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PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE UNITED
NATIONS CONFERENCE FOR THE PROMOTION
OF INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE
PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY

Second session

Vienna, 21-25 June 1982

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

PREPARATION OF THE CONFERENCE: REPORT OF THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL

Note by the Secretariat

The General Assembly in resolution 36/78 of 9 December 1981 invited "the International Atomic Energy Agency to fulfil its appropriate role within the scope of its responsibilities at all stages of preparation of the Conference, and during the Conference itself, by contributing to the discussion of relevant issues, by providing technical data and documentation as needed, particularly in relation to the progress of the work of the Committee on Assurances of Supply, and by participating in the secretariat of the Conference". In pursuance with this resolution, the Secretariat circulates herein a report on the work done in the Committee on Assurances of Supply since its establishment the transmission of which was approved by the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency on 8 June 1982.

THE COMMITTEE ON ASSURANCES OF SUPPLY (CAS)

1. The Committee on Assurances of Supply (CAS) was established by the International Atomic Energy Agency's Board of Governors in June 1980 to consider and advise the Board on:

- (i) ways and means in which supplies of nuclear material, equipment and technology and fuel cycle services can be assured on a more predictable and long-term basis in accordance with mutually acceptable considerations of non-proliferation; and
- (ii) the Agency's role and responsibilities in relation thereto.

2. So far CAS has held five sessions (on 29 and 30 September 1980, 2-4 March 1981, 15-17 June 1981, 9-11 November 1981 and 19-23 April 1982). The sessions have been attended by representatives of approximately 50 Agency Member States and by observers from up to four intergovernmental organizations. CAS has reported to the Agency's Board of Governors on each of its sessions.

3. At its first two sessions, CAS agreed - inter alia - on the way in which its Bureau would be constituted, on the rotation of the CAS chairmanship and on arrangements for the distribution of CAS documents. In addition, it was agreed that every effort would be made to take decisions by consensus.

4. At its third session, CAS decided to adopt a flexible, open-ended approach to its work programme. A list was compiled containing eight provisional, indicative headings - a main one ("Principles of international co-operation in the field of nuclear energy in accordance with the mandate of the Committee on Assurances of Supply") and seven others - that CAS might decide from session to session to place on its subsequent agenda. The list also contained, under each heading, a number of topics proposed by CAS members. The topics and headings were included without provisional agreement having been sought on them in CAS and without prejudice to the positions of CAS members not associated with them; also, no consideration was given to amending the wording of the topics. CAS agreed that headings and topics could be added, withdrawn or reformulated at future sessions.

5. CAS has so far focused its attention on two of these headings and has established two Working Groups - open to all CAS members wishing to participate - to carry forward, between sessions, its consideration of questions falling under them; Working Group 1 has been considering "Principles of international co-operation in the field of nuclear energy in accordance with the mandate of the Committee on Assurances of Supply" and Working Group 2 has been considering "Emergency and back-up mechanisms".

6. CAS members have submitted proposals for draft principles and these have been brought together in a catalogue that is still open to receive any further proposals that may be made.

7. At its fifth session, in April, CAS had before it a synthesis - prepared by Working Group 1 - of the draft principles contained in the catalogue and a simplified version - prepared by the Bureau - of the synthesis. During a detailed discussion of each draft principle, CAS made a number of improvements and was able to overcome, in a number of cases, substantive difficulties by devising alternative formulations that were widely acceptable subject to agreement on the document as a whole.

8. Under its agenda item "Emergency and back-up mechanisms", CAS had before it, annexed to a report from Working Group 2, a draft check-list - prepared by the Working Group Chairman - on features of emergency and back-up mechanisms and a paper, "Some elements of a possible mechanism arising from the discussion of section VI of the draft check-list", submitted by the Yugoslav delegation at a meeting of Working Group 2 and illustrating a possible mechanism; it also had before it a paper prepared by the Secretariat pursuant to a request made by the Yugoslav delegation and describing four possible mechanisms. CAS concluded that the paper "Some elements of a possible mechanism arising from the discussion of section VI of the draft check-list" would constitute a basis for Working Group 2 to define a mechanism that CAS could subsequently examine. CAS agreed that Working Group 2 should hold a further session starting on 19 July.

9. In its report on its fifth session to the Agency's Board of Governors, CAS noted the substantial progress made during the session and stated that it considered that, while some differences remained, there were good prospects for a consensus document on principles to be arrived at through further discussions based on the improved draft text which it had produced.

10. CAS will start its sixth session on 4 October, when, in addition to considering further "Principles of international co-operation in the field of nuclear energy in accordance with the mandate of the Committee on Assurances of Supply" and "Emergency and back-up mechanisms", it will conduct a preliminary discussion on "Revision mechanisms". The Agency's Secretariat was requested to prepare a background paper to serve as a basis for this preliminary discussion.

11. At a meeting held on 31 May and 1 June, the Bureau considered the work schedule for CAS in the forthcoming months. Suggestions were made there that CAS prepare a report to the Agency's Board of Governors on the results of the work being carried on in CAS up to the spring of 1983, so that the Board would have time to review it before the United Nations Conference for the Promotion of International Co-operation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy. These matters will be submitted to CAS for consideration at its sixth session.