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EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION

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

1. The United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation 1/ held its thirty-third session at the Vienna International Centre from 25 to 29 June 1984. Mr. D. Beninson (Argentina), Mr. T. Kumatori (Japan) and Mr. A. Hidayatalla (Sudan) served as Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur, respectively.
2. The Committee took note of General Assembly resolution 38/78 of 15 December 1984, in paragraph 3 of which the Committee was requested to continue its work, including its important co-ordinating activities, to increase knowledge of the levels, effects and risks of ionizing radiation from all sources.
3. In the course of its opening, the Committee heard an address given, on behalf of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), by the Deputy Executive Director of that organization. The Committee expressed appreciation for the continued attention given to its activities by UNEP and for the support provided to the secretariat, which has enabled it effectively to carry out its mandate.
4. The technical discussions that occupied most of the session centred on different topics, as follows: radiation-induced cancer, including both the basic and the more practical aspects related to the establishment of absolute risk estimates; developmental effects induced by irradiation in utero; and early effects caused in man by high radiation doses. Hereditary effects of radiation in man and in a range of other mammalian species were examined. Attention was also given to

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natural sources of radiation; exposures resulting from nuclear explosions and the associated production cycles; the radiological impact of the nuclear fuel cycle; exposures due to medical uses of radiation and radioisotopes. The Committee also held general discussions on the evaluation of the detriment to health induced by exposure to radiation and the means of measuring and expressing such detriment.

5. The above topics were considered on the basis of technical documents prepared in the secretariat. Their discussion resulted in suggestions and requests for modification of such documents, which will provide supporting material for the next substantive report of the Committee to the General Assembly. Documents at present under consideration by the Committee are in different stages of preparation. Some of them will be finalized as soon as scientific information, which is thought to be critical for the Committee's deliberations, will be made available.

6. The Committee stressed that the completeness and precision (and therefore the usefulness) of its conclusions rest on data produced by others. It is therefore vital for the activity of collation and assessment of scientific data performed on behalf of the General Assembly that Member States of the United Nations, the specialized agencies including the World Health Organization, the International Atomic Energy Agency and other scientific organizations assist in providing information on the subjects mentioned above. The Committee expressed the hope that this might be done in the future to an even greater extent than in the past.

7. The Committee elected Mr. T. Kumatori (Japan), Mr. A. Kaul (Germany, Federal Republic of), and Mr. A. Hidayatalla (Sudan) to serve as Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur, respectively, at its thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth sessions.

8. The Committee decided to hold its thirty-fourth session at the Vienna International Centre from 10 to 14 June 1985.

Notes

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