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Official Records

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 85

Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (A/64/257)

Draft resolution (A/64/L.7)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I have the pleasure to invite Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, to introduce the report of the Agency for the year 2008.

Mr. ElBaradei (International Atomic Energy Agency): This will be my last speech to the General Assembly as Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Since I first spoke to the Assembly in 1998, the Agency has moved from being a relatively unknown technical organization, whose work was of interest mainly to specialists in the nuclear field, to becoming a major player at the centre of issues critical to international peace and security. The Agency has gained universal respect for its independence and objectivity in nuclear verification, safety and security. We have also made considerable progress in bringing the benefits of peaceful nuclear technology to developing countries, improving their access to energy, health care, food and clean water.

While I leave office after 12 years with pride in the IAEA's many achievements, I must also express some disappointment — disappointment that we are

still fighting the same battles to secure sufficient funding as we were back in the 1990s, that the development side of our mandate remains chronically underfunded and that we still lack adequate legal authority to effectively do our job of verification, safety and security.

On a more positive note, nuclear disarmament, which failed to make any headway in the two decades after the end of the cold war, is now back at the top of the international agenda, and there is reason to hope that we may see a breakthrough. I will return to that subject in a moment.

First, I will outline some of the main changes in the work of the IAEA over the past 12 years and offer some thoughts on both the future of the Agency and the international environment in which it operates.

I will start with nuclear power. The world seems set for a significant expansion in the use of nuclear power, with scores of countries expressing interest in introducing it as part of their energy mix. Not surprisingly, most of them are from the developing world, which urgently needs a dramatic increase in electricity supply if it is to lift its people out of poverty. Energy is the engine of development. For many countries, nuclear power, with its good performance and safety record, is a way to meet their surging demand for energy, reduce their vulnerability to fluctuations in the cost of fossil fuels and combat climate change. The IAEA has adjusted its priorities to focus more on the nuclear power programmes of what we call the newcomers.

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Nuclear safety has improved significantly since the shock of Chernobyl in 1986, but the risk of accidents can never be eliminated completely. It is in all our interests to ensure that the highest safety standards are upheld everywhere. IAEA safety standards have become the global benchmark and have recently been adopted by the European Union. I would like to see the safety standards accepted by all countries and, ideally, made binding.

Turning to the development side of our mandate, the Agency is the principal vehicle for multilateral nuclear technology transfer, helping countries to use nuclear techniques in food and agriculture, human health, water resources and the environment. Our technical cooperation activities have made a difference. For example, induced crop mutations involving nuclear techniques have produced salt-tolerant rice and drought-resistant wheat, providing better nutrition and food security and improving economic prospects for farmers. Likewise, isotope data provide a unique tool to determine the availability and vulnerability of groundwater systems over the long term, so that reliable supplies of fresh water can be secured for the next generation.

Our Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy — PACT — is bringing new hope to cancer patients and their families in developing countries, where the incidence of cancer continues to rise inexorably. Twenty-seven of the 53 countries in Africa, for example, have no operating radiotherapy services at all — no screening, no early diagnosis, no palliative care programmes. In other parts of Africa, there is one radiotherapy machine for every 70 million people. In Europe, by contrast, there is one machine for every 250,000 people.

Back in 1998, our Technical Cooperation Programme totalled a modest \$80 million per year. Ten years later, in 2008, the programme disbursed \$96 million — a negligible increase, in my view, considering inflation and the growth in the Agency membership from 127 countries to the present 150, as well as the increasing development needs of member States. We can and should do much more, but that requires a significant increase in funding — which, regrettably, has not been made available to us. I urge donor States to recognize the link between security, which you all seek, and development. Without development, there can be no security. The reverse is also true.

Improving life for the 2 billion people — one third of humanity — who live on less than \$2 per day is not just the right thing to do, it is also the smart thing to do. By helping to address the root causes of instability and insecurity, including endemic conflicts, poor governance and poverty, we make it less likely that countries will feel the temptation to seek nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction.

The gravest threat the world faces today, in my opinion, is that extremists could get hold of nuclear or radioactive materials. In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, the IAEA initiated a comprehensive programme to combat the risk of nuclear terrorism. I am proud of the speed and efficiency with which the Agency established an effective nuclear security programme, which has provided \$50 million in equipment, training and other assistance to member States over the last three years.

But it is disconcerting that nuclear security continues to be funded almost entirely from voluntary contributions, which come with many conditions attached and are both insufficient and unpredictable. Much more needs to be done. The number of incidents of illicit trafficking and other unauthorized activities reported to our Illicit Trafficking Database — over 200 last year — remains a cause of grave concern, and might well be only the tip of the iceberg.

The global non-proliferation landscape has changed radically over the last two decades. The way in which the Agency implements safeguards has also undergone a metamorphosis. We have moved beyond simple verification of declared nuclear material at declared facilities to assessing information on a State's entire nuclear programme and, most importantly, verifying the absence of undeclared activities. The Model Additional Protocol, which was approved in 1997, has become an essential verification tool. Within the limited resources and capabilities available to us, we have made increasing use of the advanced technology critical to verification today, such as remote monitoring, environmental sampling and satellite imagery.

As I reported to the Security Council summit-level meeting on nuclear disarmament in September (see S/PV.6191), our ability to detect possible clandestine nuclear material and activities depends on the extent to which we are given the necessary legal authority, technology and resources. Regrettably, we

face continuing major shortcomings in all three areas, which, if not addressed, could put the entire non-proliferation regime at risk. In over 90 States, either the Agency has no verification authority at all or its authority is inadequate because those countries have not concluded the necessary agreements with the Agency. That means we often cannot verify whether a country is engaged in clandestine nuclear activities.

Our credibility depends on our independence. Additional funding is urgently needed for state-of-the-art technology so that, for example, we can independently validate environmental sampling analyses. We also need improved and consistent access to top-quality satellite imagery. Continuing with budgets that fall far short of our essential verification needs in the coming years is not a viable option.

Iraq and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea were the two cases of suspected nuclear proliferation preoccupying the international community when I took office.

I will always lament the fact that a tragic war was launched in Iraq, which has cost the lives of possibly hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians. This was done on the basis of a false pretext, without authorization from the Security Council, and despite the Agency and the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission having found no evidence that Iraq had revived its nuclear weapons programme or programmes involving other weapons of mass destruction. It gives me no consolation that the Agency's findings were subsequently vindicated.

In the case of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, 16 years after the IAEA reported that country to the Security Council for non-compliance with its non-proliferation obligations, it has moved from the likely possession of undeclared plutonium to acquiring nuclear weapons. The on-again-off-again nature of the dialogue between the Democratic People's Republic and the international community has stymied the resolution of this issue, which is a glaring example of the fragility and shortcomings of the non-proliferation regime.

In my view, important lessons need to be learned from Iraq and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The main one is that we must let diplomacy and thorough verification take their course, however lengthy and tiresome the process might be. We need to carefully assess the veracity of intelligence information.

We must engage those with whom we have differences in dialogue, rather than seek to isolate them. We must act within the framework of international institutions — in this case, the IAEA and the Security Council — and empower them, rather than bypass them through unilateral action. The Agency, for its part, must draw conclusions justified by the facts alone. It must not jump the gun or be influenced by political considerations. Force should never be used unless every other option has been exhausted, and then only within the bounds of international law, as codified in the United Nations Security Council.

All of these lessons are applicable today in the case of Iran, whose nuclear programme remains an issue before both the Agency and the Security Council. Six years have passed since Iran was reported to the IAEA Board of Governors for failing to declare material and activities to the Agency, in violation of its safeguards agreement. As a result of difficult and painstaking work, the Agency has acquired a better understanding of Iran's civil nuclear programme. Nevertheless, a number of questions and allegations relevant to the nature of that programme are still outstanding and need to be clarified by Iran through transparency and cooperation with the Agency.

However, as I have pointed out many times, addressing the concerns of the international community about Iran's future intentions is primarily a matter of confidence-building, which can only be achieved through dialogue. I therefore urge Iran to be as forthcoming as possible in responding soon to my recent proposal, based on the initiative of the United States, Russia and France, which aimed to engage Iran in a series of measures that could build confidence and trust and open the way for comprehensive and substantive dialogue between Iran and the international community.

The issue at stake remains that of mutual guarantees among the parties. I should add, however, that trust- and confidence-building are an incremental process that requires focusing on the big picture and a willingness to take risks for peace. This is a unique and fleeting opportunity to reverse course from confrontation to cooperation and therefore should not be missed.

The Agency cannot do its nuclear verification work in isolation. It depends on a supportive political process, with the Security Council at its core. The

Council needs to develop an effective and comprehensive compliance mechanism which does not rely only on sanctions, which too often hurt the vulnerable and the innocent. It must focus more on conflict prevention and address the insecurities that lie behind many cases of proliferation, such as mistrust and unresolved conflict.

I have in the past drawn the General Assembly's attention to the growing number of States that have mastered uranium enrichment or plutonium reprocessing. Any one of these States has the capacity to develop nuclear weapons in a short span of time — a margin of security which is too close for comfort.

To address that challenge, which could be the Achilles heel of the non-proliferation regime, I believe that we need to move from national to multinational control of the nuclear fuel cycle. As a first step, I have proposed the establishment of a low enriched uranium bank to assure States a guaranteed last-resort supply of nuclear fuel for their reactors so that they might not need their own enrichment or reprocessing capability.

A number of complementary proposals have also been made. There are no technical or legal stumbling blocks that could not be overcome. The basic question is one of trust-building between States. I remain convinced that some such mechanism is essential as more and more countries introduce nuclear energy. Our ultimate goal should be the full multinationalization of the sensitive part of the fuel cycle — uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing — as we move towards a world free from nuclear weapons. Such a world is, I believe, within our grasp following the courageous initiative of President Obama and the resumption of serious disarmament negotiations between the two largest nuclear-weapon States.

Nuclear weapons are, regrettably, still seen as bringing power and prestige and providing an insurance policy against possible attack. However, by demonstrating their irreversible commitment to achieving a world free from nuclear weapons, the weapon States can greatly enhance the value and legitimacy of the non-proliferation regime and gain the moral authority to call on the rest of the world to curb the proliferation of these inhumane weapons.

I do not expect to see a world free from nuclear weapons in my lifetime, but I am increasingly hopeful that my children may live in such a world, in particular in the light of the growing realization that, with the

technology out of the box and an increasing risk of nuclear terrorism, the danger of nuclear weapons being used has increased considerably. The Security Council's recent adoption of resolution 1887 (2009), pledging to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, is encouraging. It is vital that the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference build on this momentum.

It is clear that tremendous challenges, but also tremendous opportunities, lie ahead for the Agency. If nuclear disarmament proceeds successfully, as I hope it will, that could create a significant additional verification role for the Agency. In 50 years' time, there may be several dozen additional countries with nuclear power programmes, mostly in what today is known as the developing world. That will mean a considerable increase in demand for the IAEA's services in nuclear safety, security and verification.

The IAEA's dual mandate of security and development is unique. But we are part of a complex web of international security mechanisms that need to work in harmony if we are to effectively serve the people who put their trust in us. I do not share the prevailing cynicism about international organizations. Like all human endeavours they have their weaknesses, but they are capable of great things if properly resourced and empowered and competently led. We live in an increasingly globalized world, and none of the major problems we face — terrorism, hunger, arms control, climate change — can be solved by any one country alone. We need effective international institutions.

Ultimately, we need a new global system of collective security that entails an overhaul of the United Nations system and, above all, of the Security Council: a new system in which no country feels the need to rely on nuclear weapons for its security; a new system with effective global mechanisms for conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacemaking; an equitable and inclusive system in which security is not perceived as a zero sum game or based on domination or on a balance of power; a system that places human security and human solidarity at its core, grasps our shared destiny as one human family and enables all of us to live together free from fear and free from want.

