longer useful. A rigorous, forward-looking legislative and regulatory framework for radioactive waste management was required to be in place well beforehand. In the previous ten years or so, the international community had become increasingly aware of that problem and the result had been a shift of emphasis in the Agency's work. The decommissioning of nuclear facilities presented particular problems, with regard not only to waste management but also maintaining the necessary know-how.

61. The implementation of the Joint Convention would bring new and important tasks. Ensuring the safety of interim storage sites of spent nuclear fuel was increasingly consuming

Agency resources. While the integrated safeguards system would offer new approaches, more work was needed to reconcile safeguards requirements with the demands of long-term safety. Because of its strong interest in that area, Finland was involved actively in the multinational effort to develop safeguards for the final disposal of spent fuel in geological repositories.

62. One of the Agency's recent achievements was the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. The technical co-operation programme could be a vehicle to promote the worldwide adoption of the principles set out in the Code.

63. Work was being carried out in many countries to develop acceptable technical solutions for spent fuel management, identify prospective sites and gain public acceptance for their use. The approach used in Finland, which had been fairly successful so far, had been to develop a technical solution that was not site-specific and then to approach local communities, mainly through environmental impact assessment. A political decision would soon be taken in Finland on the final disposal of spent fuel, opening the way to further site studies to form the basis for decisions on actual site use.

64. Mr. VAJGL (Slovenia) expressed satisfaction with the outcome of the 2000 NPT Review Conference which, he hoped, would give fresh impetus worldwide to the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Slovenia had already ratified the CTBT and urged all States to do likewise to facilitate its early entry into force. It also endorsed the immediate initiation of negotiations for a fissile material cut-off treaty.

65. Within the non-proliferation regime, the development and implementation of an integrated approach to safeguards was of the highest priority. The Parliament of Slovenia had ratified the additional protocol to its safeguards agreement with the Agency in July 2000. His delegation urged all States which had not yet signed safeguards agreements and additional protocols to do so.

66. Having voluntarily opted for an unshielded regime for financing safeguards, Slovenia welcomed the recent compromise solution reached by the Board in favour of gradual elimination of the shielding system.

67. In March 2000, the Slovenian Parliament had adopted legislation to enforce control over exports of dual-use equipment, material and technology that could be used for the production of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons or ballistic missiles, ammunition or explosives. A decree issued in May 2000 contained a list of such items that was identical to the export control regime of the European Union. Thus, Slovenia met the measures stipulated by the Nuclear Suppliers Group for nuclear non-proliferation. In addition, it had recently become a member of the Zangger Committee.

68. A well established international safety framework with legally binding instruments was a precondition to the peaceful use of nuclear energy and an important element of the global safety culture. The first review meeting of Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety held in 1999 had been of great value for national nuclear safety programmes. His country had already ratified the Joint Convention and urged all Member States to do their best to facilitate its early entry into force. The Notification and Assistance Conventions had

already attained global status, but more Member States should adhere to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the Paris and Vienna Conventions on liability so that they could become universal.

69. Slovenia highly appreciated the Agency's expert services, having made use of them since the very start of its nuclear programme. It planned to invite the Agency to carry out another OSART mission in 2002.

70. As always, his country had pledged its full share to the TCF for 2001 and had fulfilled its financial obligations towards assessed programme costs for 1999. In the past year, it had hosted nine Agency meetings, training courses or workshops, in addition to providing on-the-job training and expert services. It supported Agency technical co-operation projects which offered ways of resolving common problems through regional co-operation and had submitted its project proposals for the 2001-2002 cycle.

71. The modernization of the Krško nuclear power plant had reached completion in 2000. Replacement of the steam generators and the supply of a full-scope simulator had been major components of the demanding programme, part of which had been carried out under an Agency technical co-operation project. The aim was to extend the lifetime of the plant and increase its operational safety.

