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Temporary President: Ms RAYOS NATIVIDAD (Philippines)

President: Ms ŽIAKOVÁ (Slovakia)

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* Reissued for technical reasons.

¹ GC(62)/17.

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Abbreviations used in this record

AAEA	Arab Atomic Energy Agency
AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
CNS	Convention on Nuclear Safety
CPF	Country Programme Framework
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EPR	evolutionary power reactor
EU	European Union
HEU	high enriched uranium
ICERR	IAEA-designated International Centre based on Research Reactor
INIR	Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
INSSP	Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
Joint Convention	Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management
LEU	low enriched uranium
MNSR	miniature neutron source reactor
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NSF	Nuclear Security Fund
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PUI	Peaceful Uses Initiative

Abbreviations used in this record (continued)

RANET	Response and Assistance Network
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SLA	State-level safeguards approach
SMRs	small and medium sized or modular reactors
TC	technical cooperation
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
WANO	World Association of Nuclear Operators
WMDs	weapons of mass destruction

— Opening of the session

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT declared the 62nd regular session of the General Conference open.
2. In accordance with Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, she invited the delegates to observe one minute of silence dedicated to prayer or meditation.

All present rose and stood in silence for one minute.

3. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT welcomed the participation of many ministers and senior officials from Member States. Their presence enhanced the standing of the Agency as the foremost forum for international cooperation in the peaceful and safe use of nuclear energy, attesting to the value of the Agency's work and the high regard that Member States continued to have for its mandate.
4. Every year, the community of nations had the opportunity to revisit and interpret anew the Agency's mandate to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world. Each General Conference provided an opportunity to ensure the continuing relevance of the Agency's work for its increasing number of Member States.
5. She expressed hope that the spirit of Vienna, which had permeated the previous General Conference session, would also prevail during the current session as Member States discussed key elements of the Agency's major work priorities and sought solutions, through nuclear science and technology, to address critical challenges.
6. In South-East Asia, Typhoon Mangkhut, also known as Typhoon Ompong, had ravaged the northern Philippines, also battering Hong Kong and parts of mainland China, claiming lives and property in its wake. The increase in the frequency and intensity of typhoons was no doubt related to climate change, and the focus of the Scientific Forum on the use of nuclear technology in combating the adverse effects of climate change was both timely and necessary.
7. There was much to celebrate in how Member States had continuously given meaning to the Agency's evolving mandate over more than 60 years. In 2017, at the first International Conference on the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme, over a thousand participants had contributed to the conversation on the impact of the TC programme on the front line of human development. In November 2018, the conversation would be taken to the next level with the first Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology: Addressing Current and Emerging Development Challenges — a high-level dialogue on nuclear science and technology and their applications, their delivery through the TC programme, and their contribution to sustainable development. The forthcoming inauguration of new laboratories at Seibersdorf represented another milestone.
8. Expectations were high and demands were growing on the TC programme, which contributed to the attainment of Member States' development goals through assistance in health and nutrition, food and agriculture, nuclear knowledge development, water and environment, energy, and industrial applications. As a result, the call for sufficient, assured and predictable resources for the programme resonated even more. The General Conference provided a welcome opportunity to continue discussions on ensuring sufficient resources to meet that growing demand, especially in light of the level of resources available for non-promotional activities.

9. Turning to nuclear safety and security, she said that as nuclear power was expected to play a key role in the world's low-carbon energy mix, the demand for INIR missions, as well as peer review and advisory services, was increasing accordingly. Interest was growing in the development of SMRs and in the Agency's work on the maintenance and management of 30-year-old power reactors.

10. The International Conference on the Security of Radioactive Material to be held in December 2018 and the International Conference on Nuclear Security to be held in 2020 at the ministerial level as well as discussions on the Nuclear Security Plan for 2018–2021 could provide insights into how to address security issues.

11. In the past months, the Agency's critical work on safeguards had gained even more prominence. The pressures brought to bear on the Agency were reflected by the developments relating to the JCPOA and the further development of the DPRK's nuclear programme.

12. She commended the expertise and dedication of the Secretariat under the excellent leadership of the Director General and their commitment to carrying out the Agency's noble work under the banner of Atoms for Peace and Development. She conveyed her deepest gratitude to the Far East Group for supporting her presidency and thanked the Vice-Presidents of the Conference and the outgoing Chair of the Committee of the Whole for their assistance and support during the 61st General Conference.

1. Election of officers and appointment of the General Committee

13. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT invited nominations for the office of President of the Conference.

14. Ms NINČIĆ (Serbia), speaking on behalf of the Eastern Europe Group, proposed Ms Žiaková (Slovakia).

15. Ms ŽIAKOVÁ (Slovakia) was elected President by acclamation.

16. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT congratulated Ms Žiaková on her election and wished her every success in her task.

Ms Žiaková (Slovakia) took the Chair.

17. The PRESIDENT thanked all present, in particular the Eastern Europe Group, for having supported her candidacy. She felt privileged to have the opportunity to serve as President of the General Conference, only the fourth woman and the first representative of the Eastern Europe Group and Slovakia to do so. She would do her utmost to successfully carry out that very important task in a constructive, collaborative manner and in the spirit of Vienna. She also thanked the outgoing President for her stewardship and able guidance.

18. She commended the Director General and the Secretariat for their dedication, tireless efforts, commitment and expertise, all of which had translated into the Agency's many achievements and accomplishments over the years.

19. The General Conference would be considering issues of great complexity and importance and of direct relevance to the Agency's role. In light of the international events and global challenges faced over the past years, it was of the utmost importance to make every possible effort to conduct constructive deliberations to achieve continuing and tangible progress in the Agency's Atoms for Peace and Development mission, within its mandate. The Member States were responsible for fully defining the

future aspirations and goals for the work of the Agency and the confidence that they placed in it was undeniably a valuable investment in international peace, security and development.

20. As the inextricable link between nuclear energy and nuclear weapons was arguably the greatest danger of nuclear power, the Agency's verification activities deserved full and unwavering support. Safeguards represented a fundamental nuclear security instrument, which meant in turn that benefits could be derived from the peaceful applications of nuclear techniques.

21. When carefully and responsibly used, nuclear energy had proved to be a reliable source. The Agency helped to ensure that nuclear activities were always conducted in a safe and secure manner by implementing and continuously improving high nuclear safety and security standards to prevent nuclear accidents. She commended the Agency's efforts aimed at globalizing nuclear safety by networking, integrating safety-related activities, assisting Member States in the implementation of the safety standards and promoting adherence to the relevant international conventions.

22. The ongoing development and application of nuclear technology continued to open up new and promising opportunities for global sustainable development. With the Agency's assistance, many Member States had made significant progress towards achieving their socio-economic developmental priorities. The Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology to be held in Vienna in November 2018 would aim to address current and emerging development challenges and seek to facilitate high-level dialogue on nuclear science, technology and applications for peaceful uses, and on their delivery, mainly through the TC programme.

23. Commending the work of the Department of Technical Cooperation, she said that the TC programme was recognized as an important delivery mechanism through which the Agency fulfilled its statutory functions to promote peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It had progressively become more relevant in assisting Member States in the use of nuclear science and technology to address key development challenges in such areas as human health and nutrition, agriculture and nuclear safety, as well as towards the attainment of the SDGs.

24. It was the responsibility of all Member States to ensure that the Agency was provided with adequate financial means for implementing and delivering on its programmatic activities and related development initiatives. Further strengthening and identification of savings and resource efficiencies were to be applied in all areas of the Programme and Budget 2018–2019.

25. She would spare no effort in seeking consensual outcomes on all items on the agenda. The emphasis should be on areas of agreement following a constructive and open approach in accordance with the common goal of creating a stronger Agency able to meet all expectations.

26. As the Director General was currently recovering from a medical procedure, he was unable to be physically present at the Agency's headquarters. He continued to discharge his responsibilities, supervising and guiding the work of the Agency in close communication with his office. She wished him good health and a speedy recovery, and an early return to Vienna.

27. Pursuant to Rules 34 and 40 of the Rules of Procedure, the Conference had to elect eight Vice-Presidents, a Chair of the Committee of the Whole and five additional members of the General Committee to constitute the General Committee of 15, with herself as its Chair.