In conclusion, I take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to the Republic of Austria for being a most gracious and supportive host country for the

IAEA. I congratulate my successor, Director General-elect Yukiya Amano, and wish him every success. I thank the General Assembly for its support during my 12 years as Director General. We have come through some challenging times together. It has been an honour and a privilege to work with all of you.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly I should like to thank the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency for presenting this valuable report. As this is the last time he addresses the Assembly in his current capacity, we express our satisfaction and appreciation to him for the role he has played.

I now give the floor to the representative of Malaysia to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.7.

Mr. Ali (Malaysia): On behalf of my delegation, I should like to thank Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for the introduction of the report of the IAEA for 2008 and for his statement, which concisely depicted the various activities undertaken by the Agency this year and the challenges faced by the Agency in carrying out its tasks.

In Malaysia's capacity as Chairman of the IAEA Board of Governors and on behalf of the sponsors, I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/64/L.7 on the Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency. We would like to thank all sponsors of this draft resolution, and we invite others to join in co-sponsoring it. This draft resolution is the product of consultations held in Vienna, following which, in October 2009, it was unanimously adopted by all member States of the IAEA.

In general, this draft resolution is an update of a similar resolution adopted by consensus at the sixty-third session of the General Assembly (resolution 63/6). It takes note of, among other things, the report of the IAEA and the resolutions adopted at the fifty-third regular session of the IAEA General Conference, held in Vienna from 14 to 18 September 2009. In addition, it expresses the Assembly's appreciation for the 12 years of distinguished service by Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei as Director General of the Agency and extends its best wishes to Mr. Yukiya Amano, the incoming Director General of the Agency.

As in previous years, the resolution reaffirms the Assembly's strong support for the indispensable role of

the Agency in encouraging and assisting the development and practical application of atomic energy for peaceful uses, in technology transfer to developing countries and in nuclear safety, verification and security. It also appeals to Member States to continue to support the activities of the Agency.

It is my sincerest hope the General Assembly will adopt this draft resolution by consensus.

Mr. Örnéus (Sweden): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU).

At the outset, I should like to thank the secretariat of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its Director General, Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, for their hard work over the past year. We thank Mr. ElBaradei for his report on the activities of the IAEA in 2009.

Allow me also to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. ElBaradei on his successful tenure as Director General of the Agency. The last 12 years have at times been exceptionally dramatic for the IAEA, and it has been well served by having at its helm a person with strong integrity and diplomatic skill. The Nobel Peace Prize in 2005 was a just recognition of the achievements both of the Director General and of the Agency.

We also warmly welcome Ambassador Amano, who will take office as the new Director General of the Agency in December. The challenges facing the world today in the fields of non-proliferation and nuclear safety and security are indeed demanding. The European Union is convinced that Ambassador Amano has the experience required to take on the tasks ahead and the EU can assure him of its strong support.

EU member States are among the sponsors of the draft resolution on the report of the IAEA (A/64/L.7). We praise the efforts by the Chairman of the IAEA Board of Governors and sincerely hope that the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

While the EU fully supports the draft resolution, this does not imply support for IAEA resolution GC(53)/RES/17, which is mentioned in paragraph 2 of the draft resolution. In this regard, the EU recalls that when that resolution was adopted by the IAEA General Conference, a considerable number of States voted against it, among them all EU member States.

Fifty years ago, the IAEA was set up to promote "Atoms for Peace", with the mandate to increase the

contribution of nuclear energy to peace, health and prosperity, to ensure that nuclear activities are not diverted to military purposes, to spread throughout the world a culture of safety, as well as rigorous safety standards and, more recently, to avert the risk of nuclear terrorism. Today the Agency is faced with a number of compelling challenges, in particular nuclear proliferation and compliance issues.

The international safeguards system of the IAEA is an essential part of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime since its prime objective is to detect and deter the diversion of nuclear materials for use in nuclear weapons. The European Union is working towards making the Additional Protocol a condition for the supply of nuclear exports. All EU member States have had Additional Protocols in force since May 2004. We reiterate that the Agency's comprehensive safeguards agreements and Additional Protocols constitute the current verification standard.

The EU regrets that there are still a considerable number of States that have yet to bring into force Additional Protocols. We urge States that have not yet done so to sign and bring their respective safeguards agreements into force, as well as the Additional Protocols to the agreements.

The IAEA's activities have established the framework for cooperative efforts to build and strengthen an international safety and security regime and have the full support of the European Union in this regard.

The IAEA plays an important role in strengthening the global nuclear safety framework. The EU fully supports the Agency's efforts in this field. Under the Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation and the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance, the European Union has dedicated some €70 million for the period 2007-2013 to assist countries to strengthen their nuclear safety and radiation protection regimes. Under these instruments, the EU is cooperating with the IAEA to implement specific projects with IAEA member States.

The EU recognizes that nuclear security is an essential programme of the Agency and commends the IAEA for its activities aimed at preventing and combating nuclear terrorism. Through a financial contribution of more than €20 million since 2004, the EU is the major donor to the IAEA Nuclear Security

Fund. We call on all States to commit themselves to financing the Fund.

The safety and security of radioactive sources are indeed of utmost importance. In this regard, the role of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, adopted by the General Conference of the Agency in 2003, is of particular importance. The European Union has made a commitment to respect the Code and urges all States to do likewise.

The task of the IAEA to foster international cooperation for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to promote nuclear safety and security and, not least, nuclear verification, remains more important than ever in today's world.

In concluding, the EU reiterates its full support for the IAEA and is pleased to be a sponsor of draft resolution A/64/L.7, on the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, I would like to express my appreciation to Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei for the work he has done during his 12 years in office as Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). His achievements and the honours he received while in office earned him universal acclaim as is confirmed by the Nobel Peace Prize that was awarded to the Agency and to him personally.

We welcome the appointment of the new Director General, Ambassador Amano of Japan, and pledge to him our full support. We hope that his activities will assist in preserving the great prominence of the Agency, whose work has always been based on the principles of impartiality and objectivity in the interests of all its member States.

The IAEA has been the global centre for cooperation in the nuclear field for more than half a century. Under current conditions and taking into account new challenges and threats encountered by the world community, the role of the IAEA as the sole international organization with the task of ensuring the necessary balance between the development of the safe and peaceful use of nuclear energy and the adherence of States to the regime of nuclear non-proliferation has become increasingly more important. We commend the activities of the IAEA to date and are committed to further strengthening the Agency's potential.

In our view, the main task for the immediate future is to ensure conditions under which all IAEA member States may take full advantage of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, in accordance with the requirements of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, without any impediments.

Upgrading the IAEA's potential in uncovering undeclared nuclear materials and unannounced nuclear activities is an important track in strengthening this regime. The Agency's safeguards system plays an important role in ensuring the effectiveness of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Making the system universal will allow the Agency to guarantee with reliable certainty that there are no undeclared nuclear materials or activities worldwide.

We proceed from the understanding that in the future the safeguards agreement and the Additional Protocol to it should become the universal norm for verifying compliance by States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons with their non-proliferation obligations, as well as the new standard in the field of arrangements on nuclear supplies. We hope that all countries that have not yet acceded to this most important document and, above all, those carrying out significant nuclear activities, will do so as soon as possible.

With respect to the ever-increasing role of nuclear energy in the world and the commission of new production and energy potentials related to the nuclear field, the scope of the IAEA control activities will also be growing. In this regard, it is now time to ponder the matter of making the IAEA's technical control capabilities commensurate with the expanded number of facilities placed under its safeguards.

In that context, we welcome the work of the Agency's secretariat to apply the concept of integrated safeguards in the Agency's control activities on a practical basis. The Russian Federation will continue to assist the Agency in reinforcing the safeguards system through the financing of the national programme of scientific and technological support for IAEA safeguards.

To date, much has been done to create an effective international safety net to prevent nuclear weapons and nuclear materials from falling into the hands of terrorists. In that connection, it is necessary to stress the importance of the IAEA's systematic efforts to strengthen the worldwide nuclear physical safety

regime. We support the adoption of a new IAEA nuclear physical safety plan for 2010-2013.

As the terrorist threat is international, we deem it necessary to strengthen mechanisms for multilateral and bilateral cooperation. At the meeting in Moscow on 6 July 2009, the Presidents of Russia and the United States adopted a joint statement on nuclear cooperation. In particular, the statement confirmed their commitment to enhancing cooperation to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to suppress acts of nuclear terrorism. The statement also declared the intent to broaden and deepen long-term cooperation to further strengthen the security of nuclear facilities throughout the world, including by means of continued activity to return spent high enriched uranium fuel to producer States, to develop new types of low enriched uranium fuel, potentially to convert research reactor cores in third countries, and to minimize the use of high enriched uranium in civilian applications, where feasible. We invite all Member States to join us in that work.

We would like to report that Russia has adopted a principled decision to make, starting in 2010, a significant voluntary contribution to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund, amounting to \$1.5 million in 2010 and \$1 million annually from 2011 to 2015. We hope that our contribution will help to further strengthen the nuclear physical safety regime.

The Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, put forward by the Presidents of Russia and of the United States in 2006, is another important contribution to resolving that task. The Initiative is acquiring a global dimension, as 76 States have already joined it as participating nations. Key international instruments, such as the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, the 2005 Amendment to that Convention and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism serve as a basis for cooperation within the Global Initiative.

The implementation of the technical cooperation programme is an important element of the Agency's activities. The Russian Federation has been paying and intends to continue to pay in full its voluntary contributions to the Technical Cooperation Fund. This year, we have contributed 23.6 million rubles to the Fund. In addition, in late 2008, we contributed 240 million rubles to assist the Republic of Armenia in

improving the safety of the Armenian nuclear power plant under the IAEA technical cooperation programme.

The Russian Federation ensures the appropriate level of safety regulation in its use of nuclear energy, in compliance with international conventions and IAEA recommendations. This year, for the first time Russia will receive an IAEA mission to assess the activities of the national safety regulation entities in the use of nuclear energy.

The Russian Federation has decided to assist Ukraine in improving the safety of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant site and accelerating the decommissioning of the facility. In 2009, we allocated \$10 million to that end, and next year we shall contribute an additional \$7 million to the Chernobyl Shelter Fund.

With respect to current non-proliferation and environmental safety matters, we continue to work to return spent high enriched uranium fuel to Russia, jointly with the United States, the IAEA and partner countries in technical cooperation projects related to the removal of high enriched uranium fuel from Soviet-made research reactors. As of 1 September 2009, over 470 kilos of fresh and 415 kilos, in uranium equivalent, of irradiated high enriched uranium fuel had been returned to Russia from abroad, including from Romania, Latvia, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Uzbekistan, Hungary and Kazakhstan. In 2009, respective intergovernmental agreements were signed with Romania, Serbia and Poland.

The development of nuclear energy in many countries raises the issue of a reliable supply of the appropriate fuel. From the economic point of view, creating the capability for nuclear fuel production is a very expensive process. We believe that the most effective decision here could be the implementation of initiatives with respect to the nuclear fuel cycle, with the IAEA playing a central role and in the framework of multilateral approaches, aimed at providing an economically feasible and practically viable alternative to establishing all its elements at the national level. We highly appreciate and support the role of the Agency in promoting multilateral approaches to the establishment of nuclear fuel cycle services. We are prepared to work with all interested countries on defining and aligning initiatives on multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle, where that is possible and feasible.

Within the framework of the initiative put forward by the President of Russia to create a global nuclear energy infrastructure, the International Uranium Enrichment Centre was established in 2007, in cooperation with the Republic of Kazakhstan, on the premises of the Angarsk Electrolysis Chemical Plant open joint-stock company. In 2008, the Centre obtained all the necessary permits and licences to begin practical activities as a supplier of goods and services. This year, Armenia joined the International Uranium Enrichment Centre, while Ukraine's membership process is currently being finalized.

