

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

This year's session of the General Conference was primarily concerned with the future. Much of it was linked with the effects of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) on safeguards work, on the peaceful use of nuclear explosives and possibly on the Agency's structure. A programme presented by the Agency for the next six years was approved, though the widening gap between needs and resources for technical assistance caused grave concern.

Dr. Manuel Sandoval Vallarta (Mexico) was elected President of the session in succession to Dr. Jan Neumann (Czechoslovakia).

With the signing of the NPT by more than 80 countries, and discussions by the United Nations and by the Non-nuclear weapons states in mind, there was considerable emphasis on the responsibilities which will have to be borne by the Agency when the Treaty is implemented.

Foremost among these is the safeguarding of nuclear material to prevent its diversion from peaceful uses to nuclear weapons. The Agency's Safeguards System was recognized as a solid base for future NPT control activities. It was felt that present preparations and studies are an assurance that the Agency will be ready to fulfil its role under NPT. It was noted that considerable experience had been gained and that this will be valuable in training new members for the inspectoral staff. There was some concern at the costs which would have to be met and suggestions were made that the money might come from the countries with advanced nuclear programmes.

Commenting on these aspects, the Director General, Dr. Sigvard Eklund, in his opening speech pointed out that depending on the speed with which ratifications of the Treaty were made and safeguards agreements concluded, there would be a transition period of a year or two until the Agency would be called upon to exercise its safeguards function. This period was to be used for a gradual build up and specifically to hire and train staff needed for effective large-scale application. Scientific and technical research and developments were of vital importance in formulating detailed procedures and general safeguards system concepts in the future.

On cost and manpower aspects Dr. Eklund added "I have serious doubts about the possibility of making reliable prognostications beyond 5-6 years from now, as we should then begin to see some results of the research and development efforts that I have just mentioned. I strongly believe in the necessity for countries, advanced in the nuclear field, and with substantial power programmes, to establish national nuclear materials management

systems and national safeguards controls which, when harmonized with IAEA safeguards, will facilitate the latter in a major way. The unit size of installations under safeguards is likely to grow considerably, which means that their safeguarding will require proportionately less staff. The effect of these factors is difficult to quantify at the present time, and I would thus not make any forecast, but I believe that figures quoted recently in the literature are much too high".

PEACEFUL NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS

A further subject arising from NPT was the manner in which nations can be assisted to make use of nuclear explosives for peaceful purposes, even though the time they will become practical may be some years away. Again it was felt that the Agency is the appropriate body and a resolution was carried asking the Director General to initiate studies of the procedures which should be adopted.

Great hopes were again expressed for the use of nuclear energy in developing areas, especially for desalting projects and agricultural purposes. In a special lecture on this subject Dr. V.A. Sarabhai, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission of India, gave useful guidance, supported by detailed research on results to be expected from linking power to desalination plants and fertilizer manufacture.

One of the Agency's projects from which all Member States will derive advantage in the future is the International Nuclear Information System (INIS) which may begin operating in 1970. This system and the programme for the exchange of nuclear data will be assisted by the installation of a new computer at the end of this year. In the second of the special lectures, John Woolston, Director of the Division of Scientific and Technical Information, gave a full explanation of INIS.

Extended reports of both lectures will be given in the next issue of this Bulletin.