28. She proposed that the delegates of Australia, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Canada, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Nigeria, the Philippines and Romania be elected as Vice-Presidents, that Mr Glender Rivas of Mexico be elected as Chair of the Committee of the Whole and that the delegates of Greece, Kenya, Luxembourg, the United Arab Emirates and the United States of America be elected as additional members of the General Committee.

29. The President's proposals were accepted.

2. Message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations

30. Mr FEDOTOV (Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Director-General of the United Nations Office in Vienna) read out the following message:

"I am pleased to greet the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

"You have a broad range of issues on your agenda, from promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy to enhancing the safeguards system, from advancing nuclear safety and security to furthering our shared objectives of nuclear disarmament.

"Let me start by commending Director General Amano and the staff of the IAEA for their dedication and hard work.

"The past year has seen both progress and setbacks.

"I welcome the Agency's continuing efforts to verify and monitor Iran's implementation of its nuclear-related commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

"The IAEA has also continued its work supporting the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly on health and nutrition, food and agriculture. The Agency's technical cooperation programmes provide a valuable service to its Member States and I welcome the priority placed on these activities.

"Through the implementation of safeguards agreements, the IAEA continues to work against the spread of nuclear weapons by providing credible assurances that its Member States are living up to their non-proliferation commitments. I am pleased to note that there are now 182 States with safeguards agreements in place, including 132 States with additional protocols in force. That is a crucial contribution to international peace and security.

"I also welcome the IAEA's readiness to resume verification activities in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. I remain hopeful that the ongoing diplomatic process can lead to sustainable peace and complete and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, in accordance with relevant Security Council resolutions.

"Nuclear safety and security rightly remain key issues for the IAEA. It is essential that nuclear and other radioactive materials are secure. Relatedly, it is of utmost importance that robust levels of nuclear safety are in place. As Director General Amano has pointed out, while nuclear security is the responsibility of individual countries, the IAEA plays a central role in facilitating and coordinating international cooperation in this regard.

"I wish you a fruitful gathering and look forward to continuing the valuable partnership between the IAEA and the United Nations in the year ahead."

31. In closing, he expressed his best wishes for a productive conference, and wished the Director General a speedy recovery.

3. Statement by the Director General

32. The PRESIDENT said that the Director General's full written introductory statement had been circulated to Member States in advance of the meeting.²

33. The DIRECTOR GENERAL, speaking via video link, welcomed participants to the 62nd session of the General Conference and expressed regret that he could not be present in person.

34. The Agency worked to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and helped countries achieve their development goals through the use of nuclear technology in health care, food and agriculture, industry and many other areas.

35. He was pleased that the General Conference attracted many government ministers as that reflected the great importance of the Agency's work to the 170 Member States.

36. He encouraged all countries to be represented at ministerial level at the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology to be held in Vienna in November 2018.

37. He thanked the staff of the Agency for their hard work and dedication, and expressed gratitude to all of the Member States for their active support of the Agency, and of him personally, and to Austria for being a model host country.

5. Contributions to the Technical Cooperation Fund for 2019

38. The PRESIDENT, recalling that on 4 June 2018 the Board of Governors had recommended a figure of €86 165 000 as the target for voluntary contributions to the TCF for 2019, drew attention to the table in document GC(62)/15 showing the contribution that each Member State would need to make in order to meet its share of that target.

39. The early pledging and payment of contributions to the TCF greatly helped the Secretariat in planning the Agency's technical cooperation programmes, and all delegations in a position to do so were therefore urged to notify the Secretariat during the Conference's current session of the contributions that their governments would be making for 2019. She was pleased to note that 18 Member States had already made their pledges to the TCF for 2019, representing the largest number of Member States to pledge before the opening of a General Conference session.

40. At the end of the session she would report on the contributions pledged at that time and hoped to be able to report favourably on the percentage of the 2019 target figure already pledged.

6. General debate and Annual Report for 2017 (GC(62)/3 and Additional Information)

41. Ms GOJKOVIĆ (Serbia) underlined the global importance of the Agency's activities and cooperation and reaffirmed her country's constant and strong commitment to the basic principles and

² The Director General's full introductory statement is attached as an Annex to this official record.

goals for the safe and secure application of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Serbia would continue to support the Agency's programmes for the greater efficiency and successful implementation of verification measures, and for the development of integrated safeguards, in line with the NPT.

42. Serbia's remarkable progress over the past year had included the ratification of an additional protocol. Furthermore, the process to adopt its INSSP was in its final stages. Serbia would continue to support the international community's efforts to establish efficient mechanisms against illicit trafficking in nuclear material and radioactive sources.

43. Her country continued to prioritize health and environmental protection and the establishment of conditions for the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear energy and for achieving global peace, prosperity and the well-being of future generations. Since the last General Conference, Serbia had passed a law ratifying the CNS, a law ratifying the Joint Convention and a regulation on establishing a National Radiation Emergency Plan. A legal basis had been established for improving the country's role in global efforts to implement nuclear safety measures. Serbia would continue to apply the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and the Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources.

44. Serbia attached great significance to Agency technical assistance, which was essential for attaining a higher level of nuclear safety and security and for meeting the Agency's requirements and standards. The support provided with regard to the functions of the Serbian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency, safe nuclear waste management and health protection was highly important. In that context, Serbia was implementing many national and regional projects. Her country supported the Agency's efforts to improve international standards and documents, and recognized the key contribution of technical assistance to further progress in that field.

45. Serbia was actively improving its Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency, and was committed to strengthening its legal and regulatory frameworks in line with international standards and the European Union acquis. Her country was also taking steps to improve the legal status of its regulatory body in order to ensure its full independence and autonomy, stable funding and sound professional and administrative capacities.

46. Mr SALEHI (Islamic Republic of Iran), having wished the Director General a speedy recovery, said that the future of the JCPOA was among the most pressing global concerns. It was important to recognize the historic importance of the agreement, which had been the result of long and arduous consultations in which concessions had been made on all sides. Since the entry into effect of the plan in early 2016, Iran had faithfully fulfilled all its commitments. In contrast, the United States of America had continually failed to comply fully with its provisions and, in its eventual withdrawal from the JCPOA, had demonstrated a blatant disregard for UN Security Council resolution 2231 (2015). That decision would undoubtedly have serious repercussions for peace and security at international and regional levels. It also raised concerns about the rationale behind the policy pursued. Moreover, while the international community had expressed anger at such unilateralism, it had also expressed concern in relation to the difficult situation in the region.

47. The JCPOA could be instrumental in bolstering the relevance and viability of the NPT, which remained a reliable framework for the non-proliferation regime and a linchpin of international security. Iran had strongly supported the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East since 1974 and was subject to the most stringent nuclear verification inspections in the world. Israel, for its part, had steadfastly refused to accede to the NPT or comply with inspections and was in possession of a considerable nuclear arsenal. Displaying a blatant disregard for the actions of a State that was not party to the NPT while insisting on the fully-fledged implementation of NPT safeguards in a party to the NPT was contentious, discriminatory and highly unjust. As for the future of the JCPOA, the progress already achieved should

be accompanied by further practical and concrete steps. The EU had a duty to uphold its commitments: the approach employed thus far, which had been characterized by gradualism, would not be an appropriate response to the recklessness displayed by the USA. He expressed hope that the Agency would continue executing its mandate with professionalism and impartiality, maintaining objectivity and refraining from any political bias in its technical reports, and that it would soon draw the broader conclusion with regard to Iran.

48. Iran aspired to use nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes in managing water supplies, responding to climate change, generating electricity and improving health and food and agriculture under the Agency's guidance, which should help Member States achieve the SDGs through the provision of experience, knowledge and equipment. In recognition of the significant contribution of nuclear power to reducing greenhouse gases and improving energy security, Iran had begun implementing phases two and three of the Bushehr nuclear power plant programme as part of its long-term strategy to increase the proportion of nuclear energy in its energy mix. The plant had received an improved safety assessment from WANO, and an OSART mission to the plant would be conducted soon.