We share with IAEA the view that the Centre is capable of addressing issues not only of guaranteed access to nuclear fuel cycle services, but also of guaranteed deliveries of nuclear fuel at the Agency's request. We continue to develop the initiative to create a guaranteed reserve of low enriched uranium in a volume of two full reactor-core fuelling loads of 1,000 megawatts installed capacity, with their planned storage entrusted to the International Uranium Enrichment Centre under an arrangement with the IAEA.

Last year, at the fifty-second session of the General Conference of the IAEA, Russia introduced a proposal on the principle of establishing guaranteed reserves. This year, we further developed that initiative. It was presented in detail at the March and June meetings of the IAEA Board of Governors. A detailed description of the initiative has been issued as an information paper of the Agency.

I would like to emphasize that the Russian proposal is based on article IX of the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The rights of States members of the Agency are not infringed upon or derogated from, including with regard to the development of their own production capacities within the nuclear fuel cycle. The right to receive high enriched uranium from a guaranteed reserve does not entail renouncing the rights to create and develop a fuel cycle. We are not proposing such a condition. The material can be supplied to any non-nuclear IAEA member State that is not in breach of its safeguards agreement and has placed all its nuclear activities under IAEA safeguards.

The implementation of the IAEA International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO), initiated by Russia, serves as an example of successful international cooperation under the auspices

of the Agency. At this time, following publication late last year of the methodology for assessing innovative nuclear energy systems, developed by INPRO, the second stage of the project's implementation has begun. INPRO participating parties can now start organizing practical joint work on developing safe nuclear technologies. We support the IAEA secretariat's efforts to finance the project's budget and call on all participating parties to initiate its direct financing on a shared basis. The Russian Federation has committed to long-term financing of the project for the period 2008-2012 by allocating 23 million rubles annually.

I would like to reaffirm our support for draft resolution A/64/L.7, entitled "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency". As a sponsor of the draft resolution, Russia fully endorses the importance of the Agency's work and is confident that it will continue in the interests of strengthening international security.

Mr. Abdulaziz (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish to begin by welcoming Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and to thank him for having presented the report (see A/64/257) reviewing the important activities undertaken by the Agency in 2008 in its various spheres of work and its contribution through its verification activities to international peace and security. I wish to reaffirm our full confidence in the competence of the Agency in fulfilling its noble task of promoting equally the three main pillars of its work — technology transfer, safety and verification.

For over half a century, the IAEA has made tangible contributions to international cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, promoting the highest standards of nuclear safety and security throughout the world, and verifying that States comply with their non-proliferation obligations while guaranteeing that the non-nuclear States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) continue to enjoy their inalienable right, pursuant to article 4 of the Treaty, to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The importance of that inalienable right is becoming more pronounced for non-nuclear States parties to the NPT at a time when developing countries face a growing need for clean and affordable sources of energy to implement their development plans and advance their social and economic circumstances. This need has been accentuated by the financial and economic crisis, which has cast a pall on the ability of

developing countries to achieve their development objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals. Egypt therefore believes that the Agency will continue to play a central role in helping non-nuclear-weapon States members of the NPT to acquire technology to meet their growing need for nuclear energy.

The role of the IAEA in supporting international cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy has gained in importance. The inadequate quantitative and qualitative level of nuclear power technology transfer from developed to developing States has been accentuated by the attempts of some parties to impose false conditions and unjustified restrictions or to raise false pretexts to prevent non-nuclear-weapon NPT member States from acquiring the materials and technology required to develop their peaceful nuclear programmes. Furthermore, the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) has issued waivers for countries that are not party to the NPT and provided those countries with nuclear technology and materials.

The 2010 Review Conference of the States Parties to the NPT is approaching. It will be a decisive moment for the future and fate of the Treaty. We must therefore address the imbalance in implementing the Treaty in order to guarantee that such NSG exceptions will not be repeated. We must push for all the practical measures necessary to achieve the universalization of the IAEA's comprehensive safeguards regime in order to address the exaggerated politicization of the implementation of the nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament regime, as well as non-compliance with disarmament commitments and with the provisions of the Treaty prohibiting cooperation with non-member States, with a view to realizing the Treaty's universality and guaranteeing its effectiveness and credibility. We must also effectively address the phenomenon of the presence of nuclear weapons on the territories of non-nuclear-weapon States members of military alliances that are under comprehensive safeguards and apply the Additional Protocol.

Despite the fact that the comprehensive safeguards regime is not universal and despite the excessive shortcomings in the implementation by nuclear-weapon States of their nuclear disarmament obligations, non-nuclear-weapon States continue to face increasing pressure to accept more commitments in the safeguards area, in addition to the Additional Protocol. This is happening in a context that ignores the right of

every country to accept such an instrument or any other additional commitment beyond comprehensive safeguards. Priority should be given to achieving the universality of the IAEA comprehensive safeguards regime before additional enhancements to the safeguards system are called for in a discriminatory manner.

Even when the Security Council convened its historic summit-level meeting on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation on 24 September this year, it adopted resolution 1887 (2009), which sought to reinterpret important elements of the IAEA safeguards system and the inalienable right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, pursuing new interpretations that could run contrary to the provisions and objectives of the NPT. These are all indications of the increased risks posed by the attempts of some to establish that resolution as a key reference for addressing the issue of non-proliferation at the 2010 Review Conference. This is unacceptable to a great number of States.

The IAEA remains the only legitimate multilateral forum for the discussion and analysis of the technical, legal and practical dimensions of a number of proposals that have been put forward on multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle and nuclear fuel assurances. There are, however, discussions that cannot be concluded before a consensus is reached that has so far remained elusive. While Egypt welcomes the exploration of supplementary means to provide for nuclear fuel assurances and to promote voluntary frameworks for international cooperation in the area of fuel production, without requiring States to give up any rights, we see no basis for such arrangements resulting in any form of restriction on free national choices in the nuclear fuel cycle. Such choices are inalienable, not subject to restriction, and protected under the NPT for all non-nuclear-weapon States. Egypt believes that no State should give up that right, even if it has not yet exercised it; otherwise, future generations will be deprived of their rightful option in this regard, which is of concern given the possibility that meeting future requirements and development needs may potentially depend on it.

All States of the Middle East except Israel have acknowledged the central importance of adhering to the IAEA's comprehensive safeguards system. Israel remains outside that system despite the annual adoption at the IAEA General Conference of a resolution entitled "Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East", which demands that Israel join the

comprehensive safeguards regime in order to facilitate the arrangements required to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and regional trust, peace and security. This year, for the first time since 1991, the General Conference adopted a resolution entitled "Israeli nuclear capabilities" with a view to alerting the international community to the dangers represented by those Israeli capabilities which remain outside international control in the area of safeguards, nuclear safety or security. Such capabilities represent significant motivation for nuclear proliferation in the Middle East and pose the ultimate threat to the stability of the region and to broader international peace and security.

I shall now move from the regional dimension to address the issue of technical cooperation. Egypt reiterates the importance it attaches to IAEA technical cooperation activities with other developing countries that benefit from such programmes and use nuclear technologies in the areas of health, agriculture, food, water resources, radio isotopes and radiological technologies. We emphasize the importance of promoting the role of the Agency in technology transfer through increased funding for its technical cooperation activities, bearing in mind that such activities represent one of the main pillars of the IAEA's statutory role.

We note the role of the IAEA as the sole international multilateral forum mandated to work to apply the highest nuclear safety standards for nuclear reactors and to help developing countries benefit from nuclear energy. Egypt, which is working to make nuclear energy a viable means for realizing its development goals, cooperates with the Agency in this area, including on services relating to assessing energy requirements and on technical advisory services relating to the safe and effective development of national capabilities to use nuclear energy. We look forward to the continued support of the Agency in these efforts.

With regard to IAEA activities in the area of nuclear security, Egypt welcomes the continued efforts of the IAEA to further develop the Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plans and to ensure, to the extent possible, all required voluntary contributions to the Nuclear Security Fund. In this context, Egypt looks forward to participating in the Nuclear Security Summit to be convened by the President of the United States in April 2010, which we hope will yield consistent results that will help consolidate the IAEA's efforts in this regard.

Finally, I take this opportunity to particularly commend the balanced role played by IAEA Director General ElBaradei and his staff since 1997, and the results his responsible leadership has produced in developing this most important and sensitive international body and increased international trust in his integrity and leadership. I would also like to congratulate Ambassador Amano, the incoming Director General of the Agency, and to confirm that we look forward to continued cooperation with him. Egypt reiterates its continued support for the Agency in every possible way so as to protect its balanced international role and guarantee its contribution to world security, stability, scientific progress and well-being.

Ms. Kolontai (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): Belarus greatly values the results of the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and welcomes the strengthening of the IAEA's authority as the leading international intergovernmental organization in the nuclear field. We attach special importance to the IAEA's efforts in such areas as technical cooperation, nuclear energy, nuclear non-proliferation, the adoption of a safeguards regime, and nuclear and radiation security. We note the attention that the IAEA has given to addressing a range of issues by providing technical assistance to Member States in creating and developing the peaceful uses of nuclear power. The IAEA's assistance in establishing a process for creating national nuclear power systems is making an important contribution to strengthening nuclear safety in the energy sphere and promoting the adoption of atomic energy technology for peaceful purposes.

For Belarus, cooperation with the IAEA in this sphere is of special significance in the context of its own preparations for constructing its first nuclear power plant. Belarus has made considerable progress in building the nuclear energy infrastructure necessary to ensure the safe exploitation of atomic power. We are paying special attention to the development of atomic energy legislation and standards, as well as to establishing an effective regulatory system for nuclear and radiation safety. After an in-depth, multilateral study, three possible sites were chosen for the plant, one of which has been designated as the primary location and the other two as reserves. In this connection we note the expert assistance of the IAEA, whose specialists visited Belarus twice in 2008.

In the process of constructing the nuclear facility, Belarus is giving significant attention to the issue of

public information. In strict compliance with its international obligations, Belarus has held public hearings for agreement on its report on assessments of the environmental impact during the nuclear power plant's planning and construction. Along with the public, countries that had expressed their intention to participate — Austria, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine — were invited to participate in the proceedings. The final version of the environmental impact assessment documentation will be prepared, taking into account comments received from those countries and the public.

The Republic of Belarus is a convinced and consistent supporter of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as of strengthening the IAEA's safeguards regime. Our strict compliance with our commitments under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Safeguards Agreement confirms our support for the principles of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

In considering the processes of non-proliferation and disarmament as a whole, we should remember that one of the most important goals is to guarantee the use of nuclear technology for exclusively peaceful purposes. In this regard, it should be stressed that under the NPT and the IAEA Charter, every member State has an inalienable right to implement a peaceful nuclear programme. Belarus is convinced that the mechanisms at the disposal of the international community must promote the equal, non-discriminatory access of all interested countries to the benefits of nuclear energy.

As a founding member of the IAEA, Belarus is an active supporter of strengthening the Agency, the leading international organization promoting the safe, reliable and peaceful use of nuclear energy for the purposes of sustainable development. In recent years, much has been done to achieve the IAEA's chief aim, "Atoms for peace". In this regard, Director General Mohamed ElBaradei has rendered us great service. We express our sincere gratitude to Mr. ElBaradei, a Nobel laureate, for his tireless efforts as Director General of the IAEA, which have strengthened the Agency's international authority as the key organization advocating the broad use of nuclear power for maintaining peace, health and well-being.

Belarus welcomes the appointment as Director General of Mr. Yukiya Amano and is ready to support

him in his work. We would also like to emphasize our support for draft resolution A/64/L.7 on the report of the IAEA (see A/64/257). Belarus is a sponsor of the draft and a wholehearted support of the Agency's work to strengthen international security and sustainable development.

