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Chairperson: Ms. FEROUKHI (Algeria)

Contents

Item of the agenda ¹	Paragraphs
18 Strengthening the Agency's activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications (<i>continued</i>)	1–3
15 Measures to strengthen international cooperation in nuclear, radiation and transport safety and waste management (<i>resumed</i>)	4
23 Amendment to Article VI of the Statute	5–10
18 Strengthening the Agency's activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications (<i>resumed</i>)	11–87

¹ GC(51)/COM.5/1.

Abbreviations used in this record:

SMR	small and medium-sized reactor
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18. Strengthening the Agency's activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications (continued) (GC(51)/COM.5/L.8)

1. The representative of INDIA, introducing the draft resolution entitled “Small and medium-sized nuclear reactors — Development and deployment” in document GC(51)/COM.5/L.8, said that the worldwide demand for energy was continuing to increase rapidly. The Agency's latest projections indicated that global energy consumption would grow by 53% during the period up to 2030, with 70% of the growth taking place in developing countries.
2. Nuclear power, apart from helping to meet the increased energy demand and enhancing the security of energy supplies, would help to mitigate carbon emissions. The Agency's mid-term projections indicated the possibility of a substantial expansion in the use of nuclear power, especially in developing countries.
3. Large reactors were not necessarily suitable for countries with very limited investment capacities or small electrical grids, which was why a draft resolution on the development and deployment of small and medium-sized nuclear reactors had been submitted by India and six other Member States.

15. Measures to strengthen international cooperation in nuclear, radiation and transport safety and waste management (resumed) (GC(51)/COM.5/L.16)

4. The representative of NEW ZEALAND, introducing the draft resolution on transport safety contained in document GC(51)/COM.5/L.16, said that it built upon the achievements of the past year and looked ahead to important transport safety issues. It was sponsored both by coastal States and by shipping States.

23. Amendment to Article VI of the Statute (GC(51)/COM.5/L.15)

5. The representative of ALGERIA, introducing the draft decision contained in document GC(51)/COM.5/L.15, said that it updated decision GC(50)/DEC/12 adopted by the General Conference in 2006.

6. The representative of the REPUBLIC OF KOREA, noting that eight years had passed since the unanimous adoption of General Conference resolution GC(43)/RES/19, said that Member States should follow up on the common commitment which that resolution represented.
7. The representative of MOROCCO, expressing regret at the lack of progress in the past year, urged the Committee to recommend adoption of the draft decision.
8. The representative of CANADA, noting that every Member State would be part of a regional group once the amendment to Article VI entered into force, called for further Member States to accept the amendment.
9. The CHAIRPERSON took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the draft decision contained in document GC(51)/COM.5/L.15.
10. It was so agreed.

18. Strengthening the Agency's activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications (resumed) (GC(51)/COM.5/L.8)

11. The representative of FRANCE, noting that his country was among the sponsors of the draft resolution contained in document GC(51)/COM.5/L.8 and introduced by the representative of India earlier in the meeting, said that many countries had become very interested in SMRs.
12. The representative of CHINA said that his country's name had been inadvertently omitted from the list of sponsors of the draft resolution.
13. The representative of AUSTRIA said that the draft resolution contained much of the same language as the draft resolution entitled "Plan for producing potable water economically using small and medium-sized nuclear reactors" (recommended by the Committee in document GC(51)/COM.5/L.7/Rev.1) and the draft resolution entitled "Nuclear power applications" submitted in document GC(51)/COM.5/L.6. He therefore wondered what added value it provided.
14. The representative of NORWAY, supported by the representatives of LUXEMBOURG, IRELAND and DENMARK, said that in his delegation's view the draft resolution was superfluous.
15. The representatives of BRAZIL and CANADA said that their delegations did not consider the draft resolution to be superfluous.
16. The representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA recalled that, in subparagraph 5 (a) of resolution GC(50)/RES/13.B.1, the General Conference had in 2006 encouraged the development of "small and medium nuclear power reactors".
17. The CHAIRPERSON proposed that the Committee, despite the fact that some of its members considered the draft resolution contained in document GC(51)/COM.5/L.8 to be superfluous, focus on that draft resolution with a view to arriving at a text which could be recommended to the General Conference for adoption.
18. It was so agreed.