72. The number of radiological accidents in recent years proved how essential it was to develop an adequate national and international capacity for emergency preparedness and response. The Agency was performing important work in that area, and Slovenia was actively involved in emergency preparedness activities under the Agency's regional project on the safety review of research reactor facilities (RER/9/058).

73. Having played an active role in the deliberations on the amendment of Articles VI and XIV.A of the Statute (resolutions GC(43)/RES/19 and GC(43)/RES/8, respectively), Slovenia had already ratified both amendments and had deposited its instrument of acceptance on 3 April 2000. An early entry into force of those amendments would contribute to enhancing the role and efficiency of the Agency.

74. Ms. HAIRD (United Kingdom) said that the Agency, as the body responsible for applying safeguards and ensuring compliance with safeguards agreements under the NPT, had a key role to play in implementing the conclusions of the recent NPT Review Conference. She urged the 50 or so States that had not yet brought into force comprehensive safeguards agreements to do so as soon as possible in fulfilment of their NPT obligations. She congratulated the Director General on having submitted additional protocols covering 54 States, including some with significant nuclear activities, to the Board of Governors for approval and noted with satisfaction that 16 of those protocols had come into force. However, many States that had not yet concluded and brought into force additional protocols and she called on them to do so as soon as possible. The recent enactment of its Nuclear Safeguards Act provided the United Kingdom with the necessary domestic powers to bring its additional protocol into force and it would do so as soon as possible. In the meantime, it had

submitted to the Agency voluntary declarations of information under the terms of the additional protocol. She was pleased that the Secretariat had found the information helpful in testing systems and procedures for the receipt, processing and evaluation of information.

75. While the Secretariat's work on integrated safeguards, with inputs from SAGSI and Member States, was impressive, her delegation believed that the development and comparative evaluation of alternative proposals for the integration of safeguards measures would provide a useful basis for decisions on the acceptability of particular proposals. She looked forward to the submission of a more detailed paper to the Board in due course.

76. The United Kingdom had published its annual figures for holdings of civil plutonium in June 2000 and national figures as at 31 December 1999 for holdings of civil high-enriched uranium and the amount of depleted, natural and low-enriched uranium in the civil nuclear fuel cycle. As part of the effort to be as transparent as possible about the interface between civil and military programmes, information on withdrawals of nuclear material from safeguards since 1978 had recently been made public. Future withdrawals from safeguards would be limited to small quantities of nuclear material unsuitable for explosive purposes and information on such withdrawals would also be made public.

77. The United Kingdom welcomed the Board's decision concerning the oversight of neptunium and americium¹. It had provided the Agency with information on exports of separated neptunium up to the end of 1999 and would provide annual reports on such exports in future. It would also be updating information previously provided on exports of separated americium. She stressed the importance of co-operation by the relevant States in the oversight exercise.

78. The United Kingdom was grateful for the Board's updates on negotiations involving the Russian Federation, the United States of America and the Agency on submission for verification of material designated as no longer required for military purposes and looked forward to receiving more detailed information in due course.

79. Her delegation urged Iraq to begin co-operating immediately with the Agency and UNMOVIC so that sanctions could be suspended as soon as possible and eventually lifted. Also, the United Kingdom was seriously concerned about the continuing refusal of the DPRK to co-operate with the Agency and urged it to comply fully with its safeguards agreement as soon as possible. It was to be hoped that the progress made since the recent landmark North-South summit would be reflected in a more positive attitude by the DPRK to arms control issues.

80. The United Kingdom believed that the Agency should give high priority to safety standards within the nuclear safety programme and particularly welcomed moves to develop fuel cycle safety standards, which would not only assist the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention in meeting the objectives of the Convention but also complement standards already in place for nuclear power plants. The Joint Convention represented a major step towards ensuring that spent fuel and radioactive waste were managed in ways that achieved

¹ See the annex to document GOV/OR.986.

high levels of safety and protected individuals, society and the environment from the harmful effects of ionizing radiation. The United Kingdom was committed to the aims of that Convention and looked forward to participating in the preparatory meeting for the reviews of national reports, and in the reviews themselves.

