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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FORTIETH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 25 October 1989, at 3 p.m.

President:

Mr. JAYA
(Vice-President)

(Brunei Darussalam)

later:

Mr. LOHIA
(Vice-President)

(Papua New Guinea)

- Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency [14]
 - (a) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Agency
 - (b) Draft resolution
- Organization of work

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 14 (continued)

REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

- (a) NOTE BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TRANSMITTING THE REPORT OF THE AGENCY (A/44/450)
- (b) DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/44/L.18)

Mr. AMIGUES (France) (interpretation from French): First, on behalf of the European Community and its 12 member States I should like to convey my thanks to the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the quality of his annual report on the Agency's activities in 1988 and for the presentation he made today in the Assembly.

I express again our constant support for IAEA's objectives: to promote international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy; for the health and prosperity of peoples all over the world; and to help prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The European Community's interest in the Agency's work is a reflection of the place nuclear energy has taken in the life of many European citizens. I am pleased in this regard to commend the work done by the Agency to promote safe and efficient use of nuclear energy in certain areas of special interest to the members of the Community.

In regard to the structure of the report presented to us, I confirm, first of all, our agreement on the Agency's technical assistance and co-operation programmes. The Twelve attach special importance to the IAEA's activities to which they make a significant contribution and by which the developing countries are able to obtain, if they so desire, assistance in such varied spheres as the application of isotopes and radiation in agriculture or industry, safety, nuclear engineering and technology or even medicine, and basic research.

(Mr. Amigues, France)

These programmes, the continuation of which was approved in 1988 in spite of possible budgetary problems, are a constant illustration of the contribution made by nuclear technology to our struggle for health and well being in many parts of the world.

In the area of nuclear energy, I recall the growing role played by this type of energy in the overall production of electricity in the Community. The proportion increased to 33.9 per cent in 1988, from 11.7 in 1980. That gives the European Community special responsibilities with regard to nuclear energy, not only towards its citizens but also towards the entire international community.

The Twelve give pride of place to international co-operation in the areas of safety and radiation protection, and they welcome the priority given to these areas in the IAEA's programmes. These issues should remain of major concern to the Agency and the significant efforts made in this field since 1986 - and continued in 1988 - should be equally dynamic in the years to come. The revision of the Agency's codes on nuclear safety standards (NUSS), the development of missions of Operational Safety Review Teams (OSART), and the work of the International Nuclear Safety Advisory Group (INSAG) are examples of basic work carried out by the Agency in this sphere.

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I want to emphasize our constant interest in and support for the Agency's activities in connection with waste management. Nuclear-waste management - a problem of which the public are quite rightly very much aware - will continue to require close international co-operation in the future. We note with satisfaction the useful role that the Agency has played in bringing about a consensus on the principles that should be applied in the treatment of high-activity waste. In this regard, we welcome the establishment of the International Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee, whose task will be to provide guidelines and advice in this sphere.

I should like also, on behalf of the Community, to express appreciation of the efforts of the Agency to ensure progress on the question of responsibility in the event of nuclear damage. The adoption, in September 1988, of a common protocol on civil responsibility was an important stage in this work.

In order to emphasize the importance that the Twelve attach to questions of safety, they submitted to the 1989 General Conference, for the first time, a joint draft resolution dealing with all aspects of the work of the Agency in this sphere. The resolution, which referred in particular to the need for a future dialogue on reactors, was adopted by consensus.

Having demonstrated the Community's agreement with the Agency's safety activities and the firm determination to maintain their high priority, I wish to emphasize the importance that the Twelve attach to the safeguards system. The members of the Community believe that development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be part and parcel of appropriate action against the danger of the dissemination of weapons. We hope that this necessary balance will be maintained and strengthened during the international discussions that are to take place in coming months, especially at the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the

(Mr. Amigues, France)

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation Treaty of Nuclear Weapons. The members of the European Community, whether or not they are parties to the Treaty and in accordance with the principles of their respective foreign policies in the nuclear field, will not fail to make their active contribution to the debate.

The European Community and its member States believe that the Agency's safeguards system, which is an essential component of an effective international non-proliferation régime, should be applied as widely as possible. The Twelve reiterate their hope that all non-nuclear-weapon States will voluntarily submit their nuclear installations to the Agency's safeguards system.

We have again this year noted with satisfaction that all nuclear materials placed under the Agency's safeguards were to be used for peaceful purposes. In this regard, we confirm our confidence in the efficiency of the organization, the staff and the methods used in the Department of Safeguards.

