The International Atomic Energy Agency: Origins and early years

Peace through scientific co-operation became an abiding purpose

by Dr John A. Hall

Motivated by the apprehension of scientists and statesmen, created by determined negotiating groups, and structured to meet the challenges of the future, the International Atomic Energy Agency celebrates its 30th birthday on 29 July 1987.

The concept of an international atomic energy organization was proposed over 40 years ago. The aims of such an organization were to control the new force of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, to solve the problem of atomic weapon limitation, to protect the public from the hazards of radiation, and also to promote a constructive dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union in this new and dynamic field.

After the formulation of the early proposals, 10 years of discussion and fumbling followed, finally resulting in negotiations leading to the establishment in 1957 of an autonomous and independent international organization, the International Atomic Energy Agency.

How did this come about?

The IAEA is a direct consequence of the world's entry into the Atomic Age and the establishment of the United Nations.

On 2 December 1942 the first chain reaction was achieved in an experimental "pile" constructed under a football stadium at the University of Chicago. This test was followed two-and-a-half years later by the detonation of the first atomic device at the Alamagordo Air Force Base in New Mexico, USA. It was an international project for there were British, Canadian, French, and Italian scientists working with their American colleagues in this massive effort.

The American people and the rest of the world were eventually informed of the project through the publication of the first report on atomic energy, the famed Smyth Report, on 9 August 1945. The official title was *A General Account of the Development of the Methods of Using Atomic Energy for Military Purposes under the Auspices of the United States Government 1940-1945.** This lengthy title proved too cumbersome for some of the reviewers. The account — prepared by Professor Henry DeWolf Smyth, Chairman of the Department of Physics of Princeton University — presented concisely in language understandable to the layman, the scientific background and the nature of atomic energy, and the development of the weapon. This small book enjoyed extensive circulation and has been translated into 40 languages.**

Postwar roots

Following the war, many scientists and statesmen had concluded that it was vital to secure international control of nuclear energy. The new United Nations, established in the summer of 1945, appeared to be the logical forum for examining the possible ways of achieving this goal.

In mid-November 1945, at the urging of England's Prime Minister Attlee, President Harry Truman agreed to meet in Washington with the British and the Canadians to discuss their wartime atomic agreements and the control of atomic energy. As no US policy had been formulated, Secretary of State James Byrnes requested Dr Vannevar Bush, former science advisor to President Roosevelt, to submit his suggestions. Bush happily complied, seeing a splendid opportunity to present his ideas to the Truman administration.

Bush proposed sending representatives from the United States and the United Kingdom to Moscow to discuss establishing a new United Nations agency to deal with the sharing of atomic energy information. If this tactic succeeded, he reasoned, then broader co-operation

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* US Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D.C. (1945).

** The report's lengthy official title even provoked an amusing comment by Professor Smyth to me on 13 July 1986: "If the title had been short, no one ever would have heard of the Smyth report." General Groves, the head of the atomic bomb project, did stamp a few copies of the report "The Atomic Weapon", but later decided against this title on security grounds. Professor Smyth became the US Representative to the IAEA in Vienna in 1961 where he served with distinction for 9 years.

could be initiated under an international inspection system supervised by a United Nations agency. The President concurred and the ideas were ultimately incorporated into the Declaration of Washington on 15 November 1945, which was endorsed by Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In December, they were accepted by the Soviet Union and were placed in the Moscow Communiqué of 27 December 1945 proposing the creation of a United Nations Atomic Energy Commission (UNAEC).

UN Atomic Energy Commission

In anticipation of the first meeting of the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission, Secretary of State Byrnes asked for recommendations on international control. The Acheson-Lilienthal Report was the result. It was prepared by two committees. One was chaired by Under-Secretary of State Dean Acheson, and the second by David Lilienthal, head of the Tennessee Valley Authority, a large government power complex. The major element of the Acheson-Lilienthal Report, later incorporated into the US plan presented to the UNAEC by Bernard Baruch, the US representative, was that there should be an international atomic energy organization. This international organization would have operating responsibilities to own and manage the dangerous activity of atomic energy. By assigning the agency this operating responsibility, the area of physical inspection, a difficult problem, would be narrowed. Over a transitional period, atomic weapons were to be destroyed and abolished.