81. Her country strongly supported the Agency's technical co-operation activities. It had paid its full contribution to the target of the TCF for 2000 and had made additional voluntary contributions covering specific areas of the Agency's work. She welcomed the agreement reached in the Board on the financing of technical co-operation, particularly the mechanism to encourage States to increase their contributions to the TCF in line with a progressive rate of attainment formula. She urged all States to contribute their share of the TCF target and assessed programme costs in full and on time.

82. For its part, the United Kingdom had completed the necessary parliamentary procedures for ratification of the amendments to Articles VI and XIV of the Statute and she called on all States to make every effort to ensure their early entry into force.

83. Welcoming the Secretariat's new approach to programme and budgeting, she said her country intended to play an active role in determining priorities for the coming biennium. She also welcomed the introduction of performance indicators and called on the Secretariat to ensure that they were both representative of the Agency's work and measurable. The United Kingdom would do its best to provide any information needed to assist the Secretariat in measuring its performance.

84. She was pleased that an MOU between the Agency and the OECD/NEA had been elaborated and looked forward to its speedy conclusion. It would help to prevent unnecessary duplication of activities and provide access to the results of the NEA's work.

85. In conclusion, she pledged the continuing support of the United Kingdom to the Agency activities in the year ahead.

86. Mr. SIAGE (Syrian Arab Republic) underlined that Israel's nuclear capability presented a serious threat to the countries of the Middle East region. Its nuclear policy was not motivated by a regional arms race, since all States of the region except Israel had signed the NPT and concluded safeguards agreements with the Agency. The Arab States had again placed an item entitled "Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat" on the agenda to give the Agency an opportunity to condemn those capabilities in the light of the NPT.

87. For the past six years, the General Conference had adopted by consensus a resolution entitled "Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East". As a first step towards ensuring transparency and building the confidence needed to establish a NWFZ in the Middle East, as advocated in operative paragraph 7 of that resolution and in the final document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, Israel should accede to the NPT and place its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards. The General Conference should assist in putting international pressure on Israel to renounce nuclear weapons as that would move forward the peace process and promote security and stability in the Middle East.

88. The peace process was currently in difficulties because Israel wanted both peace and land. The Syrian Arab Republic aspired to a just and comprehensive peace based on United Nations resolutions and would therefore be satisfied with nothing less than the recovery of the whole of the Golan Heights up to the line of 4 June 1967 and full Palestinian sovereignty over Jerusalem. Israel must cease all measures aimed at altering the Arab character of the city and perpetuating its illegal occupation. Moreover, the Palestinian refugees must be given the opportunity to exercise their right to return to the land that was stolen from them.

89. He commended the Agency's Department of Technical Co-operation on its work during the previous year. He strongly supported its new strategy based on, inter alia, the one-house approach, Model Projects, thematic planning and results-based programming, and encouraged the Agency to support the adoption of a regional co-operation agreement among the Arab States of West Asia.

90. The stagnation of TCF resources was impeding the implementation of projects in certain Member States. He called on States to honour their obligations to the Fund in full and on time, particularly major donor countries that had undertaken under the NPT to make the necessary financial and human resources available for the Agency's technical co-operation activities, and to pay their assessed programme costs.

91. The Syrian Arab Republic participated in and supported the Agency's training programme. For example, the Syrian Atomic Energy Agency, in co-operation with the Agency, was pleased to host a number of training courses, including a nine-month regional course on radiation protection and radiation safety in Arabic in Damascus. His country was also grateful to the Agency for its assistance in disseminating scientific knowledge in Arabic and welcomed the bilateral projects being undertaken by the Agency and the Arab Atomic Energy Agency.

92. Mr. de SAMPAIO NUNES (European Commission) said that although over a third of the electricity consumed in the European Union was currently generated by nuclear power plants, the long-term role of nuclear energy compared with other sources remained unclear.