One of the outstanding events of 1988 was the conclusion of a safeguards agreement with China. This completed the series of voluntary agreements between the Agency and the five nuclear-weapon States members.

With regard to peaceful uses of nuclear energy, also, we should think in the long term. I shall refer to two areas in which in 1988 the Agency began or continued studies of use for the future, in addition to the area of the problem of hazardous wastes, which I have already mentioned.

In connection with studies of controlled thermonuclear fusion, a new stage was reached with the establishment and the inaugural meeting of the Council of the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor project. There can be no doubt that international co-operation on such an ambitious project as an experimental thermonuclear reactor is powerful encouragement to all those throughout the world who in the future will be working on this type of energy.

(Mr. Amiques, France)

The Agency has also tackled the problems of protection of the environment and the risks of global warming of the atmosphere. Its consideration of the possibility of ecologically rational, lasting development might constitute a starting-point for the studies that will be actively pursued in this important sphere.

It should be noted, however, that, as in previous years, some problems persist and may influence the conditions in which the Agency carries out its tasks. Delays in the payment of some contributions to the general budget again in 1988 gave rise to alarming financial difficulties. It is in the interest of all member States that the Agency receive in good time the funds they have committed themselves to providing.

The States of the European Community reiterate their concern at the fact that the Agency has become involved in questions of a political nature that come within the purview of other bodies. This compromises the role of the Agency in fulfilling its statutory task of promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

In conclusion, I should like to reaffirm the willingness of the States of the European Community to continue and develop close co-operation with the International Atomic Energy Agency in all areas of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and the sincere hopes for its success that accompany that willingness.

Mr. HOHENFELLNER (Austria): The report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on its activities in 1988 provides us with a welcome opportunity to commend the exemplary efficiency and effectiveness of that Agency within the United Nations system. In fulfilment of its mandate, the Agency has been instrumental both in acting as a catalyst for the establishment of safety standards and other normative procedures designed to enhance the safety of the

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

harnessing of nuclear energy and in the application of safeguards. These are two principal tasks of the Agency - tasks that all Member States, whatever their national attitude to the use of nuclear energy for the production of electricity, will wish to support, since only persistent international co-operation can provide us with a means of reducing the dangers inherent in the utilization of nuclear energy. My delegation notes with satisfaction the unfailing and innovative efforts of the Agency in this regard.

It is with great pleasure that we take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Blix on his reappointment as Director General of the Agency for a further period of four years. We are convinced that, under his able guidance and leadership, the Agency will continue its efforts to find solutions to the manifold unresolved issues arising from the harnessing of nuclear energy.

It is well known to all assembled here that Austria is not in the mainstream of those States that place confidence in nuclear power as a means of dealing with the increased global demand for energy. Yet, in spite of this refusal to regard nuclear power as a viable remedy for all shortcomings in the energy sector, we extend our full support and encouragement for the essential undertakings of the Agency.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

For it is precisely in those fields directly related to the expressed concern of the Austrian population - the safety of nuclear power and the elaboration of a régime to deal with the inevitable shortcomings of safety - that the conscientious and professional work of the Agency is unrivalled and merits our encouragement.

The programme on nuclear safety has the highest priority among the Agency's activities dealing with the various aspects of nuclear power. We take note with satisfaction that over the past year the Agency has successfully continued its quest for the elaboration of guidelines, codes of practices, and safety principles on such issues as the physical protection of nuclear material, radioactive waste transactions and the underground disposal of high-level waste.

In that context, we wish to reiterate our view that in order to be truly effective on a world-wide basis such nuclear safety standards must necessarily become generally applicable and universally binding in character. Given the transboundary effects of the use of nuclear energy, we do not accept the argument that nuclear safety lies outside the scope of international regulation by virtue of its being exclusively a matter of national responsibility and jurisdiction. It is our sincere hope that the necessary political will on that crucial issue can be mobilized.

In view of the fact that the occurrence of accidents can never be excluded, Austria is specifically interested in reducing their probability in order that the likelihood of their leading to uncontrollable disasters be minimized. In addition, Austria is of the firm conviction that a world-wide system of liability safeguarding the interests of damaged parties must be further promoted. Such a system should not only amend the existing régimes on civil liability but also take into account the ultimate liability of the operator State for transboundary nuclear damage. For, in the light of the potentially catastrophic effects of nuclear accidents, causing damage not only to a great number of individuals but also to the

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environment in general, only such a comprehensive instrument could do justice to the legitimate interests of all parties concerned. Thus, civil liability should urgently be supplemented by a system of State liability.

