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Summary record of the 14th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 25 October 2013, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Mr. García González . . . . . (El Salvador)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 60: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (*Territories not covered under other agenda items*) (*continued*) (A/C.4/68/L.6)

Draft decision A/C.4/68/L.6: Question of Gibraltar

1. **The Chair** said that the draft decision had no programme budget implications.

2. *Draft decision A/C.4/68/L.6 was adopted.*

Agenda item 49: Effects of atomic radiation (A/68/46; A/C.4/68/L.7 and A/C.4/68/L.8)

3. **Mr. Larsson** (Australia), speaking as Chair of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation and accompanying his statement with a digital slide presentation, introduced the report of the Scientific Committee on its sixtieth session (A/68/46). Recalling that the Scientific Committee had been established by the General Assembly in 1955 and currently had 27 members, he said that the Scientific Committee assessed levels and trends of exposure to, and effects and risks to people from, ionizing radiation emitted by radioactive substances and apparatus such as X-ray equipment.

4. People were exposed to radiation from natural sources, including outer space and the Earth, and from naturally occurring radioactive substances present in food, water and air, as well as artificial sources of radiation such as those used in medicine and industry. The Scientific Committee maintained an overview of global levels and trends in sources of exposure, with radiation doses currently ranging roughly between 1 and 13 millisieverts and averaging 2.4 millisieverts.

5. Health effects of radiation exposure included such clinically observable effects as acute radiation syndrome; cancer, which was the main concern at moderate and low exposure levels; thus far unproven hereditary effects; and others such as those resulting from prenatal exposure and effects on the cardiovascular and immune systems.

6. The Scientific Committee's assessments underpinned the work of such other international bodies as the International Commission on Radiological Protection, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the World Health Organization (WHO), which developed standards for managing radiation risks to human health and the environment.

7. At its June 2013 session, the Scientific Committee had agreed on scientific findings on the levels and effects of radiation exposure due to the nuclear accident after the 2011 great east-Japan earthquake and tsunami, and the effects of radiation exposure of children, as detailed in the two scientific annexes discussed at that session and summarized in chapter III of its report (A/68/46).

8. **Mr. Mettler** (United States of America), speaking as a member of the Scientific Committee's task group on the effects of radiation exposure of children, said that the Scientific Committee had brought together for the first time all previously existing data on that topic. It had considered the effects on children in heavily contaminated areas such as Chernobyl and Fukushima, but had also considered exposures of children in medicine and aimed to establish whether children were actually three to five times more sensitive to radiation than were adults. It had used different sources of data on childhood irradiation, including survivors of atomic bombings, those treated with radiotherapy for benign conditions, and childhood cancer survivors. It had also looked at certain aspects of developmental anatomy and physiology that affected the response to radiation. For example, the brain constituted 20 per cent of total body weight at birth, while in adults it was only 2 per cent.

9. Dosimetry was influenced by physiological factors and had been assessed, for example, among children in villages contaminated by the Chernobyl accident. A given amount of external radiation exposure caused higher doses in internal organs of children and infants because they had smaller body diameters and radiation penetration was easier. Regarding internal exposure, such as inhalation of radon gas or ingestion of contaminated foods, the fact that children's organs were closer together meant that radionuclides concentrated in one organ irradiated other organs more than occurred in adults.

10. Of particular concern were radiation-induced malignancies. For its study, the Scientific Committee had reviewed 23 different cancer types. In relation to carcinogenesis and the risks following exposure in childhood versus adulthood, children were at higher risk than adults for brain, thyroid and skin cancer, but at lower risk for lung cancer. For about 25 per cent of

the cancer types studied, children were more radiosensitive than adults, but for about 30 per cent of cancer types, there was little or no relationship between radiation exposure and risk.

11. The data collected showed that the effect of a high dose of radiation on the intelligence quotient of children varied with age: the younger the child at the time of exposure, the more acute the effects. While children were also more likely than adults to develop cataracts as a result of radiation exposure, they were less likely to become sterile as a result of radiation exposure of ovarian tissue. As to hereditary effects, there was no significant increase in birth defects or cancer cases in the offspring of cancer survivors, according to a study by the United States National Cancer Institute.

