



# General Assembly

Seventy-eighth session

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New York

Official Records

*President:* Mr. Francis . . . . . (Trinidad and Tobago)

*In the absence of the President, Mr. Dibba  
(Gambia), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

## Agenda item 89

### Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency

**Note by the Secretary-General transmitting  
the report of the International Atomic Energy  
Agency (A/78/304)**

**Draft resolution (A/78/L.7)**

**The Acting President:** I now invite Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, to introduce the report of the Agency.

**Mr. Grossi** (International Atomic Energy Agency): It is an honour to address the General Assembly in order to present the report (see A/78/304) of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for 2022 and to update the Assembly on the work of the Agency.

Almost exactly 70 years ago, President Dwight D. Eisenhower of the United States stood on this very spot and gave his famous “Atoms for peace” speech (see A/PV.470), which set the course for how we use the atom for good rather than evil and sowed the seed of the idea that grew into what is today the IAEA. Today the proposition that we should use atoms for peace is more relevant than ever, and the IAEA is the vehicle by which we are making it a reality. Every day, on every continent, the IAEA is supporting nations in overcoming

challenges such as disease, poverty, hunger, pollution and climate change by seizing opportunities to improve health care, agriculture and energy systems through the power of nuclear science and technology.

The IAEA is best known as the world’s nuclear-weapon watchdog, and we take that role very seriously. But it is worth remembering that most of our member States join the IAEA because they want to improve the lives and livelihoods of their people through the peaceful application of nuclear science and technology. Those uses are so versatile and varied that they can directly assist countries in achieving more than half of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and indirectly they support the achievement of every one of them.

Let me begin by addressing the single challenge that cuts across all the SDGs and affects every person on the planet — climate change. I want to start there because we find ourselves at a critical juncture in the history of energy and our climate. Every one of us has a responsibility to think long-term and act decisively, based on facts and science. It is clear that nuclear energy must be part of the equation if we are to meet our climate goals and build a sustainable future in which it is possible for humankind to thrive. And as the latest United Nations stocktaking attests, we are not on track. Even after trillions of dollars have been spent on the green transition over the past 20 years, hydrocarbons still supply more than 80 per cent of the world’s energy. In those 20 years, nuclear power’s share of global electricity production decreased by about half. Today solar and wind technologies contribute to 5 per

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cent of the global energy supply. If that is to increase sustainably, those renewables will need a firm low-carbon energy base. It is possible to decarbonize a large industrial grid. A number of countries have shown us that. They have also shown us that nuclear power plays a decisive role as the firm low-carbon energy base on which their success is built.

Today more than 400 nuclear power reactors operating in more than 30 countries supply over 10 per cent of the world's electricity and more than a quarter of all low-carbon electricity. Without nuclear power, global CO2 emissions would be much higher.

More than 50 reactors are currently under construction. Many countries already operating nuclear power programmes are extending them. But what about those countries where electricity consumption will rise fastest over the coming decades? In Africa, electricity capacity is set to grow fivefold by 2050, and in Latin America, it is forecast to double. They are looking at nuclear too. Of the 30 or so countries that are currently either considering or embarking on the introduction of nuclear power, more than half are in the developing world. And most of those are in Africa.

The IAEA has intensified its work in those countries, offering the milestones approach to establishing a nuclear programme, publishing safety standards and security guidance and mapping out the path to carbon neutrality through our Atoms4NetZero initiative, which we launched in 2022. We are also making sure that nuclear has a seat at the table at crucial discussions, including the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Nuclear capacity will need to more than double so that climate goals can be met. It will also need to become more innovative. In 2022, the IAEA launched the Nuclear Harmonization and Standardization Initiative. It brings together all stakeholders in an effort to facilitate the timely and safe deployment of advanced reactors, including small modular reactors. Those reactors can be built in factories far away from their final destination, and their modularity allows for gradual investments as and when more capacity is needed. That makes nuclear energy particularly relevant and potentially more easily affordable to communities looking to power smaller and growing electricity grids. The potential of small modular reactors as part of the energy mix of developing countries is clear, and many of them have turned to the IAEA for guidance and support.

The growing interest in nuclear energy across the world is reflected in the IAEA's projections. In its new outlook for global nuclear capacity for electricity generation, the Agency increased its high case projection to 873 gigawatts by 2050. To achieve such growth will require a better investment playing field and one that takes into consideration the full benefits of nuclear. To that end, the IAEA facilitates the understanding of nuclear financing and the macroeconomic impacts of nuclear investments.

Regardless of which energy mix best serves a nation individually, all nations benefit when investments in nuclear energy are made. I urge the decision makers of our world — whether as stakeholders in development banks or other mechanisms funding the green transition — to recognize nuclear energy and its infrastructure for what they are: proven, safe, large-scale and long-term sources of low-carbon energy.

Unlike fossil fuels whose waste kills 8 million people a year, nuclear energy accounts for and carefully stores all its waste. Deep underground repositories are offering game-changing long-term solutions. In 2022, the Agency continued to work with its Member States across the fuel cycle, including in the areas of waste management and decommissioning, holding conferences, publishing status reports and conducting peer review missions.

In addition to its role in decarbonizing electricity grids, nuclear energy will be key to decarbonizing other sectors too because it is able to produce sustainable heat for homes and industry and to produce large amounts of hydrogen. It is also able to provide drinking water via desalination.

Nuclear energy is a force for good, and nuclear safety and security are paramount. That is why my teams of safety and security experts and I crossed the front lines of the war in Ukraine to establish an ongoing expert presence at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant. We have worked tirelessly to try to prevent a nuclear accident from bringing even more suffering to those who are already bearing so much. With regard to nuclear, safety and security come first.

In 2022, the Agency conducted nine vital in-person missions to Ukraine, three of which I led, and facilitated the delivery of crucial safety and security equipment. Those efforts culminated in the agreement that would lead to a continuous IAEA presence at all Ukraine's nuclear power plants, ensuring ongoing support and assistance.

In response to the armed conflict, I formulated and presented to the Security Council the five basic principles of nuclear safety and security in an armed conflict (see S/PV.9334). The bottom line is that nuclear power plants should not become part of a theatre of war. They should neither be attacked nor militarized.

The IAEA's seven indispensable pillars of nuclear safety and security, meanwhile, make absolutely clear the crucial areas of nuclear safety and security, so no one misunderstands them, whether they are combatants on the ground in Ukraine or readers of the IAEA's frequent updates on the situation at Ukraine's nuclear facilities, especially at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant.

In 2022, shortly after the start of the conflict, we developed a detailed technical plan to provide comprehensive assistance, as necessary, across four crucial areas: in-person technical assistance, equipment delivery, remote assistance and rapid deployment assistance. This year, our ongoing presence in Ukraine continues, as do our updates.

The IAEA has been proactive in reviewing the safety-related aspects of the Advanced Liquid Processing System (ALPS) water stored at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power station following the accident of 2011. In 2022, the ALPS task force laid the groundwork for the disposal of that treated water to be conducted transparently and in line with international safety standards. The IAEA will be there for the duration of the discharge, monitoring and assessing it, including by taking independent samples, to ensure full transparency and scientific objectivity.

Around the world, the Agency's safety standards are considered international reference points for the protection of people and the environment from harmful effects of ionizing radiation. Meanwhile, our nuclear security guidance plays an equivalent role in helping the international community prevent nuclear material from falling into terrorists' hands.

Our safeguards teams are inspecting ever-greater quantities of nuclear material and increasing numbers of facilities, assuring the international community of their peaceful uses while remaining firm, objective and diligent. In 2022, there were more than 230,000 significant quantities of nuclear material under safeguards and the IAEA conducted more than 14,000 days of in-field verification activities.

The Agency's verification and monitoring of Iran's nuclear-related commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) have been seriously affected by the decision, in February 2021, to stop the implementation of those commitments, including the Additional Protocol. That was further exacerbated in June 2022 by the decision to remove all the Agency's equipment previously installed in Iran for surveillance and monitoring in relation to the JCPOA. With regard to its Safeguards Agreement under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Iran still had to resolve some of the Agency's questions concerning traces of human-made uranium identified at three undeclared locations in the country. Unless and until Iran clarifies those issues, the Agency will not be able to provide assurances about the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme, but we remain ready to work with Iran in a spirit of cooperation and without delay to resolve those matters.

The number of States with safeguards agreements in force now stands at 190, and 141 of them have brought additional protocols into force. I call on the remaining four States parties to the NPT without comprehensive safeguards agreements to bring them into force without delay, and I encourage States that have not yet concluded additional protocols to do so as soon as possible. I also reiterate my call for States with small-quantities protocols based on an old standard text to amend or rescind them. The old standard small-quantities protocol is simply not adequate for our current safeguards system. Meanwhile, the IAEA has continued to monitor the nuclear programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea — from outside its borders, naturally. The continuation of the nuclear programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as all are aware, is in clear violation of Security Council resolutions and is deeply regrettable.

Nuclear science and technology can do much more than produce low-carbon energy. As I begin my second term as Director General, I am more determined than ever to scale up the positive impact we can make. The initiatives I have launched over the past four years are the vehicles that will help us achieve that goal. In February 2022, I launched Rays of Hope on the sidelines of the African Union Summit, supported by President Macky Sall of Senegal, who was the Chairperson of the African Union at the time, and Director-General Tedros Ghebreyesus of the World Health Organization. Starting with seven African nations, Rays of Hope is

increasing access to affordable, equitable, effective and sustainable radiation medicine services within a comprehensive cancer-control system.

Last year, I reported to the General Assembly (see A/77/308/Add.1) about the launch of two other important initiatives — the Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action (ZODIAC), to help countries better prepare for zoonotic outbreaks such as that of the coronavirus disease, and the Nuclear Technology for Controlling Plastic Pollution (NUTEC Plastics) initiative to help reduce plastic pollution, especially in our oceans. I am delighted to say that those initiatives have been fully embraced and are making important contributions. By the end of 2022, the vast majority of our Member States had designated national coordinators and laboratories for ZODIAC. Training courses reached participants in 95 countries, while crucial equipment arrived at many national laboratories. Meanwhile, NUTEC Plastics is supporting countries that are considering establishing pilot plants for plastic-waste recycling and those seeking to monitor marine microplastics through isotopic tracing.

The health and climate crises we are facing have been compounded by a food crisis. More than 780 million people went hungry in 2022, an increase of almost 20 percent since 2019. Overall, food and agriculture were again the main areas of interest for Member States participating in our technical cooperation programme. Mutation breeding using irradiation enables scientists to develop new, hardier crop varieties better able to withstand harsh climates and needing less water and fewer pesticides. In 2022, the IAEA even sent seeds to the International Space Station for research. Our scientists back here on Earth are studying them to learn potentially valuable lessons about the seeds' response to natural radiation and tough conditions. Isotope hydrology, meanwhile, helps farmers improve the management of their soil. From Latin America to the Sahel, in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the IAEA helps member States boost their capacity to do that important work. We have also assisted communities in using the sterile-insect technique to reduce their populations of destructive pests such as the Mediterranean fruit fly. All those approaches help support food security. Our work in 2022 and before has laid the foundation for Atoms4Food, the global initiative that the IAEA and FAO just launched in Rome a few days ago.

In all we do, it is vital that to ensure everyone is able to fully benefit and fully contribute. The share of women among our professional staff has reached more than 43 per cent, up from the 28 per cent total when I started as Director General four years ago. I am confident that our policies and actions have put us squarely on a path to achieving my commitment of gender parity by 2025. But it is not enough simply to improve the gender balance at the IAEA when the entire nuclear field is still lagging. The IAEA's Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme has grown every year since it was launched in 2020. By the end of 2022, almost 400 students had been awarded a scholarship to study a nuclear subject at the master's degree level. That year we launched the Lise Meitner Programme as a natural follow-up to the fellowship. It offers professional-development opportunities to women in the early and middle part of their careers in the nuclear field, and I urge those who can to support those important initiatives aimed at improving the gender balance in a crucial sector.

A world divided by geopolitical tensions must seize with even more energy every opportunity to address our shared challenges together. The IAEA makes that possible, whether in a cassava plantation, a marine laboratory, a cancer centre or a nuclear power plant in a war zone. The General Assembly has my commitment that the IAEA will continue to lean into the challenges where it can make a difference. In partnership with the Assembly, we will build a better world where no one is left behind.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina to introduce draft resolution A/78/L.7.