Mr. Khazaee (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, I would like to express my appreciation to Mr. ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for his efforts and his report to the General Assembly on the main activities of the Agency in 2008. I would also like to congratulate Mr. Amano on his appointment as the new Director General of the IAEA.

The 2008 report of the IAEA is a clear manifestation of the increasing and significant role of nuclear technology in human life. More than half a century after the establishment of the IAEA, the scope of its activities has expanded in various areas due to the growing demand for nuclear power as a renewable, clean source of energy. The IAEA report also demonstrates the importance of nuclear technology in many other areas, such as industry, medicine, science and agriculture. We are pleased that, according to the IAEA report, our oil-rich neighbours in the Persian Gulf region are also pursuing nuclear power as a new source of energy, with the cooperation of certain European countries. It is good to see that those countries, which once believed that oil-producing countries did not need nuclear energy, have now come to the conclusion that they need to expand their nuclear cooperation with such States.

A nuclear renaissance is on the horizon. Therefore, the IAEA bears the main responsibility for playing its role as the sole inclusive international organization promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. In this context, the IAEA should be the major body to assist States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to fully implement article IV of the NPT, according to which States parties have undertaken

“to facilitate ... the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear technology”.

Based on its mandate, the Agency should strengthen its efforts in nuclear cooperation and assistance, in particular to developing countries.

Unfortunately, those IAEA activities are lagging behind others, in particular verification activities. A few countries consider the IAEA solely as a verification tool. By applying this selective approach towards the IAEA over the past decade, they have attempted to downgrade it to a uni-purpose entity. For example, they wrongly call the Agency a watchdog organization.

Regarding the verification aspect of the IAEA, we attach great importance to the Agency's role as the sole competent body for verification activities in accordance with the provisions of its statute and the NPT. We also reaffirm the independent and technical aspect of the IAEA and, in this regard, all member States should abide by the provisions of the statute and avoid using the Agency as a political instrument to promote their short-term interests.

We also stress the importance of protecting the confidential information of member States and express our concern about the continued illegal release of sensitive — and confidential information. The continuation of such a trend will only jeopardize the credibility and integrity of the IAEA.

As reaffirmed in the NPT, using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes is the inalienable right of all States parties to the Treaty — a right which cannot be lawfully transferred from one State to another. It is a matter of grave concern that certain nuclear-weapon States and their allies, under the pretext of non-proliferation, should set various restrictions and limitations on the means of transferring nuclear material, equipment and technology to developing countries for peaceful activities. While they are obliged under article IV of the NPT to cooperate with non-nuclear-weapon States parties in the field of nuclear technology, they continue to expand and impose new restrictions using export controls, nuclear security, nuclear terrorism and multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle as their pretexts.

The same countries claiming to be guardians of the NPT are expanding their cooperation with non-NPT parties and exempt them from such restrictions. The nuclear cooperation of a few nuclear-weapon States with the Zionist regime is a clear manifestation of their non-compliance with both the letter and the spirit of the NPT. This is an example of their paradoxical policies towards the NPT. Such double standards and discriminatory approaches will only undermine the reliability and integrity of the NPT and IAEA. In this

regard, while we listened carefully today to the speech of Mr. ElBaradei, the Director General of the IAEA, we expected him to refer to this important point.

The Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to the universality of the NPT and IAEA safeguards. The recent resolutions of the IAEA General Conference regarding the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East and the nuclear capabilities of the Israeli regime, which were reaffirmed by the draft resolutions recently adopted by the First Committee, are strong messages from the international community to the Zionist regime.

That regime, as the only non-party to the NPT in the Middle East, is the main obstacle to establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The clandestine nuclear-weapons programme of that regime, which is carried out in its unsafeguarded secret facilities, is the most serious threat to regional and international peace and security. We call upon all Member States to make concerted efforts and fully implement their obligations under the NPT and the 1995 resolution establishing the Middle East as a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that the Islamic Republic of Iran, as a party to the NPT, considers the development of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes to be an inalienable right of all NPT States parties. In this regard, we have invested extensive human and material resources in the field of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. This policy is based on a well-studied long-term plan aimed at meeting the growing energy needs of the country and its rapidly growing population. As we have stressed time and again, Iran's nuclear programme is and has always been for peaceful purposes.

Mr. Benítez Versón (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Cuba thanks Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for his presentation of the Agency's report.

Cuba attaches special importance to IAEA technical cooperation. In developing countries, there is a growing need to use nuclear applications in resolving our energy problems. The technical cooperation pillar of the Agency must be strengthened and receive the resources that it requires, unconditionally and in keeping with its priorities.

In Cuba, the application of nuclear technologies in vital areas of the economy is greatly appreciated. One of our objectives is to achieve the harmonious integration of technical cooperation projects with our prioritized development programmes. Similarly, in keeping with the priority we place on cooperation with developing countries, we have increased our participation in regional cooperation projects, especially with those that are part of the IAEA's Regional Cooperative Arrangements for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America.

In 2008, Cuba continued to increase its contributions to the IAEA technical cooperation programme. Such contributions included the participation of 29 Cuban experts in 53 international missions of the Agency and of eight professors in technical cooperation activities. Additionally, nine experts from other countries carried out training activities in Cuba.

Cuba welcomes the Programme for Action for Cancer Therapy. We also welcome the launch this past May of the World Health Organization and the IAEA Joint Programme on Cancer Control.

Our country allocates significant human and financial resources to comply with its safeguards agreements. We are pleased to be among the countries in which the IAEA secretariat has found no diversion of declared nuclear material for activities other than for peaceful purposes or any sign of undeclared nuclear activities or materials.

The unjust economic, commercial and financial blockade to which Cuba is subject continues to affect IAEA procurement activity and, subsequently, the projects that the Agency would like to implement there. The IAEA secretariat faces continuing and growing difficulties to procure approved scientific equipment for projects in Cuba due to the fact that United States firms, or those that have capital participation from that country, cannot sell their equipment to Cuba without facing the genuine possibility of being subject to sanctions. This situation makes the implementation of our projects more expensive as we have to purchase equipment from further afield.

The IAEA is currently undergoing analysis to improve its operation. For this exercise to be successful, we have to bear in mind the major differences that exist among the nuclear programmes of the countries that make up the Agency. A large number

of States possesses minimal amounts of nuclear material, and many do not even have nuclear facilities as the concept is defined in terms of safeguards. As a result, we cannot establish comprehensive measures thinking only about those who have large- or medium-scale nuclear programmes.

Furthermore, we have to guarantee that the verification process would take place in a just and impartial manner as the crucial condition for preserving peace and security in our countries. We must definitively remove from verification any undue pressure or interference that would undermine the efficiency and credibility of the Agency.

Political manipulation over the so-called question of a nuclear Iran should have stopped a long time ago, and we have to put an end to double standards, as we see with the charges against the Syrian Arab Republic and with the unacceptable impossibility of achieving a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, which has been an ongoing demand of the international community in recent decades.

We reaffirm the need to respect the inalienable right of all States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. We stress that in no case should voluntary measures become obligations for States. Likewise, we insist that the IAEA is the only authority with the power to verify compliance with obligations under the respective States' safeguards agreements. We trust that the work of the Agency will continue without any external interference.

Furthermore, Cuba rejects any attempt to use the nuclear fuel supply as a means of economic or political coercion or as a mechanism to confirm the monopoly of a few countries over the distribution of that fuel.

Cuba reaffirms its conviction that only the total elimination of nuclear weapons will help to guarantee international peace and security. Despite the hopes for change, it is disturbing that militaristic policies continue to be developed and that much more than a billion dollars is spent every year on the war industry, which includes the development of weapons and nuclear strategies.

We have the power to reverse this situation. In the coming months, we will see new opportunities and the NPT review conference in 2010 will be an ideal moment to enable the rationale of multilateral action to

prevail, with a view to establishing a real commitment to development, nuclear disarmament and global peace.

I would like to conclude by reiterating the respect and great esteem that the Cuban authorities have for Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei for his leadership and for his management of the Agency. We trust that his legacy of professionalism and impartiality will continue to be a source of inspiration for the work of the Agency. Likewise, we congratulate Ambassador Yukiya Amano for his election as the new Director General. We would like to offer him our full cooperation and wish him every success in his administration.

Mr. Kleib (Indonesia): Let me first express my delegation's appreciation to Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for presenting the IAEA annual report. We would also like to express our deep gratitude to Mr. ElBaradei for all of his efforts to manage the affairs of the IAEA in an effective manner and for his supportive contribution to international peace and security. He led the Agency with great credibility, exceptional professionalism and personal qualities. Our congratulations also go to Ambassador Yukiya Amano on his appointment as the new Director General of the IAEA. We are confident that under his very able leadership the Agency will continue to advance in its role.

Mr. Tommo Monthe (Cameroon), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The work of the IAEA over the past few years is to be lauded. Indonesia commends the IAEA's activities in supporting progress on nuclear applications, promoting socio-economic development through technical cooperation, and contributing to world peace and security. Technical cooperation is one of the best ways to promote peaceful uses of atomic energy for sustainable development. We therefore hope that such cooperation will increase and be funded properly. The IAEA should pursue a more balanced distribution of its budget with equal importance given to each of the three pillars.

The issue of multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle has been discussed within the IAEA in recent years. The creation of a multilateral fuel cycle arrangement is indeed crucial for strengthening the existing non-proliferation regime. Any proposal in this respect should not hinder the right of all States to develop all aspects of nuclear science and technology

for peaceful purposes. We concur that this complex issue requires our thorough consideration to ensure that all associated technical, legal, economic and political aspects are addressed before any final decision is made.

Guaranteeing the high level of nuclear safety worldwide is also of paramount importance to Indonesia. We therefore support the Agency in promoting the acceptance of all IAEA safety standards as a global preference for the protection of people and the environment against nuclear accidents and the harmful effects of radiation exposure. The use of international safety standards and the sharing of expertise on a more regional basis can also be promoted by the establishment of regional safety networks, such as the nuclear safety network of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

With regard to nuclear security, Indonesia supports the activities of the Agency and recognizes the risks and potential dangers of illicit trafficking and possession of nuclear materials by terrorist groups. However, the international community's efforts to prevent nuclear terrorism should always be undertaken within the existing global legal framework. The IAEA's focus should not be diverted from its statutory activities, especially its promotional activities.

We continue to support the Agency's efforts to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of its safeguards regime. The safeguards system is both a fundamental part of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and an essential element for nuclear disarmament.

Indonesia, as a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the South-East Asia nuclear-weapon-free zone, has put a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an Additional Protocol into force, and has, together with the IAEA, implemented an integrated safeguards regime. Thus, we are pleased with the establishment in Seoul last April of the Asia-Pacific Safeguards Network and look forward to its first meeting, to be held next April in Indonesia.

The IAEA's role in combating nuclear proliferation and the urgency of providing it with all necessary means to perform its verification responsibilities in an effective and credible manner has been highlighted by the verification challenges of the past few years. While maintaining a high degree of technical quality and credibility, the work to make

verification activities cost-effective should also be pursued. On the question of nuclear verification in some countries, such as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Islamic Republic of Iran, Indonesia continues to support all diplomatic efforts to resolve the nuclear issues at an early date. We hope that all parties involved will exercise patience, restraint and flexibility. Only through substantive dialogue and consultation can we truly find a comprehensive, peaceful settlement and a lasting one.

We welcome the outcome of the fifty-third session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency held in Vienna this past September, including the adoption of the resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities (GC(53)/RES/17). In this regard, Indonesia expresses its deep concern over the continued failure to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. We are perturbed by the persistent Israeli attitude of refusal to place its nuclear installations under IAEA safeguards. Progress will only happen if Israel places all of its nuclear installations under the Agency safeguards and accedes to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as it has been called upon to do by a number of resolutions of the General Assembly and the IAEA General Conference.