While supported by the majority in the UNAEC, the Baruch plan was criticized and rejected by the Soviet Union.

On 19 June 1946, A. Gromyko, the Soviet representative, countered with the Soviet position: All atomic weapons should be declared illegal, and destroyed. The basis would then be established for inspection by an international agency. There was little discussion of these proposals and they were summarily rejected by the majority.

The Baruch proposals were not negotiable. In the final analysis, they probably would not have been accepted by the United States. Even with a long transition period, strong Congressional opposition could be predicted. One cannot judge whether the Soviet proposals of 1946-47 were tactical moves to minimize world reaction to their negative position on the Baruch plan, or whether they reflected a sincere effort to solve the profound problem created by the atomic weapon.*

The UNAEC lasted until 29 July 1948, and then died. (It was formally abolished in 1952.) It made three reports to the Security Council, but by July 1948 there was a complete impasse in the Commission making its further effectiveness impossible.

* For one retrospective view, see "A forerunner of the NPT? The Soviet proposals of 1947", by Bertrand Goldschmidt, *IAEA Bulletin*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (1986).

The Eisenhower initiative: Atoms for peace

Although the world was confronted with an atomic arms race, there were no further discussions of the serious problem of international action until 1953 when the Atoms for Peace programme was presented to the world community on 8 December by President Eisenhower before the General Assembly of the United Nations. It was a major initiative of the Eisenhower Administration, and the heart of the plan was the President's own idea. As a first step toward nuclear disarmament, Eisenhower proposed that the principal powers should reduce their stockpiles of fissionable material by allocations to an international atomic energy agency which would then supervise its use for peaceful purposes.

The failure of the Baruch plan and the complete impasse in the disarmament discussions had led the President to conclude that more modest proposals than those previously presented might succeed where comprehensive ones had been rejected. The origins of the Agency were based on this limited nuclear disarmament plan.

The reaction of the General Assembly to the proposals was enthusiastic. The world community was deeply worried about the prevailing international political situation and the President of the United States had made suggestions which gave promise, particularly of reducing tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States and opening up channels of communication.

After 8 December 1953, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, recognizing the importance of bringing the Soviet Union into the negotiations from the beginning, addressed a series of notes to the Soviet Ambassador in Washington, Zaroubin, and subsequently to Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov, urging bilateral discussions of the President's proposals.

However, the first substantive action by the United States came only in its note of 19 March 1954, when it presented to the Soviet Union an outline of a proposed International Atomic Energy Agency.

Section B.3 of the outline stated: "In order to insure adequate health and safety standards were being followed, and in order to assure that the allocated fissionable material is being used for the purpose for which it was allocated, the Agency would have a continuing authority to prescribe certain design and operating conditions, health and safety regulations, required accountability and operating records, specify disposition of by-product fissionable materials and waste, retain the right of monitoring and require progress reports. The Agency would also have authority to verify the status of allocated material inventories and to verify the compliance of the issuance."*

Thus the first formal United States position on the IAEA included a safeguards provision with emphasis on

*UN Document A/2738 (1954).

health and safety, and control over plutonium. The note of 19 March 1954 contained the basic US view of the Agency which prevailed for the next few years.

After initial criticism of the Eisenhower plan, the Soviet Union agreed (in August 1955) to enter into discussions with the United States and others to draft a statute for the proposed International Atomic Energy Agency. This led to the "Twelve-Power" discussions of February 1956 in Washington.

The United States had a serious problem, for the Atomic Energy Act of 1946 prevented international co-operation of the type suggested by President Eisenhower. With Eisenhower's strong support, the Chairman of the United States Atomic Energy Commission and his colleagues proposed to Congress important amendments to the existing law which would make possible the implementation of the President's proposals. In August 1954, Congress approved the changes and the way was open for positive international co-operation. In particular, it made possible a substantial United States contribution to the Geneva Conference of August 1955.