**Ms. Squeff** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to present to the General Assembly draft resolution A/78/L.7, entitled "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency", and I am pleased to do so on behalf of Argentina, which is chairing the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the period from 2023 to 2024. It is the fourth time that my country has been honoured with this important responsibility, having last served as Chair in 1991 and 1992. It is an example of Argentina's commitment to the International Atomic Energy Agency and its activities in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and non-proliferation.



Argentina has a nuclear programme with an extensive history of exclusively peaceful uses, with more than seven decades of development. It has generated extensive capabilities and scientific, technological and industrial resources. In that context, we want to highlight the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its Director General Rafael Grossi in the interest of promoting nuclear energy and technology for peace, health and prosperity in the world in a context of serious challenges in terms of climate, food and international security.

We also welcome the recent appointment of Rafael Grossi as Director General of the IAEA for a new term, until December 2027, which clearly shows the support of the international community for the IAEA and his leadership of the Agency.

The draft resolution before the General Assembly today derives from a requirement pursuant to the IAEA Statute and the 1957 Agreement governing the relationship between the United Nations and the IAEA. It is the means by which the Assembly recognizes and takes stock of the work of the Agency. This year's draft resolution is a factual update of last year's resolution 77/9; as such, it takes note of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the IAEA General Conference at its sixty-seventh regular session.

Furthermore, we would like to mention that some IAEA Member States noted that some resolutions of the sixty-seventh session of the IAEA General Conference were adopted by a vote. With regard to the IAEA annual report for 2022 (see A/78/304), one Member State noted that it had a reservation, as contained in the IAEA information circular INFCIRC/1102.

Finally, the draft resolution reiterates the strong support of United Nations Member States for the Agency and the activities entrusted to it and welcomes resolution GC(67)/RES/1 on the approval of the appointment of Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi as the Director General from 3 December 2023 to 2 December 2027. Following consultations in Vienna on 24 October, the draft resolution was unanimously approved for submission to the General Assembly. We would like to thank all sponsors for their support.

We hope that the General Assembly will adopt draft resolution A/78/L.7 without a vote, thus strongly expressing the importance that the international community attaches to the IAEA and the broad scope of its work.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of the European Union, in its capacity as observer.

**Mrs. Samson** (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Norway, Monaco and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

We will be pleased to join consensus on draft resolution A/78/L.7, on the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) (see A/78/304) highlighting the Agency's indispensable role as outlined in its mandate "Atoms for peace and development". We congratulate IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi on his reappointment and reaffirm our strong support for the Agency's technical, independent and impartial work.

Russia's war of aggression and its illegal seizure of Ukraine's Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant are gross violations of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations and the very principles of the IAEA Statute. They have led to multiple risks affecting nuclear safety, security and continued safeguards implementation in Ukraine. In that context, the EU welcomes the first-ever IAEA General Conference resolution on Ukraine (GC(67)/RES/16), adopted in Vienna on 28 September. The EU fully supports the work of the IAEA and has provided significant financial support for the IAEA support and assistance missions at Ukraine's nuclear power plants. We stress the importance of the IAEA Director General's seven indispensable pillars for nuclear safety and security and the five concrete principles for protecting the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant which must be respected. However, there is only one sustainable solution: Russia must urgently withdraw all its armed forces, military equipment and other personnel from the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant and fully respect Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

The EU reiterates its firm support for the full, complete and effective implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its three pillars and continues to call for its universalization. We fully support the establishment of a zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East, as agreed at the 1995 NPT Review Conference.

The IAEA safeguards system is a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and plays an indispensable role in the implementation of the NPT. We underline the primary responsibility of the Security Council in cases of non-compliance and encourage further diplomatic efforts to find peaceful solutions to proliferation crises which represent a threat to international peace and regional peace and security.

As a key security priority, the EU will continue to invest diplomatically and politically to ensure that Iran does not acquire a nuclear weapon. The risk of a nuclear proliferation crisis in the region has further increased as a result of Iran's escalating nuclear trajectory. Concrete and sustained moves of nuclear de-escalation are needed to help restore trust. Iran must cooperate in full with the IAEA without further delay to resolve all pending safeguards issues, in accordance with its legally binding obligations under its NPT Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement. We strongly condemn the de-designations by Iran of experienced Agency inspectors. The EU urges Iran to reverse those regrettable unilateral measures, which affect in a direct and severe way the Agency's ability to conduct effectively its verification activities in Iran, including the monitoring of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The EU remains committed to the JCPOA and calls on all States to support the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). The EU commends the IAEA for its regular updates on its verification and monitoring activities of Iran's nuclear commitments under the JCPOA and on the implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in Iran. We strongly urge Iran to reverse all activities inconsistent with the JCPOA and return without delay to its full implementation, including of all transparency measures. We also urge Iran to return to the implementation of the Additional Protocol and to seek its ratification. The EU calls on Iran to work with the Agency in earnest and in a sustained way towards the fulfilment of the commitments contained in the joint statement issued in March.

The European Union remains gravely concerned about the continued development by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes in clear violation of relevant Security Council resolutions. The EU urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to engage in meaningful discussions with all relevant parties to build a basis for sustainable peace and security and to take steps aimed at pursuing complete, verifiable and

irreversible denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. We insist that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea return to compliance with the NPT and the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and bring into force the Additional Protocol, and we urge it to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea cannot and will never have the status of a nuclear-weapon State under the NPT or any other special status.

The EU supports the strengthening of the IAEA safeguards system and continue to believe that comprehensive safeguards agreements, together with the Additional Protocol, constitute the current verification standard under the NPT. We call for their universalization without delay.

The EU and its member States attach the utmost importance to nuclear safety. We stress that the highest standards for nuclear safety that can be reasonably achieved should be implemented and continually improved. We encourage all States Members of the United Nations to promote a strong nuclear-safety culture, and we will continue to provide assistance for that worldwide, including through the European Union's Instrument for International Nuclear Safety Cooperation, with a budget of €300 million. We look forward to the next International Conference on Nuclear Security in May 2024, with a view to strengthening global nuclear security. As one of the largest donors to the IAEA's Nuclear Security Fund, the EU recognizes the Agency's central role in facilitating international cooperation and assisting Member States in building their capacities to combat nuclear security threats and risks. We encourage all Member States to join the international nuclear safety and security conventions and adhere to the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. As civil nuclear installations are not designed for involvement in situations of armed conflict, it is important to identify the challenges when applying safety standards and security guidance.

The EU and its member States reaffirm their long-standing commitment to the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme. We support the Agency's activities in the peaceful uses of nuclear technology in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, including in the context of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. We also welcome the IAEA's strong commitment to gender equality, with a view to

achieving gender parity and mainstreaming a gender perspective in all programmes and projects. The EU is proud to be the largest donor to the IAEA's Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme, which helps to increase the number of women in the nuclear field.

**Ms. Lim** (Singapore): The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is an important and steadfast partner of the international community. As a member of the IAEA's Board of Governors from 2022 to 2024, Singapore reaffirms its full support for the Agency's mandate and work, and is pleased to continue its sponsorship of the draft resolution entitled "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency" (A/78/L.7) this year. The IAEA's annual report (see A/78/304) highlights the agency's key achievements across the core areas of nuclear verification, nuclear safety and security and technical cooperation and capacity-building. Nevertheless, in order for the IAEA to continue carrying out its mandate effectively, every country has a responsibility to work closely and proactively with it, and I would like to make three key points in that regard.

First, the IAEA plays a central role in upholding the international non-proliferation regime, as the sole competent authority responsible for verifying States' fulfilment of their nuclear safeguards obligations. Singapore urges all States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to honour the commitments under their respective comprehensive safeguards agreements and the Additional Protocol. We also call for the remaining non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT that have yet to bring comprehensive safeguards agreements into force to do so as soon as possible. Those efforts to build mutual trust and confidence are now more crucial than ever.

Secondly, the IAEA has established rigorous global standards for nuclear safety and security and actively supports Member States in implementing those standards. Singapore is committed to maintaining and strengthening its national regulatory frameworks for radiation safety, including on waste management, emergency preparedness and exposure control. The IAEA's first Integrated Regulatory Review Service mission to Singapore was completed in October 2022, and we look forward to further cooperation under our country programme framework for the period from 2021 to 2025.

As nuclear scientific research and technologies continue to advance, we welcome the IAEA's ongoing efforts to update its guidance documents to keep pace

with emerging technologies. That gives Member States important support in harnessing the benefits of nuclear energy in a safe, secure and sustainable manner. We also welcomed the official opening of the IAEA's Nuclear Security Training and Demonstration Centre in Seibersdorf last month. We are confident that the Centre will make valuable contributions to enhancing nuclear security training and tackling global nuclear terrorism. At the same time, Singapore remains deeply concerned about the fact that the ongoing war in Ukraine has put the safety and security of Europe's largest nuclear power plant in peril and is compounding the risk of a nuclear accident with catastrophic consequences. We appreciate the IAEA's independent and impartial assessment of the situation on the ground, and we reiterate the importance of upholding the IAEA's seven pillars for nuclear safety and security, which Director General Rafael Grossi outlined in 2022, and the five concrete principles elaborated by the Director General in his briefing to the Security Council on 30 May of this year (see S/PV.9334).

Thirdly, the IAEA's efforts in technical cooperation and capacity-building are an integral contribution to helping developing Member States, especially least developed countries and small island developing States, achieve their development goals. Singapore reaffirms the inalienable right of all States parties to the NPT to the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology, in accordance with article IV of the Treaty. As an active technical cooperation partner of the Agency, Singapore will continue to support the IAEA in ensuring the effectiveness of the Technical Cooperation Programme, including by renewing the Singapore-IAEA Third Country Training Programme and through the 2019 IAEA-ASEAN Practical Arrangements.

In conclusion, Singapore extends its deep appreciation to Director General Grossi and his staff for the continued professionalism, objectivity and technical competence they have shown in carrying out their duties in the past year. We also appreciate the active engagement of the IAEA's Liaison Office in New York and the Director of the New York Liaison Office, Ambassador Vivian Okeke. Singapore stands ready to work with all Member States and the IAEA to ensure that the Agency remains fully able to discharge its mandate.

**Mrs. Narváez Ojeda** (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Chile welcomes the annual report for 2022 (see A/78/304) of the International Atomic Energy Agency

(IAEA). We thank Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi, the Secretariat and all Agency officials for the hard work carried out during that period. I would also like to acknowledge the representative of Argentina for introducing this year's draft resolution (A/78/L.7), of which we are a sponsor, and to congratulate her on her country's election as Chair of the IAEA Board of Governors.

We also take this opportunity to reiterate that Chile has been and will continue to be a firm promoter of general and complete disarmament and in favour of broad, transparent and democratic multilateral debate. We strongly support disarmament regimes for weapons of mass destruction, including the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and we adhere to the principle of the indivisibility of international security, because all States, regardless of their size or power, have a responsibility to contribute to consolidating an international order based on cooperation and governed by international law.

We reiterate our firm commitment to the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, in accordance with the provisions of article III of the Agency's Statute, recognizing the contribution that such energy can make to global efforts to achieve the Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, such as those pertaining to health, agriculture, water and food, among others. We recognize the professional, technical and independent work being done by the IAEA and the important role it plays in safeguards, safety and security, technical cooperation, the promotion and facilitation of research, development and the practical application of atomic energy for peaceful purposes. We value such flagship IAEA projects as the Rays of Hope initiative in the field of cancer care and the Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action programme, which is aimed at strengthening national capacities in that area. We would like to make special mention of the Nuclear Technology for Controlling Plastic Pollution initiative, a project of great interest to us in Chile in our implementation of our turquoise foreign policy, which prioritizes initiatives focused on fighting and mitigating the global climate crisis and on the agendas for the protection and stewardship of the oceans.

Chile attaches enormous importance to the technical cooperation that the IAEA provides. In that context, the 2022 annual report outlines a series of activities that were hosted in Chile or that representatives of my country participated in. We welcome the fact that

there is an agile technical cooperation programme within the IAEA that responds rapidly to the urgent needs of Member States through national, regional and interregional projects. The scope of Chile's national projects includes the development of areas such as agriculture, ocean pollution, applications of nuclear science and the strengthening of technological security infrastructure. We are also grateful for the IAEA's collaborative work with specialized national agencies such as the Chilean Commission on Nuclear Energy. We also acknowledge the support that we have received in the management of disused sealed radioactive sources and the Operation and Maintenance Assessment for Research Reactors mission that helped my country improve the availability and reliability of its research reactor, RECH-1.