On that note, we cannot resist drawing a certain parallel. We have witnessed how tremendous pressures have been put on other countries in the region to follow IAEA guidelines. So, no country in the Middle East can be exempted from IAEA safeguards nor escape from obligations to comply with IAEA safeguards.

Finally, as one of its first sponsors, we would like to reiterate our support for draft resolution 64/L.7, introduced earlier by Malaysia.

Mr. Bashir (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like, at the outset, to thank Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for his annual report, in document GC(53)/7, presented to the General Assembly. That report mentions the programmes and plans drawn up by the Agency with a view to developing technology transfer for peaceful purposes and to maintaining a global nuclear security regime, while strengthening the security of nuclear facilities. That proves the important role that the IAEA has always played and continues to play in the area of cooperation in the field of the use of energy for peaceful purposes and for development. We would also like to pay tribute to the efforts of

Mr. ElBaradei and wish his successor, Mr. Amano, every success in his future endeavours.

Sudan attaches a great importance to the applications of nuclear technology mentioned in the report that aim to strengthen food security, develop advanced techniques to fight disease and effectively manage water and technical resources in the development of modern irrigation systems as part of major agricultural projects. Therefore, strengthening the Agency's cooperation with UNICEF in matters of education and agriculture, as well as with the World Health Organization, is more important today than ever.

The assistance given to developing countries to develop their relevant national technical regimes complements the efforts of the Agency in the implementation of technical cooperation plans and programmes. We hope that such cooperation will develop within the framework of programmes applied by the World Health Organization in the area of health, to re-launch regional and continental projects aimed at fighting malaria-carrying bugs and other devastating scourges in Africa, so that the African continent can carry out economic and social development programmes and work towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and fulfilling the internationally agreed economic agenda.

Sudan reaffirms the right of States to develop research and to produce nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, without discrimination and in accordance with commitments to international instruments and terms of reference. Our country's delegation reaffirms as well the need for States to refrain from exerting pressure on the Agency or interfering with its work or activities so as to safeguard the credibility and the crucial role that it plays. Hence, we call for a just and fair approach to deal with outstanding issues with certain States through dialogue and negotiation, so that appropriate solutions can be found.

The delegation of Sudan reaffirms its established position supporting the aspirations of all regions to declare themselves nuclear-weapon-free zones, starting with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which is one of the fundamental pillars of international peace and security. We are deeply concerned by the fact that the Middle East is still far from achieving that objective because of the objections of Israel, which is the only nuclear-weapon State in the region, and its refusal to subject its nuclear

programmes to the Agency's comprehensive safeguards regime, and by the fact that it continues to defy the pleas and repeated calls of the international community to do so. A commitment on Israel's part to respect the Treaty and its additional protocol is vital to the elimination of tensions in the region and would help to strengthen regional and international peace.

My delegation highly appreciates the Agency's efforts in Africa, and we hope to see an increase in the Agency's budget, especially in the field of combating diseases and in supporting nuclear treatment facilities aimed at fighting diseases and poverty in Africa.

Mr. Kim Bonghyun (Republic of Korea): My delegation would like to express its appreciation to Mr. ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for his comprehensive report on the Agency's broad range of activities. Taking this opportunity, my delegation also would like to commend his 12 years of distinguished service as Director General of the IAEA. Mr. ElBaradei's vision, his commitment to professional impartiality, transparency and equitable cooperation with member States will undoubtedly leave a lasting legacy for the IAEA and the international community.

Turning to the annual report of the IAEA for 2008, we are pleased to take note of the Agency's numerous and valuable accomplishments in the fields of nuclear energy, nuclear applications, safety and security and verification during the report period. The Republic of Korea would like to underline the importance of the IAEA in promoting the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear science and technology and to reiterate its commitment to cooperate with the Agency in all areas of its activities.

My delegation would like to touch upon some of the issues that we consider relevant to the future work of the IAEA. First, we strongly believe that the universalization of IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols is essential for improving the current safeguards and verification regime. In particular, we believe that the additional protocols are becoming an essential verification standard, as recent events have suggested that the comprehensive safeguards agreements alone are no longer adequate to enable the Agency to fully implement its mandate. In this light, we call upon those States which have not yet done so to conclude such agreements and bring them into force without delay.

Secondly, the Republic of Korea appreciates the Agency's guiding role in the development of a new multilateral framework for assuring the supply of nuclear fuel. We believe that further constructive dialogue and elaboration within the IAEA can deal correctly with the implications of the different views on basic concepts as well as on technical matters. Any new mechanism for the supply of nuclear fuel should meet the basic demands of each member State and the international community as a whole, expanding reliable, economic and equitable access to nuclear fuels while reducing proliferation risks. As a major user of nuclear energy, the Republic of Korea will continue to participate in and make positive contributions to the relevant discussions on that issue.

Thirdly, nuclear terrorism is a real threat to international peace and security in terms of the increasing risk of terrorist attacks and the serious consequences of any single accident. Nuclear security-related activities are one of the core functions of the IAEA. While we welcome the Agency's achievements through the implementation of the Nuclear Security Plan for 2006-2009, we encourage the Agency to continue to strengthen its efforts for enhanced nuclear security and to work closely with other international initiatives in that area.

The extended use of nuclear energy calls for the strengthening of nuclear non-proliferation and, more than ever, stricter security measures. In that regard, the peaceful resolution of the nuclear issue involving the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is vital to securing the lasting peace and prosperity of the Korean peninsula and the North-East Asian region.

Since the General Assembly's session last year, international efforts for verifiable denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have faced a series of provocative actions taken by that country. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has blatantly violated the Six-Party Talks agreements and relevant Security Council resolutions, not only by its nuclear test last May, but also by the series of long-range rocket launches in April and ballistic missiles tests in July and October.

The adoption of Security Council resolution 1874 (2009), which condemns in the strongest terms the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear test and reinforces the sanctions regime already in place against that country, was a clear reflection of the united

and resolute will of the Council and the international community to stem the nuclear development and nuclear proliferation activities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. My delegation believes that all nations should send an unequivocal message to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by fully implementing the sanctions obligations called for under Security Council resolution 1874 (2009).

The resolution of the IAEA General Conference, adopted by consensus in September, is another firm message from the international community as a whole to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. My delegation expects that the resolution will contribute to the realization by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that its nuclear ambitions will not be tolerated.

It is imperative that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea promptly return to the Six-Party Talks, abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, in accordance with the Joint Statement of 19 September 2005, and return to the Non-Proliferation Treaty regime, as well as faithfully comply with international obligations and all commitments.

In complying with that process, the role of the IAEA is essential, and the Korean Government will closely coordinate and cooperate with relevant countries and the Agency, with a view to achieving the peaceful resolution of the nuclear issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and to establishing peace and stability in the North-East Asian region and beyond.

Finally, I wish to congratulate Ambassador Yukiya Amano on his election as the new Director General of the IAEA and to assure him of the full support and cooperation of the Republic of Korea in his new endeavour.

Ms. Sodov (Mongolia): I join other representatives in thanking Director General Mr. ElBaradei for introducing the report on the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) during the past year. On behalf of the Government of Mongolia, I wish to take this opportunity to express our profound respect to Mr. ElBaradei for his professionalism, his stewardship of the Agency and his outstanding contribution to promoting the goals of the Agency during his 12-year tenure. The activities carried out by him and his team in promoting and developing peaceful uses of nuclear energy will surely benefit future generations. We wish him well in his future endeavours.

Allow me also to offer our warm congratulations to the incoming Director General of the Agency, Ambassador Yukiya Amano. I am sure that his rich experience and personal qualities will allow him to perform that high responsibility with talent, efficiency, determination and pragmatism.

My delegation would like to commend the IAEA on the impressive gains made during the past year, as is evident from the report, and on the outcome of the Agency's fifty-third General Conference, held in Vienna in September. We are confident that the Agency will continue to play an active role in promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy and wider nuclear applications, including in health, power generation, food security and water management, as well as in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Government of Mongolia highly appreciates the active measures taken and the valuable support provided by the Agency to its members, especially to developing countries.

Mongolia is beginning a new phase in its nuclear activities for peaceful purposes and is taking concrete measures to develop nuclear energy and to promote wider nuclear applications, especially in the areas of health and agriculture. Thus, the Mongolian Parliament adopted this year a policy and action plan — the Nuclear Energy Law — on uranium utilization and nuclear energy, which took effect in August. The law is designed to regulate all issues pertaining to the exploitation of radioactive minerals and nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, nuclear and radiation safety, and the protection of the population, society and the environment from the negative impacts of ionizing radiation.

To strengthen the country's nuclear regulatory functions, the Government of Mongolia has also established a nuclear energy agency, under the aegis of the Prime Minister, to serve as the Government's regulatory agency. Possessing large reserves of uranium, Mongolia is striving to further expand cooperation with its partners on uranium production, coupled with assistance from the IAEA.

As in many other parts of the world, cancer morbidity and mortality are on the increase in my country. It has become the second major cause of mortality among the population. Bearing in mind the need to strengthen its diagnostic and treatment capacity, as well as to improve quality and accessibility

to preventive and patient-friendly cancer services, Mongolia has requested the IAEA, especially the office of its Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT), to provide the necessary advice and assistance.

As a follow-up to Director General ElBaradei's visit to Mongolia last April, PACT integrated missions have visited the country and will soon present their findings and recommendations to the Government of Mongolia. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Agency and its PACT office for their support and help in addressing this challenge of the twenty-first century.

My delegation wishes to reaffirm Mongolia's strong commitment to the goals of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. Together with other non-nuclear-weapon States, it is working to make the forthcoming Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) an important landmark in the common efforts to strengthen the NPT regime and to take practical steps towards a nuclear-weapon-free world.

With that in mind, Mongolia hosted last April the first meeting of focal points of nuclear-weapon-free zones, where a statement was adopted as a contribution to the preparation of the 2010 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). I wish to inform interested delegations that we have submitted the statement by the Chair of the Ulaanbaatar meeting for issuance as an official document of the General Assembly at the present session.

The NPT can fulfil its role only if Member States are confident in others' compliance to their Treaty obligations. In this regard, the efficiency and effectiveness of the Agency's safeguards system are of utmost importance. Today the comprehensive safeguards agreement (CSA) is not adequate to allay suspicions. Only integrated safeguards, that is, the CSA and additional protocols together, can make safeguards most effective. Today they represent the verification standard. We call on all States that have not yet done so to sign or ratify these two important safeguard and verification instruments.

My Government attaches great importance to strengthening world peace and stability, especially in North-East Asia. We have always advocated that the Korean peninsula should be denuclearized, that peace and stability there should be maintained and that the

nuclear issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should be resolved peacefully through dialogue. Likewise, the Iran nuclear issue should also be addressed through dialogue.

In conclusion, allow me to express Mongolia's resolve, as a newly elected member of the Agency's Board of Governors, to work in close cooperation with the entire IAEA membership and secretariat in promoting the Agency's noble goals.

Mr. Bavaud (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): The annual report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) demonstrates the excellent quality and the scope of the Agency's work. We offer the IAEA our full support, and we look forward to once again sponsoring the draft resolution on the Agency's report (A/64/L.7). We hope that the draft resolution, like previous such texts, will be adopted without a vote.

We would like this year to thank Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, IAEA Director General, who leaves the Agency after 12 years of service. Throughout his tenure at the head of the IAEA, Mr. ElBaradei has demonstrated his independence and a sense of responsibility in facing the difficulties of his mission, enhancing the credibility of the Agency and defending its ideals in the area of non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

On several occasions Mr. ElBaradei has asked us to consider delicate subjects, for example, on proposals relating to the multilateralization of the nuclear fuel cycle. In doing so, he has shown much political far-sightedness. His efforts have undoubtedly contributed to the promotion of world peace and security.