49. Iran had taken several substantial steps in its pursuit of nuclear fusion technology and had engaged in constructive consultations with other States. It had made progress in working with China on redesigning the IR-40 reactor and on advancing the production of stable isotopes in cooperation with the Russian Federation.

50. In connection with strengthening nuclear safety standards, Iran planned to establish an advanced nuclear safety centre through cooperation with the EU and other States, and had already made progress in that regard.

51. Any nuclear security measures taken should neither hinder international cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, nor undermine the priorities of the TC programme. Responsibility for nuclear security lay with Member States alone, and the Agency's role was merely to enhance national infrastructures at the request of a State. Furthermore, the ambiguities and concerns surrounding the SLA should be addressed before further action could be taken on that matter.

52. With regard to technical cooperation, Iran was prepared to share its achievements in the field of nuclear activities with other Member States. The Agency, for its part, was responsible for facilitating technical cooperation between States as well as for the transfer of knowledge on nuclear science and technology to developing countries.

53. Iran looked forward to a day when the goal of peaceful nuclear energy for all and nuclear weapons for none became a universally recognized aspiration.

54. Mr RAZAKOV (Kyrgyzstan), having thanked the Secretariat for its continued support, said that radiation safety was one of the most important aspects of his country's science and technology policy, promoting the development of national programmes and stimulating both economic growth and technological development. That policy also included the application of nuclear technology to agriculture and health care, which required the provision of radiation protection and safe services, strengthening the country's regulatory framework and infrastructure and bringing the legal foundations of nuclear safety in line with international requirements, as well as making the best possible use of the TC programme to meet national needs and priorities.

55. Kyrgyzstan had benefited from technical assistance in its endeavours to develop a sound legal framework and capacity-building for relevant State bodies. Such technical cooperation required the implementation of a range of measures to deal with the safety of radiation sources, waste management and the updated licensing and verification mechanisms in order to ensure that national safety programmes complied with Agency standards. Since 2005, Kyrgyzstan had received Agency assistance

under technical cooperation, primarily in the form of national projects as well as through cooperation between States participating in regional and international projects.

56. One of the most salient aspects of Kyrgyzstan's cooperation with the Agency was ensuring the safe use of nuclear technology by strengthening the country's regulatory infrastructure through the application of a results-based approach and the development of legal documents and national programmes. Those measures formed the basis of a long-term national radiation safety strategy in accordance with international standards.

57. The Agency had played an important coordinating role in managing the uranium legacy of radioactive waste in Central Asia in general and in Kyrgyzstan in particular. For instance, States had adopted the Strategic Master Plan, under which Kyrgyzstan had undertaken measures to strengthen national capacity in order to support the remediation and reclamation of uranium legacy sites, and it had already begun a systematic and comprehensive assessment of risks and options. Kyrgyzstan was the beneficiary of a multi-donor trust fund, which had been established by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in cooperation with the Agency and the EU to assist with the ecological remediation of uranium legacy sites in Central Asia. In addition, it had signed and ratified a framework agreement with the bank for the implementation of the work. Kyrgyzstan was undertaking a range of fundraising activities with a view to resolving the ecological problems that stemmed from the uranium legacy.

58. A range of national projects was being successfully implemented. Firstly, Kyrgyzstan was strengthening the infrastructure and capacity of its health care system. Nuclear medicine and radiodiagnosis were being updated, radiotherapy services improved and new equipment provided for the national centre for oncology. Moreover, the services provided by radiological laboratories were being strengthened and a new training centre was under construction. Secondly, Kyrgyzstan aimed to fulfil all its obligations under its safeguards agreement. Thirdly, Agency missions were being conducted in Kyrgyzstan as well as national and regional seminars and training sessions with Agency experts. Lastly, Kyrgyz experts were taking part in Agency events and specialists were learning how to review the Agency's standards. As a result of that technical cooperation process, new priority areas had been identified, such as veterinary safety, food safety, and the need to modernize and improve brachytherapy services.

59. Kyrgyzstan was planning to sign a CPF with the Agency at the current session that would set out plans for technical cooperation from 2018 to 2022. The framework was the outcome of a multilateral consultation process involving relevant ministries and departments, which had aimed to identify priority areas for cooperation with the Agency as a means of strengthening bilateral cooperation.

60. Mr PERRY (United States of America) read out the following message from President Trump:

"I send my greetings to the delegates of the 62nd IAEA General Conference.

"The United States strongly supports peaceful nuclear cooperation. This includes American investments in IAEA programmes, which have positively affected the lives of people around the world through advancements in industry, medicine, agriculture and energy production. It also includes American development and exports of advanced nuclear reactors that maintain the highest standards of operational efficiency, supporting jobs in a critical industry in the United States.

"Nuclear proliferation remains a serious threat to a peaceful world. We will continue to promote high standards of safety, security, safeguards and non-proliferation, including an additional protocol as the international standard, and call on other nations to do the same. We must ensure Iran's nuclear programme is exclusively peaceful and that Tehran is permanently denied any

pathway to nuclear weapons. In addition, the Syrian regime must cooperate fully with the IAEA to comply with IAEA safeguards obligations.

“Finally, I am pleased that Chairman Kim has reaffirmed his commitment to complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. While this will need to be verified, I have confidence that he will honour our agreement, and, equally important, our handshake. The United States appreciates the IAEA’s readiness to contribute to our efforts to promote peace and the security of both the Korean Peninsula and the world. Together, we are making strides toward our shared goals. While much work remains, the collective efforts of IAEA Member States are reducing the threat of nuclear war and nuclear terrorism. On behalf of the American people, I thank you and send my best wishes for continued success.”

61. Having extended good wishes to the Director General, he said that, in keeping with the Agency’s motto, Atoms for Peace and Development, the USA was making a \$1.1 million extrabudgetary contribution to help the Agency build a new energy centre to power its Nuclear Applications Laboratories.

62. President Kennedy’s statement that man held the power to abolish all forms of human poverty and all forms of human life reflected the Agency’s goal of transforming nuclear power from a tool of destruction and terror into one of prosperity and peace. Undeniable progress had been made towards that goal. Decades ago, only a few nations had been developing peaceful uses of nuclear energy and President Kennedy had warned that as many as 20 countries could one day possess nuclear weapons. Now, nuclear energy spanned much of the globe and nowhere near 20 nations had nuclear weapon capabilities. Moreover, the Joint Statement of President Trump and Chairman Kim Jong Un provided further hope for progress. From UN Security Council resolutions to presidential leadership, it was firm resolve that had led to that dialogue, and that same resolve could result in final, verified denuclearization.

63. Despite progress, however, challenges remained. As the President had said, the Syrian Arab Republic must cooperate with the Agency with regard to nuclear activities. The JCPOA represented a flawed deal that had failed to address the continued misconduct of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In Vienna, an Iranian diplomat had been arrested for supplying explosives to terrorists seeking to bomb a political rally in France, and the United States Department of Justice had recently arrested two individuals for spying on Iran’s behalf. His country was therefore re-imposing key sanctions and sought only a deal that fully addressed that country’s nuclear programme and its proliferation and other destabilizing activities. Through robust monitoring and verification, the Agency must insist on Iran’s cooperation. Furthermore, nuclear weapons must be kept out of the hands of non-State actors, including terrorists, and nuclear and radioactive material must be protected from theft or misuse.

64. At the same time, it was important to expand the peaceful uses of nuclear power, which included nuclear medicine. Accordingly, the USA was committed to producing molybdenum-99 without using HEU, thus avoiding proliferation. It also included nuclear energy, which produced nearly one third of the world’s clean electricity and could provide power to the 1.3 billion people currently without it, thus replacing poverty with abundance and reducing violence. The journey, which was of paramount importance, would be challenging and would involve standing up to aggression, sitting down to discuss issues, being resolute and strong and being open to dialogue.

65. Archbishop GALLAGHER (Holy See) conveyed to all those present the best wishes and cordial greetings of Pope Francis.

66. The Holy See commended and supported the Agency’s many activities that had strengthened international cooperation and significantly contributed to preventing nuclear proliferation and promoting nuclear disarmament. Those activities also helped to foster integral human development by

supporting technical cooperation in the nuclear sciences and their applications and by advancing the peaceful use of nuclear technologies.