The 1955 Geneva Conference

Much could be said about the Geneva Conference for the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy of August 1955. It was initiated by the United States, but had the

The first IAEA General Conference

The opening of the IAEA's first General Conference took place on 1 October 1957, a beautiful autumn day. The good weather plus the anticipation of the Viennese prompted hundreds of people to post themselves in front of the Konzerthaus hoping to spot an "atomic personality" from abroad. Because of the international meetings, the hotels and restaurants had been fully booked for several weeks. Kärntnerstrasse, one of Vienna's main streets (then a two-way street!) was crowded with shoppers for the first time in many years. One must remember that only 2 years earlier the four armies of the 10-year occupation force had finally departed. The Austrian Government and the Viennese people gave the new agency a warm welcome. Vienna was once again free, and the new wine from the hills of Grinzing made many delegates overlook the sad impact of war and occupation.

The world press was interested in this new organization, too, and a special building, the Künstlerhaus, was made available to the Agency as the headquarters for the several hundred press representatives.*

The Konzerthaus where the delegations met was accustomed to staging orchestral and ballet programmes; not an international meeting. However, alterations had been made during the summer to accommodate the new occupants. Chairs and desks were provided for 55 delegations and their advisors, booths were installed for the interpretation of the four official languages, and headphones were provided for the delegates. The concert house had become a conference center.

The Secretary General of the UN was represented by Dr Ralph Bunch, the Under-Secretary. The head of the Soviet delegation at this first General Conference was Prof. Emelyanov, while Lewis Strauss led the US delegation. A spirit of optimism prevailed. Fifty-five States were represented at the conference, challenged with promoting international co-operation in the field of atomic energy.

The Austrian delegation was led by Ambassador Karl Gruber who was unanimously elected its President. The conference was a constructive one. It confirmed the Board of Governors' appointment of Sterling Cole as the first Director General and approved a budget of US $4 million for 1958 based on the recommendations of the Preparatory Commission.

* The Künstlerhaus was more famous for the artists who seceded from it than for those artists who stayed. Klimt, Kokoschka, and others left to establish the Sezession Gallery a few blocks away.

The Konzerthaus, one of Vienna's great concert halls that had been dedicated by Emperor Franz-Joseph in 1913, was the site of the IAEA's first General Conference in October 1957. The scene shows the crowd who had gathered hoping to see "atomic" personalities.

President of the IAEA's first General Conference was Ambassador Karl Gruber (left) of Austria, shown here with Ralph Bunch, Under-Secretary of the United Nations.

Vyacheslav Molotov (left), former USSR Foreign Minister and Alternate Resident Representative to the IAEA from 1960–61, talks with Sterling Cole, the Agency's first Director General from 1957–61. Mr Cole, who recently passed away, is remembered on page 59.)

unanimous support of the General Assembly of the United Nations. It was the largest conference sponsored by the United Nations up to that time. Over 1000 scientific papers were delivered. Seventy-three states were represented, with more than 2000 participants.

One of the main United States exhibits was a small swimming-pool type reactor. It had been built at Oak Ridge, Tennessee and flown to Geneva in a large transport plane. The delivery of the reactor, with the legal hurdles to be surmounted, was a miraculous exercise in logistics. With the permission of the Canton of Geneva and the United Nations, the reactor was placed in its own special building on the grounds of the Palais des Nations. Thousands of people saw an operating nuclear reactor for the first time.

On the Soviet side, Academician Skobeltsin, the senior scientist on the United Nations Science Advisory Committee and head of the Soviet delegation, greatly added to the success of the conference with his positive statements and co-operative actions.

The greatest contribution of the Soviet Union, however, was the strong delegation it sent to Geneva. The Soviet papers presented were technically sound, original, and well received by the delegates. Soviet science scored a major success. As a result of the Geneva Conference, the proposed International Atomic Energy Agency now had a strong technical basis established by definite areas of co-operation.