In the area of regional technical cooperation, the work carried out in conjunction with the IAEA under the Regional Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean (ARCAL) is vitally important. We would like to point out that Chile currently presides over ARCAL's representative and technical coordination bodies. A special mention goes to the Marine-Coastal Stressors Research Network in Latin America and the Caribbean, which covers the sampling and analysis of microplastics to ensure the collection of comparable data and thereby establish a regional database on the amount of microplastics in marine and coastal environments. Another initiative that we would like to highlight is the Optimization of Radiation Protection in Paediatric Interventional Radiology in Latin America and the Caribbean, which is aimed at promoting a culture of safety in paediatric radiology and strategies for its optimization, including the determination and use of appropriate reference levels. The initiative was launched in collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization and the World Health Organization.

We are proud to point out that Chile has a feminist foreign policy, which is understood as an effort to establish the guiding principles of equality and non-discrimination in Chile's international action. In that regard, we value the contributions of women, which are fundamental to the field of nuclear science, technology and application, as well as the activities associated with the work of the IAEA. In that field, we should mention the positive impact of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme and the Lise Meitner Programme. At the same time, we considered



it important for the Agency to continue its regional chapter of Women in Nuclear, which seeks to support equal female participation in nuclear science and technology. In September we saw the launch of a guide to gender mainstreaming in the nuclear sector in the region entitled *Somos Potencia*, or “We are power”. I would also like to emphasize the fact that together with El Salvador and Spain, our country co-chairs the Group of Friends of Women in Nuclear chapter in Vienna. We note the need for up-to-date statistics disaggregated by gender and region on the Agency’s activities, particularly in the area of technical cooperation. The Agency also has a responsibility to continue to ensure parity in panel discussions and support for civil society organizations that bring together scientific professionals in the peaceful use of atomic energy.

We share the IAEA’s concern about Ukraine’s nuclear infrastructure and join the calls urging the parties to refrain from military action that could jeopardize the integrity of the facilities. Chile recognizes the importance of the technical work carried out by the IAEA in that area and calls for ensuring a continued presence of its personnel at nuclear sites on Ukrainian territory. We also highlight the importance of the seven essential pillars of nuclear safety, technology and security, and the five principles aimed at safeguarding the Zaporizhzhya installations.

**Mr. Muhamad** (Malaysia): At the outset, Malaysia would like to record its appreciation of the work of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on its comprehensive report for 2022 (see A/78/304) and the additional information highlighting key developments relating to the Agency in 2023. Malaysia commends the Agency’s multifaceted initiatives as outlined in the report, including the resolutions adopted at the sixty-seventh IAEA General Conference in September. We recognize the IAEA’s indispensable contributions to promoting the safe, secure and peaceful uses of nuclear technology, as well as its role as the sole competent authority in verifying States’ compliance with safeguards obligations. Malaysia acknowledges the invaluable support provided by the Agency across various fields, including medicine, food and agriculture, through various programmes such as the Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action, Nuclear Technology for Controlling Plastic Pollution Plastics and Rays of Hope initiatives and, most recently, *Atoms4Food*. They have greatly facilitated the utilization of nuclear science and

technology for peaceful purposes in our efforts to realize the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In that regard, we cannot overstate the significance of the IAEA’s technical cooperation activities aimed at the efforts of Member States from the developing world to achieve the SDGs.

In the domain of nuclear safety, Malaysia appreciates the Agency’s assistance to Member States in building and strengthening their capabilities, including in the area of waste safety. Effective nuclear safety and security are critical in ensuring the peaceful uses of nuclear technology and energy. The IAEA plays an essential part in supporting the implementation and continued improvement of international nuclear safety and security standards.

In conclusion, Malaysia supports draft resolution A/78/L.7, reaffirming the pivotal role of the IAEA in the development and application of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, and is pleased to be one of its sponsors.

**Ms. Joyini** (South Africa): We welcome today’s debate on the report (see A/78/304) of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and would like to express our sincere appreciation to the Director General of the IAEA, Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi, for his presentation of the IAEA’s report for 2022 and for providing valuable updates on the Agency’s 2023 activities.

The update on the Agency’s activities is particularly important in the wake of the failure of the past two Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. While we note that the last time the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons agreed on an outcome was in 2010, which included agreement on specific actions aimed at strengthening the IAEA safeguards system, the subsequent meetings, including the latest Preparatory Committee, held in August, have raised a number of issues that are relevant to the work of the IAEA. They include the importance of the implementation of safeguards and the impact of conflicts on them, as well as the inalienable and unconditional right to peaceful uses of nuclear technology. South Africa looks forward to seeing the IAEA continue to take positive steps to enhance the contribution of nuclear technology to development.

South Africa reaffirms its strong support for the IAEA’s work in the area of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, contributing to development through science,

technology and its Technical Cooperation Programme, some details of which the Director General shared earlier. We note the growing number of Member States requesting support from the Agency in that important area, which assists them in addressing their social and economic development needs and contributes to their achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. South Africa, too, continues to benefit from the support provided by the IAEA. The promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in all aspects of life is vital to progress and development. South Africa remains committed to strengthening its participation and programmes with the Agency, and we are proud that our iThemba Laboratory for Accelerator Based Sciences, which is Africa's leading research facility for accelerator-based science and host of the largest accelerator facility in the southern hemisphere, is an IAEA Collaborating Centre. South Africa was also proud to host the Joint Workshop of the International Working Forum on the Regulatory Supervision of Legacy Sites and the Coordination Group for Uranium Legacy Sites on Challenges to Remediation and the Regulatory Supervision of Legacy Sites in Africa, held in Centurion in November 2022.

Nuclear-power applications, and nuclear energy in particular, are a key feature of South Africa's 20-year electricity-generation plan. We therefore welcome the IAEA's assistance to Member States in applying international safety standards in order to strengthen nuclear power plant safety. We also welcome the Agency's conduct of its technical safety reviews of new-build projects and operating plants, helping Member States to enhance the nuclear safety justification in areas potentially in need of improvement so as to meet Agency safety standards, such as at South Africa's Koeberg nuclear power plant, whose review was conducted between October 2021 and May 2022.

Gender mainstreaming remains a priority for South Africa, and we welcome the goal set by the Director General for gender parity in the Agency by 2025. We note that at the end of 2022, the percentage of women in the professional and higher categories was 41.3 per cent — the highest to date — and that of women in senior management positions had reached 44.1 per cent. South Africa supports the Agency's efforts in that regard, and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme, which has benefited a number of South African female scientists, is an excellent initiative that is contributing to global efforts to diversify the nuclear

sciences. We are also pleased that the 2022 report reflects the fact that in collaboration with Ambassador Okeke and the IAEA Liaison Office at the United Nations in New York, South Africa hosted side events jointly with Zimbabwe and Namibia on the margins of the sixty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women and during the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2022, related to the IAEA's support for sustainable development initiatives and through the Fellowship Programme. The side events showcased the support provided by the IAEA on the African continent related to the nexus of gender empowerment, peaceful uses of nuclear technology and development.

In conclusion, it is vital that we recognize the work of the IAEA today, not only in terms of its mandate for strengthening nuclear verification and non-proliferation, but in its efforts to confront global health, development and gender-related matters consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union's Agenda 2063. We are therefore appreciative of the IAEA's role and look forward to its continued valuable contribution to advancing peaceful uses, development and gender equality in the area of nuclear energy.

**Ms. Chan Valverde** (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for his briefing and to congratulate him warmly on his reappointment to lead that important body, affirming Member States' broad support for his leadership and vision in addressing urgent global challenges while contributing to international peace and security and advancing sustainable development. The International Atomic Energy Agency carries out essential work that spans all the objectives of the United Nations, about which I would like to highlight three aspects.

First, the IAEA has been a vital partner in promoting nuclear security, particularly in the past year. The work it has done to promote the safety and security of nuclear facilities and materials for peaceful purposes in all circumstances, including armed conflicts, is particularly notable. For that reason, together with Canada, Finland and Singapore, Costa Rica sponsored a resolution at the previous session of the IAEA General Conference that addresses nuclear safety security and safeguards in Ukraine. The resolution reaffirms the General Conference's support for the IAEA's efforts to ensure nuclear safety and security in Ukraine during

the armed conflict there. We stress the importance of the Director General's seven indispensable pillars for nuclear safety and security and five principles for protecting the Ukrainian nuclear power plant in Zaporizhzhya, which he detailed in the Security Council (see S/PV.9334). The situation in Ukraine is extremely fragile and challenging, especially because of the enormous risk created by the presence of nuclear reactors in a war zone, an unprecedented situation.

The vulnerabilities already facing nuclear power plants, including external power shortages, cyberattacks and human and technical errors, become more acute in a situation of conflict, with the added risk of a direct military strike resulting from a deliberate attack or from crossfire. A meltdown of any of Ukraine's 15 reactors, but especially the six reactors at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, would be a radioactive disaster for the region with potential global humanitarian consequences, including for food insecurity. We support the Agency's continued presence at Zaporizhzhya and other Ukrainian nuclear facilities, as well as its comprehensive programme of technical support and assistance, which has been crucial. The withdrawal of unauthorized military personnel from the plant and its return to the control of the Ukrainian authorities will be crucial to ensuring nuclear safety in the region. Costa Rica urges that we acknowledge the vulnerability of nuclear reactors as military targets and enshrine the principle of establishing demilitarized zones around all nuclear power plants.

Secondly, the Agency plays a vital role in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and in technical cooperation. In that regard, we emphasize the role of the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme, which has supported numerous countries, including Costa Rica, in the development of peaceful applications of nuclear technology and has thereby contributed significantly to efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in areas such as health, agriculture and environmental protection. Moreover, the Agency's cooperation has allowed Member States to leverage the benefits of nuclear technology in such areas as medicine, food security and water resource management. Costa Rica urges all of us to continue supporting and strengthening those practices with a view to achieving sustainable, equitable development.

Thirdly, gender equality is a fundamental principle of the United Nations, and the IAEA is no exception in that regard. We welcome the programmes for women's

empowerment in nuclear matters and the Agency's consistent efforts to integrate a gender perspective into the nuclear sector. We want to highlight the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme, which encourages women to pursue careers in nuclear-related fields, offering scholarships for master's degrees and internship opportunities facilitated by the Agency. Along the same line, the Lise Meitner Programme offers women the possibility of enhancing their technical and leadership skills in the nuclear field through professional appointments lasting several weeks. Another successful example is the regional chapter of Women in Nuclear in Latin America and the Caribbean, which has been an essential advocate for the equal participation of women in nuclear science and technology. The launch of the Somos Potencia guide is a significant step towards integrating a gender perspective in the nuclear sector of the region. Those initiatives are essential to promoting the equal and meaningful participation of women in a field that has historically been dominated by men. By encouraging women's participation in the nuclear sector, we are not only promoting equality but driving innovation and excellence.

The International Atomic Energy Agency is an ally of Costa Rica and the international community in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and Costa Rica is committed to continue working closely to achieve our shared objectives.

**Mr. Kadiri** (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): The Kingdom of Morocco welcomes the presentation of the sixty-seventh annual report (see A/78/304) of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) by its Director General, Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi, and his exhaustive and detailed presentation on the Agency's most recent activities and its laudable efforts this year. We welcome Mr. Grossi's reappointment to the position of Director General of the Agency until 2 December 2027 and assure him of our full support and constructive commitment to the conduct of the Agency's various activities during his second term. My country reiterates its full and consistent support for the indispensable role of the Agency in providing assistance and promoting development and the practical use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, with the aim of ensuring the transfer of technology to developing countries and preserving nuclear safety, verification and security.