67. The non-proliferation regime was strongly supported by Agency safeguards, with a focus on improving the regime's effectiveness and efficiency. For example, the Agency's participation in the verification and monitoring of Iran's commitments under the JCPOA was indispensable in assessing whether all nuclear material was being used for peaceful purposes, and thus contributed to greater peace and security in the Middle East.

68. Furthermore, the Holy See supported the international community's continued patient efforts to revive negotiations on the DPRK nuclear programme, which threatened the integrity of the non-proliferation regime. There was no military solution to that threat. Agency safeguards, reflecting the Agency's critical role in nuclear verification in the region, made an essential contribution to peace and security, helped to foster a climate of confidence in place of mutual recriminations and constituted an important tool in moving towards denuclearization.

69. The non-proliferation regime must contribute as effectively to a comprehensive nuclear-test ban as it did to nuclear disarmament. For that reason, the Holy See had signed and ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, with the aim of moving beyond nuclear deterrence to a world entirely free of nuclear weapons. Nuclear tests had resulted in the largest cumulative dose of man-made radiation released into the environment. As Pope Francis had said in his Encyclical Letter of May 2015, the natural environment was a collective good, the patrimony of all humanity and the responsibility of everyone. It must be administered to promote the good of all; nuclear weapons were arms of mass and environmental destruction.

70. Pope Francis had further noted that the arms race continued to escalate and the expense of modernizing and developing weaponry, including nuclear weapons, was considerable. As a result, the real priorities facing humanity, such as the fight against poverty, the promotion of peace, the undertaking of educational, ecological and health care projects and the development of human rights, were relegated to second place.

71. The Holy See recognized the Agency's important contribution to the creation of a world free of nuclear weapons through the combination of comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols. Furthermore, the Agency's strategy of strengthening regional, national and global networks and forums and expanding nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety and emergency preparedness and response capacities helped to promote nuclear safety and security and a safety culture. The broader goals of non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies were supported by those crucial strategies.

72. The Holy See welcomed and commended the Agency's efforts with regard to an inter-departmental task force on climate change and the Scientific Forum on Nuclear Technology for Climate: Mitigation, Monitoring and Adaptation. The role of science, technology and innovation within the framework of the SDGs could be supported by various nuclear technologies and their applications, as outlined in Agency developmental programmes. TC projects in fields including human health, water and environment, climate change, food security and smart agriculture had already assisted significantly in alleviating poverty and enabling countries to meet their development goals in a sustainable manner.

73. The Agency played a proactive role at all levels in developing strategies for PACT and in establishing and enhancing radiotherapy programmes. The Holy See was grateful to the Agency for helping low- and middle-income Member States to improve the effectiveness of their radiation medicine services as part of a comprehensive cancer control strategy, for supporting the training of health professionals and for engaging in fundraising to boost cancer control programmes and activities.

74. Modern global ethics of responsibility, solidarity and cooperative security were urgently required to replace old ways of thinking that had so often been driven by self-interest and distrust. It was important to recognize that individual States' own peace and security depended ultimately on the peace and security of others. Therefore, the Holy See appealed to all leaders and nations to work towards the common goals of promoting non-proliferation, disarmament, the peaceful development and use of nuclear technologies and sustainable integral human development, particularly for the poorest countries. The pursuit of such goals would significantly contribute to true and lasting global peace.

75. Mr BOZUMBAYEV (Kazakhstan) said that, as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the 2017–2018 term, Kazakhstan prioritized strengthening the non-proliferation regime, controlling the development of new types of nuclear weapons and reducing nuclear risks. During the first Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, Kazakhstan had initiated the Universal Declaration on the Achievement of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World, which had been approved by the General Conference in 2015 and had the potential to become one element of the new global nuclear security architecture. His country was working on the adoption of a draft resolution in that regard and looked forward to other Member States' support.

76. His country fully implemented the provisions of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and supported efforts to strengthen the system to combat trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive materials. As a member of the NSG and the Zangger Committee, Kazakhstan took all possible measures with regard to nuclear export control.

77. As an NPT State Party and the country that had eliminated the fourth largest nuclear arsenal in the world, Kazakhstan actively worked towards disarmament and the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime. Its history had showed the effectiveness of a development model without weapons of mass destruction, with a policy of peace and good-neighbourliness.

78. During the special meeting of the Security Council earlier in 2018, President Nazarbayev had suggested the creation of a special Security Council resolution that would establish clear consequences for countries that violated the NPT, including sanctions and other coercive measures.

79. At the same time, it was necessary to develop a legally binding system of guarantees provided by nuclear-weapon States to non-nuclear-weapon States, as the main measure that would eliminate incentives to possess nuclear weapons. Practical steps must be taken to reduce the threat posed by nuclear weapons, including multilateral initiatives to reduce nuclear arsenals that brought together all de facto nuclear-weapon States and threshold States. The process of drafting a nuclear weapons convention should begin at the earliest opportunity.

80. Kazakhstan welcomed the DPRK's efforts to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula, particularly by suspending nuclear tests and missile launches, and supported a solution based on dialogue and negotiation.

81. Kazakhstan implemented the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, to which all countries should accede without delay. Furthermore, it welcomed the entry into force of the Amendment to the CPPNM, which would contribute to global nuclear security. In 2016, his country's WWR-K research reactor had begun operating using a new low enriched nuclear fuel. As part of the international programme for the return of spent fuel from research reactors to the country of origin, the spent fuel assemblies with HEU from that reactor had been sent to the Russian Federation and the HEU had been processed into LEU. His country was currently exploring the possibility of converting other research reactors to low enriched fuel.

82. The Agency LEU Bank, which had opened in Kazakhstan in 2017, would make a significant contribution to the development of peaceful nuclear power and improved global nuclear security.

Kazakhstan also welcomed the Agency's activities related to the application of the safeguards system and called on States to voluntarily apply safeguards to their nuclear activities as broadly as possible.

83. Kazakhstan fully supported the Agency's activities to promote the transfer and development of technologies related to peaceful nuclear applications. In recent years, his country had contributed more than one million dollars in funding, and intended to further develop its technical cooperation activities.

84. Mr ZHANG Kejian (China), having wished the Director General a speedy recovery, said that in the past year, the Agency had made positive contributions through its statutory work to promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy around the world and to curbing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, as well as through strengthening global nuclear safety and security and improving the effectiveness and efficiency of nuclear safeguards.

85. The year 2018 marked the 40th anniversary of reform in China. In October 2017, President Xi Jinping had introduced a policy for governing the country in a new era, which would promote the development of an ecological civilization through ensuring harmony between humans and nature, and through the development of a clean, low-carbon, safe and efficient energy system. Priority would be given to nuclear power as a green, low-carbon energy source. In recent years, advanced third generation nuclear power technologies had been deployed on a large scale in China. Marking the first deployment of a reactor of the Hualong One design, unit 5 of the Fuqing nuclear power plant had entered the system commissioning phase. The CAP 1400 unit had been prepared for construction, unit 1 of the Sanmen nuclear power plant had started operation as the first AP-1000 reactor, and unit 1 of the Taishan nuclear power plant, the world's first EPR reactor, had been successfully connected to the grid. China was also promoting the development of Generation IV nuclear power technology, the fast reactor demonstration project; the first module of a high-temperature gas-cooled reactor had been installed by the end of 2017.

86. With regard to Typhoon Mangkhut, which had made landfall in Guangdong Province, he was pleased to report that all four nuclear power facilities in the area had withstood the typhoon — all units were operating safely and smoothly and all staff were unharmed.

87. Over 60 years, China had developed an independent nuclear industry and stood ready to share its experience with other Member States. It welcomed students from all countries to participate in its atomic energy scholarship programme.

88. The national Nuclear Safety Law, which had taken effect at the beginning of 2018, was the first such law to provide a firm basis for the safe and sustainable development of nuclear energy in China. His country had provided training for some 2000 nuclear security professionals and stood ready to contribute more to building nuclear security capacity in the Asia-Pacific region and the rest of the world. It was facilitating Nigeria's MNSR conversion project and was willing to assist other countries in converting more MNSR using HEU fuel on the basis of the Ghanaian model.