US-Soviet discussions

The bilateral discussions between the Soviet Union and the United States dealing with the purpose of the Agency and the provisions for a draft Statute made little progress in 1954. In 1955, however, a draft Statute was distributed by the US State Department and discussed informally with Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and Portugal. These States were selected by the Department of State because of their advanced status in nuclear energy or because they were producers of uranium or thorium. In August (1955) the Soviet Union agreed to participate. In the same month, all members of the United Nations received copies of the draft Statute and were invited to comment on the document.

"Twelve-Power" Conference

At the 10th Session of the General Assembly, a resolution was passed urging prompt consideration of the draft Statute and enlarging the negotiating group by adding Brazil, Czechoslovakia, India, and the USSR. This "Twelve-Power Working Group" became the principal architect of the Statute and met formally in Washington on 27 February 1956. The Washington meetings were highly productive and conducted in an unusually cordial atmosphere.

The head of the US delegation to the Twelve-Power Conference was Ambassador James J. Wadsworth, an able and affable ex-Congressman from New York state who was the Deputy Chief of Mission of the US Delegation to the United Nations. Gerard Smith of the State Department and I, then with the US Atomic Energy Commission, served as his two senior advisors. The Soviet delegation was led by Ambassador Zaroubin, assisted by Professor Emelyanov, Leonid Zamyatin, and Anatol Dobrynin. Homi Bhabha, the leader of the Indian delegation, was a well known physicist, artist, lover of opera and world literature and, above all, an articulate defender of the developing countries. Gallic logic and humor was added with the presence of Bertrand Goldschmidt of the French delegation. Dr Goldschmidt was a chemist whose passion for precision clarified issues and greatly advanced our discussions.

Headquarters: Vienna, Austria

Why was Vienna chosen as the site of this new independent agency, the IAEA?

Dr Heinrich Haymerle, the Austrian Observer to the United Nations, was present in the General Assembly on 8 December 1953 when President Eisenhower delivered his Atoms for Peace speech. Realizing the significance of the proposals for Austria, Haymerle recommended to his Ministry of Foreign Affairs that Austria should offer to host the proposed international atomic energy organization. His recommendation was strongly supported by Karl Gruber, the Austrian Ambassador to the United States.

As a new member of the United Nations, Austria was invited to the Statute Conference in New York in 1956, and successfully established a conference preference for Vienna as the headquarters for the International Atomic Energy Agency. Austria had achieved a great political victory in a remarkably short time. Thanks to a small group of postwar Austrian statesmen, within a period of 2 years her goals of independence, permanent neutrality, membership in the United Nations, and host to an important and politically sensitive international organization had been attained.

To be host to the Agency required the Austrian Government to make provisions to meet the needs of the new organization. In the spring of 1957, Foreign Minister Figl appointed a planning committee and named Dr Hans Thalberg of the Foreign Ministry as the liaison officer. In the course of his work in accommodating the Agency, Thalberg had assured representatives of the Preparatory Commission that the Konzerthaus could be made ready with interpreting equipment and other necessary services in time for the General Conference. (The Konzerthaus was one of Vienna's great concert halls, and had been dedicated by Emperor Franz-Joseph in 1913).

It was decided to house the small Secretariat of the Agency in the Musikakademie, a short walk around the corner from the Konzerthaus. The Musikakademie could also provide a room suitable for the first sessions of the Board of Governors.

Temporary headquarters: The Grand Hotel

Now, however, the Austrian authorities were faced with finding temporary headquarters for the new Director General and his staff. For some time, Dr Thalberg and the Preparatory Commission had been reviewing possible sites. One location offered was the Kaufmannschaft building on Peter Jordanstrasse in the 19th District, but it was rejected as being too far from the heart of the city. Eventually, the Austrian Government proposed the New Grand Hotel which they had recently acquired.