Switzerland greatly looks forward to working with the new IAEA Director General, Mr. Yukiya Amano, who is taking over at a crucial time in the Agency's history.

Indeed, with the possibility of real progress in the area of nuclear disarmament, it could be increasingly realistic that the IAEA may need to accept new verification challenges. Switzerland, which has always favoured a balance between nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, is ready to support such a development within the Agency. Recent progress in the management of the Agency's budget is also to be welcomed, since it could help to ensure that the IAEA will be able to operate from a more solid basis in confronting these future challenges.

Switzerland, which is currently a member of the IAEA Board of Governors, will remain firmly committed to supporting the Agency in its mission.

Mr. Paschalis (South Africa): South Africa would like to thank the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency for his insightful and comprehensive report on the activities, challenges and achievements of the Agency during 2008. My delegation has noted with appreciation that the Agency has successfully carried out its statutory mandate.

Our meeting takes place at a time of growing concern regarding the inability of the international community, more especially developing countries and the African continent, to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. This makes it imperative that we work together to coordinate our efforts in support of the Millennium Development Goals across the globe.

In this connection, South Africa notes with appreciation the commendable activities undertaken by the Agency in strengthening international cooperation in nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety, as well as in nuclear science, technology and applications. These activities have the potential of improving our prospects for achieving some of the Millennium Development Goals.

As part of its contribution to the implementation of the development aspects of the Agency's work, South Africa is involved in the following activities. In recognition of the importance of nuclear knowledge management, South Africa is an active participant in the Agency's fellowship and scientific visit programmes, both as a provider and as a recipient. My country has established an accelerator facility for effective use in nuclear education and training. As a result, some of our institutions are now offering a Master of Science course in accelerator and nuclear science meant to leverage existing experience of facilities to the benefit of potential regional partners.

South Africa will host the ninth World Conference on Neutron Radiography, which is aimed at bringing together researchers, students and fellows to share information, build networks and strengthen relationships between international partners in research related to neutron radiography.

In collaboration with the Agency, South Africa will also host the International Conference on Effective Nuclear Regulatory Systems: Further Enhancing the

Global Nuclear Safety and Security Regime. The conference will, inter alia, emphasize the responsibility to be shared by all regulators, operators and vendors in maintaining effective global nuclear safety and security infrastructure and culture. South Africa remains convinced that this conference could make a contribution in drawing attention to the important role regulators can play in promoting nuclear safety and security.

South Africa views radioactive waste management as an important area in the chain of use of nuclear energy. In this connection, radioactive waste management presents an integral part of South Africa's nuclear energy policy and receives elaborate attention in our radioactive waste management policy and strategy.

In January, our parliament passed the National Radioactive Waste Institution Act, which provides for the establishment of a National Radioactive Waste Disposal Institute in order to manage radioactive waste disposal on a national basis. Further progress has been made with the installation of the first accelerator mass spectrometry facility on the African continent at the iThemba Laboratory for Accelerator-Based Sciences (iThemba LABS). In addition to this, the EXACT3D PET camera that was decommissioned at Hammersmith Hospital in London and donated to the University of Cape Town has been relocated to iThemba LABS. This makes iThemba the world's second operational facility in its field.

In order to address the global shortage of molybdenum-99 isotopes and its adverse impact on medical treatment of patients, South Africa is doing all it can to meet the shortfall, taking into account, of course, the operational limitations which we all know and understand. South Africa is also now represented on a special Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development committee that is looking at ways of stabilizing world supplies of this radioisotope.

Beyond this, my country's Pebble Bed Modular Reactor Company is moving forward with construction work to commission a pebble bed modular reactor in 2018. While a change in design from electricity generation to a more versatile concept that could both provide electricity and process heat, has resulted in a delay in the programme, it has broadened its potential customer base. The successful deployment of this leading-edge technology has the potential to make a

significant contribution to local and international energy supplies.

Furthermore, South Africa continues to assign high priority to and participate in IAEA activities contributing to agricultural development, especially on the African continent. With regard to the international peace and security mandate of the Agency, South Africa supports its activities undertaken in the period under review in the areas of nuclear safety and verification. In this connection, my delegation is pleased to note that the republics of Congo and Kenya have joined the many other African countries that in recent years have been fulfilling their commitments under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) by concluding safeguards agreements with the Agency.

South Africa believes that a strengthened safeguards system is an essential mechanism for dealing with non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and providing information about States' nuclear activities. Strengthened safeguards, if buttressed with the necessary detection capability, would contribute to establishing confidence in the peaceful application of nuclear energy and thus further facilitate the transfer of nuclear technology and the use of nuclear energy to benefit developing countries. It is for this reason that South Africa urges Member States that have yet to conclude their safeguards agreements with the Agency, in compliance with their respective obligations under the NPT, to do so as soon as possible.

With regard to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, we share the concern of other members about the termination of the IAEA's monitoring and verification activities in that country. South Africa urges and encourages the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to allow the IAEA inspectors to carry out their monitoring and verification activities in the country's territory. South Africa has consistently called upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to fully and verifiably terminate any nuclear weapons programme, to return to the NPT as soon as possible, to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and to place all its nuclear facilities and material under comprehensive IAEA safeguards.

Regarding Iran, we are encouraged by the increased cooperation between the IAEA and the Islamic Republic of Iran and urge Iran to fully cooperate with the Agency and implement the binding resolutions adopted by the Security Council in order to

resolve the matter — while, at the same time, being allowed to develop nuclear technology for peaceful uses in conformity with the letter and the spirit of the NPT. We also note that there exists a window of opportunity arising from the readiness of the parties concerned to initiate talks, which we hope will lead to substantial discussions to resolve the issues surrounding Iran's nuclear programme.

We are aware that climate change is a serious threat globally, especially for the energy sector. We hope that the Copenhagen Conference in December will take the necessary decisions, taking into account the socio-economic development imperatives of developing nations.

In conclusion, I wish to place on record South Africa's highest regard for the exemplary work and achievements of Mr. ElBaradei and the International Atomic Energy Agency over the past 12 years. Mr. ElBaradei has led the Agency with great dignity, integrity and impartiality, virtues that have contributed to building confidence in the work of the Agency, as evidenced by the award of a Nobel Peace Prize. We wish Mr. ElBaradei every success in future. South Africa welcomes the incoming Director General, Ambassador Amano of Japan, and expresses its commitment to working constructively with the new Director General and the secretariat.

Mr. AlSanad (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): Today the General Assembly is discussing an agenda item that is important because of its close connection to the principles on which the United Nations was established, in particular those concerning the maintenance of international peace and security and controlling non-peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The State of Kuwait has reviewed and welcomes the valuable and outstanding annual report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for 2008, and it wishes to convey its deep appreciation and gratitude to the Director General of the IAEA, Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, for devoting so much of his experience and knowledge to the Agency for more than a decade. We wish him well in the future. Kuwait also thanks the Agency staff for all their diligent efforts towards fulfilling the goals and aspirations of the peoples and countries of the world through their consolidation of the principle of the peaceful use of nuclear energy for the good and welfare of humanity.

Kuwait also conveys its congratulations to the new Director General of the IAEA, His Excellency Ambassador Yukiya Amano, and wishes to emphasize its intention to cooperate with him fully and comprehensively in his efforts to see his mission succeed. We also commend the Board of Governors for the role it has played.

Since its accession to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) four decades ago, the State of Kuwait has continuously worked and coordinated its efforts with the IAEA's Department of Technical Cooperation to establish specialized laboratories for measuring radioactive isotopes in Kuwait's water and soil. In its eagerness to build its own capabilities and in the firm belief in the importance of training qualified national personnel in nuclear radiation and radioactive materials protection, my country has taken the initiative of hosting regional workshops in cooperation with the Agency, most recently a Nuclear Power Planning Workshop, held from 18 to 29 October at the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research. Moreover, my country has always been eager to send trainees to participate in training courses held at the IAEA headquarters and this year was an active participant in the International Symposium on Nuclear Security, held in Vienna from 30 March to 3 April, to help train customs officers in the detection and safe handling of radioactive materials, as well as in training personnel in combating nuclear terrorism.

The IAEA, through its nuclear technology programme, promotes the exchange of nuclear information and knowledge, as well as conveying this knowledge to Member States, particularly in developing countries. This programme aims at facilitating the use of nuclear science and related technology in order to help States use such technology to fulfil their social and economic needs in a sustainable manner in areas such as food production, water resources management, environmental protection and health care.

In this context, the State of Kuwait emphasizes the importance of enhancing the capacity of Member States to use nuclear applications for achieving sustainable food security, such as applying the technology to address the deterioration of the soil, increase sustainable agricultural production and livestock husbandry, combat pests and improve the quality and safety of food products. The State of Kuwait also emphasizes the importance of consolidating IAEA efforts to achieve sustainable food security,

particularly in the present global food crisis, which is a matter of extreme concern for the majority of the States in the world, especially the poor and developing countries.

Inaugurating a new phase in developing relations between my country and the IAEA and because of his interest in diversifying energy resources, His Highness the Amir of Kuwait has instructed the Kuwaiti Government to devise an integrated national strategy to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Furthermore, the Council of Ministers decided in March, on the recommendation of the IAEA, to establish the High National Commission for Nuclear Energy, headed by His Highness the Prime Minister.

In this context, the Gulf Cooperation Council States, which are seeking to use nuclear energy in peaceful pursuits, will discuss during the upcoming summit of the heads of State, scheduled for December in Kuwait, the establishment of a nuclear training centre, in coordination with the IAEA, in order to train cadres from the Gulf countries in nuclear energy safety.

The vitally important role that the IAEA plays in averting the use of nuclear energy for military purposes and maximizing safety in its peaceful applications cannot be fulfilled without unified efforts by all States. The Middle East region will not accomplish its aims in peace and stability as long as Israel remains the only country in the region that refuses to submit its nuclear facilities to the Agency's comprehensive safeguards regime, which represents a main obstacle to achieving the universality of the NPT and causes a deep imbalance in fostering the non-proliferation regime. This unnatural situation is an incentive for other States to attempt to possess nuclear weapons on the pretext of the international community's laxness in dealing with countries that refuse to open their nuclear facilities and reactors to international inspectors.

In the face of this Israeli intransigence, my delegation calls on the international community to bring pressure to bear on Israel to join the NPT and to submit all its facilities to IAEA safeguards. We also emphasize the right of all the States in the region to acquire the needed technology and knowledge to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes within the relevant international agreements. That will make the Middle East, including the Gulf region, a region free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

In this regard, my country welcomes the ongoing discussions between the friendly Islamic Republic of Iran and the 5+1 group in Geneva and Vienna. We express our satisfaction at the positive spirit and constructive ideas that predominate in the talks, as well as Iran's readiness to exchange nuclear fuel and open its nuclear facility at Qom for international inspectors. That cooperation aims to build the confidence that the international community needs to avoid any future repercussions. We would also like to reaffirm the need for a diplomatic solution to any course that may be pursued in the future vis-à-vis the programme. My country's delegation encourages the Islamic Republic of Iran to continue its cooperation with the IAEA with full transparency, to implement all articles relevant to the requirements of the Agency and international resolutions, so as to promote and maintain peace and security in the Gulf and the Middle East region.

The historic Security Council summit convened in September (see S/PV.6191) and its adoption of Council resolution 1887 (2009), is an important step that contributes to combating and preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Kuwait strongly supports this initiative and calls on all States to adhere to it and adopt the idea of a world free of nuclear weapons.