Morocco also thanks the penholder Argentina for its presentation of draft resolution A/78/L.7, on the report of the IAEA. The Assembly's adoption of the

draft resolution, following today's debate, will once again be a recognition of how essential and urgent it is that we all preserve the international nuclear safety and security regime, while guaranteeing the inalienable right of States to the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Morocco has put in place a clear, multidimensional and structured national strategy that is aimed at promoting the safe, sustainable and secure use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. To do that, we have undertaken a series of concrete actions that essentially aim to establish a reliable infrastructure in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear technology, thanks to our cooperation with the Agency and partner Member States. The Moroccan institutions responsible for implementing our national strategy were the first in Africa to have the distinction of being named as IAEA Collaborating Centres for the use of nuclear techniques in the areas of water resource management, environmental protection and industrial applications, as well as capacity-building in the field of nuclear security. In the region, Morocco has organized a series of trainings and workshops dedicated to sharing knowledge with more than 40 brother States in Africa, and within the framework of our triangular cooperation with the IAEA we continue to promote the peaceful use of nuclear technologies in a safe, secure and sustainable manner in the areas of nuclear medicine, medical physics, nutrition, water, agriculture, industry, the environment and energy, as well as nuclear safety, security and safeguards.

Under the enlightened leadership of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, Morocco remains firmly committed to the principles of South-South cooperation and African solidarity and to continuing to support multilateral efforts, with a view to promoting initiatives that embody our collective motto, "Atoms for peace and development". To that end, and as part of its continued support for the Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action (ZODIAC) initiative, which was adopted under the Moroccan presidency of the sixty-fourth General Conference, in partnership with the IAEA in 2024 Morocco will organize the first Conference of African Laboratories working under ZODIAC. The Conference will enable participating laboratories to coordinate their efforts by creating synergies that strengthen the resilience of African Member States, particularly in dealing with pandemics and zoonotic diseases such as the coronavirus disease, Zika and

Ebola. While emphasizing the need to strengthen synergies, dynamics and complementarity between all stakeholders in the fight against cancer, particularly in Africa, Morocco reiterates its full support for the Rays of Hope initiative, which aims to provide cancer care for all and to alleviate the lack of radiotherapy in developing countries. Morocco has contributed actively to the various debates on the importance of nuclear applications in the fight against cancer by hosting a high-level panel on the role of nuclear technology in the fight against cervical and uterine cancer in Africa.

The Kingdom of Morocco reiterates its commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), a cornerstone of disarmament and non-proliferation, and reaffirms the importance of preserving the subtle balance between the three pillars of the Treaty — nuclear non-proliferation, disarmament and the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. We are fully committed to contributing to the realization of the IAEA vision of atoms for peace and development and the peaceful use of nuclear power, including through international cooperation under the umbrella of the IAEA, with a view to better expanding access to nuclear energy and enabling the transfer of technology and knowledge for peaceful purposes.

In conclusion, my country firmly believes that the IAEA, with its technical expertise and safeguard mechanisms, will continue to work tirelessly for the promotion of international peace and security in the nuclear field. To that end, we are all called on to demonstrate commitment to, confidence in and support for the work of the Agency and the good offices of its Director General.

**Ms. Rodríguez Mancía** (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to thank Ambassador Rafael Mariano Grossi for presenting the annual report for 2022 (see A/78/304) of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and to congratulate him on his reappointment as Director General of the Agency for the period from 2023 to 2027. I also thank the delegation of Argentina, in its capacity as Chair of the Board of Governors, for presenting draft resolution A/78/L.7 on the report, of which Guatemala, as in previous years, is honoured to be a sponsor.

My country acknowledges the sovereign right to exploit and use nuclear energy for exclusively peaceful purposes, as established in article IV of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). However, in the world in which we now find ourselves,



one where approximately 13,000 nuclear warheads exist, we are confronted by a number of scenarios that have considerably increased the risk of an imminent nuclear disaster, making it all the more essential that countries reaffirm their commitment to working for full and complete disarmament as the only guarantee for achieving international peace, security and stability. We commend the IAEA for its work and for its ongoing presence at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear plant and other nuclear sites in Ukraine with the aim of preventing a disaster of incalculable proportions. And collective efforts are vital if we are to continue promoting the exclusively peaceful uses of science and technology and protecting future generations from annihilation by nuclear weapons.

Guatemala recognizes the benefits that nuclear technologies bring to the world and that they are key to people's development and welfare when used for peaceful purposes. Nonetheless, we must remember that they pose a serious threat to human beings, especially when used as a deterrent — that is, as a weapon of mass destruction instead of a tool for developing our societies. We must therefore always continue to advocate for their proper use. My delegation is aware that nuclear energy and technology must be used responsibly, putting them at the service of the advancement of our peoples, which is a matter of vital interest to all States. Nuclear security should not obstruct, limit or hinder the inalienable right to access nuclear technology for peaceful uses, a right that is especially important for developing countries.

To that end, Guatemala would like to underscore the importance of reciprocal cooperation between the IAEA and developing countries, as well as in regional projects, in which both sides are enriched by the mutual contribution and receipt of technical know-how, experience and resources that have a positive and direct impact on their populations. In that regard we can see the importance of the Agency as an independent, technical, professional body that meets its obligations in an impartial manner, particularly in applying and verifying its safeguards, which are a key pillar of the non-proliferation regime. For example, Guatemala reaffirms its support and would like to continue working with the Agency in the context of the COMPASS initiative for the application of the nuclear safeguards regime, through which our country has made considerable progress in strengthening its control and accountability system for nuclear material, and that is why today we can talk about the advantages of nuclear energy. Through that initiative, the IAEA has

been able to help States build the necessary safeguards capacities and provide valuable resources to their populations in areas such as health, agriculture, food, environmental protection and even water conservation. Our experts in Guatemala have received specialized training, in person and online, on expert guidance in nuclear material control and accountability, specifically regarding hardware and software for safeguards and detection teams. That support has been extremely important in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of our application of the safeguards regime, in line with the requirements outlined in our Safeguards Agreement and its respective Protocols.

I want to emphasize that in Guatemala nuclear technology is primarily used in radiation in the medical field and is directly linked to the provision of key health services for the people of Guatemala, ensuring that they receive the appropriate services safely, which is one of my country's priorities. In that regard, we would like to highlight other IAEA-led initiatives, such as the Agency's important work in the area of peaceful uses of nuclear energy through applications such as Rays of Hope; the Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action, which is a comprehensive project for combating zoonotic diseases; and the Nuclear Technology for Controlling Plastic Pollution and Atoms4Food initiatives, the last of which demonstrates the competitive solutions that nuclear energy can provide in the fight against hunger and malnutrition, creating opportunities for the Agency to transfer best practices and knowledge to Member States to solve the complex challenges faced by societies today. My delegation therefore reiterates that it is essential for countries to continue working with the Agency to ensure that nuclear energy is used to expand and improve health coverage and the production and distribution of food, as well as to prevent and reduce the negative impacts of climate change as effectively as possible and to give greater attention to natural disasters, among other things, all of which are essential to genuine and sustainable development.

Guatemala reaffirms its commitment to respecting and observing the norms on disarmament, including those outlined in the NPT, and recognizes the important role of the IAEA in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and arms technology through its safeguards system. Guatemala would like to take this opportunity to encourage all countries that have not yet done so to sign or ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Lastly, we reiterate our support for and commitment to Ambassador Grossi and to the work of the IAEA, so that we can continue working constructively for a world in which the word “nuclear” does not evoke fear or mistrust but is rather synonymous with uses for peaceful purposes that benefit our peoples.

**Mrs. Buenrostro Massieu** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico thanks Director General Rafael Grossi for presenting the report for 2022 (see A/78/304) of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). In addition to the usual work of the Agency, Mexico would particularly like to acknowledge the Director General's own work in Ukraine, Iran and Fukushima. We also recognize the strong professional team at the International Atomic Energy Agency, which has taken the gender perspective on board and has been adding an increasing number of women to its ranks.

The international community is facing challenges today that might once have seemed unlikely. The current situation in Ukraine, specifically at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, requires an IAEA that is adaptable and pragmatic. Mexico therefore expresses its support for the seven pillars that the Agency has defined for ensuring nuclear safety and security in an armed conflict, covering the physical integrity of nuclear facilities, the functionality of safety and security systems, staff working conditions, supply chains, communication channels, radiation monitoring and emergency response measures and the crucial element of ensuring a secure off-site power supply from the grid.

Independently of the situation in Ukraine, Mexico believes that nuclear safety is a priority that must be updated to reflect new situations and technological advances. We applaud the Agency's work on safety standards and nuclear security guidelines, as well as its commitment to supporting the strengthening of national nuclear legal and governmental structures. We commend it for its efforts to maintain and strengthen nuclear, radiological, transportation and waste security, as well as emergency preparedness and response capabilities, with the highest standards of nuclear security for human health and the environment.

As the report clearly reflects, nuclear applications and the peaceful uses of the atom have enhanced the capacity of States to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the promotion of technologies related to health, nutrition, agriculture,

water resource management, the environment, energy and industry. In terms of technical cooperation, we consider the implementation of the Nuclear Technology for Controlling Plastic Pollution initiative to combat plastic pollution in the marine environment and the Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action initiative for the detection and prevention of zoonotic diseases to be extremely important. The Rays of Hope programme has also especially benefited Mexico in strengthening our radiation safety infrastructure and through the donation of linear accelerators for oncological treatment. And thanks to successful collaboration for more than a decade between our Secretariat for Agriculture and Rural Development, the Agency and the Food and Agriculture Organization, a Mexican facility dedicated to the eradication of the Mediterranean fruit fly through the sterile-insect technique has become a centre of excellence. The efforts have had results for Mexican export agriculture and for the protection of human health by combating the chikungunya, dengue and Zika viruses.

We hope that the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme will continue to be a source of ongoing and effective support for States, and we urge members to continue to support it politically and financially so that it can operate sustainably. Mexico will continue to strongly support the Agency's mandate and work, as well as its key responsibility for verification under safeguards agreements, which is essential in the current uncertain international context. We emphasize that safeguards are international obligations to which States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons are committed, and that there can be no room for politicization where they are concerned. We continue to trust in the IAEA in its vital role as guarantor of the Treaty's technical instrumentation.

I would like to conclude by emphasizing that our efforts to ensure that nuclear energy is reserved for peaceful uses make sense only in the light of our understanding of the potentially catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. That is therefore the basis of our work, and we must not lose sight of it.

**Mr. Akram** (Pakistan): We thank Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi for his presentation of the annual report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for 2022 (see A/78/304). We acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of the Agency and of Mr. Grossi in advancing the use of peaceful nuclear energy for

sustainable development and resilient economies. The report provides a comprehensive overview of the significant activities of the Agency, including the development and transfer of nuclear technologies for peaceful applications, the enhancement of nuclear safety and security and the strengthening of nuclear verification and non-proliferation efforts on a global scale.

Despite the continued challenges posed by the coronavirus disease pandemic in 2022, the IAEA maintained its commitment to fulfilling its mandate. We particularly commend the Agency's swift response to requests by Member States for assistance in overcoming the consequences of regional and global medical emergencies, natural disasters and industrial accidents.

Pakistan firmly supports the Agency's continuing assistance to Member States in their efforts to address various development challenges through the safe, secure and sustainable utilization of nuclear science and technology. That is a true reflection of the Agency's motto "Atoms for peace and development". Pakistan has been a significant beneficiary of the Agency's support and has effectively employed nuclear science and technology in various sectors, including health care, agriculture, power generation, industry and environmental protection. Mr. Grossi's visit to Pakistan earlier this year further bolstered the ongoing collaboration between Pakistan and the Agency, which has been mutually beneficial and enduring. The application of nuclear technology in the health-care sector remains a high priority for Pakistan. A total of 19 cancer hospitals operated by the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission provide vital care to more than 80 per cent of our cancer patients. During Director General Grossi's visit, he inaugurated the first CyberKnife facility at the Nuclear Medicine, Oncology and Radiotherapy Institute in Islamabad. We take pride in the Institute's designation as an anchor centre under the Agency's Rays of Hope initiative for cancer care for all.

Pakistan has been a leading partner in the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme, and we have aligned our Technical Cooperation Programme with the Agency's Medium-Term Strategy 2024–2029 to achieve substantial results. We stand ready to share our experiences in designing and implementing comprehensive technical cooperation projects with fellow members of the global South. The practical arrangement signed between Pakistan and the Agency's Department of Technical Cooperation is a manifestation of that commitment.

The devastating impacts of climate change have amplified the vulnerabilities of several countries and peoples worldwide. The catastrophic floods in Pakistan last year underscore the urgent need for global action to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions. One third of Pakistan was submerged, affecting 33 million people and causing losses and damage amounting to a tenth of Pakistan's gross domestic product. Such global challenges demand global solutions and close and unrestricted cooperation among Member States.