89. With regard to the situation on the Korean Peninsula, China was committed to finding political solutions through dialogue and consultation. It welcomed the positive developments and stood ready to continue working with the relevant parties to play a positive role in achieving the denuclearization of the Peninsula and lasting peace and stability in the region.

90. In the interests of strengthening the international non-proliferation regime and peace and stability in the Middle East, adhering to multilateralism and international rules, China had consistently supported the JCPOA and co-chaired the working group on the Arak heavy water reactor modernization project. All the tasks undertaken by his country were going well and he expressed hope that all parties concerned would continue to ensure the effective implementation of the agreement in the common interest of the international community.

91. The Agency should continue to promote the development of nuclear energy and technology to attain the SDGs. It should make full use of technical cooperation to assist the countries embarking on a nuclear power programme in improving their nuclear infrastructure and promoting the application of nuclear technologies in agriculture, industry, energy, health care and environmental protection. It should provide well-directed support and assist Member States in achieving sustainable socio-economic development.

92. It should also promote the improvement of nuclear safety and security to build a community with a shared future in the nuclear field through helping Member States to develop nuclear safety and security standards and guidelines, fostering nuclear safety and security culture, establishing a team of highly competent nuclear professionals and improving emergency preparedness and response.

93. The Agency should also improve the nuclear non-proliferation and safeguards system. It should enhance its communication with the Member States to jointly increase the effectiveness and efficiency of safeguards and strive to ensure impartiality and objectivity. In doing so, it should play a constructive role in helping to resolve sensitive, pressing nuclear issues through political and diplomatic means.

94. If the Agency continued to pursue its Atoms for Peace and Development policy as well as innovation and excellence, persevered in cooperation through openness and sharing, building a community in the nuclear world, a better future for nuclear energy could be attained.

95. Mr LIKHACHEV (Russian Federation) said that, over the years, the Agency had become renowned as an organization that could address a wide range of issues relating to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The Russian Federation had continually supported the Agency and would continue to cooperate closely with it.

96. His country financed large projects under the TC programme, the NSF, the safeguards support programme of the Russian Federation, PACT and INPRO. It ensured the functioning of the Agency's guaranteed nuclear fuel reserve at the International Uranium Enrichment Center in Angarsk. Russian contributions to the Agency's budget in 2018 had exceeded €17 million.

97. The Russian Federation attached great importance to safeguards activities, which were fundamental to the application of the NPT. It supported an objective, depoliticized and technically feasible safeguards system that was based on agreements reached between States and the Agency and was fully transparent, including in areas related to the reform and development of the system.

98. The Russian Federation had contributed significantly to ensuring the application of the JCPOA, not only during negotiations, but also during the implementation phase. In particular, it had secured the removal of all surplus enriched uranium from the Islamic Republic of Iran. The JCPOA represented a meticulous balance of interests and must be rigorously observed in its entirety.

99. The Russian Federation strongly supported the concluding statement by the President of the International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century, held in Abu Dhabi in 2017. He highlighted the conclusion that, for many States, nuclear energy was a proven, clean, safe and economical technology that would play an important role in achieving energy security and in the attainment of the SDGs.

100. The Russian Federation had made great progress over the previous year, the first quarter of which had been marked by the start-up and pilot operation of unit 4 of the Rostov nuclear power plant and unit 2 of the Leningrad nuclear power plant, the second Generation III+ reactor unit introduced in Russia.

101. In July 2018, fuel had been loaded at the Akademik Lomonosov nuclear power plant, the world's first floating nuclear power plant in Murmansk, which would shortly be transferred to the city of Pevek via the northern sea route. Small-capacity nuclear power generation was in high demand in energy-

deficient regions that lacked the necessary grid infrastructure and capabilities to ensure large-capacity generation.

102. The Russian Federation continued to provide assistance in developing nuclear energy abroad. The first concrete had been poured at the Akkuyu nuclear power plant in Turkey, the Rooppur nuclear power plant in Bangladesh and the new unit of the Kudankulam nuclear power plant in India. Practical work had begun at the construction sites of units 2 and 3 of the Bushehr nuclear power plant. Construction work was also under way at the Hanhikivi nuclear power plant in Finland, the Paks II nuclear power plant in Hungary and the Belarusian nuclear power plant. A comprehensive package of documents had been signed with China and an agreement on the construction of the first nuclear power plant in Uzbekistan had recently been signed.

103. His country provided assistance to countries interested in non-power applications of nuclear energy through centres for the development of science, medicine and radiation technologies in industry and agriculture. Rosatom had concluded contracts for the construction of such centres in Bolivia and Zambia and the Russian Federation was also cooperating with Viet Nam, Nigeria and Mongolia.

104. The Russian Federation also gave priority to the efficient management of spent nuclear fuel through a gradual transition to the two-component nuclear energy system based on thermal and fast reactors in a closed nuclear fuel cycle.

105. The Russian Federation operated nuclear power plants with BN-600 and BN-800 sodium cooled fast reactors. It was implementing the ambitious Breakthrough project in Seversk, which involved the establishment of a pilot demonstration complex with a fast neutron reactor and closed nuclear fuel cycle technologies. The Russian Federation had mastered the technology used for the production of the mixed nitride uranium-plutonium fuel, which was optimized for fast reactors. It also offered assistance in spent nuclear fuel reprocessing and the consequent embedding of uranium and plutonium in the fuel cycle and conditioning of radioactive waste, all of which would ensure that demand for nuclear energy was met in the long term.

106. At a large scientific conference held by Rosatom in cooperation with the Kurchatov Institute, the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation, scientists had identified among the key areas of progress atomic-hydrogen energy, plasma technologies and controlled thermonuclear fusion. The conference had also concluded that all States should work together to find synergies between experimental facilities, scientific infrastructure and professional competencies in the Russian Federation and elsewhere. In that connection, he welcomed the first IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology to be held in November 2018.

107. One of his country's priority nuclear scientific projects was an international research centre based on a multipurpose fast neutron research reactor currently under construction in Dimitrovgrad. It was among the facilities that would be available to other countries under the ICERR programme. In his address to the 2018 international forum ATOMEXPO, the President of the Russian Federation had emphasized that there was a steadily growing demand for energy-efficient and safe nuclear technologies; that potential should be strengthened, in particular through extensive international cooperation.

108. Much work remained to be done, and must not be politicized. Collective success was not possible without global cooperation or the experience and authority of the Agency.

109. In closing, he wished the Director General a speedy recovery.

110. Ms KNEISSL (Austria), speaking on behalf of the EU, said that Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and San Marino aligned themselves with her statement.

111. The EU was fully committed to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, continued to support the universalization of the NPT, called upon States that had not yet done so to join the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States and underlined the importance of the safeguards system to the implementation of the Treaty.

112. The EU was determined to work with the international community to preserve the JCPOA. While it deeply regretted the USA's withdrawal from the plan, as long as the Islamic Republic of Iran continued to implement its nuclear-related commitments, the EU would remain committed to the continued full and effective implementation of the JCPOA. Iran must continue adhering strictly to all such commitments and to cooperate with the Agency fully and in a timely manner through the implementation of its comprehensive safeguards agreement and additional protocol, including by providing all requested access.

113. While supporting the recent diplomatic efforts, the EU urged the DPRK to engage seriously in follow-up negotiations, take steps to embark on a credible path towards complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization and maintain its declared suspension of nuclear weapons and ballistic missile testing. It called on the DPRK to comply with relevant UN Security Council resolutions, to return to the NPT and Agency safeguards at an early date, and to sign and ratify the CTBT without delay.

114. The EU urged the Syrian Arab Republic to cooperate promptly and transparently with the Agency to resolve all outstanding issues, including through concluding and implementing an additional protocol as soon as possible.

115. The EU reaffirmed its full support for the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East, and reiterated its readiness to support the process leading to the establishment of such a zone.

116. The EU continued to call for the universalization without delay of CSAs together with additional protocols. It strongly supported the continued improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of safeguards through the implementation of State-level safeguards approaches. Furthermore, the EU was actively supporting the Agency's safeguards system through the European Commission Safeguards Support Programme, the Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation and through some of its Member States' support programmes.