In conclusion, I cannot fail to express the hope that the international community will continue to support the IAEA and the non-selective application of all nuclear disarmament conventions and all decisions related to non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): I would like first of all to thank the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, for presenting the annual report of the IAEA. Since this will be the last occasion on which he appears at the General Assembly in that capacity, I would like to express my deep appreciation to him for his 12 years of distinguished service and leadership at the helm of the IAEA. I also extend best wishes to the incoming Director General, Mr. Amano.

The IAEA plays a crucial role in maintaining peace and security. It disseminates the benefits of nuclear technology to humanity. It verifies non-proliferation. It provides services to developing countries. Those functions are becoming increasingly important.

Japan has been making a significant contribution as a lead country in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear technology for purposes of health, energy and development. Japan will continue to widely share scientific knowledge and technology with many developing countries through the IAEA's technical cooperation programme.

Nuclear energy provides great potential and capacity for ensuring a clean energy supply. In response to growing energy demand and climate change, the role of nuclear power generation is being re-evaluated and is attracting global interest. It is essential to pay utmost attention to what is known as the 3S principle: safeguards, safety and security. Japan will continue to promote the importance of ensuring 3S by organizing regional seminars in cooperation with the IAEA and also by hosting an international conference on nuclear security for Asia next year in 2010.

Japan has been at the forefront of international efforts towards the elimination of nuclear weapons and towards nuclear non-proliferation, adhering to the three non-nuclear principles. Regrettably, a large number of nuclear arsenals still remain on the globe and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) regime is strained. We therefore welcome the adoption of the important Security Council resolution 1887 (2009), on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, at the Council summit in September (see S/PV.6191). This year, Japan once again submitted a draft resolution on the total elimination of nuclear weapons to the General Assembly. We are very pleased that the First Committee adopted the draft resolution (A/C.1/64/L.36*) by an overwhelming majority only a few days ago (see A/C.1/64/PV.21).

The 2010 NPT Review Conference provides an important milestone for taking further concrete steps. To contribute to the success of the Review Conference, Japan and Australia jointly launched the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament. We hope it will propose ambitious but realistic and practical recommendations that will serve as the basis for strengthening the NPT regime.

Those initiatives will support efforts to strengthen the IAEA safeguards system, which is a vital pillar of the non-proliferation regime. The most effective way to strengthen the safeguards system of the IAEA is to universalize the additional protocol. Japan will actively

promote this by hosting Asian non-proliferation talks and IAEA seminars. We will also contribute to the safeguards system by sharing advanced safeguards technology.

The nuclear and missile programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea pose a grave threat to the peace and security of North-East Asia and of the international community. Those programmes are totally unacceptable. All Member States should work together to firmly implement Security Council resolutions 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009). We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to take positive steps, including its immediate return to the Six-Party Talks, without any preconditions and to fulfil the commitment it made in the Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks. Japan will seek to normalize its relationship with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by comprehensively resolving all outstanding issues of concern.

Iran's nuclear programme is a source of concern for the international community. In order to remove the concern and to build confidence internationally, we hope that Iran will fully cooperate with the IAEA and faithfully respond to the requirements of the relevant IAEA Board decisions and United Nations Security Council resolutions. Japan continues to contribute towards a peaceful and diplomatic resolution of that issue.

The vital mission of the IAEA will continue to grow, and I assure the Assembly that Japan will continue to play a leading role in contributing to the Agency's work.

Mr. Tow (Singapore): After more than 50 years of advancing the cause of "Atoms for Peace", the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) remains relevant in today's world, perhaps more relevant than ever. The Nobel Prize awarded to the Agency and to Director General Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei in 2005 was testament to the Agency's stellar work in meeting the challenges and aspirations of the world in the nuclear arena.

Singapore joins others in the General Assembly in thanking Mr. ElBaradei and his dedicated staff for a comprehensive report and for their excellent work. At the same time, Singapore warmly applauds Mr. ElBaradei as he completes his mission this year. We would like to acknowledge that much of the stature

of the IAEA is due to his dedicated, visionary and wise leadership in steering its work.

Looking to the future, Singapore extends its warmest congratulations to Ambassador Yukiya Amano, who will soon be the Agency's first Asian Director General. We are confident that with his vast experience in the fields of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, he will also lead the IAEA with distinction. He is in a position to influence the renewed impetus in the work towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

In particular, the success of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in 2010 could impart a greater shared sense of purpose in our deliberations on the future of the Agency. Indeed, the collective efforts and resources of all member States will be needed to empower the Agency and enable it to face the challenges and seize the opportunities that lie ahead.

Singapore continues to view the Agency's three pillars of work — safety and security, safeguards and verification, and science and technology — as being complementary and of equal importance.

As nuclear energy is increasingly viewed as an option for countries and we see an increase in nuclear installations around the world, nuclear safety and security is ever more crucial in avoiding any catastrophic fallout. We endorse the IAEA work in support of States' efforts to ensure the highest standards in nuclear safety and security through setting relevant benchmarks and through the various IAEA instruments, peer reviews, assistance and review missions.

Singapore is of the view that as the world enters an age of nuclear renaissance, a corresponding culture of nuclear safety must be established. Regional and national efforts need to be redoubled to bolster confidence within our societies for the use of nuclear power to be accepted. In that connection, we note the adoption by the European Union of a directive on nuclear safety as a major step towards a common legal framework and a strong culture of safety in Europe.

In our region, South-East Asia, in view of increasing energy needs, several countries have either indicated an interest in or are pursuing nuclear energy programmes. Singapore fully supports greater regional cooperation to complement and strengthen international

and national efforts in this area of nuclear safety and security.

In March 2009, the Energy Studies Institute of Singapore organized a one-day regional round table on achieving a safe and sustainable nuclear future. It brought together policymakers and regulators from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and international nuclear experts to engage in a free-ranging dialogue on the pursuit of civilian nuclear energy and the attendant policy implications, including managing public concerns about nuclear safety.

Beyond our own efforts among the 10 members of ASEAN, Singapore fully supports the Asian Nuclear Safety Network in its effort to ensure a high standard of nuclear safety in the Asian region. Singapore joined the Network in December 2008 and participated in its second meeting on the nuclear safety strategy dialogue in April 2009. It is pleased to host the tenth meeting of its steering committee this December.

The right of States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes must also be exercised in compliance with States' non-proliferation obligations. Singapore firmly believes that we must ensure that the IAEA safeguards and verification regime remains capable of responding credibly and effectively to new challenges within the Agency's mandate, in order to continue to provide safeguards assurances.

At the national level, every State has to play its part. Singapore has steadily enhanced its legislative framework to ensure compliance with the Additional Protocol and the modified Small Quantities Protocol, which we ratified and concluded with the IAEA in March 2008. Just recently, we hosted a visit by IAEA safeguards inspectors, in accordance with the mechanism outlined in Article 8 of the Additional Protocol.

For many years, the IAEA has had before it several verification cases. Singapore would like to thank and commend the IAEA team for their persistence, often labouring in difficult situations in pursuing investigations into those cases. In this regard, we note that the heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, in the final document adopted at Sharm el-Sheikh this year, expressed their full confidence in IAEA impartiality and professionalism.

The Agency's quiet work in the promotion of peaceful applications of nuclear science and

technology is the area that no doubt has the greatest impact on the lives of many people in the developing world, contributing concretely towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Yet the international news media has grossly underreported that aspect of the Agency's work. That should change, because the benefits of nuclear applications are obvious and myriad. They extend to human health in medical diagnosis and treatment, pest control and various industrial applications such as in the petrochemical and mining sectors, animal and agro-industries and food processing, to name a few.

While Singapore is pleased that the Agency's technical cooperation has expanded considerably in recent years, in both the scope and number of activities, there is still room for the Agency to further enhance its work to help developing countries in those areas.

We commend the Agency for establishing partnerships with international and regional development organizations to develop greater synergies. Singapore remains firmly committed to supporting the IAEA technical cooperation programme. We look forward to further cooperation with the Agency, through our memorandum of understanding with it, in outreach efforts to assist other developing countries.

In conclusion, Singapore would like to express its continued support for the important work of the IAEA. We strongly urge all States, especially those with outstanding obligations and issues, to fully cooperate with the Agency to further strengthen cooperation and confidence-building as part of the international community's effort to enhance global peace and security.

Mr. Sergeyev (Ukraine): At the outset I would like to welcome the new member States to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) — the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Republic of Rwanda — and to wish them every success in their activities within the Agency. Expansion of the IAEA membership is additional proof of the Agency's growing authority.

We consider the IAEA the leader of international efforts to deliver a safe and secure nuclear future, and we highly appreciate its continued adherence to the three main pillars of its activity: safety, technology and verification.

Ukraine associates itself with those who stand for further strengthening the Agency and its ability to detect and deter the diversion of nuclear material for non-peaceful purposes. We therefore positively note the recent constructive discussions in Vienna within the framework of the open-ended process on the future of the Agency and the role it should play in 2020 and beyond.

The international safeguards system of the IAEA is an essential part of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. Ukraine considers that comprehensive safeguards agreements, together with additional protocols, constitute the current IAEA verification standard. We call upon all States to bring comprehensive safeguards agreements into force without delay and to sign, ratify and implement an additional protocol.

At the same time, existing challenges to non-proliferation efforts have highlighted the need for collective action to shore up the international safeguards system. We note that those challenges are taking place at a time when the international safeguards system is facing a growing imbalance between the IAEA mission and available resources. Ukraine welcomes the United States' 2008 Next Generation Safeguards Initiative, aimed at developing policies, concepts, technologies and infrastructure to meet the aforementioned challenges, and is ready to contribute to its realization.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. We were encouraged by the outcome of the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference and expect that the Conference will adopt a set of consensual, concrete and effective measures aimed at stepping up international efforts against the threat of nuclear proliferation, pursuing nuclear disarmament in accordance with article VI of the Treaty and ensuring the responsible development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Ukraine, as a Chair of Main Committee II of the Conference, will continue to actively contribute to all NPT-related efforts by helping to make the Conference a success.

Ukraine attaches the utmost importance to the issue of ensuring nuclear safety and underscores the important role played by the IAEA in strengthening the global nuclear safety framework. It is important that any development of nuclear energy take place under the best safety, security and non-proliferation conditions. We are confident that international cooperation is crucial to achieving those conditions and call upon all countries — including those envisaging a civil nuclear option for the first time — to cooperate with the Agency and implement its recommendations. In that context, we believe it essential that member States that still have not done so become contracting parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the conventions on notification and assistance and the Joint Convention.

Another programme of the utmost importance to the IAEA is nuclear security. Ukraine supports the IAEA activities in that area and welcomes the newly adopted Nuclear Security Plan 2010-2013, which sets out priorities for the Agency for the years to come. We commend the Agency for the assistance provided to Ukraine for the implementation of specific projects, and we call on all IAEA member States to continue to give financial support to the Nuclear Security Fund. We also urge all States to become parties to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its Amendment.

We highly value the results of the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme. Noting in its latest annual report that interest in launching nuclear power programmes has continued to grow among member States, the Agency has rightly focused on developing nuclear power applications. At the same time, it has continued to successfully develop projects in six main areas of non-nuclear applications. In that connection, we encourage the Agency's strong support for regional cooperation.

Human health remains the single overriding priority in all regions, accounting for 27 per cent of the IAEA total budget for addressing the pressing development needs of the world's poorest countries. Let me recall that last year Ukraine hosted 12 regional and interregional events in this and other cross-cutting thematic areas.