12. The Scientific Committee had concluded inter alia that children were not just small adults; their tissues developed into adult tissues at different rates and different times. Certain age-related differences in radiation effects were explicable, while others were not. An accurate estimation of risks required data derived from observations of exposed children and not just generalizations from observations of adults.

13. **Mr. Larsson** (Australia), speaking as Chair of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, introduced the report's findings on the levels and effects of radiation exposure due to the nuclear accident after the 2011 great east-Japan earthquake and tsunami. On 11 March 2011 a 9.0-magnitude earthquake, followed by an enormous tsunami, had caused the loss of 20,000 lives and massive damage to land and property. Additionally, three of the reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power station had suffered severe damage, leading to the release of large amounts of radioactive iodine-131 and caesium-137. The disaster was the worst civil nuclear accident since the one at Chernobyl.

14. After the tsunami had struck, the authorities had ordered the evacuation of many of the local residents. While taken in the interest of public health, that action had had a profound impact on the social and mental well-being of "nuclear evacuees". The Scientific Committee estimated that the evacuation had reduced radiation doses by up to 90 per cent.

15. The Scientific Committee had set up a coordination group to assess exposure levels and effects on human health and on the environment resulting from the accident. Well over 200 scientists had participated voluntarily, and the Scientific Committee had received assistance from such international organizations as the World Meteorological Organization, IAEA and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization.

16. The Scientific Committee had considered exposure to a wide range of radioactive substances, including iodine-131, caesium-137 and caesium-134. Radioactive substances had been discharged into the air, the ground and the sea. Very low levels of radioactivity would doubtless be detected for years to come in remote parts of the marine environment, and trace levels had been detected over the entire northern hemisphere within weeks of the initial event.

17. Given that a large fraction of the radioactivity released had drifted out over the sea, the radiation doses received by the Japanese public generally remained low. The average effective dose received was less than 10 millisieverts for adults and 10 to 15 millisieverts for 1-year-old infants. Those values were far below the levels at which acute radiation effects could be expected and were consistent with the fact that no such effects had been reported.

18. The Scientific Committee considered it prudent to maintain a cautious approach regarding health implications, since final answers might require decades. It further considered that a small increase in cancer risk could be inferred from models. However, since there was no clinical difference between radiation-induced cancers and those resulting from other causes, any increase in the incidence of health effects attributable to radiation was not expected to be discernible.

19. In estimating the organ-specific dose to the thyroid gland, the Scientific Committee had found that the average annual absorbed dose from naturally occurring sources of radiation was about one milligray, while the dose among those evacuated was 30 milligrays in adults and up to 70 in 1-year-olds, a dosage largely attributable to intake with food. An increased risk of thyroid cancer could thus be inferred based on epidemiological models, in particular for children. A cautious approach remained warranted, however, since screening among children was continuing and results were as yet still compatible with those in locations that had not been affected by the accident.

20. The accident had not resulted in any radiation-related deaths among the 25,000 workers exposed to radiation in their efforts to bring the situation under control, fewer than 200 of whom had received doses of approximately 50 times the annual natural background doses, according to information available to the Scientific Committee. The recorded doses might, however, underestimate the actual doses by about 20 per cent, owing to the lack of data regarding some very short-lived radioactive substances released in the early phases of the accident. Increased cancer risk could be expected among workers who had received doses of more than 100 millisieverts. Caution was again in order, since it would be difficult to observe an increased incidence of health effects attributable to radiation exposure because of the normal statistical variation in cancer incidence.

21. In sum, the Scientific Committee had taken a careful approach in its estimation of doses and associated effects on the population of Japan, the workers at the site and the environment. Its estimates were generally somewhat lower than, although consistent with, those produced by WHO in May 2012. Although small cancer risks could be inferred from models, any increased incidence might not be discernible against background disease rates and their natural variability. Furthermore, any environmental effects might have been transient and localized. By contrast, the Scientific Committee noted that the indirect impact of the accident on the social and mental well-being of the affected population was considerable.

22. Two thematic priorities had been identified for the Scientific Committee's future activities: the global impact of energy production, including follow-up to the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident, and radiation effects at low dose rates. The Scientific Committee would further streamline evaluation processes, develop networks of experts and focal points in all member States, and improve dissemination of its findings in more understandable formats. To that end, publication procedures should be streamlined. Voluntary contributions to the general trust fund for the Scientific Committee would accelerate implementation of its strategic plan for 2014-2019.