We firmly believe that nuclear power has a vital role in enabling us to mitigate and adapt to climate change and transition to a low-carbon energy future. Pakistan shares the view that nuclear power is an affordable, reliable and environmentally friendly energy source. We have extensive experience in operating a safe, secure and fully safeguarded nuclear power programme. We currently operate six nuclear power plants with a combined capacity of 3,530 megawatts, and we are aiming to increase the share of nuclear power in our national energy mix. In that regard, we have begun the construction of another nuclear power plant, Chashma unit 5, with a capacity of 1,200 megawatts. We emphasize that international cooperation and dialogue are of central importance in fostering an enabling environment to unlock the full potential of nuclear power and that the removal of barriers in order to ensure equitable and non-discriminatory access to civil nuclear cooperation is of fundamental importance. We share the view that all States should fully comply with their respective safeguards obligations. At the same time, the Agency's safeguards should not be used to serve partisan political objectives. Its verification regime will remain credible only if it is applied on a non-discriminatory basis as stipulated in the Agency's Statute.

Pakistan places the highest priority on nuclear safety and security as a national responsibility. We are party to several leading international instruments related to nuclear safety and security and have established a robust and rigorously enforced nuclear safety and security framework that complies with the highest global standards. The Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority is an independent national regulator, responsible for ensuring compliance with applicable standards in nuclear installations and radiation facilities throughout the country. Pakistan's National Institute of Safety and Security has become an IAEA Collaborating Centre for nuclear security

education, training and technical support, highlighting our expertise in that crucial domain, and our Centre of Excellence for Nuclear Security has evolved into a regional and international hub for high-quality nuclear security training. Pakistan also supports the Agency's Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme, which aims to enhance women's participation in nuclear science and technology. Several of its fellows are currently pursuing degree programmes at the Pakistan Institute of Engineering and Applied Sciences, which is also an IAEA Collaborating Centre.

In the light of recent developments, we propose convening a special session of the General Assembly to establish a new consensus on disarmament and non-proliferation that better addresses current and emerging realities and offers equal security for all States, large and small. That consensus should eliminate the discrimination and double standards inherent in the existing non-proliferation arrangements and establish a framework for promoting peaceful nuclear energy under appropriate international safeguards, in line with States' international obligations and on a non-discriminatory basis.

Pakistan remains committed to further enhancing its mutually beneficial cooperation with the IAEA. We will continue to support the Agency's role in the promotion of peaceful nuclear technology in accordance with its mandate, as outlined in its Statute.

**Mr. Galstyan** (Armenia): We thank Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi for his preparation and presentation of the annual report for 2022 (see A/78/304) of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and take this opportunity to congratulate him on his reappointment.

This year marks the thirtieth anniversary of Armenia's membership in the International Atomic Energy Agency. During that time Armenia has benefited from the Agency's valuable expertise, technical assistance and cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and has supported and facilitated the Agency's activities in promoting an effective safeguards regime, high standards of nuclear safety and security and access to nuclear technology and applications.

In its capacity as a newly elected member of the IAEA Board of Governors, Armenia would like to assure everyone of its full support for the Agency's mission in all areas of its mandate. We welcome the Agency's continued efforts to implement its programmed

activities in a balanced manner, with a focus on developing and transferring nuclear technologies for peaceful applications, enhancing nuclear safety and security and strengthening nuclear verification and non-proliferation efforts worldwide. The Agency's safeguards and verification pillar is at the core of the global nuclear non-proliferation agenda. It provides the international community with assurances that nuclear technologies are being applied exclusively for peaceful purposes. The Agency's expertise and its peer review and advisory missions, technical assistance and capacity-building activities contribute to maintaining and strengthening Member States' nuclear safety architecture. More than 40 international peer review missions hosted by Armenia have been instrumental in supporting our realization of our national plans for the safe, long-term operation of our nuclear power plant in line with international standards.

Armenia greatly values the IAEA's central role in strengthening the nuclear security framework globally and providing continuing assistance to States in establishing and maintaining effective and sustainable nuclear security regimes. We emphasize the importance of the universalization and effective implementation of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its Amendment. Ensuring the security in all circumstances of nuclear facilities and other associated objects dedicated to peaceful purposes is vital, and in that regard we strongly support the seven indispensable pillars for nuclear safety and security and the five principles introduced by the Director General.

The Agency has shown great resolve and ability in leveraging its experience and expertise in order to contribute to international efforts to deal with major global challenges through timely and impactful initiatives such as Rays of Hope, the Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action, Nuclear Technology for Controlling Plastic Pollution and Atoms4Food. We support the Atoms4NetZero initiative and welcomed the successful conclusion of the second International Conference on Climate Change and the Role of Nuclear Power 2023.

As in previous years, Armenia is pleased to be a sponsor of draft resolution A/78/L.7, submitted by the delegation of Argentina on the report of the IAEA, which reaffirms the indispensable role of the Agency with regard to nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear technology, as well as nuclear safety, security and safeguards.



**Ms. Dhanutirto** (Indonesia): I thank the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for presenting the Agency's annual report (see A/78/304). I also congratulate him on his reappointment to a second term of office, signifying the trust and confidence that States have in the Agency's role in enhancing global efforts to ensure nuclear safety and security, particularly in an increasingly volatile global security context where threats and nuclear rhetoric are so easily uttered. The irresponsible statement threatening the use of nuclear weapons against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip is simply unacceptable. Such provocative language exacerbates conflict and raises doubts about the commitment to nuclear disarmament. That is exactly why all countries, including Israel, must renounce their possession of nuclear weapons, promptly place all their nuclear facilities under IAEA full-scope safeguards, in accordance with Security Council resolution 487 (1981), and conduct their nuclear-related activities in conformity with the non-proliferation regime. Nuclear war will only bring devastation to humankind. There can be no winners. The total elimination of nuclear weapons is therefore the only way forward.

As a member of the Board of Governors for the 2023–2024 term, Indonesia is committed to supporting the IAEA in achieving its mandate. In that regard, I would like to highlight two points. The first is about increasing the benefits of nuclear energy as a catalyst for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The role of nuclear energy in achieving sustainable development must be strengthened. The IAEA's annual report has underscored the broad range of applications of nuclear technology for our peoples' welfare. Around 60 per cent of technical cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region is channelled to sectors to support food security, through safe and effective pest control and crop improvement, and health care, through diagnostic tools and treatments for cancer. We must ensure sufficient, assured and predictable funding if we are to promote such technical cooperation. As a member of the IAEA Board of Governors, Indonesia will prioritize increasing access to such benefits, particularly in developing countries.

The second point is about strengthening international cooperation. Indonesia is actively engaged in the IAEA's flagship programmes, including the Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action, Nuclear Technology for Controlling Plastic Pollution (NUTEC) and Rays of Hope initiatives, through which we are industrializing nuclear technology. Indonesia is pleased to be one of

four pilot countries in Asia to be part of the NUTEC Plastics initiative, developing irradiation technology for use in plastics recycling. Such programmes underscore the need for strict safety measures and demonstrate a commitment to innovation and the well-being of our populations. National stakeholder meetings in Indonesia and Malaysia have shown our commitment to an open, transparent and inclusive dialogue on nuclear safety and security in nuclear applications. Indonesia also welcomed the signing of a letter of intent in March by our Ministry of Health and the IAEA on the Rays of Hope initiative, reflecting our shared commitment to advancing the positive impact of nuclear technology on global health and welfare. Through such cooperation we can utilize nuclear technology to protect the environment and public health.

Finally, peaceful uses of nuclear technology are paramount in today's world. It is our shared responsibility to ensure that such applications are conducted safely and transparently. In that regard, it is important that we continue to support the IAEA's role in verifying the peaceful nature of nuclear programmes and ensuring safeguards to prevent proliferation. We must promote the IAEA's role in the implementation of safeguards agreements, including on the issue of nuclear naval propulsion. The IAEA should work in full adherence to its safeguards statutory mandate to find legal, procedural and technical answers when addressing that issue and to maintain its high standards of safeguards verification and monitoring mechanisms, measures that should be carried out in a transparent, inclusive and accountable manner.

To conclude, let us work together to achieve our common goals in order to promote the benefits of nuclear technology and secure a peaceful and prosperous future for all humankind.

**Mr. Song Kim** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea deeply regrets that draft resolution A/78/L.7, entitled "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency", which was submitted to the Assembly today, contains inappropriate references to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's self-defensive nuclear activities. My delegation would like to clarify its position on the matter.

At the ninth session of the fourteenth Supreme People's Assembly, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea outlined its policy on building nuclear forces in its Constitution, with the aim of greatly strengthening

its national defence capabilities, including its nuclear forces, and thereby firmly consolidating the institutional and legal foundations for ensuring its national security and the defence of its national interests. As a sovereign State, it is our indisputable autonomous right to enhance the role of nuclear power in our national security and to consolidate its legal and institutional status in ensuring that it can compete with the United States and its followers, which have established a policy and a system in which they use nuclear weapons against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Having failed to recognize that reality, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) continues to submit annual reports to the General Assembly speculating about and conspiring to find fault with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's measures for strengthening its nuclear forces. That constitutes a flagrant infringement on the sovereignty of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and explicit interference in its internal affairs, which we will never tolerate and which we strongly condemn and reject. We would like to make it clear that we will not change or concede our current status as a nuclear-weapon State, and we will continue to further strengthen our nuclear forces as long as the tyrannical nuclear weapons of the United States remain in place and aggressive imperialist forces continue to exist.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is not a member of the IAEA, and more than 30 years have passed since the IAEA lost the authority and competence to talk about our nuclear issue. In the early 1990s, in its servile pursuit of the United States' hostile policy, the IAEA helped fabricate unjust resolutions by raising suspicions about our nuclear facilities designed for peaceful purposes. That compelled the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to take the decision to withdraw from the IAEA. Devoid of the impartiality and objectivity required of an international organization, the IAEA is being abused by the United States and the West as a political tool, and our assessment of that situation remains unchanged today, after more than 30 years. The IAEA should dedicate itself to addressing imminent issues of international concern, such as the nuclear proliferation among Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States, rather than wasting time and resources on ensuring that the United Nations adopts its futile anti-Democratic People's Republic of Korea resolutions year after year. As long as the IAEA repeats its biased and double-dealing practices by

taking sides with the United States in its hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, we will have no dealings with it.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to this opportunity to draw attention to the Director General's incitement of public opinion against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea through his persistent spreading of such unfounded rumours as that of an imminent seventh nuclear test in the international arena.

**Mr. Flores** (Honduras) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank Mr. Grossi for his presentation this morning.

Honduras is a country that is committed to disarmament and non-proliferation and participates in this space in recognition both of the importance of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) at the international level and its commendable work in the dissemination and transfer of nuclear applications and technology for peaceful use, with a significant positive impact on the sustainable development of our planet, as documented in today's report (see A/78/304). My country recognizes the Agency's valuable work and great contribution to maintaining peace, security and balance in the peaceful use of nuclear applications. Its work has a direct impact on the lives of thousands of people and contributes to at least nine of the 17 goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We are fully convinced of the benefits that come with the use of this technology in the pursuit of peace and development, since it is an alternative that helps to address the crises facing humankind in such areas as health, energy, agriculture, environment and climate change, among others.

On behalf of Honduras, I would like to thank the Agency for its continued support to our country through the Technical Cooperation Programme, which has enabled us to specialize and improve our human resource capacities in various applications of nuclear technology. My country is currently carrying out 12 national projects in such priority areas as health, education, environment, food security, radiation safety and energy, and we are also part of 12 regional projects. They all complement the goals of our national development programme while generating synergies with various academic and research entities on the ground. For that reason, we are pleased that an IAEA exploratory mission will be visiting our country at the end of this month within the framework of the

Nuclear Technology for Controlling Plastic Pollution (NUTEC) initiative, with a view to addressing the management of solid waste in the Honduran Caribbean. That support will help us find solutions to that problem that will enable us to improve the quality of life of the population of our seacoast and its biodiversity. Bearing that in mind, my delegation would like to underline the following points today.

First, we have taken note of the IAEA report for 2022 and its main 2023 activities. We hope the international community will comply its obligations with respect to the Agency with a view to ensuring peace and prosperity in the world.

Secondly, Honduras will continue to implement nuclear technology through the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme and in strict compliance with the Agency's international standards.