117. The EU had supported the LEU Bank project with around €25 million and looked forward to its full establishment in 2019.

118. While every country had a sovereign right to choose its energy mix, some considered nuclear power production to be a way to prevent or reduce greenhouse gas emissions and combat climate change, whereas others had chosen other options to the same end.

119. The EU attached the utmost importance to the worldwide implementation and continuous improvement of nuclear safety. For that reason, an EU directive established a European system of peer reviews on specific safety issues at least every six years. The first such review, dedicated to the issue of ageing management of nuclear power plants, had recently been completed. The EU had provided its expertise through the provision of stress tests in a number of neighbouring countries.

120. Nuclear security must continue to be strengthened worldwide in order to prevent nuclear terrorism and the misuse of nuclear and radioactive material.

121. The EU continued to strongly support the TC programme as its second largest contributor.

122. The EU also attached importance to the empowerment of women and gender equality within the Secretariat.

123. Mr ELMARKABI (Egypt) said that his country was continuing to develop a peaceful nuclear programme in order to meet its growing needs in the areas of economic and industrial development. Egypt also endeavoured to ensure that its nuclear programme was supported by a comprehensive legislative and technical framework, overseen by national experts, in order to guarantee the safe and secure operation of the nuclear power plants that Egypt would build in the years ahead, namely four electricity-generating units, each with a capacity of 1200 MW, in line with Egypt's strategy based on the diversification of energy sources and increased use of new and renewable sources.

124. A contract had been signed on advisory services for the project, including advice on updating and completion of the site studies, selection of new sites based on the latest international criteria and Agency norms, and preparation of the necessary technical studies for the project. Engineering, supply and construction contracts had also been signed for the nuclear power plant with a view to securing the supply of nuclear fuel and obtaining advisory services for the use, maintenance and management of spent fuel. The contracts had entered into force on 11 December 2017.

125. Egypt was currently conducting an assessment of its nuclear infrastructure prior to the hosting of an INIR mission.

126. Egypt continued to conduct research and development in all areas involving peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including health, food, agriculture, industry, water resources and mineral resources. The following advanced research facilities of the Egyptian Atomic Energy Authority were used for that purpose: the Egyptian Testing Research Reactor-2; the Radioisotope Production Facility; the Gamma Irradiation Facility; and the Electron Beam Accelerator, whose capacity had been increased from 1.5 MeV to 3 MeV.

127. Egypt greatly appreciated the Agency's support for its TC projects in areas such as: capacity-building; oversight support for the Egyptian Nuclear and Radiological Regulatory Authority; treatment of solid waste from the Radioisotope Production Facility; radiation treatment of heritage and archaeological materials; and building of radiation therapy capacities. Egyptian scientists and experts participated in many coordinated research projects, and Egypt appointed staff to serve the Agency as cost-free experts and to acquire the requisite expertise for the next generation.

128. The first stage of the project to modernize the physical protection system for Egypt's first and second research reactors had been completed and the second stage had been launched. Egypt's INSSP had also been updated with a view to developing a nuclear security culture, upgrading the physical protection of the nuclear and radiological facilities, and securing Category 1 and Category 2 radioactive sources.

129. Responsibility for nuclear security lay with Member States and should not be linked to other considerations, in particular a State's right to benefit from peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Egypt aspired to use its expertise and its research facilities to support Arab and African regional nuclear energy programmes. It had actively participated in joint training programmes and research projects as a member of the AAEEA and AFRA and appreciated the Agency's support for such activities.

130. Egypt underscored the importance of providing sufficient funds for the TC programme so that the Agency could fulfil its mandate in that regard.

131. Egypt supported the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology to be held in November 2018. A nuclear science student from an Egyptian university would attend the event as a representative of the country's youth.

132. Egypt underscored the importance of the Agency's verification of the non-diversion of nuclear materials. As the comprehensive safeguards regime was the legal cornerstone of the Agency's safeguards system, in accordance with the NPT, steps to ensure its universalization were essential. Efforts to develop the safeguards system should not entail additional obligations for States over and above their existing contractual obligations. Furthermore, imposition of the State-level approach should be based on the State's consent rather than on mere consultations.

133. Universalization of the comprehensive safeguards regime was an essential step towards the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East and towards securing the right of its inhabitants to be protected from the threat of nuclear weapons. Egypt continued to take vigorous action to establish such a zone and to ensure that all nuclear facilities in the region were placed under the Agency's comprehensive safeguards. It called on the Director General to take all necessary steps to implement the resolution that Egypt submitted each year to the General Conference, which requested the Agency to implement its safeguards in the Middle East and to place all nuclear facilities under safeguards. Notwithstanding the support for the resolution each year by a large majority of Member States, no real action had been taken to implement it on account of the refusal of one State in the Middle East to place its nuclear facilities under comprehensive safeguards.

134. Egypt deplored the apparent lack of political will to implement the 1995 resolution on the establishment of a zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East and called on the sponsors to shoulder their responsibility and take serious action to implement the resolution, which had been a cornerstone of the agreement on the indefinite extension of the NPT. The region was in dire need of such action, since the continued failure to implement the resolution manifestly undermined the credibility of the NPT. Egypt underscored the urgent need for the international community to step up its efforts to achieve the universalization of the NPT and urged all States that had not yet done so to accede to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States.

135. Egypt greatly appreciated the Agency's unwavering support for the implementation of its nuclear energy programme, especially in the area of electricity generation. It also appreciated the Agency's advice on capacity building through TC projects of the human resources required to manage and implement the programme, and the development of a comprehensive joint plan between Egypt and the Agency on the successful construction of a nuclear power plant based on the Agency's safety and security norms.

136. Mr MATSUYAMA (Japan) said that his country welcomed the agreement signed between the DPRK and the USA at their meeting in Singapore. It was hoped that its ostensible commitment to achieving complete denuclearization would comprehensively resolve any outstanding issues of concern. Nonetheless, the Director General had recently noted that the country was still pursuing its nuclear programme. The DPRK was strongly urged to dismantle all of its weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. Member States, for their part, were urged to draw on the expertise and experience of the Agency, which played a central role in ensuring that denuclearization could be verified.

137. Given the role of the JCPOA in bolstering the international non-proliferation regime and securing regional stability, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the other parties were urged to continue implementing its provisions. The Agency played an important role in monitoring and verifying its implementation and Japan fully supported its work in that area. For instance, it had cooperated with the Agency to provide training programmes for Iran on safeguards.

138. Japan had recently revised its Strategic Energy Plan, on the basis of which it was striving to achieve an optimal energy mix by 2030 by reducing its dependency on nuclear power and restarting nuclear power plants in line with the most stringent safety regulations. His country would work steadily

to implement the plan. As for its longer-term strategy, Japan was committed to reducing its dependency on fossil fuels and transitioning to alternative energy sources by 2050. In view of international development trends, such as the creation of innovative nuclear reactors, Japan aimed to pioneer its own nuclear-based innovations, such as by developing technology for use at the back end of the fuel cycle and enhancing the safety and mobility of existing reactors.

139. Japan had revised the basic principles on its use of plutonium for the first time in 15 years. It remained committed to possessing plutonium only for specific purposes and had announced that it would reduce the amount of plutonium in its possession. As concluded in an Agency report, all nuclear material in Japan, including plutonium, was being used for peaceful activities under strict safeguards, and Japan had no non-proliferation issues to declare. To demonstrate its commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, his country would continue to use plutonium — in line with strict safety standards — to generate thermal power. It would also continue to increase transparency in its use and management of plutonium and continue adhering to Agency safeguards. In the interest of transparency, it would continue to keep the international community informed about its nuclear energy policy through the Agency and its white paper on nuclear energy.

140. Japan was making steady progress in decommissioning nuclear power plants and managing contaminated water at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. Environmental remediation activities were also progressing, with decontamination measures being completed as planned in the areas for which the Government of Japan was responsible. Furthermore, owing to the various measures taken to secure food safety and to the results of inspections under strict standards, many countries had already confirmed the safety of Japanese food and lifted import restrictions. Japan called on all countries to do the same based on scientific evidence.