23. In conclusion, the Scientific Committee and its work were fundamental to the international radiation safety regime, with consequences for development, health and the environment. The Scientific Committee facilitated the cost-effective exchange of information at the global level, and had earned respect as a result of its competence and objectivity. The maintenance of those features in the years ahead was a critical task.

24. **Mr. Toro-Carnevali** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the States parties and associated States of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), said that the report of the Scientific Committee on its sixtieth session illustrated the importance of the effects of atomic radiation on humankind and the environment.

25. Welcoming the decision of the Scientific Committee to include in its strategic plan for 2014-2019 a study of the global impact of energy production, including follow-up of the radiological consequences of the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power station, and the rapidly expanding use of ionizing radiation in medical diagnosis and treatment, he called on the Scientific Committee to continue studying the effects of the Fukushima accident and of the exposure of children to radiation so as to enhance understanding. The Scientific Committee's intention, in that strategic plan, to raise awareness among decision-makers, the scientific community and civil society with regard to ionizing radiation exposure and the related health and environmental effects would provide a sound basis for decision-making.

26. With the increased use of nuclear technologies in the modern world, the Scientific Committee's work was essential in evaluating current research in the field. It was therefore necessary to resolve the chronic shortage of resources for the trust fund administered by the United Nations Environment Programme. The financing mechanism should be strengthened before the membership was enlarged. Furthermore, scientists representing member States in all five regional groups should participate in the Scientific Committee's work on the basis of their scientific qualifications and the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

27. The Scientific Committee's studies influenced decisions taken on energy, waste management and radiological medicine, as well as on protection of workers and the environment. The tragedies of Chernobyl and Fukushima were a reminder of the need for caution and for all available data to be disseminated among scientists, government entities and civil society organizations. In that regard, MERCOSUR would continue to support the Scientific Committee's

endeavours in developing the international protection regime to combat the effects of atomic radiation.

28. **Mr. Hallergard** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Iceland, Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Armenia, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, stressed the importance of the work done by the Scientific Committee in assessing the effects of radiation on human health and the environment and supplying the international community with information on the sources, exposures and effects of ionizing radiation. In that regard, medical exposure to atomic radiation constituted an international priority, since it was by far the largest source of artificial exposure.

29. The Scientific Committee's proposal to cooperate on the periodic collection and exchange of patient data was therefore welcome. The association of Heads of European Radiological Protection Competent Authorities could make a valuable contribution in that regard, and research cooperation could be undertaken within the Multidisciplinary European Low Dose Initiative.

30. He also welcomed the information provided during the sixtieth session of the Scientific Committee on the nuclear accident following the great east-Japan earthquake and tsunami regarding the levels and effects of radiation exposure, together with the information on the effects of the radiation exposure of children. Continued research was required on the latter subject so as to identify the full scope of the differences between children and adults.

31. The priorities of the Scientific Committee's current programme of work coincided with those of the European Union, which also eagerly anticipated the forthcoming report on radiation exposure from electricity generation.

32. **Mr. Alday González** (Mexico) said that discussion of the effects of nuclear weapons, traditionally confined to disarmament forums, had recently been enriched by new technical and factual information in various areas.

33. In March 2013, Norway had held an international conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, attended by representatives of 127 countries, numerous international organizations and civil society. The conference had focused on the immediate humanitarian impact of a nuclear explosion; possible developmental, economic and environmental consequences; and preparation of a response capacity in the event of a nuclear disaster. The conference had concluded that no State or international body would be able to deal adequately with a humanitarian emergency caused by a nuclear explosion or provide the necessary assistance to those affected.

34. In February 2014, Mexico would host a second conference, focused on the impact of an intentional or accidental nuclear explosion on the environment, global public health, economic growth and food security, from the perspective of society in the twenty-first century.

35. **Ms. Al-Haidari** (Iraq) said that because of the wars and destruction it had experienced, her country was aware of the scale of the challenges relating to the effects of atomic radiation and environmental pollution, and the resulting dangerous and fatal illnesses which were passed from generation to generation. Iraq's view of radiation and its effects as an important and serious issue was reflected in its Constitution, which required compliance by its Government with international obligations relating to the proliferation, development, production and use of nuclear and other weapons. Iraq worked continuously and in cooperation with international organizations to limit the harmful effects of previous weapons programmes.