For that reason, Austria has actively participated in the Working Group that was convened for the first time in June this year and entrusted with the task of studying all aspects of liability for nuclear damage. The establishment of the open-ended Working Group is of prime importance in that regard and deserves our fullest support.

Austria attaches great importance to the Agency's activities in the area of technical assistance and co-operation designed to assist Member States in benefitting from industrial standards and developments as well as from advances and experiences attained in the scientific and technological fields.

At a time when the disarmament process has entered a new era marked by wider possibilities and far-reaching prospects, it is also fitting to recall the role of the IAEA as an arms-control verification agency. The forthcoming 1990 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons will provide an opportunity to draw the attention of the international community to the important role the Agency is playing in this field and will have to play in the future.

Mr. ZACHMANN (German Democratic Republic): The delegation of the German Democratic Republic wishes to thank the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Blix, for his informative introduction of the IAEA annual report for 1988. We should also like to express our warmest congratulations to Mr. Blix on his re-election as Director General of the Agency.

The current situation is characterized by progress achieved in disarmament, particularly in the nuclear field. That being the case, the conditions for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and thus for the activities of the IAEA will no

(Mr. Zachmann, German
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doubt improve in the long run. The Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles is being implemented. The Soviet decision to cease production of highly enriched uranium for military purposes and the shutting-down of its plutonium reactors is of great significance for nuclear disarmament and helps strengthen the régime on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

We have noted with interest the fact that in the United States, too, reactors for the production of weapons-grade plutonium and tritium have been closed down. Has the time not come now to conclude an international agreement on the cessation and prohibition of the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes? Such a step and a comprehensive ban on nuclear-weapon tests would considerably improve the conditions for nuclear disarmament.

The German Democratic Republic commends the active role the IAEA plays in strengthening the régime on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and in promoting a mutually beneficial co-operation in the world regarding the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and a safe development of nuclear energy management.

The non-proliferation of nuclear weapons remains an important prerequisite for the peaceful use of atomic energy. The forthcoming Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons will provide an opportunity for a broad exchange of views on all parts of the Treaty. The objective should be to enlarge the circle of participants, to consolidate the Treaty in all its aspects and to ensure its further realization.

Of primary importance for the strengthening of the Treaty are fresh agreements on arms limitation and disarmament in the nuclear field. What matters most today is a Soviet-American treaty on a 50-per-cent reduction of those countries'

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strategic offensive arms and a nuclear-test ban. Tactical weapons should also be included in the disarmament process. Jointly with a large majority of States, the German Democratic Republic is calling for the immediate accession of South Africa and Israel to the non-proliferation Treaty and the placing of all their nuclear activities under the nuclear safeguards of the IAEA. We therefore welcome the mutual information circulated by the depositaries of the Treaty at the thirty-third session of the IAEA General Conference on the resumption of negotiations with South Africa with a view to the latter's accession to the Treaty, and we expect an early and positive answer on the part of South Africa. The study on various modalities of application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East prepared by the Agency is a valuable contribution towards the implementation of General Assembly resolution 43/65 and should be taken account of when drafting the study on measures to be taken.

(Mr. Zachmann, German
Democratic Republic)

The Agency's nuclear safeguards are of utmost importance for ensuring the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The high degree of reliability and effectiveness of the safeguards must be retained, and the required financial means should be made available.

In the report we noted with interest that in 1988, as in previous years, the Agency did not detect any facts that would testify to diversion of safeguarded nuclear materials and facilities to the manufacture of nuclear weapons or to other military purposes or to the manufacture of nuclear explosive devices. It must not be overlooked, however, that there are obstacles in the way of the nuclear safeguards system. Apart from the settlement of the financial problems, we consider it urgent that pending verification agreements be concluded and the nuclear activities of all nuclear-weapon States be subordinated to comprehensive nuclear safeguards. The German Democratic Republic will also in the future meet its obligations vis-à-vis the Agency and enhance the safeguards system of the IAEA by way of its support programme.

The annual report for 1988 reflects the efforts made by the IAEA and its member States for the further consolidation of international co-operation in the field of nuclear safety and radiological protection. It is to be welcomed that there has been an increase in the number of States Parties to the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency. As far as the German Democratic Republic is concerned, it has intensified its activities for the strengthening of nuclear safety in both the national and international frameworks. Since 1987, bilateral agreements on the exchange of information on radiological protection have been concluded with six States. Only recently, a trilateral

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agreement was signed between the German Democratic Republic, the USSR and the Federal Republic of Germany on questions related to nuclear safety.