93. In signing the Kyoto Protocol, the European Community had committed itself to an 8% reduction in 1990 greenhouse gas emission levels by 2010. If the share of nuclear energy in electricity production were to decline, Europe would be unable to meet that target. It was estimated that CO₂ emissions could increase by around 10% in 2010 compared with 1990 and by 15% in 2020 if, as anticipated, certain safe and competitive nuclear power plants were shut down early and there was a major increase in natural gas consumption. Today, Europe was divided over the nuclear option, which must be objectively and democratically debated. While it presented advantages in terms of economic competitiveness, supply security and greenhouse gas reductions, there were still drawbacks in respect of radiation safety, the dismantling of obsolete facilities and the management of highly radioactive wastes.

94. Expansion of the EU to include central and eastern European countries raised the issue of reactor safety in some candidate countries. The Union had taken due note of the Director

General's offer to work more closely with it on the matter. First-generation Soviet-type reactors that could not be brought up to western safety levels at a reasonable cost were to be closed, and politically binding agreements to that end had been concluded with the countries concerned. The remaining reactors would be renovated within a reasonable time-frame. The EU had established a number of financial mechanisms to help candidate countries attain high standards of nuclear safety. It had contributed to the creation of a special fund within the EBRD for the early closure of some of the most unsafe reactors and had provided a large loan through EURATOM for the modernization of the Kozloduy nuclear power plant in Bulgaria.

95. In the interests of promoting world economic development while preserving the environment, the EU was prepared to share its experience in nuclear safety with countries that chose the nuclear option. An important aspect of the European Commission's efforts aimed at protecting humankind from the dangers of ionizing radiation was its work to promote a nuclear safety culture in Europe. To that end, it was collaborating especially closely with Russia, Ukraine and Armenia. The European Commission applauded Ukraine's decision to shut down the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in December 2000. At the donors' conference for the rehabilitation of the Shelter, held in Berlin in July 2000, the EU had made pledges bringing its contribution to 57% of the total funding. Within its own borders, the EU continued to identify aspects of nuclear safety that could be improved by a common approach and had encouraged candidates for membership to participate in the effort. An increasingly important activity in Europe, in view of the number of facilities which were planned for closure, was the dismantling of nuclear installations.

96. The EU welcomed the success of the recent NPT Review Conference, even though a number of difficult issues remained unresolved. The control of nuclear materials within the Union remained entirely satisfactory, largely due to the excellent co-operation between Agency inspectors and those of the European Commission, and especially through the New Partnership Approach. The Commission actively supported the Agency in the development of integrated safeguards which would favour a more qualitative approach to control and should lead to reductions in traditional activities. He hoped that the EU would continue to be an area where nuclear proliferation was not an issue so that the Agency could concentrate its safeguards efforts on areas where real dangers existed. The Commission played an important role in the supply of nuclear fuels and monitored markets closely to ensure diversification of sources of supply.

97. If there was to be a future for nuclear energy, R&D in both fission and fusion was important in order to make existing technology safer and more economical through the exploration of new and promising concepts. With regard to fission, a high priority should be given the problem of waste management, whereas the main issue for fusion was clearly the future of the ITER. Negotiations on co-operation agreements in fusion research between EURATOM and the United States of America and EURATOM and Kazakhstan had been completed in April 2000 and June 2000, respectively. Progress had been made in negotiating a co-operation agreement on peaceful uses of nuclear energy with Japan and similar negotiations would be launched very soon with Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Co-operation agreements on nuclear safety and fusion had been negotiated with the Russian

Federation and were to be signed in the near future, and specific nuclear co-operation activities had been carried out with that country, including the involvement of the EURATOM Joint Research Centre. The EU intended to remain involved in KEDO and in any initiative aimed at the maintenance of peace and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula.

98. In conclusion, he said that all States, including those of the EU, would have to face challenges in the nuclear sector in coming years. The Commission must not confine itself to the role of administrator of decisions adopted within its institutional framework; it should initiate a wide-ranging debate on the share of nuclear power in Europe's future energy supply.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.