The New Grand Hotel on the Kärntner Ring one block from the State Opera consisted of two buildings contiguous to a third, older section known as the Grand Hotel. The older building had been partially gutted by fire in 1955 and was unusable. On 11 December 1957, the basic headquarters agreement developed by the Legal Advisor of the Austrian Foreign Ministry, Rudolph Kirchschläger, and members of the Agency legal staff, was signed by the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Leopold Figl, and the Director General, Sterling Cole. (In September 1963, after considerable remodeling, the Old Grand Hotel was also taken over by the Agency).

From the moment of its opening on 10 May 1870, almost a century before, the Grand Hotel had been one of the most desirable hotels in Vienna. Although it was proud of its 200 bedrooms and apartments, and boasted several bathrooms on each floor, its great innovation was an "American steam elevator"! The elegant appointments of this 19th century building would be transformed and altered to meet the needs of the IAEA, with the hotel's elaborate "Reading Room", for instance, becoming the new meeting room for the Board of Governors. The Grand Hotel became the Agency's "home", and it would be its temporary headquarters for over 22 years.

The Grand Hotel, Vienna, was the IAEA's "temporary" headquarters for more than 22 years.

During these 22 years, the Grand Hotel had special meaning for most of the staff. The Agency was new, its important purposes presented a unique challenge and the environment of the Grand Hotel seemed to foster a pride in the organization. The small restaurant and the cafeteria became not only places to eat but a congenial setting for holding small meetings and consulting with colleagues over a "kleine mokka" on the latest developments in their respective fields. The main dining room of the old Grand Hotel was transformed into the delegates lounge where evening receptions could be held. The spacious room was also available for meetings for the many staff clubs which had been organized. The prevailing atmosphere was good. In its early years, the Agency was small and housed in its own building, which gave it a strong sense of its own special identity.

Bürgermeister Franz Jonas of Vienna was an early supporter of the Agency, extremely popular and highly esteemed. A man of austere tastes, he exemplified all that was good in the "new Austria". The Agency staff and their families relied on many of the services provided by the city of Vienna. Jonas understood their needs and was helpful and co-operative. A housing shortage did exist in post-war Vienna and adequate quarters at a reasonable price were difficult to find. After discussions with Jonas, an agreement was reached under which the city of Vienna would construct housing for the staff, first on the Hofzeile and later on Chimanistrasse in the 19th District.

In December 1961, Sigvard Eklund (right) became the IAEA's second Director General. He is shown with his Deputy for Administration, John A. Hall, and Baquir Hasani (left), Ambassador of Iraq and Chairman of the IAEA Board of Governors.

The Statute Conference

The Twelve Power Conference completed its work on 27 April 1956 with an agreed draft on an *ad referendum* basis, several changes having been made from the earlier drafts. The composition of the Board of Governors was increased from 16 to 23. The title of the General Manager was changed to that of Director General, and the two-budget system was introduced. (The administrative budget was based on the revenue from the United Nations system of assessments while a second budget was based on voluntary contributions. This second budget eventually became the budget and source of funds for the technical assistance programmes.)

Safeguards were emphasized, but a psychological limitation added to the draft stated that safeguards would be applied only to the extent *relevant!* This limitation was proposed by Dr Bhabha. At the 18th session of the Washington meetings, a draft Statute was unanimously approved.

The Statute Conference, which met in October 1956 in the General Assembly Hall in New York with 81 governments attending, was established, arranged, and sponsored by the 12 governments which had participated in the Washington meetings. This group concluded, moreover, that the draft which emerged from the Washington meetings and had been placed before the Statute Conference should not be substantially altered. Efforts to make basic changes were opposed by the sponsoring governments. Some modifications were made, but the draft Statute that was eventually endorsed by the conference was the agreed Twelve-Power draft.

A few recommendations were adopted by the plenary; the most important being the preference of the conference to establish the headquarters of the agency in Vienna, Austria.

Eighty-one governments signed the Statute. Annex-I provided for the establishment of a Preparatory Commission to convene as soon as the Statute was open for signature. The purpose of the commission was to develop a programme, arrange for the first General Conference to be held in Vienna, and prepare for the first session of the Board of Governors.