Of particular importance for Ukraine in this field are the problems of radioactive waste management experienced during the decommissioning of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant and the conversion of

the Shelter Object into an ecologically safe system. The Agency has continued to provide assistance in the remediation of the territories affected by radionuclides in Ukraine. The results of the IAEA's recent activities in this field — including the holding of a seminar on the third decade of cooperation and actions aimed at the social and economic rehabilitation of the territories that suffered from the Chernobyl catastrophe — laid the basis for the United Nations Action Plan on Chernobyl to 2016. We hope that the Agency's attention to the Chernobyl issue will not decrease, since it remains a challenge for the entire international community.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the delegation of Ukraine, to congratulate Mr. Yukiya Amano on his appointment as Director General of the IAEA and to wish him every success in managing the Agency. We want also to express Ukraine's great appreciation for the work of the outgoing Director General, Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, recognized through the Nobel Prize, and of the Agency's secretariat.

Finally, I wish to state that Ukraine fully supports draft resolution A/64/L.7, entitled "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency", and will continue its active involvement in IAEA activities.

Mr. Midekssa (Ethiopia): It is a profound honour and pleasure to address the Assembly on behalf of my delegation on the important agenda item before us. I would like at the outset to express my deepest appreciation and gratitude to the outgoing Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, for his informative report on the work of the Agency. Allow me also to express my sincere respect for his commendable leadership over the past 12 years and his efforts for the propagation of the peaceful use of nuclear technologies worldwide.

In addition, my warmest congratulations go to Ambassador Yukiya Amano on his appointment as incoming Director General of the IAEA. I would also like to assure him that my country will fully cooperate with and support his efforts to attain the Agency's objectives aimed at the promotion and transfer of nuclear technologies for safe and peaceful applications.

As we all know, the International Atomic Energy Agency has been working for the realization of the Atoms for Peace vision since the day of its

establishment. As a founding member of the Agency, Ethiopia has always attached and will continue to attach great significance to the maintenance of global peace and security in connection with the specific area of the mandate entrusted to the Agency.

As regards the use of nuclear energy, I am pleased to inform this gathering that Ethiopia is engaged in a number of national and regional projects that apply nuclear techniques to address various socio-economic development challenges in the areas of agriculture, human health, water resources development and energy planning. Indeed, it is a pleasure for me to mention the fact that not only has the number of active national projects increased from year to year; the content and depth of the projects have experienced a remarkable transformation. Ethiopia is pursuing a focused approach on areas of high relevance for the benefit of socio-economic development objectives.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has taken some promising steps to enhance the relevance and efficiency of its activities, including through its Joint Division with the International Atomic Energy Agency, which is important for developing and least developed countries in particular. The Joint Division of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture has been especially instrumental in creating synergy between the two organizations. Ethiopia welcomes the decision of FAO to retain the Joint FAO/IAEA Division. We therefore urge the strengthening of that useful partnership between the two global organizations.

We also firmly believe that adequate and predictable resources for the programmes of the Agency and, more importantly, balanced distribution of resources to the safeguards, nuclear safety and technical cooperation activities of the Agency need to be ensured. The Technical Cooperation Programme is in fact playing a crucial role as a means of nuclear technology transfer to the developing member States of the Agency.

It is known that the ultimate mission of the Agency and its member States is to create a nuclear-weapon-free world through the implementation of all relevant international guiding principles and treaties. The Pelindaba Treaty is a clear manifestation of the commitment of the African States for more transparency and cooperation among themselves. We

therefore call upon all African member States to maintain that momentum through ratification of the Pelindaba Treaty with a view to its universal application.

As a founding member of the Agency, I would like to reaffirm Ethiopia's commitment to the peaceful use of nuclear technologies and applications. In that regard, it is important to underscore that nuclear non-proliferation could eventually lead to a world free of nuclear threat if, and only if, it is complemented by genuine disarmament measures by all nuclear-weapon States.

In conclusion, allow me to reiterate our profound thanks and appreciation to the IAEA, particularly its governance and leadership, for their dedication to strengthening crucially essential technical cooperation activities between the Agency and my country. I would also like to reassure the Assembly that, apart from abiding by its international obligations as a member State, Ethiopia will continue to do its utmost to further enhance that positive spirit of cooperation with the Agency.

Mr. Li Yang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation would like to thank the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, for his report on the work of the IAEA over the past year. We appreciate the Agency's important role in promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy and in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Mr. ElBaradei, who will leave office shortly. For the past 12 years, as the Director General of the IAEA, Mr. ElBaradei has demonstrated his outstanding leadership by faithfully fulfilling the mandate stipulated in the Statute of the IAEA with objectivity, impartiality and professionalism, and has greatly contributed to the promotion of nuclear energy and to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, I would like to congratulate Ambassador Yukiya Amano on his election as the new Director General of the Agency. China is looking forward to continuing its close cooperation with the new Director General and the secretariat.

China noticed that over the past year the IAEA has carried out much fruitful work in promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy through programmes on nuclear power, nuclear applications and technical

cooperation. The Agency actively assisted member States to strengthen their nuclear safety and security and continued to play an important role in the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Last year, the Agency applied safeguards in 163 States. It made constant efforts in concluding additional protocols with more States and in strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of safeguards. The IAEA has also played a constructive role in addressing some regional nuclear issues. China would like to express its appreciation for the Agency's efforts and achievement in those areas.

Economic development, climate change and energy needs have led to an increasing number of countries seeking to develop nuclear energy. At the same time, strengthening the non-proliferation regime and preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons are important issues that greatly concern the international community. China is of the view that the IAEA should adopt a balanced approach towards both categories of activities, with emphasis on the following areas.

First is making full use of its expertise and increasing input in technical cooperation programmes so as to assist member States in developing nuclear power and nuclear application and to promote relevant international cooperation. Second is taking concrete measures to strengthen the effectiveness and improve the efficiency of safeguards and to promote the universality of the additional protocols to earnestly prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons. The third area is further promoting the nuclear safety culture and the establishment of regulations and a safeguards system for nuclear safety, and continuing to assist member States in establishing sound and effective nuclear security systems to improve the collective capability to prevent and combat nuclear terrorism. Fourth is continuing to play a constructive role in promoting the resolution of regional nuclear issues through peaceful means. Fifth is facilitating discussions on multilateral nuclear fuel supply assurance in an effort to seek consensus by all sides on the issue.

Last April, the Chinese Government and the IAEA jointly organized the successful International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Energy in the 21st Century, in Beijing. Delegates shared experiences and views, explored various future strategies and ideas concerning the sustainable development of nuclear energy and reached broad consensus.

China will, as always, continue to support the Agency and work with other member States and the secretariat to promote further progress in the Agency's work.

Mr. Tarar (Pakistan): I would like to pay tribute to the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), His Excellency Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, who has led the Agency with distinction and commitment throughout his tenure. We also warmly felicitate His Excellency Ambassador Yukiya Amano on his election to the challenging post of Director General. We are confident that his vast experience will stand him in good stead in strengthening the IAEA's role in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy in an impartial and professional manner, sensitive to the needs and expectations of all Member States, particularly the developing nations that have modest programmes.

The IAEA's unique role as the world's focal point for promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy is assuming greater significance with the increasing global energy demand, the alarming scarcity of fossil fuel reserves and the growing awareness of the diverse environmental problems that they pose. In view of the good and safe performance of nuclear power plants, that scenario has led to a resurgence of interest in nuclear power after more than two decades. It is important to nurture that likely growth lest we miss the opportunity. Thus the promise comes with an immense challenge not only for the nuclear industry but also for the Agency, as it is expected to play a guiding role in promoting an equitable access to nuclear technology, materials and equipment.

To afford every State its right to the peaceful applications of nuclear technology, particularly nuclear power generation, universal and non-discriminatory criteria for international cooperation must be developed. In that process, principles should be placed above perceptions. Such an approach would also help to strengthen the non-proliferation regime. Here, we may remind ourselves of the primary objective enunciated in the Agency's mission statement, which says that the IAEA:

“assists its Member States, in the context of social and economic goals, in planning for and using nuclear science and technology for various peaceful purposes, including the generation of electricity, and facilitates the transfer of such

technology and knowledge in a sustainable manner to developing Member States”.

The IAEA's Statute is clearly based on the concept that the application of safeguards and safety measures is an associated function in promoting and safely transferring nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Its proper implementation, therefore, requires the maintenance of a balance between the Agency's promotional activities and its work on verification and nuclear security. As circumstances would have it, the latter seems to have taken up the better part of the Agency's attention and its policymaking organs. It is required to ensure that that trend does not hamper the Agency's core statutory function of promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy, particularly because many developing countries have an ambition to start a nuclear power programme and look towards the Agency.

The primary vehicle through which the Agency fulfils its promotional role is its technical cooperation programme, which has brought tangible benefits to many developing member States. IAEA programmes on human resource development, expert services, fellowships, training courses and equipment supply are the key components of the technical cooperation activities that ensure impact and sustainability.

We in Pakistan have greatly benefited from such interactions not only in the area of nuclear power, but also in other peaceful applications of nuclear energy, including agriculture, hydrology, medicine and industry. We strongly support and appreciate the Agency's efforts in improving the quality of its technical cooperation programmes and in making them compatible with the changing requirements and needs of the Member States despite the odds of resource constraints.

Needless to say, those activities should be further strengthened by the provision of sufficient resources and continual enhancement of their effectiveness. For its part, Pakistan will continue to contribute by sharing its experience, offering training placements at its educational and research and development centres whenever requested and by providing the services of experts.

Pakistan has long been a strong advocate of using nuclear technology for progress and prosperity. I would like to point out to this audience that Pakistan signed a contract for the first nuclear power plant in the

mid-1960s, when very few developing countries had even thought of harnessing nuclear energy. That plant, which was connected to the grid in 1972, is still operating, and we take care of all the front-end requirements of the fuel cycle.

However, our second plant, the 300 MW C-1, came with some delay and was commissioned in 2000. The Agency played a very supportive role in assessing the design and operational safety of this plant. Our third plant, C-2, is nearing completion. Pakistan looks to the Agency and the developed world for assistance as it develops its nuclear power programme so that this clean source of electrical power can be exploited in an energy-starved country.

While nuclear power has been the mainstay of our effort, Pakistan has also developed programmes around the application of ionizing radiation and radioisotopes in the fields of agriculture and medicine for the benefit of its population. A typical example is the 13 nuclear medical centres that the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission is running across the country, where every year about half a million patients receive diagnostic and therapeutic services, most of them free of cost. Five other such centres are under construction.

Alongside the inception of its atomic energy development programme, Pakistan has recognized that ensuring nuclear safety and security is of vital importance. In those areas, Pakistan continuously strives to follow existing international standards and practices and has based its national regulations on the Agency's nuclear safety standards. The Agency's guidance documents on the physical protection of facilities and materials and on the safety and security of radioactive sources are being used as a basis for inspection and enforcement.

As a State party, Pakistan is fulfilling its obligations under the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident, and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency. Pakistan is actively participating in the nuclear safety and security activities and programmes of the Agency.

Consequently, while Pakistan is receiving valuable assistance from the IAEA and member States, it is also sharing its experience and resources with the IAEA and member States. Pakistan is also contributing

to the IAEA databases such as the Illicit Trafficking Database (ITDB), the Nuclear and Radiological Event Scale (INES) and the Incident Reporting System (IRS).

Here, I would like to reiterate Pakistan's firm commitment to nuclear non-proliferation. Pakistan has maintained a good track record in Agency safeguards. Following international standards, we are continuously improving controls over the export of goods, technologies and facilities. Pakistan believes that the global non-proliferation regime must be strengthened on the basis of moral, political and international commitments.

As I express our deep appreciation for the valuable assistance provided by the Agency in the fields of nuclear technology, safety and security, my delegation also believes that the Agency should make greater initiatives to facilitate construction of nuclear power plants in member States on a non-discriminatory basis. That would contribute to the economic growth of the countries concerned, and economic growth for all is truly the catalyst we need to eradicate the menaces we face today.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.