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EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION

Report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the
Effects of Atomic Radiation

1. The United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation 1/ held its thirtieth session at the International Centre in Vienna from 6 to 10 July 1981. The duties of Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur were discharged by Mr. Z. Jaworowski (Poland), Mr. D. Beninson (Argentina) and Mr. T. Kumatori (Japan), respectively.
2. The Committee took note of General Assembly resolution 35/12 of 3 November 1980. On the basis of drafts prepared by the Secretariat, the Committee discussed a number of scientific documents containing the supporting evidence for the next substantive report to the General Assembly. These documents reviewed information provided by Member States and by international organizations or published in the open scientific literature on various subjects.

* A/36/150.

1/ The terms of reference of the Committee, which was established by the General Assembly at its tenth session in 1955, are set out in resolution 913 (X). It was originally composed of the following Member States: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, France, India, Japan, Mexico, Sweden, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America. By resolution 3154 C (XXVII), the General Assembly decided to increase the Committee's membership by up to five additional members, and the following Member States were appointed by the President of the Assembly in consultation with the Chairmen of the regional groups: Germany, Federal Republic of, Indonesia, Peru, Poland and Sudan.

3. Among the physical subjects the technical discussions dealt with the models for the assessment of radiation doses to human populations; exposures resulting from the production of nuclear power for peaceful applications; exposures received in the course of diagnostic or therapeutic radiological procedures; exposures to radon, thoron and their decay products; occupational exposures.

4. In the biological subjects other documents were reviewed concerning the form of the dose-response relationships for radiation-induced tumours; the short- and long-term non-tumorous consequences of localized exposures in experimental animals and man; the biological effects of radiation administered in combination with other physical, chemical or biological agents; the fatality rates of radiation-induced tumours.

5. The Committee held also a preliminary discussion of the structure and the possible content of the next substantive report to the General Assembly.

6. The Committee expressed satisfaction with the amount and quality of information received on the above subjects from States Members of the United Nations, from the specialized agencies and from the International Atomic Energy Agency. The contribution of these data to the Committee's assessments is invaluable. The provision of new relevant information on doses, effects and risks of ionizing radiation will ensure that the future deliberations of the Committee will be founded on the latest scientific and technical knowledge.

7. In response to a special request by the United Nations Environment Programme, the Committee reviewed and approved a document on the environmental behaviour and dosimetry of selected radionuclides. This analyses the sources, the pathways in the environment, the transfer to man and the dose assessments for the following radionuclides of major importance for the applications of nuclear energy: tritium, carbon-14, krypton-85, strontium-90, iodine-129 and iodine-131, caesium-137, radon and plutonium.

8. The Committee will hold its thirty-first session at the Vienna International Centre from 15 to 26 March 1982, during which time it plans to finalize its main report with scientific annexes for submission to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session.