141. Enhancing nuclear safety remained a priority for Japan. To date, it had restarted nine reactors and as it continued its progress in that regard, nuclear safety would remain crucial. Moreover, it had requested that the Agency conduct an IRRS follow-up mission. In the meantime, Japanese operators were continuing their own efforts, including by receiving the Agency's OSART mission on a regular basis.

142. Japan would continue to share its experience from the Fukushima Daiichi accident with the international community and contribute to enhancing nuclear safety worldwide. It would continue to support the activities of the RANET Capacity Building Centre in Fukushima.

143. Japan was committed to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy — not least because of its contribution to the attainment of the SDGs — and would co-chair the forthcoming Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology. It had decided to contribute approximately US \$1 million to the PUI for TC projects in areas such as nuclear medicine and water resource management, bringing its total financial assistance through the PUI over the past year to more than \$5 million.

144. In connection with the Tokyo 2020 Olympics, Japan had agreed to step up its cooperation with the Agency regarding security measures to counter nuclear terrorism. Projects conducted in cooperation with the Agency and the Japan Atomic Energy Agency Integrated Support Center for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Nuclear Security sought to advance global nuclear security.

145. Agency safeguards were the most important instrument in ensuring nuclear non-proliferation and Japan supported the efforts to make the safeguards system more effective and efficient. Japan also attached importance to the universalization of CSAs and additional protocols, which it would continue to promote through frameworks such as the Symposium on International Safeguards: Verification and Nuclear Material Security, the Asia Senior-Level Talks on Non-Proliferation and the Asia-Pacific Safeguards Network.

146. Japan reiterated its commitment to further promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and strengthening nuclear non-proliferation.

147. Mr ALFALIH (Saudi Arabia) said that although his country was one of the world's largest producers and exporters of oil, it aspired to diversify its sources of power generation, in line with the Saudi Vision 2030 and related implementation programmes, in order to meet the country's growing demand for electricity due to its increased use in domestic and industrial contexts, such as for desalination purposes and in other areas.

148. Two ambitious programmes had been launched in that connection, namely the King Salman Renewable Energy Initiative and the National Atomic Energy Programme. The latter had been launched in July 2017 with the aim of including atomic energy in the Kingdom's energy mix in order to achieve comprehensive, sustainable and environmentally-friendly development. It would enable Saudi Arabia to invest in all of its natural resources, to benefit from its highly competitive capacities, and to create a technologically advanced national industry consistent with the Saudi Vision 2030, which sought to diversify the economy, to create an attractive investment environment, to generate new job opportunities and to develop the country's human capital.

149. Saudi Arabia implemented its national atomic energy programme in accordance with all relevant international instruments and best international practices, adhering to the highest safety, security and transparency standards. It had cooperated in a close and transparent manner with the Agency and with States and entities with expertise in the area, drawing on their experience to ensure the successful implementation of the programme. Saudi Arabia had complied with all international nuclear treaties to which it was a party, and had concluded a number of bilateral agreements with other States for cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

150. His country had established a legal and institutional framework that regulated the implementation of the National Atomic Energy Programme. In 2018 it had adopted an official policy document on the Programme, the Law Regulating the Use of Nuclear and Radioactive Material, and the Law on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage. Saudi Arabia had also announced the establishment of the Nuclear and Radiation Control Authority as an independent regulatory agency to ensure compliance with relevant legislation, the protection of human beings and the environment, and the highest possible operational safety standards.

151. Sites were under study that might be compatible with national and international safety and environmental standards for the construction of a nuclear power plant. In the meantime, the first large-scale nuclear reactor would be designed in collaboration with the world's leading suppliers of nuclear technology. In addition, exploratory uranium mining studies were being conducted in order to fully utilize national mineral resources.

152. Saudi Arabia had hosted an INIR mission in July 2018 to draw on the Agency's experience and to assess progress in preparing the national infrastructure for nuclear energy.

153. A balance must be maintained between, on the one hand, a State's obligations in terms of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear security and, on the other, its right to benefit from peaceful uses of nuclear energy and its indigenous natural resources. Accordingly, his country stressed the importance of universal compliance with the NPT. It also supported initiatives aimed at establishing NWFZs and reiterated its appeal to the international community for cooperation in ridding the entire Middle East of nuclear weapons.

154. The international community should adopt a more stringent and transparent stance against all threats to regional and international peace and security, particularly from Iran, given its efforts to build its nuclear capabilities, its acts of sabotage and aggression against other States in the region, and its

continued substantial support for terrorist organizations and militias through the provision of strategic weapons that were deemed to be a component of military nuclear capabilities.

155. Saudi Arabia called for the highest level of transparency regarding the safety of nuclear power plants and noted that the safety standards at the nuclear power plant in Bushehr, Iran were a source of great concern in the region, since the seismically active plant was closer to some cities in the Arabian Gulf area than to the Iranian capital. The Agency and its technically advanced Member States should therefore take urgent action to assess the risks associated with the Bushehr nuclear power plant and determine the possible consequences of any potential radioactive leaks resulting from the recurrent earthquakes in the Bushehr region, which could cause a human and environmental disaster in the Arabian Gulf. Such a development could also have a negative impact on the credibility of nuclear technology and undermine confidence in its benefits.

156. Saudi Arabia reiterated its commitment to all legal instruments governing the use of nuclear energy and the sharing of nuclear technology. It would continue to provide the Agency with material and moral support for the harnessing of nuclear energy for the benefit of humanity and for the prevention of hostile and unsafe uses thereof. It called on the international community to cooperate in developing nuclear technology and to firmly oppose any attempt to use nuclear energy for non-peaceful purposes, especially in the Middle East.

157. Mr ALWEENDO (Namibia) commended the key role played by the Agency's TC programme in assisting African Member States in participating fully in the Agency's work.

158. Nuclear science, technology and applications were recognized as having the potential to accelerate the attainment of several SDGs, including those relating to health, food and energy security, sustainable agriculture, water resources management, the environment and climate change. Those areas, to which the Agency was contributing, were a priority for Namibia, which called for a greater contribution by nuclear technology and improved resource allocation.

159. Nuclear science and technology must be integrated into his country's national development agenda and activities to help to promote sustainable development. Namibia had set out its intentions in its nuclear science and technology policies and its nuclear fuel cycle policies. Moreover, it had expressed its ambition to develop national nuclear science research, development and innovation capacities, and welcomed opportunities to promote that agenda, including the upcoming IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology. Namibia looked forward to resolutions and recommendations on nuclear science, technology and applications for peaceful uses and their delivery to Members States through Agency technical cooperation and their future contribution to the SDGs.

160. The benefits of nuclear technology and applications for agriculture, food security, health and water resources management could not be overemphasized. Accordingly, nuclear technology transfer and the Agency's support to enhance research and development activities in collaboration with higher learning institutions, relevant agencies and regional networks remained a high priority in many African countries. That was critical to building capacity, enhancing and preserving nuclear knowledge and harnessing the resource for the benefit of humanity.

161. Namibia appreciated the approach to assisting Member States with specific technology transfer projects, which combined the Agency's competitive technical expertise through its network of collaborators to address the needs of Member States. Examples included the development of bankable project documents for the development of radiotherapy services and the Agency's assistance in resource mobilization.

162. His country also appreciated the support provided to uranium-mining Member States, which covered all aspects of the uranium production cycle, from exploration, mining and processing to mine closures and site remediation.

163. Namibia attached great importance to nuclear safety and security, which was the responsibility of each State. It had therefore incorporated the Agency's safety standards into its national legislation and regulations for the control and regulation of radiation sources and nuclear and radioactive material. Although Namibia had made great strides in reviewing and developing its regulatory infrastructure to bring it into line with international standards and increase adherence to the relevant international legal instruments and conventions, much work remained to be done with the Agency's support. He therefore called for a strengthened interactive approach to the regular, continuous and objective assessment of regulatory infrastructure.