Thirdly, the IAEA is an important partner for our country, and we want to assure Director General Grossi that the Agency can count on Honduras in the advancement of its mandate to ensure peace and promote the use of nuclear technologies for peaceful purposes in conditions of safety and security, as outlined in article II of its Statute.

Fourthly, in the light of this year's report, we urge everyone to support the IAEA and its Director General. The balance in its activities must be maintained so that we can make effective progress in promoting the use of energy and nuclear technology for development. We also urge everyone support the effective implementation of the IAEA initiatives Rays of Hope, NUTEC Plastics, Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action and Atoms4Food.

Fifthly, in terms of disarmament, Honduras, as a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, recognizes the importance of cooperation in the area of nuclear energy. We reiterate that we have to consider the three pillars of the Treaty as complementary and indivisible. And given the treaties' undeniable complementarity, my country, as a State party to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, urges countries that have not yet done so to sign and ratify it with the urgency that we need to strengthen the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

In conclusion, Honduras once again expresses its gratitude for the support of the IAEA, and we welcome the progress towards greater representation and gender equality in its organization.

**Mrs. González López** (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to begin by expressing El Salvador's thanks for today's plenary meeting on the presentation of the annual report (see A/78/304) of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). My country is a co-sponsor of draft resolution A/78/L.7, presented by Argentina in its capacity as Chair of the IAEA Board of Governors, which reflects the commitment of El Salvador's Government to the crucial work being done by the Agency in the global context of disarmament, non-proliferation and promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

We very much appreciate the IAEA's report for 2022 and acknowledge the leadership of Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi, whom we congratulate on his reappointment. At a time when the Agency is facing considerable challenges to the safety and security of nuclear power plants worldwide, El Salvador applauds its various activities, which range from the fight against cancer and zoonotic diseases to the promotion of energy security. My country recognizes the essential role that the IAEA plays in the implementation of the system of safeguards for the peaceful use of nuclear energy, which contributes significantly to our commitments to sustainable development. In that regard, we welcome discussions on the potential of nuclear energy for addressing the growing demand for energy and mitigating climate change.

In accordance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), we reaffirm that nuclear energy should be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. For that reason, El Salvador has a Safeguards Agreement, an Additional Protocol and a small-quantities protocol. In that context, and with the purpose of complying with the NPT's provisions on the peaceful use of nuclear energy, El Salvador is considering incorporating nuclear power into its energy matrix. That is why we have expressed interest in the Agency's projects related to capacity-building around small modular reactors and microreactors, as well as applications of nuclear energy for mitigating climate change.

El Salvador welcomes its close cooperation with the organization through the Technical Cooperation Fund, and we are pleased to be able to highlight our cooperation for 2022 in the following areas. The first is the Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy, in coordination with the World Health Organization and the IAEA, through which support is provided to Member

States to assess their cancer-control capabilities and to provide expert advice for the development of national cancer-control programmes. The second is the INT 2021 Intra-Regional Technical Assistance Project, which supports Member States that are considering or planning to introduce or expand nuclear energy programmes, in order to develop the sustainable national infrastructure necessary for safe, secure and peaceful programmes. The third is the Global Water Analysis Laboratory Network, launched at the United Nations Water Conference earlier this year, which enables countries to generate their own chemical, biological and isotopic water data. We recognize the legislative assistance that the IAEA provides to its members to raise awareness, advise and provide training on the development and review of national legislation, assistance that my country has greatly benefited from.

Finally, we would like to highlight the importance of the full, effective and significant participation of women in nuclear fields through such specialized scholarship and training programmes as the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme and the Lise Meitner Programme, which offer women empowerment and specialization opportunities in nuclear fields. These initiatives enrich and diversify the nuclear community, promoting an inclusive environment for the advancement of nuclear science and technology, which is why we call for their continuity and expansion. Together with Spain and Chile, El Salvador has the honour of chairing the Group of Friends for Women in Nuclear at IAEA headquarters in Vienna, reflecting our commitment to ensuring women's full participation in these important matters.

**Ms. Kavaleuskaya** (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): On behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Belarus, I would like to thank Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi for presenting the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for 2022 (see A/78/304). We fully support the Director General's work to position nuclear technology as a safe, sustainable and reliable energy source that can contribute to a gradual transition to zero emissions and will become a key component in the development of green energy.

We believe that one of the major results of the Agency's work has been universal acknowledgement of the important contributions of nuclear energy and non-energy nuclear technologies to achieving sustainable development. The flagship initiatives aimed at applying and making available nuclear technologies in areas where people are currently in greatest need

of and benefit the most from them — the Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action, Rays of Hope and Nuclear Technology for Controlling Plastic Pollution — are a recognized trademark of the Agency. Belarus has consistently advocated for strengthening the IAEA as the leading international organization promoting the transfer of nuclear technology so that the greatest number of countries in the world are able to reap the benefits of atoms for peace.

The Agency promotes nuclear safety and security and ensures the global nuclear non-proliferation safeguards system. We have been pleased to note the steady growth in demand for partnering with the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme. In Belarus, IAEA technical cooperation projects have enabled us to improve the effectiveness of our training of personnel in order to keep pace with new developments in the nuclear power industry, helping to ensure nuclear and radiation security and contributing significantly to the development of nuclear medicine and the unique work of achieving sustainable development in the areas affected by the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident. We look forward to further productive cooperation within the framework of the upcoming 2024–2025 cycle of the Programme.

Belarus is implementing its nuclear power programme in close cooperation with the IAEA and is taking the necessary measures to ensure the highest possible security levels at its power plant. Our nuclear power plant's second reactor went into commercial operation last week, and according to preliminary estimates should meet about 40 per cent of the country's domestic electricity needs, thereby significantly greening the national economy. We fully support the IAEA safeguards system and attach great importance to further strengthening and improving it. Objectivity and strict reliance on the international legal instruments and approaches agreed on by Member States are key to ensuring the sustainability of the non-proliferation system, based on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We look forward to the convening as soon as possible of a comprehensive international discussion on the new and emerging challenges to the Agency's verification activities and their relation to certain countries' intention to begin using highly enriched nuclear materials in non-prohibited military activities.

In conclusion, we reaffirm our support for the IAEA's activities and join the consensus on draft resolution A/78/L.7.



**Mrs. Zalabata Torres** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Colombia thanks Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for the presentation of the Agency's annual report for 2022 (see A/78/304), and is pleased with his reappointment for a second term. We also thank Argentina for introducing draft resolution A/78/L.7, which we support and have co-sponsored.

We want to emphasize the importance of the Agency's work across its three pillars. Its role in promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the transfer of knowledge and nuclear technologies that can be used in areas related to development is vital. It is therefore crucial to strengthen the technical assistance and cooperation that this pillar creates, expand the scope of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and improve access to their benefits, especially in developing countries, while taking into account their needs and priorities.

The Agency's work in nuclear safety and security in establishing the standards and the culture of safety that should guide nuclear activities and programmes is also essential. While underscoring the importance of ensuring the safety and security of nuclear facilities and States' international responsibility to maintain them, we also emphasize and appreciate the efforts and work of the IAEA, under the Director General's leadership, in fulfilling its mandate in that regard at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, in what is an unprecedented situation. We reiterate the importance of the full implementation of the seven pillars of nuclear safety at Zaporizhzhya.

We also stress the Agency's primary work in verifying the exclusively peaceful nature of nuclear programmes through the implementation of its safeguards, and we recognize the IAEA as the sole competent authority in the area. We emphasize its impartial and transparent work and advocate for strengthening and universalizing the nuclear safeguards and verification system. The IAEA is an important component of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime and thereby contributes to the maintenance of international peace and security. Colombia will continue to work, both within the framework of the IAEA and the review process of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons during its current cycle, to ensure full compliance with the pillars of the Treaty and the Agency's Statute.

We would like to make special mention of the importance and impact of the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme. Colombia has completed the design phase of the projects for the Programme's 2024–2025 cycle, focused on the establishment of a new research reactor for the production of radioisotopes to be used in the medical and scientific fields, which will benefit our health system and agriculture. And under the Agency's guidance, we are making progress in drafting nuclear legislation. We appreciate the Agency's support in advancing those projects. We also reiterate our thanks for the Agency's assistance during the difficult years of the coronavirus disease pandemic. We would like to highlight the Nuclear Technology for Controlling Plastic Pollution (NUTEC Plastics), the Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action and the cancer-fighting Rays of Hope initiatives, all of them launched under the Director General's leadership. Colombia is committed to safeguarding its vast biodiversity and protecting its oceans in the face of the great challenges posed by the climate crisis, and we see the NUTEC Plastics initiative as an opportunity to mitigate marine pollution and contribute to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

Colombia completed its term as a member of the Board of Governors this year, during which it worked to strengthen the Technical Cooperation Programme and the safeguards regime. It served as Vice-Chair of the Board and chaired the informal open-ended working group on the preparation of the Medium-Term Strategy 2024–2029. We reiterate our appreciation to the delegations of member States for their constructive work. We also reiterate our commitment to the full implementation of the Agency's mandate.

Lastly, we value and will continue to support initiatives to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the nuclear sector. We want to highlight the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme and the Lise Meitner Programme. Thanks to them, Colombia now has an active Women in Nuclear chapter, whose aim is to increase women's visibility in nuclear science and technology and strengthen their work in that area.

**Mr. Montalvo Sosa** (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Rafael Mariano Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for presenting the Agency's annual report (see A/78/304) to the General Assembly, and I congratulate him on his reappointment to the position until December 2027. I would also like to thank the Republic of Argentina for submitting this year's draft resolution (A/78/L.7) and

to congratulate it on its election as Chair of the IAEA Board of Governors, of which Ecuador is a member for the period from 2023 to 2025. Ecuador is once again sponsoring the draft resolution in recognition of the International Atomic Energy Agency's efforts in its ongoing quest to ensure that nuclear energy is used exclusively for peaceful purposes.

My country supports the IAEA's safeguards and verification system and promotes objectives and efforts aimed at non-proliferation and disarmament, including the reduction of nuclear arsenals and the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones. Ecuador stresses the importance of achieving the universal application of the Agency's safeguards without exception, including in every region and especially in countries that are outside the regime.

Ecuador maintains its firm position in support of the full implementation of the three pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and we support the right of all States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. I would like to highlight the contribution of the IAEA in the areas of science, technology and nuclear applications as part of global efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

As we have said on multiple occasions, we underscore the importance of the work of the IAEA and its efforts to ensure nuclear safety and security at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear plant in Ukraine so as to prevent a nuclear accident. The seven pillars derived from IAEA safety standards and nuclear safety guidance have enabled it to make an independent and impartial assessment of the nuclear safety situation in Ukraine in the context of the aggression against Ukraine. The IAEA should therefore receive full support for its implementation efforts.

Ecuador also stresses the essential role played by the Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme and acknowledges the actions and measures that the IAEA has taken to create a more efficient programme that responds to the priorities and needs of its member States. Cooperation with the Agency is of particular importance for my country because of the contribution it makes to assisting national efforts in the area of economic and social development. In that regard, I would like to acknowledge the technical assistance provided in 2022 to 31 States in Latin America and the Caribbean, including my own country, Ecuador, in

the areas of human health, radiation safety, food and agriculture, water and the environment. I commend the development of the Nuclear Technology for Controlling Plastic Pollution and thank the IAEA for its support in strengthening human resources in the areas of hydrology and marine environment in order to establish a microplastics laboratory in the Galapagos Islands and for the provision of incidentals and materials for analysis at the laboratory.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize my country's full and unequivocal support for the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency, especially in its aim to make nuclear energy ever more safe, efficient and beneficial for all humankind.

**Mr. Marzooq** (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): The delegation of Iraq appreciates the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) (see A/78/304). We thank Director General Rafael Grossi, as well as the secretariat, for their work in drafting the report. Iraq reaffirms its commitment to the Agency's mission in accordance with its Statute, and to its efforts to improve the balance among the pillars of its mandate — strengthening nuclear security and safety, safeguards and verification and technical cooperation.

My country's Government has continued its beneficial and constructive cooperation with the IAEA in building national capacities and implementing nuclear applications for peaceful purposes through the Agency's technical cooperation. The Technical Cooperation Programme continues to help to achieve increased progress in facilitating the transfer of nuclear technology to realize sustainable socioeconomic advances in developing countries. In that context, Iraq would like to emphasize prioritizing the Agency's activities in the area of technical cooperation for Iraq and other developing countries that benefit from those programmes for building capacity and investing in nuclear applications in the areas of health, agriculture, food, water resources, isotopes and others, thereby helping to promote peace, health care, prosperity and sustainable development all over the world.