19. The representative of SOUTH AFRICA, expressing support for the draft resolution, proposed the addition, after paragraph (e), of a paragraph reading “Noting also that some SMR designs have fuel characteristics that have enhanced proliferation resistance”.
20. The representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION and INDIA said that the addition proposed by the representative of South Africa was acceptable to their delegations.
21. The representative of GHANA expressed support for the proposal made by the representative of South Africa.
22. The representative of PAKISTAN proposed that paragraph (e) be deleted and urged that the additional paragraph proposed by the representative of South Africa not be included in the draft resolution.
23. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN expressed support for the deletion of paragraph (e).
24. The representative of SOUTH AFRICA said that, if it was agreed that paragraph (e) should be deleted, he would withdraw his proposal.
25. The CHAIRPERSON asked whether the Committee wished paragraph (e) to be deleted.
26. It was so agreed.
27. The representative of PAKISTAN pointed out that in paragraph (b) the word “economic” should read “economics”.
28. The representative of YEMEN proposed that in paragraph 1 the word “economic” be replaced by “economically viable”.
29. The representative of the UNITED KINGDOM proposed that in paragraph 1 the words “within the available resources” be replaced by “subject to the availability of resources”.
30. She welcomed the fact that in subparagraph 6 (iii) it was envisaged that the Director General would not have to report to the Board and the Conference before 2009.
31. The CHAIRPERSON asked whether the proposals made by the representatives of Yemen and the United Kingdom regarding paragraph 1 were acceptable.
32. It was so agreed.
33. The representative of AUSTRIA proposed the addition, after paragraph (c), of a paragraph reading “Noting also the risks and pending issues in connection with nuclear power reactors, which are also valid for small and medium-sized units”.
34. The representative of FRANCE said that the additional preambular paragraph proposed by the representative of Austria raised questions touched upon in other draft resolutions. In the interests of a balanced approach, perhaps language similar to that in paragraph (j) of the draft resolution on nuclear power applications in document GC(51)/COM.5/L.6, which referred to “benefits and risks”, could be used.
35. The representative of INDIA, expressing support for the comments made by the representative of France, said that in his view the concerns of Austria were addressed in — for example — paragraph (b) of the draft resolution under consideration.

36. The representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, also expressing support for the comments made by the representative of France, noted that the draft resolution contained in document GC(51)/COM.5/L.6 referred — in paragraph (f) — to “the safety and security issues associated with nuclear energy”.

37. The CHAIRPERSON suggested that interested delegations hold informal consultations on the proposal made by the representative of Austria.

38. The representative of NORWAY suggested that “, environmental” be added after “social” in paragraph 3.

39. The representative of FRANCE said that the envisaged feasibility studies would include assessments of environmental impacts as a matter of course. However, his delegation would not object to the inclusion of a reference to environmental protection in paragraph 3.

40. The representative of PAKISTAN said that environmental impacts were always taken into account in such feasibility studies.

41. The representative of NORWAY, welcoming the flexibility shown by the representative of France, said that she would prefer environmental impacts to be explicitly mentioned in paragraph 3, and also — for the sake of consistency — in paragraph (b).

42. The representative of INDIA said that, in his view, environmental concerns were addressed through the mention of waste management in paragraph (b). He would prefer that there not be a reference to environmental protection in the draft resolution, but he would not block a consensus in favour of the inclusion of such a reference.

43. The representative of NEW ZEALAND suggested that the words “the possible cost and risk factors, including security, waste management, and” be inserted in paragraph 3 after “technical aspects”.

44. The representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA suggested that, in order to avoid going into excessive detail regarding the nature of envisaged feasibility studies, paragraph 3 be amended to read “... besides the technical aspects, inter alia the social, environmental and economic impacts of SMR technology”.

45. The representative of NORWAY, expressing support for that suggestion, said that, although it was standard procedure to deal with environmental impacts in feasibility studies, it was not certain that the standard procedure would be followed in all feasibility studies.

46. The representative of AUSTRIA, expressing support for the suggestion made by the representative of New Zealand and the comment made by the representative of Norway, said that several suggestions made by delegations such as his own before the draft resolution had been tabled were not reflected in the text. Given the amount of detail elsewhere in the draft resolution, and how many paragraphs reiterated ideas contained in other draft resolutions, he did not think that language responding explicitly to environmental concerns should pose a serious problem.

47. The representative of FRANCE — following comments by the representatives of NORWAY, IRELAND, SOUTH AFRICA, the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, NEW ZEALAND, PAKISTAN, AUSTRIA, INDIA and CANADA and by the CHAIRPERSON — proposed that paragraph 3 be amended to read “besides the technical aspects, which cover safety and security and environmental protection, the social and economic impacts of SMR technology”.

48. The CHAIRPERSON took it that the Committee wished to accept the proposal made by the representative of FRANCE.

49. It was so agreed.

50. The representative of AUSTRIA, referring to paragraph 4, said that his delegation could not support a resolution in which the Director General was requested to continue consultations with multilateral financial institutions “in activities relating to the development and deployment of SMRs”. Austria, which was a net donor in a number of multilateral financial institutions, was opposed to the development and deployment of nuclear power altogether and hence to the Director General's consulting with multilateral financial institutions in the interests of SMR development and deployment. His delegation would like to see the words “multilateral financial institutions” deleted.

51. The representative of INDIA said that, if the Director General had in fact been consulting with multilateral financial institutions “in activities relating to the development and deployment of SMRs”, his delegation did not see why those words should be deleted.

52. The representative of NORWAY proposed the insertion of the word “advisory” between “in” and “activities relating to the development and deployment of SMRs”.

53. The representative of CANADA, recalling that in paragraph 9 of resolution GC(50)/RES/13.B the General Conference had in 2006 requested the Director General “to report to the 51st session of the General Conference on innovative means of financing nuclear power as an option in meeting the energy needs of interested developing countries”, said that it was Canada's understanding that, in response to the request, the Secretariat had been consulting with multilateral financial institutions. His delegation did not see how the Secretariat could prepare a credible report without consulting with such institutions.