164. Nuclear energy would continue to be a competitive technology, especially in the context of global efforts to preserve the environment and mitigate the impacts of climate change. In that context, Namibia noted the growing demand for nuclear energy. For developing and middle income countries, energy demand and economic growth were intrinsically linked. Thus, nuclear energy should be explored as a viable option in the national energy mix. In that regard, Namibia wished to see more local value added to the nuclear fuel cycle. Given the need to maintain high standards of nuclear safety and security, it had always reaffirmed its commitment to a strengthened nuclear safety, security and safeguards regime, including the improvement and strengthening of its regulatory and institutional infrastructure in line with Agency recommendations and standards.

165. Mr ALHAJESSA (Iraq), having wished the Director General a speedy recovery, said that his country was making significant progress in its efforts to overcome terrorist strongholds, most recently in the Ninawa Governorate, which had been liberated from ISIL terrorist gangs. The authorities were monitoring the situation at sites containing hazardous materials, in particular radiological materials and sources in areas previously under terrorist control.

166. Despite the challenges faced, Iraq had acceded to the CPPNM and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and had taken steps to implement both conventions through the committees established for that purpose. The authorities were working to decommission Iraq's former nuclear facilities; the most challenging in that regard was the Tammuz 2 reactor. In direct cooperation with the Agency, Iraq was working to identify the most suitable method for decommissioning the site; thus far, national experts had managed to complete the majority of the project, which was expected to be finished within the month. Iraq invited the Agency to send a mission to visit the site and verify the progress made.

167. Plans had also been drawn up for decommissioning the remaining facilities at Al Tuwaitha Nuclear Research Centre, and efforts were being made to dispose of radioactive contaminants produced by facilities damaged during the second Gulf War, which had led to numerous natural disasters and incidents of fatal disease. Thanking Italy for helping to train experts in Iraq, he expressed the hope that Iraq would be able to continue to work with the Agency to decommission all remaining facilities, which continued to cause harm to both the people and environment of Iraq.

168. The Government had made great progress in the area of nuclear and radiological regulation. It had promulgated Act No. 43 of 2016 on the Iraqi Nuclear Energy Agency and was taking the necessary steps to establish that body. In addition, it was merging its three nuclear oversight authorities into a single body, which would be known as the National Nuclear and Radiological Oversight Authority, and was taking the necessary legislative steps in that regard. Iraq had also adopted a national radiological waste management strategy, which had been reviewed by the Agency prior to its adoption. Iraq was

taking urgent action to safely dispose of radiological waste from decommissioned destroyed nuclear sites and of material produced by medical, industrial and oil facilities.

169. Iraq was boosting its capacity to protect radiological materials and facilities, to ensure information security and to conduct nuclear forensics. It was also making efforts to increase investment in nuclear applications for medical, educational, industrial and agricultural purposes, with a view to fostering development across the board. In that connection, he thanked the Department of Technical Cooperation, the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security and the Department of Safeguards for their cooperation, in addition to all States that had helped fund projects in Iraq.

170. The elimination of nuclear weapons and other WMDs from the Middle East was crucial to the achievement of regional security and stability. It was vital, therefore, to continue efforts to convene the conference on the establishment of a zone free of WMDs in the Middle East, pursuant to the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and in accordance with the terms of reference set forth in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference, which would have a positive political and security impact in the region. Israel, alone in the region, had refused to accede to the NPT, subject its nuclear installations to Agency safeguards or conclude an additional protocol, and outstanding questions still needed to be answered regarding those nuclear installations that had the potential to cause an environmental and humanitarian catastrophe in that part of the world.

171. Iraq commended the Secretariat's efforts to implement the JCPOA, in accordance with the mandate assigned to it by the Board and with UN Security Council resolution 2231 (2015). The result of more than a decade of negotiations and diplomacy, the JCPOA was proof that multi-party diplomacy was still capable of producing agreements that could help strengthen international peace and security and, in the case of the JCPOA, support the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. As it supported the JCPOA, Iraq was disappointed by the most recent developments in that regard. It called on the States parties to the JCPOA to ensure its continuation, as it played a positive role in ensuring regional peace and security and achieving stability in the Middle East.

172. Iraq hoped that the General Conference would be successful in its work to strengthen cooperation between Member States with the aim of ensuring that the peaceful uses of nuclear technology were fully exploited for the benefit of humankind.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

Statement to the 62nd IAEA General Conference

Yukiya Amano
(Director General)

Madam President,

I welcome all of you to this 62nd IAEA General Conference. I regret that I cannot be present for this important meeting.

The Agency now implements safeguards in 181 countries, helping to ensure that nuclear materials are not diverted from peaceful purposes. This is an important, and unique, contribution to international peace and security.

Since the last General Conference, we have continued to verify and monitor the implementation by Iran of its nuclear-related commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Iran is implementing its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA. It is essential that Iran continues to fully implement those commitments.

The Agency continues to verify the non-diversion of nuclear material declared by Iran under its Safeguards Agreement. Evaluations regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran continue.

The nuclear programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea remains a cause for grave concern. The DPRK's nuclear activities are clear violations of relevant UN Security Council resolutions and are deeply regrettable.

The Agency continues to enhance its readiness to play an essential role in verifying the DPRK's nuclear programme if a political agreement is reached among countries concerned.

I again call upon the DPRK to comply fully with its obligations under relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council and of the IAEA Board of Governors, to cooperate promptly with the Agency and to resolve all outstanding issues.

Madam President,

Through our technical cooperation programme, the Agency helps to improve the health and prosperity of millions of people by making nuclear science and technology available in health care, food and agriculture, industry and many other areas.

I see the enormous difference our work makes in my many visits to developing countries.

Capacity-building is a key element of the TC programme. The Agency has supported nearly 50,000 fellowships since 1956, helping scientists from developing countries to significantly improve their skills. In a recent survey of former fellows, almost 90% of respondents said their placements fully met their professional expectations and the needs of their home institutes.

As I informed the Board in June, we are reviewing the work of our Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT) which, in due course, will work under the overall coordination of my office, as part of our one-house approach to cancer-related issues.

The IAEA's role in transferring nuclear technology to developing countries is unique. In order for us to fulfil this role, it is important that all countries contribute on time and in full to the TC Fund.

The modernisation of our nuclear applications laboratories at Seibersdorf continues to make excellent progress. Major construction work on all new laboratory buildings is nearly complete.

I am very grateful for the generous contributions received so far. I encourage all Member States in a position to do so to contribute to the costs of equipping the new buildings.

The IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology will take place in Vienna from November 28 to 30. I encourage all Member States to participate at ministerial level.

Madam President,

The Agency's latest annual projections show that nuclear power will continue to play a key role in the world's low-carbon energy mix. However, the declining trend in our low projection for installed capacity up to 2050 suggests that, without significant progress on using the full potential of nuclear power, it will be difficult for the world to secure sufficient energy to achieve sustainable development and to mitigate climate change.

Regarding the IAEA LEU Bank in Kazakhstan, I expect that the procurement process will be completed in 2018 and that the LEU will be delivered to the IAEA LEU Bank Storage Facility in 2019.

Madam President,

Due attention to safety and security is essential in all uses of nuclear and radiation technologies. Nuclear safety and security are national responsibilities, but the IAEA plays the central role in ensuring effective international cooperation.

We continue to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of Agency peer review and advisory services in nuclear safety and security so that they can better support Member States in the application of IAEA safety standards and security guidance. We have begun preparations for the next IAEA International Conference on Nuclear Security, which will take place at ministerial level in Vienna in February 2020.

Madam President,

We have significantly increased the amount of material on our public website iaea.org in languages other than English. Versions of the website in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish were launched in June.

We continue to implement efficiency measures in order to make optimal use of the resources entrusted to us by Member States. But demand for Agency support is steadily increasing. It is essential that Member States continue to make available the resources we need to provide the services they expect.

Since becoming Director General more than eight years ago, I have worked hard to increase the proportion of women on the Agency's staff, especially in more senior positions.

We have made progress. But we can do better. My goal is to achieve gender parity among the most senior officials by 2021.

Finally, Madam President, I thank the staff of the Agency for their commitment and dedication to delivering on our important mandate.

I am grateful to all IAEA Member States for their active support for the Agency and for me personally and to Austria for being an exemplary host country.

Thank you.