Iraq is working to expand its peaceful use of nuclear energy in the health-care, water desalination, agriculture and energy fields, and we count on the Agency's technical assistance through regional projects. We commend the Director General's initiative Rays of Hope, aimed at assisting Member States, especially developing States, in improving their capacities in radiation medicine and dealing with the problems of insufficient materials

and expertise in that area. I would also like to mention the Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action (ZODIAC) initiative, aimed at diagnosing and strengthening global preparedness to control diseases caused by animals. We welcome the work under way to provide materials to Member States' national laboratories and the appointment of national coordinators for the provision of the necessary diagnostic materials. Iraq looks forward to furthering its work with the Agency in that regard.

Our national authorities are working in cooperation with the IAEA's Department of Technical Cooperation to bolster our national capacities and address infectious and chronic diseases, particularly cancers. Iraq welcomed the Agency's role in launching an impACT Reviews project and a comprehensive assessment of the fight against cancer in Iraq, in cooperation with the World Health Organization and the International Agency for Research on Cancer. The impACT Reviews report issued in late 2022 has helped Iraq prepare and implement its national cancer-control programme. Furthermore, in cooperation with the Agency, the Government of Iraq is working to establish the Al-Amal Hospital in Baghdad and the Warith International Cancer Institute in Karbala in the near future as two regional centres where radiotherapy and radiation oncology will be provided under the umbrella of the IAEA.

Iraq understands the importance of using nuclear energy in a secure and safe manner to attain high levels of nuclear safety worldwide by promoting national measures and international cooperation within the Agency's mandate. In that context, in 2023 the Government of Iraq enacted laws on Iraq's accession to the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, and I am pleased to announce from this rostrum that Iraq will be depositing the instruments for its accession to those two conventions in the coming days. With regard to radioactive waste management, our national monitoring and enforcement authorities have put in place an integrated action plan to eliminate radioactive pollution in Iraq and to establish national strategies for the Government's management of radioactive waste — the first being a national radioactive waste management strategy and the second a national strategy for the management of radioactive material waste from natural sources. The Government of Iraq is working to safely dispose of radioactive waste arising from a number of activities, whether at nuclear facilities, medical centres or oil installations.

We have taken significant steps to eliminate radioactive pollution in various regions of Iraq, with Iraqi teams completing operations to eliminate such pollution in several governorates in southern Iraq thanks to expertise acquired through our participation in the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme. In that context, Iraq urgently needs to build permanent radioactive waste disposal facilities in a number of regions, and we commend the roles of the IAEA and the European Union in providing support and assistance in that area. A contract was concluded with the European Union to study the choice of site and the implementation and design of the plans for building sustainable radioactive waste disposal facilities. We look forward to continuing to receive assistance in the construction of those facilities, which will play a major role in protecting the environment and humans from the harmful effects of radioactive waste.

Our national authorities have worked in direct coordination and specialized cooperation with the IAEA to resolve the technical issue of liquidating up to 80 per cent of the nuclear installations at the Al-Tuwaitha nuclear site. The remaining task, and our biggest challenge, is managing the central part of the reactor, and we hope for continued cooperation with the Agency and continued assistance in its liquidation.

My delegation underlines its firm support for the IAEA and its Director General in enhancing our efforts to implement the safeguards regime, and we appreciate the Agency's activities in the monitoring and verification fields.

Iraq reiterates its full commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. We once again call for the full implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which is the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation regime and the basis of nuclear disarmament, with a view to further developing the applications of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

The regional and international efforts to make the Middle East a zone free from nuclear weapons continue to be stymied owing to the Zionist entity's refusal to permit any endeavours in that regard. Iraq calls once again on all the relevant parties to continue working to achieve concrete results that can truly contribute to creating a region in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

In conclusion, the delegation of Iraq would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Director

General of the IAEA on earning our trust and securing a second term in office. We reaffirm our support for him and our continued cooperation as he undertakes his tasks in the upcoming period.

**Mr. Al Ashkar** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): In 1969 my country, Syria, joined the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and in 1992 we signed our Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Syria has always supported the right of all Member States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and we consider the Agency's implementation of its role and mandate in accordance with its Statute extremely important.

The Israeli aggression in September 2007 that targeted a building in the Deir ez-Zor governorate of Syria was a violation of Syria's sovereignty and a flagrant breach of international law. However, rather than being unequivocally condemned, that aggression was used to launch a campaign of lies against my country. The issue of the application of the safeguards regime in Syria, which is before the IAEA's Board of Governors, is an example of how the IAEA has been manipulated by certain States to serve their political agendas. In that regard, I would like to make the following points.

First, according to the Agency's Statute, the United States was required to notify the Agency of information it possessed before the destruction of the building in question, not eight months after Israel had destroyed it. The same goes for Israel, which did not provide the Agency with the information in its possession and committed a treacherous act of military aggression against Syria's sovereign territory.

Secondly, the fact that Israel has officially acknowledged its responsibility for the aggression means that it is required to cooperate with the Agency to reveal the nature of the contamination caused by the missiles used in its act of aggression. As long as Israel, the aggressor, refuses to cooperate with the Agency in that regard, any discussion of the subject is pointless.

Thirdly, most of the Agency's conclusions regarding the building in Deir ez-Zor were based on images and analysis provided by the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States. That raises many questions about the credibility of the information received, particularly when we recall the aggression that the United States and Britain launched against Iraq on the basis of misleading information regarding the alleged presence of weapons of mass destruction.

Fourthly, the Syrian Arab Republic has positively and constructively cooperated with the IAEA. In June 2008 we authorized a team from the Agency to visit the destroyed site in Deir ez-Zor and collect samples. And in October 2011, although we reached an action plan with the Agency that resolved all the outstanding issues, pressure from certain Member States hampered those efforts.

The United States and many European Union countries have continued to violate their obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) by protecting Israel and shielding its nuclear programme from international oversight. They have also strengthened their cooperation with Israel in its development of its military nuclear capabilities, specifically by providing it with the expertise, materials and technology it needs to manufacture and develop nuclear weapons. Israel's aggressive behaviour in the region and its preservation of its nuclear capabilities outside the framework of the NPT and its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA constitute a real danger to the non-proliferation regime in the Middle East. Furthermore, Israel's rejection of all initiatives calling for the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, and its refusal to place all its installations under IAEA safeguards, pose a grave threat to regional and international peace and security. The international community cannot remain silent in the face of that challenge to the non-proliferation regime and should act urgently to take practical deterrent measures that can lead to Israel's accession to the NPT.

The need to act in response to Israel's anomalous nuclear position is now especially critical, as the Israeli entity has dangerously escalated its aggression against the Palestinian people. The recent threat by a minister of the Israeli entity to use nuclear weapons against the Gaza Strip, which is home to more than 2 million people, has exposed the country's real extremism and blatant defiance of all the international norms against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Syria condemns such statements in the strongest terms, as they confirm what Israel has always concealed about its possession of such weapons, outside international oversight and with the support of its Western allies. All of that represents a threat to security and stability in the region and to the lives of its peoples. In that context, Syria calls on the international community and the IAEA to take all necessary measures and assume their responsibility to expose Israel's nuclear programme and place it under



the Agency's comprehensive safeguards system and its nuclear facilities and programmes under IAEA oversight. The IAEA General Conference's adoption at its fifty-third session of a resolution entitled "Israeli nuclear capabilities" clearly expressed the international community's concern about the threat to security and stability in the Middle East posed by the proliferation of nuclear weapons and sent a clear message of grave concern about Israel's nuclear capabilities. It demanded that Israel accede to the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities under the Agency's comprehensive safeguards regime.

In conclusion, my delegation reaffirms that Syria has cooperated with the Agency in full transparency, shown the greatest possible flexibility and spared no effort to resolve outstanding issues, including agreement on an action plan to resolve them. The relevant safeguards implementation reports attest that Syria has not been late in meeting its legal obligations under the agreement or in implementing its obligations under the NPT, and that we have complied with all periodic inspection requests, despite the difficult situation we have been enduring over the past 10 years. Furthermore, the Agency's annual reports on the implementation of safeguards have attested to Syria's complete fulfilment of its own commitments. In that context, my delegation stresses that Syria will continue to cooperate with the Agency in fulfilling its objectives and ensuring that the Agency can continue to carry out its tasks with independence, professionalism and impartiality, and we emphasize the importance of preventing the Agency from being used as a tool to serve certain countries' political agendas.

**Mr. Iravani** (Islamic Republic of Iran): I appreciate the Director General's presentation of the annual report (see A/78/304) of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and I would like to emphasize the need for more proportionate and impartial reports.

Nuclear power is crucial to meeting energy needs with low-carbon impact, especially in developing countries, and transferring nuclear know-how and technology to those nations, as per the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the IAEA Statute, is vital. The safeguards regimes should support the advancement of nuclear science and technology without infringing on the rights or sovereignty of NPT States parties. Exploiting nuclear proliferation concerns in order to restrict those rights is unacceptable. It is disturbing that there are States that continue to deny developing countries access to nuclear

technology, in violation of both the IAEA and NPT obligations, with some even giving the Israeli regime generous support for its clandestine arsenals of weapons of mass destruction. Unilateral coercive measures and double standards harm the possibilities for the peaceful use of nuclear energy and for technical cooperation.

Regarding Iran's peaceful programme, it is important to note that the IAEA has continued to conduct robust and ongoing verification and monitoring activities at Iran's nuclear facilities, and we expect the Islamic Republic of Iran's continuing, deep and good-faith cooperation with the IAEA to be duly acknowledged. It should also be emphasized that Iran is entitled to exercise its rights as outlined in our Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA concerning the admission of inspectors and other related issues. We maintain a constructive relationship with the IAEA and its secretariat, with the aim of resolving any outstanding issues. However, it is crucial to underscore that with regard to Iran's peaceful nuclear programme, the facts should not be distorted or selectively presented. The United States' illegal withdrawal in 2018 from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is particularly important, a fact that certain delegations seem to intentionally overlook. As we have consistently pointed out, there must be a clear distinction between the legal obligations of Member States under their respective safeguards agreements and their voluntary commitments. The verification and monitoring of activities related to the JCPOA are voluntary and are not linked to the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement. The repeated attempts to connect them to an alleged issue are therefore entirely unfounded and unacceptable.

Another important fact is that the IAEA has fully declared and verified all of Iran's nuclear materials and activities. The Islamic Republic of Iran has a commendable record of cooperation with the IAEA, with an enormous number of safeguards inspections of its peaceful nuclear programme. The Agency and the Islamic Republic of Iran have a close working relationship in a variety of areas. As the Agency has verified and confirmed on several occasions, there is no proof of the diversion of declared nuclear materials or activities in Iran. However, the Agency's impartiality, independence and professionalism should never be jeopardized in the context of safeguards obligations or influenced by certain parties, with a view to ensuring that all States are able to enjoy their rights as enshrined in the IAEA Statute.

The Zionist regime is committing barbaric crimes in its slaughter of defenceless Palestinians, along with the other negative roles it plays in the region. It has covertly assassinated our nuclear scientists and sabotaged Iran's peaceful nuclear facilities. Those horrific acts of terrorism should be categorically condemned by the international community. That regime must be held responsible, and none of its atrocities should be treated with impunity. Along with the international condemnation of the Israeli regime for threatening to use nuclear weapons — both against Iran and recently against Gaza in just the past two months — we categorically condemn it both for its possession of weapons of mass destruction and its threats of using them. The Israeli regime has refused to accede to the NPT or conform to the IAEA's comprehensive safeguards. The Agency must deal with it through an unbiased and proportionate approach. The time to disarm the Israeli regime and bring peace and security to the region is now.

**Mr. Abdullah** (Bangladesh): I would like to begin by expressing our appreciation to the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for presenting the Agency's annual report for 2022 (see A/78/304) and providing updates on its 2023 activities. We are also happy to support draft resolution A/78/L.7, on the report of the IAEA.

Bangladesh commends the IAEA for its steadfast efforts to fulfil its crucial mandate during the reporting period, despite multiple challenges. We particularly appreciate the Agency's work in ensuring the implementation of safeguards in Europe's largest nuclear power programmes in Ukraine, including through verification activities on the ground.