The Statute required 18 ratifications, of which at least three had to come from the following States: Canada, France, UK, USSR, and USA. On 29 July 1957, the Agency came into being with the required ratifications.

The Cole administration

The first Director General, Sterling Cole, was an American Congressman with years of legislative experience as a member of the joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy. What he lacked in international experience was balanced by a devotion to his office and loyalty to the objectives of the Agency. His tenure from 1 December 1957 to 1 December 1961 was marked by the problems inherent in organizing a new agency in a difficult political period. Fortunately, Cole did have some capable senior staff to assist him. One of these was Henry Seligman, borrowed from Harwell, the United Kingdom's research laboratory. For many years he was the able Deputy on Research and Isotopes. The uses of isotopes in industry, medicine, and agriculture were suitable fields for this new agency in the beginning, and Henry Seligman was an international expert. Another competent advisor was Paul Jolles, a Swiss lawyer, who had successfully directed the Preparatory Commission through the rough beginnings of the Agency and was an effective Deputy for Administration.

In 1958, the Board of Governors established a Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC).* This committee

* The membership of SAC in 1958 was Sir John Cockcroft, United Kingdom; Dr W.B. Lewis, Canada; Dr Bertrand Goldschmidt, France; Dr Homi Bhabha, India; Prof. V.S. Emelyanov, USSR; Dr Bernard Gross, Brazil; and Prof. I.I. Rabi, United States.

played an increasingly important role during the first years of the Agency reviewing the proposed programmes and examining the recommended seminars, symposia, and meetings. Also in September 1958, the 2nd General Conference was held in the newly organized Conference Center in the Hofburg, the ancient seat of the Habsburgs in the city of Vienna. The 18th Century Ballroom, the Festsaal, was used as the plenary meeting room for the annual General Conference until September 1986. (In 1987, the General Conference will meet in the newly constructed Austrian Conference Center promised by the Austrian authorities in June 1967).

There were few substantive programmes during the first 4 years. It was a period of administrative adjustment and a time of trial and error for the new organization. The structure of the Agency was being developed and staff recruited. The early programmes dealt with training and educational services and provided special technical assistance missions to Latin America. Safeguard programmes were limited to research reactors because the Soviet Union, in particular, was hesitant to support work on procedures for reactors over 100 megawatts.

Head of the US delegation to the IAEA General Conference in 1961 was Glenn Seaborg, Chairman of the US Atomic Energy Commission. The delegation included Ambassador Henry DeWolf Smyth (right), US Governor on the IAEA Board; (partly hidden) William Cargo, Resident Representative of the USA to the IAEA; and Prof. I.I. Rabi, Member of President John F. Kennedy's Scientific Advisory Committee.

The Eklund administration

In June 1961, a candidate from Sweden was supported by the Board of Governors by the necessary two-thirds majority and Sigvard Eklund became the second Director General. A physicist by training, Dr Eklund was well known in the international scientific community. He had been the Secretary General of the 2nd Geneva Conference in 1958. His appointment was approved by a substantial majority of the General Conference. Admiral Oscar Quihillalt from Argentina, President of the General Conference, administered the oath and Dr Eklund took office on 1 December 1961.

I became his Deputy for Administration on the same date. Professor Rylov remained as the Deputy for Technical Operations until 1963 when Professor Gennady Yagodin from Moscow took over the post. Henry Seligman continued as the Deputy for Research and Isotopes, and Upendra Goswami from India was in charge of the developing technical assistance programmes. Prof. Dragoslav Popovich from Belgrade became the new authority on safeguards until he was replaced by Slobodan Nakičenovic, also from Yugoslavia. Alan McKnight from Australia became the Inspector General.

The principal political problem for the Agency for the next few years was to establish the procedures for the inspection of large power reactors. The Soviet Union had resisted supporting this activity until the spring 1963 Board Meeting when the Soviet representative took a positive position. From this point on in 1963, the Soviet Union and the United States (as well as other governments) have found a common political ground in the field of international safeguards which has greatly augmented the strength of the Agency and increased its contributions to international security.