The review by the IAEA of the recommendations concerning the physical protection of nuclear material and their planned publication is commendable. It would be desirable for further States to accede to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material so as to give it a universal character. It was with interest that my country received the agreement reached between the Agency and the World Association of Nuclear Operators, with a view to giving fresh impetus to the activities of both organizations towards enhancing nuclear safety. The nuclear safety standards revised last year are of great importance. The German Democratic Republic uses them as the basis for national provisions for the safety of its nuclear reactors.

In connection with the current IAEA programme in the field of nuclear safety and radiological protection and with the promotion of international co-operation in the safe and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the Agency should adopt the ideas submitted by the USSR at the thirty-third session of the General Conference on the creation of a research centre at Chernobyl under the auspices of the organization, on the building of atomic reactors of new generations and on the holding of a conference on issues related to nuclear energy and environmental protection.

In the view of the German Democratic Republic, the programme on technical assistance is a central concern of the Agency. Over the past 10 years it has continuously increased in scope, owing to the system of indicative planning figures and the voluntary contributions in national currencies. The German Democratic Republic will also in the future contribute to that programme, providing equipment and documentation, training scholars and scientists from developing countries, holding training courses, organizing study tours and sending experts.

(Mr. Zachmann, German
Democratic Republic)

In conclusion, let me state that the delegation of the German Democratic Republic fully supports draft resolution A/44/L.18.

Mr. AHMED (Pakistan): The delegation of Pakistan has carefully studied the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the year 1988. Before commenting on this report, I wish to congratulate the Director General of the Agency, Mr. Hans Blix, for his comprehensive and impressive statement regarding the activities of the Agency during last year. I should like to avail myself of this opportunity to commend Mr. Blix and his colleagues for their dedication to the Agency and its responsibilities and objectives.

Pakistan attaches great importance to the work and aims of the IAEA. The Agency's assistance to member States in the use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes has made a valuable contribution to their development efforts and to the well-being of their people. Many developing countries, including Pakistan, have benefited from their collaboration with the Agency.

The fast depletion of the world's fossil fuel resources, the growing menace to our environment and the unmistakable signs of the ecological disaster facing mankind have underlined the importance and viability of nuclear energy as a source of power. In the case of Pakistan, I might mention here that our limited forest wealth in the north-western region has been seriously ravaged in the recent past by the influx of over 3 million refugees from neighbouring Afghanistan.

The crisis in the energy field facing Pakistan and other developing countries is demonstrated by the fact that the developing countries of the world, which contain two thirds of the world's population, account for only 16 per cent of commercial energy consumption. Against this, the advanced countries, with less than one third of the world's population, consume 84 per cent of the world's

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energy. The United States alone consumes 36 per cent. It is obvious that if the developing countries are to escape from poverty the development of all energy resources in those countries is an essential prerequisite. Both conventional and nuclear power plants will be needed to overcome the crippling shortage of energy in the developing countries.

(Mr. Ahmed, Pakistan)

We appreciate the continuing efforts of the IAEA to help strengthen the infrastructure for the planning, establishment and operation of nuclear power projects in developing countries through interregional and national training courses and technical co-operation projects. I should like to commend the Agency for the assistance it provides to developing countries in assessing the role of nuclear power in their national energy plans, and the introduction of nuclear techniques in the field of food and agriculture, medicine and physical science, which is proving to be extremely useful in their efforts to achieve socio-economic development. Our delegation would like to place on record its deep appreciation for the assistance and advice rendered to Pakistan by the IAEA in the formulation of its programmes for nuclear power generation, necessitated by the severe shortages of non-renewable sources of energy in the country.

According to the IAEA's 1988 report, the total installed nuclear power generation capacity worldwide increased by about 4.3 per cent during 1988. Nuclear power plants accounted for about 17 per cent of the world's electricity generated in 1988. At the end of last year there were 429 nuclear power plants in operation worldwide. According to the IAEA report, 105 nuclear reactors are now under construction. It is our earnest hope that the developing countries will also benefit from the expansion of nuclear power and that the Agency will be able to step up its programme of assisting the developing countries, whose development is seriously impeded by energy shortage.