36. The Government of Iraq had established a Ministry of Environment, charged with reducing radiation to acceptable levels, in addition to a Ministry of Science and Technology that worked continuously to eliminate polluting entities, and an agency to combat sources of radiation and protect Iraqi citizens from exposure to radiation in medicine and agriculture. Under the national energy plan, radiation accidents were dealt with in conjunction with international organizations for the purposes of exchanging information and cooperation.

37. The protection of the Earth and outer space was a collective responsibility because any form of pollution or damage affected everyone negatively, despite the perception that nuclear technology was an issue primarily affecting developed countries. Iraq supported the efforts of the United Nations to monitor radiation levels and related dangers, and called for cooperation

by the States concerned with international organizations to avert such dangers and eliminate the causes of atomic radiation. In similar vein, it hoped for support from the United Nations and developed countries to mitigate the effects of such radiation and at least reduce the dangers for the country's citizens and environment, in view of the precarious situation facing all human beings.

38. **Mr. Zhao** Xinli (China) said that wording proposed by China, "Recognizing the importance of disseminating results from the work of the Scientific Committee and widely publicizing scientific knowledge about atomic radiation", had been adopted in General Assembly resolution 66/70. China was pleased to see that the results of the Scientific Committee's work were being disseminated together with knowledge of atomic radiation.

39. In a context where many countries were confronted with problems of insufficient energy resources and pollution associated with energy production and use, nuclear energy merited vigorous development because of its high efficiency and minimal greenhouse gas emissions. Atomic radiation technology had also been used in such fields as health care, industrial surveying and food preservation, but people were being increasingly exposed to such radiation without their knowledge. The international community should therefore increase research into the effects of atomic radiation so as to protect humankind, while making full use of its benefits.

40. The regrettable and harrowing nuclear accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power station should give rise to serious reflection on ways to prevent the recurrence of similar incidents. Since secondary incidents continued to occur there, the country concerned should genuinely fulfil its responsibilities and adopt timely and effective measures to deal with the aftermath of the accident, and reassure the international community through the provision of transparent and credible information.

41. Data showed that occupational and non-occupational radioactive intake from naturally occurring materials might well exceed international safety standards. The Scientific Committee should therefore pay attention to that issue and the United Nations should play its role in ensuring the safety of atomic radiation. In that regard, efforts should be made to handle the aftermath of major nuclear incidents and minimize various harmful effects. Lessons must be learned to guarantee prevention of such incidents in the future and human safety must be the highest priority. Also, the Scientific Committee's work needed to be strengthened, given its expanding membership, and it should explore further mechanisms to yield more high-quality output.

42. Furthermore, research into the effects of atomic radiation from sources other than nuclear accidents was essential, since some of the risks were not yet known, and others arose simply from the failure to comply strictly with safety regulations. Priority should also be given to ensuring the safety of temporarily suspended and decommissioned nuclear power plants. Temporary stoppages happened quite frequently and, as technology advanced, more and more plants would be decommissioned. Above all else, safety should not be compromised for budgetary and personnel reasons.

43. China had continued to work diligently on the safety of atomic radiation over the past year. In June 2013, the Government had promulgated the revised national nuclear emergency contingency plan and its nuclear power technology research and development was already among the best in the world. The third-generation technology CAP1400 nuclear power plant had passed the preliminary design and evaluation phases, and would enter the construction phase in 2014. Moreover, a fourth-generation technology demonstration project was already in production and would be the first of its kind to enter into commercial operation.

44. After decades of effort, China had become a major power in atomic radiation technology. It had in place a set of effective mechanisms covering the entire process, from the research phase to the operation and regulation phases. It also possessed skilled nuclear-emergency response personnel and equipment, as well as legislation covering nuclear emergency response. Together with the international community, China stood ready to work to protect humankind from the harmful effects of atomic radiation and harness the related technology for the benefit of all.

45. **Mr. Cabactulan** (Philippines) said that while atomic radiation occurred naturally, humans also had the capacity to develop ways to produce such radiation artificially. Despite the obvious benefits in the fields of medicine and power generation, events had also made clear the risks and potential dangers of the use of atomic radiation. In that connection, the importance of

the role played by the Scientific Committee could not be overemphasized.