Peace through scientific co-operation

Peace through scientific co-operation had become the new purpose of the Agency. It was stated by the Chairman of the United States delegation, Glenn Seaborg, in his address to the General Conference in September 1961: "To my Government it is clear that the Agency, being charged in its Statute with worldwide peaceful expansion of the greatest scientific-technological developments of our time, is in a position to be a powerful catalyst of peace and international co-operation."

The high caliber of the representatives on the US delegation supported this purpose. Its head was Glenn Seaborg, Nobel Laureate in Chemistry. The new US Governor, Professor Henry DeWolf Smyth, was Chairman of the Princeton University Research Board. The senior advisor to the US delegation to the General Conference was Professor I.I. Rabi, Nobel Laureate in physics.

During the first 4 years of the Eklund administration, several important programmes were initiated. The first Agency inspection was made at the Nora reactor in Norway. The inspectors were Dragoslav Popovich of Yugoslavia and Carlos Buechler of Argentina. With Soviet support, 1963 saw the establishment of the Committee on Procedures to be followed in inspecting reactors over 100 megawatts. The Trieste International

The Soviet delegation to the first IAEA General Conference: From right, Prof. V.S. Emelyanov, head of the delegation, and his two alternates, Ambassador S.G. Lapin and Leonid Zamyatin, Resident Representative of the USSR to the IAEA.

Centre for Theoretical Physics was inaugurated in the same year with Professor Abdus Salam, from the Imperial College in London, as Director. In 1963, too, by amendment of the Statute, the membership of the Board of Governors was increased from 23 to 25 to accommodate two more representatives from the Middle East and Africa.

The Scientific Advisory Committees of the IAEA and the UN met in Tashkent, Uzbekistan in 1964, to prepare for the 3rd Geneva Conference. This was the first UN meeting to be held in the Soviet Union. (While the 3rd Geneva Conference was a UN Conference, the Agency had been asked to organize and conduct it.)

In 1965, the IAEA held its first General Conference outside of Vienna, in Tokyo. It was here that Dr Eklund was unanimously confirmed as Director General for another 4 years.

Traditions and growth

During the first years of the IAEA, a politically significant role was created by representatives from the Holy See. (The Vatican had been invited to the Statute Conference and did participate.) The head of the Vatican delegation was the American industrialist, Frank Folsom. He was ably supported by his deputy, Father Theodore Hesburgh, President of Notre Dame University in the United States.

The two men attended all sessions of the General Conference and stated the position of the Vatican on several of the issues presented. They impressed the delegates by their knowledge of the subjects under discussion and their sincere efforts to make a contribution to the success of the General Conference. They made friends with members of all delegations; in particular, the Soviets and Americans. They even succeeded in removing some misunderstandings between the US and Soviet representatives which could have led to serious consequences.

On the Sunday following the opening of the first General Conference, the Vatican organized a special Mass to which all delegates were invited. The service was held then at the great Baroque church, the Karlskirche. At subsequent General Conferences, the Archbishop of Vienna, Cardinal König, conducted the special service at Saint Stephens Cathedral, giving his message to the delegates in each of the four official languages of the Agency.

The tradition continued. When subsequent General Conferences were held outside Vienna (in Tokyo, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, and New Delhi) services were also held at the close of the sessions.

At the June meeting of the Agency's Board of Governors in 1967, Ambassador Haymerle had reported that the Austrian Government was prepared to construct the permanent headquarters of the Agency at no cost to it in conjunction with the arrival of another international organization, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). An Austrian Conference Centre, he said, would also be constructed at the same site in the Donaupark across the Danube.

By 1967 the Agency had grown in stature internationally and was prepared to assume the new and profound responsibilities which would be assigned to it by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) of 1970.

The early years gave great promise of exciting and crucial developments to follow. The Agency's structure would be ready to accept NPT responsibilities as well as the urgent requirements of the Chernobyl accident. Those who created the organization had built wisely and with vision.