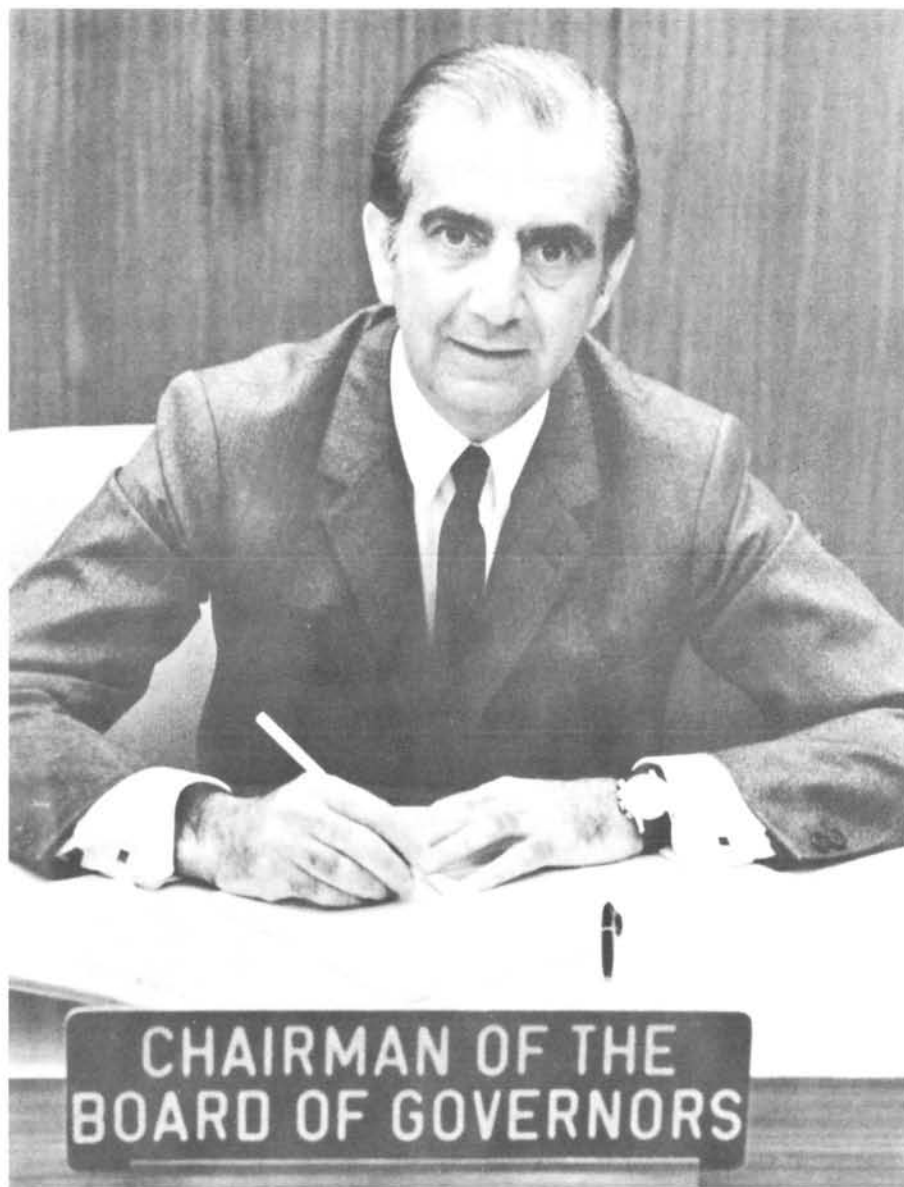
A problem affecting some of the Agency's most significant efforts both now and in the years to come is the provision of adequate resources to meet growing requirements for technical assistance. Dr. Eklund regretted in his address that Member States had not all been prepared to make such resources available. Only 59 out of the 98 had in the past year been willing to contribute to the \$2 million target of the voluntary fund, in itself only half the expressed needs for experts and equipment. There was also a fear that projects which have been demonstrated by the Agency to be technically feasible and economically viable may not be realized because of finance difficulties. A suggestion for raising a special nuclear fund from international resources was referred to the Board for consideration.

There was recognition of a desire among non-nuclear weapon states for a new examination of the composition of the Board of Governors, and

Dr. Manuel Sandoval Vallarta, Mexican representative to the Board of Governors, a distinguished physicist who has for many years played an important part in encouraging the peaceful uses of atomic energy, was unanimously elected President of this year's session of the General Conference.