46. Regarding the Scientific Committee's report, the Philippines noted that the review of radiation exposures from various types of electricity generation was at an advanced stage, as well as the plans to initiate the latest Global Survey of Medical Radiation Usage and Exposures and to undertake close cooperation with relevant international organizations. The Scientific Committee's outreach activities were also to be acknowledged, in particular the report on the levels and effects of radiation exposure due to the nuclear accident after the 2011 great east-Japan earthquake and tsunami. The management of public information in such emergency situations was also crucial in preventing misunderstandings and allaying public anxiety over radiation exposure events, as well as in preventing or mitigating similar accidents in the future.

47. The Scientific Committee's strategic plan for 2014-2019 identified thematic priorities relating to the global impact of energy production and the rapidly expanding use of ionizing radiation in medical diagnosis and treatment. The development of networks of experts in that regard would be crucial. In addition, the Philippines noted the informative conclusions drawn by the Scientific Committee on the effects of radiation exposure of children. The findings would further safeguard the health of children, by avoiding generalizations concerning the risks of exposure and concentrating on specifics.

48. **Mr. Takahashi** (Japan) said that since its establishment by the General Assembly in 1955, the Scientific Committee had provided an authoritative scientific review of the sources, effects and risks of ionizing radiation. As a country fully committed to the safety of nuclear technology, Japan had benefited from the Scientific Committee's work and its commitment was all the stronger following its own tragic experience of the nuclear accident caused by the massive earthquake and tsunami in 2011.

49. The importance of ensuring the safety of human beings and the environment in the use of radiation and atomic energy could not be overstated. In the past two years, the Scientific Committee had been the only organization to assess the levels of exposure and radiation risks following the nuclear accident resulting from the great east-Japan earthquake and tsunami. In that regard, Japan had learned much from the Scientific Committee's work in probing the extent of the exposure of workers at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power station and residents in the region.

50. Unfortunately, a number of articles in the Japanese media had perpetuated the misperception that the Government of Japan had underestimated the level of internal exposure of workers. Such a misperception might have resulted from the fact that the Scientific Committee's report referred only to underestimation as opposed to overestimation. Japan therefore requested the Scientific Committee to provide a balanced assessment of internal exposure in its report, and stood ready to submit the requisite data for that purpose.

51. **Mr. Pande** (India), commending the Scientific Committee on its detailed assessment of the levels and effects of radiation exposure following the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in 2011, said that the biological and health effects of the accident would be monitored for decades to come. Although current estimates indicated that exposure was in general too low for acute effects to be observed, a cautious approach should be adopted and the world must depend on the non-partisan, scientifically sound evaluations of the Scientific Committee. In that regard, the utmost restraint should be exercised concerning the risks to health, based as they were on the use of models and collective dose data. Thankfully, the Government of Japan had undertaken large-scale evacuation and other preventive measures, thereby reducing the radiation doses received.

52. On the subject of the radiation exposure of children during medical procedures, he said that despite the lack of broadly available data, the analysis completed by the Scientific Committee indicated that children were generally at greater risk of tumour induction than adults, although levels of radiosensitivity varied depending on the type of tumour. Similarly, there was no evidence of an increase in hereditary effects in the offspring of parents exposed to radiation. That was backed up by the research done in India in relation to several thousand newborn children in the high background radiation area off the Kerala coast.

53. India stressed the need for early publication of two very important scientific annexes finalized by the Scientific Committee at its fifty-ninth session, concerning, respectively, attributing health effects to radiation exposure and inferring risks, and uncertainties

in risk estimates for cancer due to exposure to ionizing radiation. It also noted with satisfaction the progress made in the development of the document on the epidemiology of low-dose-rate exposures of the public to natural and artificial environmental sources of radiation.

54. India emphasized that international regulatory agencies should use the risk assessments of the Scientific Committee to ensure protection of occupationally exposed workers and the general public. Although the dose limits for exposure had been the subject of public concern, they were well below those shown to cause significant harm to health. On a related note, India fully supported the Global Survey of Medical Radiation Usage and Exposures.

55. He welcomed the fact that the Scientific Committee issued its reports more frequently than in previous years. In order to work effectively, the Scientific Committee should receive the requisite support from the United Nations Environment Programme.