Pakistan has always attached importance to the Agency's existing safeguards system, which has demonstrated its reliability and effectiveness in detecting any diversion of nuclear materials to non-peaceful purposes. We have noted from the Director General's report that no anomaly was detected during 1988 that could indicate diversion of nuclear material or misuse of other material and equipment under safeguards. The Director General has concluded that

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"nuclear material under Agency safeguards in 1988 remained in peaceful nuclear activities or was otherwise adequately accounted for". (A/44/450, IAEA GC (XXXIII)/873, para. 447)

Pakistan continues to support IAEA's activities in the field of nuclear safeguards. We believe, however, that a proper balance should be maintained between the funds allocated for technical assistance and those provided for safeguards. It is our view that the concept of zero-growth cannot be applied to the IAEA's technical assistance programme. During the past two decades the IAEA's safeguards budget has been increasing in a ratio of three to one, as compared to its technical assistance programme. The amounts allocated for technical assistance do not correspond to the urgent need of the developing countries for expansion of their nuclear energy programmes. This trend has to be arrested and a higher percentage of the budget should be provided for technical assistance. Moreover, as is the case with nuclear safeguards, technical assistance activities of IAEA should be financed through predictable and assured sources of funding.

Pakistan is committed to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It is our earnest hope that the Agency will, in keeping with its charter and mandate, assign top priority to the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. This task has become all the more important as the developing countries are faced with increasing resistance from some States in their efforts to acquire technology for the development and advancement of their peaceful nuclear energy programmes.

The General Assembly, through its resolution 32/50, has categorically affirmed that

"All States have the right, in accordance with the principles of sovereign equality, to develop their programme for the peaceful use of nuclear technology for economic and social development, in conformity with their priorities, interests and needs". (resolution 32/50, para. 1 (b))

(Mr. Ahmed, Pakistan)

The resolution also clearly states that

"All States, without discrimination, should have access to and should be free to acquire nuclear technology, equipment and materials for the peaceful use of nuclear energy". (ibid., para. 1 (c))

We believe that all States Members of the United Nations should abide by these principles in order to check and reverse the negative trends impeding co-operation in the field of peaceful nuclear energy. In fact the developing countries should be provided all the necessary means to develop their nuclear energy capacity, which has a vital role to play in their economic growth.

We commend the initiatives taken by the Agency in the field of safety and radiological protection. Pakistan has already acceded to the two safety conventions - namely, the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Convention on Assistance in the case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency. We believe that nuclear safety is a shared concern of all Member States. A nuclear accident anywhere in the world would have adverse effects on the global environment and undermine the viability of the already depressed nuclear industry. However, the growing tendency to use the nuclear safety issue for restricting co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear technology is regrettable and should be avoided.

Pakistan has endeavoured to promote an international agreement prohibiting attacks against all nuclear facilities. The newly democratic Government, led by Mohtarama Benazir Bhutto, recently concluded an agreement with the Government of India in this regard. We believe such agreements would enhance nuclear safety. We would also wish to reiterate the need for sharing safety-related information within the framework of the IAEA. This is extremely important in order to prevent the possibility of nuclear accidents. As the tragic experience of the Chernobyl

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accident showed, the disastrous effects of such accidents on humanity and global environment would be greatly detrimental to the acceptance and development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Nuclear reactor accidents in recent years have underlined the essential need for proper maintenance and repair of such reactors. It is a matter of deep regret that in certain cases essential spare parts are not being provided for reactors even when they are under the Agency safeguards. This deplorable situation requires immediate redress. We call upon all the supplier States to provide full maintenance coverage to the reactors provided by them.

Pakistan is pleased to join the consensus in support of the draft resolution on the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Mr. HOU Zhitong (China) (interpretation from Chinese): The Chinese delegation listened with great attention to the statement made by Mr. Blix, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in presenting the annual report of the IAEA for 1988. The report has shown that over the past year the Agency has done much and made gratifying headway in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. For instance, it has done a great deal of useful work to help its member States develop nuclear power and promote nuclear applications. Its activities for fostering international co-operation in areas of nuclear safety, facilitating research on radioactive waste disposal and management, and strengthening radiation protection guidance, and its publication of the revised safety regulations for nuclear power plants, are generally welcomed by member States.

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

The Agency should be given full credit for the series of steps and measures it has taken to raise the implementation rate of its technical co-operation projects, use effectively financial resources for technical assistance, and monitor and evaluate the effect of technical assistance projects. Thanks to the concerted efforts of the member States and its secretariat, the Agency has played a positive role in the implementation of safeguards. We hereby express our appreciation of all this.