Chairman of the Board of Governors is now Amir Aslan Afshar, Ambassador of Iran to Austria since 1967. He was unanimously elected at the Board's first meeting immediately after the General Conference, with Ambassador John A. McCordick (Canada) and Professor Stanislaw Andrzejewski (Poland) as vice-chairmen.



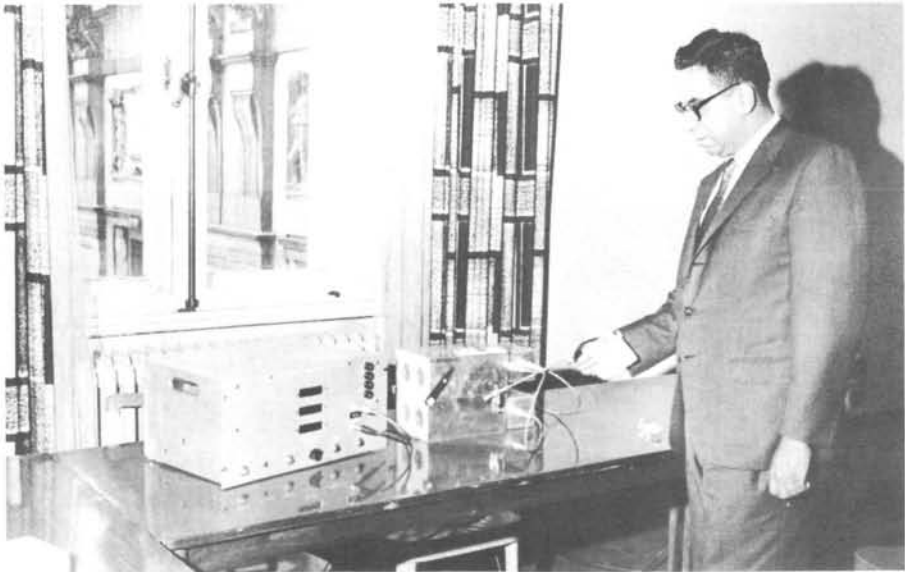
a resolution reflecting this feeling was passed. It required the Board to carry out the review in the light of developments since the Agency was established in 1957 and of the new responsibilities to be assumed under NPT.

APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP: BUDGET

Messages of support for the Agency were received from the President of the United States of America and from the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. An address on behalf of the Secretary-General of the United Nations was given by Mr. Vittorio Winspeare Guicciardi, Under Secretary-General of the United Nations and Director General of the United Nations Office at Geneva.

Applications for admission to membership made by Liechtenstein, Niger and Zambia were unanimously approved. These countries will become members as soon as they have deposited instruments of acceptance of the Agency's Statute.

New safeguards techniques. A demonstration during the General Conference of a prototype neutron detector developed by the US Naval Research Laboratory and now being used by Agency inspectors to determine its usefulness in detecting plutonium.



A resolution approving an agreement for collaboration with the Organization of African Unity was adopted.

The following countries were elected to serve on the Board of Governors for a two-year term of office: Argentina, Iran, Italy, Singapore and Venezuela. The twenty other Board Members designated by the outgoing Board or carrying on from 1967-68 are: Algeria, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Ceylon, Finland, France, India, Japan, Madagascar, Peru, Philippines, Poland, South Africa, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America.

The Conference approved the proposed programme for 1969-74 and the budget for 1969 totalling \$13 763 000, of which \$2 512 000 is for operational expenses and \$11 251 000 under the regular budget; the latter is an increase of \$774 000 or 7.4% over the figure for 1968. The \$2-million target for voluntary contributions from Member States within the overall budget is the same as last year. A total of \$1 243 729 had been pledged towards this target by the end of the General Conference by 53 countries.

The Session was attended by some 400 participants representing 76 Member States; there were observers from 4 non-Member States, representatives from the United Nations, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization, from governmental and non-governmental organizations.

The Thirteenth Session of the General Conference will open in Vienna on 23 September 1969.