54. The representative of SOUTH AFRICA expressed support for the comments made by the representative of Canada and said that his delegation was opposed to the idea of inserting the word “advisory” in paragraph 4.

55. The representative of NEW ZEALAND, noting that no reference to multilateral financial institutions had been made in paragraph 9 of resolution GC(50)/RES/13.B, called for flexibility in the Committee.

56. The representative of FRANCE expressed support for the comments made by the representative of Canada.

57. The representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA proposed that the word “multilateral” be deleted.

58. The representative of AUSTRIA requested time in which to reflect on the proposal made by the representative of the United States of America.

59. The representative of NORWAY, responding to a question put by the representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, said that she had proposed the insertion of the word “advisory” in paragraph 4 because most of the Agency's statutory activities relating to the promotion of nuclear power were advisory in nature.

60. The PROGRAMME LIAISON OFFICER, DEPARTMENT OF NUCLEAR ENERGY said that the Agency's activities relating to the development and deployment of SMRs included the organization of training and of coordinated research projects.

61. The representatives of CANADA, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION and INDIA said that they were opposed to the insertion of the word “advisory”.

62. The CHAIRPERSON proposed that the Committee consider paragraph 4 further after the representative of Austria had reflected on the proposal made by the representative of the United States of America.

63. It was so agreed.

64. The representative of NEW ZEALAND, referring to operative paragraph 5, proposed the deletion of “catalyze and” and “augmentation and”.

65. The representative of FRANCE said that his delegation was prepared to accept that proposal, hoping that the delegation of New Zealand and like-minded delegations would be flexible with regard to other paragraphs.

66. The representative of INDIA associated himself with the comments made by the representative of France.

67. The CHAIRPERSON took it that the Committee could accept the deletion of “catalyze and” and “augmentation and” in paragraph 5.

68. It was so agreed.

69. The representative of NORWAY proposed the insertion of “interested” between “in” and “Member States” in paragraph 6 (ii).

70. The CHAIRPERSON took it that the Committee could accept the proposal made by the representative of Norway regarding paragraph 6 (ii).

71. It was so agreed.

72. The representative of IRELAND proposed the addition, after paragraph (a), of a paragraph reading: “Confirming that the use of nuclear power must be accompanied by commitments to and ongoing implementation of effective levels of safety, security and safeguards, consistent with States’ national legislation and respective international obligations”. The same language was contained in paragraph (l) of the draft resolution contained in document GC(51)/COM.5/L.6 and paragraph (l) of resolution GC(50)/RES/13. B.

73. The representative of NEW ZEALAND expressed support for the proposal made by the representative of Ireland.

74. The CHAIRPERSON questioned the need for the proposed additional paragraph if it was identical with paragraph (l) of the draft resolution contained in document GC(51)/COM.5/L.6.

75. The representative of AUSTRIA, responding to the comment made by the Chairperson, said that, although the proposed additional paragraph might appear superfluous, several Member States, including Austria, wished to see the language of paragraph (l) of the draft resolution contained in document GC(51)/COM.5/L.6 introduced into the draft resolution now under consideration.

76. The representative of IRELAND said that his delegation was still of the view that the resolution now under consideration was superfluous. However, since the Committee had agreed to focus on it with a view to arriving at a text which could be recommended to the General Conference for adoption, his delegation believed that it would be helpful to add language which the General Conference had accepted when adopting resolution GC(50)/RES/13.B.

77. The representative of INDIA said that he did not see the need for the proposed additional paragraph. However, in the interests of not prolonging the discussion, his delegation would refrain from opposing its inclusion in the draft resolution now under consideration.

78. The representative of SOUTH AFRICA said that he too did not see the need for the proposed additional paragraph. If it was to be inserted in the draft resolution, it should be inserted after paragraph (k).

79. The representative of LUXEMBOURG expressed support for the comments made by the representatives of Austria and Ireland.

80. The representative of IRELAND, responding to the second comment made by the representative of South Africa, said that in his delegation's view the appropriate place for the proposed additional paragraph was after paragraph (a).

81. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN said that it was not helpful to propose the insertion of a new paragraph at such a late stage in the consideration of the draft resolution contained in document GC(51)/COM.5/L.8.

82. The CHAIRPERSON proposed that the Committee return to the issue of the additional paragraph proposed by the representative of Ireland at a later meeting.

83. It was so agreed.

84. The representative of NORWAY, recalling that the agreed version of paragraph 3 contained a reference to "safety and security and environmental protection", proposed that paragraph (b) be amended to read "... to address economics, environmental protection, safety and security, reliability, ...".

85. The CHAIRPERSON asked the Committee whether it wished to accept the proposal made by the representative of Norway.

86. It was so agreed.

87. The representative of AUSTRIA, recalling that he had proposed an additional paragraph reading "Noting also the risks and pending issues in connection with nuclear power reactors, which are also valid for small and medium-sized units", said that he was looking forward to discussing his proposal informally with members of other delegations.

88. The representative of INDIA, responding to the comment made by the representative of Austria, said that in his view the concerns prompting his proposal had been addressed by agreed changes made to the draft resolution.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.