56. **Mr. Mackay** (Belarus) said that the Scientific Committee was the main source of professional information on the effects of radiation on human health and the environment. It was difficult to overestimate the importance of objective scientific information on the threats and risks caused by radiation in the context of increasing use of nuclear energy. Belarus was pleased to have become a member of the Scientific Committee, as it had been given the opportunity to exchange first-hand experience and knowledge on how to deal with the consequences of the Chernobyl nuclear accident. The Scientific Committee had produced several reports which had been useful for planning, and it was hoped that those reports would be relevant to the United Nations Action Plan on Chernobyl to 2016 and to the development of new conceptual frameworks for international cooperation.

57. On a more sombre note, he had received word of the death, two days earlier, of Belarus's leading representative to the Scientific Committee, Dr. Jacov Kenigsberg. Dr. Kenigsberg had been known throughout the worldwide scientific community and had represented Belarus in a number of international scientific forums, including IAEA and WHO.

58. **Mr. Tsymbaliuk** (Ukraine) said that there was a continuing need to examine and compile information on atomic and ionizing radiation, and to analyse its effects on humankind and the environment. In that regard, it was important to disseminate the results of the work of the Scientific Committee.

59. Many concerns had been expressed about the radiological consequences of the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant following the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan. The Scientific Committee's commitment to assessing the levels of exposure and radiation risks resulting from the accident was welcome, and Ukraine stood ready to contribute to the Scientific Committee's work, since it had long experience of dealing with the effects of radiation following the Chernobyl accident.

60. The Scientific Committee had made progress in many different areas, including the assessment of levels of radiation exposure from electricity generation and epidemiological studies of low-dose-rate exposures of the public to naturally occurring and artificial environmental sources of radiation. It was important for the Scientific Committee to continue to review advances in the understanding of the biological mechanisms by which radiation-induced effects on human health or on non-human biota could occur. Such assessments could serve as a foundation for national and international protection standards and, for that purpose, specialized international organizations should collaborate further with the Scientific Committee to coordinate the periodic collection and exchange of data on radiation exposures.

61. Ukraine had been pleased to contribute to the elaboration of the Scientific Committee's future programme of work and the objectives and thematic priorities of the strategic plan for 2014-2019. It invited the Scientific Committee to continue its consultations with scientists and experts from member States and stood ready to provide relevant information on the levels and effects of ionizing radiation. As to the Scientific Committee's publications, procedures should be streamlined but quality maintained, since the timeliness of publication was of paramount importance for the international community.

62. **Mr. Díaz Bartolomé** (Argentina) said that the Argentine Republic had been a founding member of the Scientific Committee, which had played, and continued to play, a fundamental role in presenting the scientific arguments underlying the suspension of nuclear weapons testing.

63. His Government highlighted the work done by the Scientific Committee in relation to the levels and effects of exposure to radiation following the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power station in Japan, and also on the effects of radiation exposure on children, while noting that the results obtained were preliminary and hoping that the Scientific Committee would pursue further studies so as to achieve a full understanding of the relevant issues. In that regard, the decision taken by the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency, in its resolution GC(57)/RES/9 of 2013, calling on its Director General to complete a comprehensive report on the Fukushima Daiichi accident, was most welcome.

64. The Argentine Republic had also taken particular note of the information in the report on radiation exposures from electricity generation. The Scientific Committee had made considerable progress in examining and updating existing evaluation methodologies for that purpose. The work undertaken by the Scientific Committee in that area should be given priority, and he hoped that the final document would be ready for consideration at the Scientific Committee's sixty-first session.

65. **Ms. Sánchez Rodríguez** (Cuba), welcoming the report of the Scientific Committee, said that international peace and security continued to be threatened by a total of some 17,270 nuclear weapons throughout the world. Cuba considered that the use of nuclear weapons constituted an illegal and totally immoral act that could not be justified under any circumstances or security doctrine, and that was in flagrant violation of the international norms relating to the prevention of genocide. The work done by the Scientific Committee was a source of specialized, balanced and objective information, and the links between the Scientific Committee and United Nations agencies such as WHO and IAEA should be further strengthened.

66. Despite its limited resources, Cuba had made a significant contribution to the humanitarian programme for treatment and rehabilitation of children that had been victims of the Chernobyl nuclear accident. Cuba called on the Scientific Committee to continue its work to raise awareness of the levels, effects and dangers of ionizing radiation, whatever its source.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.