We acknowledge the IAEA's outstanding contribution to international peace, security and prosperity, especially at a time when nuclear weapons are once again looming large in international politics and a dangerous pattern is emerging. We support the central role played by the Agency in the implementation of its global verification regime. We recognize the inalienable right of all States to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, including in the areas of power generation, health care, research, agriculture and in tackling the challenges of climate change. In that regard, Bangladesh acknowledges the IAEA's indispensable role as the sole competent authority in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology in accordance with its motto of "Atoms for peace and development".

In support of our development efforts in Bangladesh, we have been building our first nuclear power plant with a view to generating safe, green and economically viable electricity following the highest IAEA standards. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the IAEA for its consistent support in our successful implementation of our nuclear energy programme. We hope the Agency's peer reviews and advisory missions will ensure the successful commissioning of our nuclear power plant. We have already hosted five missions as part of the integrated work plan and anticipate more in the coming years.

We appreciate the contribution of the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme in supporting Member States in the areas of health and nutrition, food and agriculture and the environment in order to advance the Sustainable Development Goals. We commend the Agency's launch of its global cancer initiative, Rays of Hope, which is designed to save lives and relieve the disproportionate burden of cancer on many countries. We look forward to seeing the project scaled up. We are encouraged to see the launching of Nuclear Technology for Controlling Plastic Pollution, the integrated action plan aimed at collectively addressing plastics recycling and the marine monitoring of microplastics through nuclear technology. We would like to see the implementation of that project expanded among developing countries.

We are also very encouraged by the IAEA's outreach to other United Nations agencies for horizontal and inter-agency cooperation on common causes. The recent Atoms4Food interface launched between the IAEA and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for global food security is therefore symbiotic and important. We urge the Agency to expand its cooperation regarding the sterile-insect technique, aimed at containing the *Aedes* mosquitoes responsible for spreading dengue fever in Bangladesh and other tropical countries. We are also happy to see the progress of the Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action in strengthening Member States' preparedness and capabilities for the rapid detection of outbreaks of genetic pathogens and a timely response to them.

We were also pleased to see the IAEA's substantial presence at the twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 27) in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, which emphasized the significance of nuclear power, particularly through the launch of Atoms4NetZero. We hope that the Agency will continue its meaningful

contribution at COP 28 by showcasing how vital nuclear technology is both to fighting the climate crisis and addressing its consequences.

In conclusion, let me reaffirm Bangladesh's strong commitment to supporting the work of the IAEA. We look forward to further strengthening our cooperation with the Agency to leverage nuclear science and technologies for peaceful purposes, contributing to a better world.

**Mr. Alsaedi** (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country is committed to participating in the annual debate on the agenda item of the General Assembly on the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in our pursuit of capacity-building and optimizing peaceful nuclear applications that serve the peaceful interests of States and peoples rather than their engagement in arms races. We would like to emphasize our continuing close cooperation with the IAEA, since the State of Kuwait joined the Agency in 1964. Our national authorities cooperate with the IAEA's various departments to benefit from its programmes, especially in socioeconomic development.

In the context of implementing the concept of atoms for peace and development, my country would like to highlight its cooperation with all relevant parties, particularly given the current global crises that are affecting every aspect of life, especially on the humanitarian, food security and energy-related fronts. The global situation makes it incumbent on the IAEA to follow up on its member States' nuclear safety and security systems. Over the years the Agency has established its role in implementing the safeguards that ensure the sustainability of nuclear security by creating an appropriate infrastructure and conditions necessary to peacefully serve the whole world.

I would also like to note that my country received an IAEA team of experts to advise on physical protection in May. The team commended Kuwait's efforts in that regard after being informed about the security measures and practices that we employ in our facilities and activities where radioactive substances are used. The team concluded that Kuwait has spared no effort to ensure radioactive protection and its nuclear security, in addition to defining priorities for improving nuclear security in our country, which we consider vitally important, given the nuclear threats in the region. Given my country's close cooperation with the IAEA, I would like to highlight four national projects in the context of technical cooperation — first, a genetically modified crop production project; secondly, an underground

water management project; thirdly, modern techniques for the treatment of cancers and fourthly, the monitoring of marine microplastics and a study of the uses of small power-generating reactors.

The main drivers of restoration, development, growth and prosperity continue to be dependent on international peace and security. They cannot be established in an unstable environment where we see defiance of international resolutions and non-compliance with treaties and conventions, especially in relation to the development of nuclear weapons. That said, my country does not deny the right of States to produce and develop nuclear energy for peaceful uses while refraining from using it to undermine international peace and security. In that regard, my country calls on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with the relevant international treaties and Security Council resolutions.

We also call on all States in our region to uphold relevant international laws and treaties in all fields, particularly those related to nuclear security and the development of nuclear weapons, where compliance can positively contribute to peace, development and prosperity in the region. In that regard, we stress that Kuwait is committed to establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, in accordance with the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In that regard, we welcome the Libyan presidency of the fourth Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, which will convene next week, and would like to recall that my country presided over the second Conference. My country believes that such weapons cannot exist in the region if we are to maintain its security and stability. We also stress that the international community should urge the occupying Israeli entity to join the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a non-nuclear party.

Meanwhile, Israel should subject all its nuclear facilities to the IAEA comprehensive safeguards system, especially after the threat from a minister of the occupation Government that it could use nuclear weapons against civilians and innocent people in Gaza, which is unacceptable to people of any religion, logic or conscience. As a matter of fact, we are surprised that the IAEA, whose dedication we can attest to, has made no statement in that regard, despite its tireless efforts to establish the nuclear security that can lead to peace. The

occupying Power's practices regarding civilians in Gaza have resulted in the deaths of more than 10,000 innocent civilians, two thirds of them women and children. That attests to the Government's adoption of policies of systematic ethnic cleansing and collective punishment, which are contrary to all international laws and norms and unfortunately are happening undeterred under the international community's watch. That also encourages a lack of respect for the international community and undermines global trust, which is based on respect for all international laws and treaties as well as for their contracting parties.

In conclusion, international peace and security governed by conventions and treaties upheld by all States are key to achieving development, growth and prosperity, as well as to ensuring trust among the countries of the world and their genuine willingness to comply with such treaties in order to establish world security and prosperity and pave the way for cooperation. However, those goals should go hand in hand with ensuring that the contracting States respect those conventions and treaties. Kuwait has long urged in all international forums for upholding the rule of law nationally and internationally, which we have exemplified through our fulfilment of our obligations vis-à-vis the international community. History can attest to that.

**Mr. Ishikane** (Japan): Japan highly commends the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on its work and Director General Grossi on his strong leadership in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and non-proliferation.

The peaceful use of nuclear energy is becoming increasingly important as a response to global issues such as climate change, and in the context of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Japan supports and contributes to the Agency's activities with regard to the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including the Director General's significant initiatives in the areas of zoonotic diseases, marine plastic pollution and cancer care. The role of the IAEA is also critically important in addressing key problems facing the international non-proliferation regime. The IAEA safeguards are the most fundamental instrument for that regime, and Japan strongly supports the IAEA's efforts to make them more efficient and effective. I would like to take this opportunity to touch on some of the most pressing issues facing the international non-proliferation regime today.

North Korea's nuclear and missile programmes pose a serious challenge to the international non-proliferation regime and are totally unacceptable. Japan strongly urges North Korea to take concrete steps towards the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement of all its weapons of mass destruction, ballistic missiles of all ranges and related programmes. In that regard, I would like to emphasize how critical it is for all States to fully implement the relevant Security Council resolutions. I also stress that the denuclearization of North Korea requires robust verification. Japan highly commends the Agency on its continued work to enhance its ability and readiness to verify North Korea's nuclear programme.

With regard to Iran, Japan is seriously concerned about its expansion of its nuclear activities and has urged Iran to take constructive measures in that regard, including through full and unconditional cooperation under the joint statement by the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran and the IAEA.

Japan remains gravely concerned about the situation of nuclear facilities in Ukraine. Russia's military activities in and around nuclear power plants and other facilities in Ukraine must not be tolerated. Japan commends the Agency's continuing efforts to secure nuclear safety and security in Ukraine, including through the permanent presence of IAEA experts.

Lastly, the IAEA has a unique mandate to establish international standards of safety regarding effects on health and the environment in the nuclear sector. Based on scientific evidence and in a highly transparent manner, Japan will continue to provide explanations to the international community on the discharge into the sea of water treated through the Advanced Liquid Processing System.

**Mr. Tun** (Myanmar): I would like to begin by thanking Director General Rafael Grossi for presenting the annual report (see A/78/304) of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and congratulating him on his reappointment as Director General, which clearly shows the trust that Member States have placed in him.

Geopolitical tensions, cybersecurity threats and the resurgence of weapons-based threats in the international security architecture continue to intensify at an alarming rate. At the same time, countries all over the world continue to suffer from technological and development gaps, climate-change-induced natural disasters and food and energy insecurity. Against that



backdrop, it is more critical than ever for the IAEA to fulfil its mandate on developing and transferring nuclear technologies for peaceful applications, enhancing nuclear safety and security and strengthening nuclear verification and non-proliferation efforts worldwide. In that regard, Myanmar welcomes the launch of the Rays of Hope global cancer initiative, the Atoms4NetZero initiative and the Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action initiative to combat zoonotic diseases, as well as the memorandum of understanding between the Agency and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations signed last year. At the same time, we commend the Director General and the Agency for their tireless efforts to prevent an unprecedented nuclear accident at one of the largest nuclear power plants in Europe through their monitoring of the seven pillars of nuclear safety. The precarious situation underscores the importance of refraining from attacks on critical infrastructure in conflicts and the urgent need to address threats to international peace and security when IAEA safety standards and nuclear safeguards are compromised.

As a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Myanmar is committed to its letter and spirit, including the provisions of article IV. As a founding member of the IAEA, Myanmar signed its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, a small-quantities protocol and an Additional Protocol with the Agency to ensure the safety, security and verification of all nuclear material for peaceful use. In particular, the elected civilian Government ramped up its efforts to improve its transparency in nuclear activities and join multiple nuclear safeguard frameworks. During its tenure, Myanmar signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and acceded to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its Amendment. Myanmar also submitted its second national report to the eighth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety. A new nuclear law aimed at strengthening nuclear safety, security and non-proliferation was being drafted.

Regrettably, those positive developments disappeared in 2021 with the advent of the illegal military coup. There is growing concern among the people at large, civil society and the international community about the military's attempt to acquire nuclear technology for military applications in the guise of peaceful purposes, and that concern is justifiable for the fol-

lowing reasons. First, the military has a track record of using dual-use items in its brutal killings of the people of Myanmar. The military junta has been using aerial bombardments and indiscriminate shelling across the country to overcome the people's resistance. Secondly, it completely ignores the demands of regional and international bodies. The military junta has failed to implement the five-point consensus of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations for more than two and a half years and has been violating the provisions of Security Council resolution 2669 (2022) for almost a year. Thirdly, there is a lack of accountability for the military. Emboldened by that impunity, the junta has continued to go on the offensive against the people of Myanmar through indiscriminate and disproportionate aerial attacks and heavy-weaponry shelling of civilian areas, as well as by committing further atrocities, war crimes and crimes against humanity against the people. And last but not least, there is no democratic oversight of the military junta's actions.

What this means is that no Member State should cooperate with the military junta in any way, including on a nuclear energy programme. Myanmar should receive such cooperation only when the military dictatorship ends, democracy is restored and power is returned to the people through a democratically elected civilian Government. I therefore want to remind the Assembly that the United Nations and the international community must remain vigilant with respect to the recent military junta's recent actions relating to the development of nuclear energy. Transparency and accountability must be maintained at every step in order to ensure that nuclear science and technology are being used exclusively for peaceful purposes.

In conclusion, we commend the work of the IAEA and its indispensable role in providing a global nuclear safety and security framework. Myanmar is open to reinforcing its long-standing collaboration with the Agency for the benefit of all people in Myanmar. The international community should not fail by leaving the people of Myanmar behind. We should all work together to end the military dictatorship and establish a federal democratic union in Myanmar.

**The Acting President:** We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item for this meeting. We shall hear the remaining speakers this afternoon at 3 p.m. in this Hall.

I would like to thank the interpreters for staying past 1 p.m. in order to facilitate the work of the Assembly.

*The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.*