The Chinese Government has always attached great importance to and supported the work of the IAEA. Although China is a relatively new member of the Agency, it has taken an active part in many aspects of its activities. During the past year China has hosted in co-operation with the Agency a series of activities, namely: the Training Seminar of INIS Input and Output, the Second FAO/IAEA Research Co-ordination Meeting on the Use of Isotopes in Studies of Pesticide Residues in Rice-Fish Ecosystems, the meeting of the Technical Committee on Electron Cyclotron Emissions, the Regional Training Course on Radiation Sterilization of Tissue Crafts for Safe Clinical Use in Health Care, the FAO/IAEA Research Co-ordination Meeting on Radiation-induced Fl Sterility in Lepidoptera for Area-wide Control, and the Third Regional Workshop on Energy, Electricity and Nuclear Power Planning.

Within the framework of the Asian and Pacific Regional Co-operative Agreement, China funded the Agency's Regional Training Course on Formulation Technology for Radiation Crosslinking Application. Furthermore, China has sent experts to Asian and Pacific developing countries to provide technical services, and has received technicians from some other countries for professional training.

China has been actively and steadily developing nuclear power. In doing so, we have always adhered to the policy of giving top priority to quality and safety, while vigorously promoting international co-operation in the field of nuclear safety, including co-operation with the Agency.

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

In general, China has made its contributions to strengthening co-operation with the Agency and with other countries.

In its co-operation with other countries in the nuclear field, China strictly follows a policy of not standing for, encouraging or helping the development of nuclear weapons by other countries. When exporting nuclear materials and equipment, China requests the receiving country to place these under IAEA safeguards. When importing such materials and equipment, China also ensures that they will be used solely for peaceful purposes. Following the same line, last year China formally signed with the Agency an agreement to place some of its civilian nuclear facilities under the Agency's safeguards. Not long ago we fulfilled the domestic legal procedures related to the agreement, which has now entered into force. The Chinese Government will abide strictly by the obligations set out in the agreement. Meanwhile, on 10 January this year, China acceded to the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, showing the great importance we attach to the protection of nuclear material in international transit.

Pursuing an independent foreign policy of peace, China steadfastly implements the policy of opening to the outside world. In the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, we shall, as always, continue to develop bilateral and multilateral relations with other countries, regions and international organizations and co-operate even more closely with the Agency on the basis of the principles of respect for sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit.

In conclusion, the Chinese delegation would like to express its great appreciation of the Agency's work. We endorse its annual report and support draft resolution A/44/L.18.

Mr. SOTIROV (Bulgaria) (interpretation from Russian): Over the past year the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as a recognized, authoritative centre for international co-operation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy has been strengthened. The development of nuclear energy emerged from a reappraisal of decisions adopted earlier and from heightened public interest in nuclear problems. Our country believes in the need for further development of nuclear energy, with the establishment of a strengthened international régime for its safe production and use and for the safe disposal of nuclear wastes. We attach great importance to the IAEA's programme on atomic energy, which is designed to enhance nuclear and radioactive safety. The basic principles for the safety of nuclear power installations, which were drafted by an international working group and published by the Agency in March of last year, constitute an essential contribution in the area of the safe use of nuclear energy.

We draw attention also to the general usefulness of the series of programmes designed to ensure accuracy in assessing the safety of nuclear installation, in the development of which Bulgarian experts participated. At the beginning of this year there was a meeting in Sofia of a technical committee of the Agency on the use of the programmes in this sphere.

The signing of the Joint Protocol Relating to the Application of the Vienna Convention and the Paris Convention dealing with civil liability for nuclear damage, and the establishment of a working group to deal with a whole series of issues connected with liability for nuclear damage, were important contributions to the establishment of an international régime for the safe use of nuclear energy. Of special significance in connection with nuclear and radioactive safety is the physical protection of nuclear material and its use in nuclear installations, as

(Mr. Sotirov, Bulgaria)

well as broad adherence to the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident, and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency. The Agency also has a role to play in the protection of nuclear installations from attack.

(Mr. Sotirov, Bulgaria)

We would welcome an active role by the Agency in the field of protection of the environment and its giving greater attention to the relationship between safe use of nuclear energy and protection of the environment; in our view this would go a long way in restoring the public's confidence in nuclear energy.

In October this year in Sofia a regional agreement will be signed among the members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance on operational notification and assistance in cases of nuclear and radiological accidents. I should like to inform the General Assembly that an agreement has been concluded between the Governments of the People's Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Greece on operational notification in cases of nuclear accidents and on information on nuclear installations.

Nuclear energy in my country has continued to develop successfully in the past year. The share of nuclear energy production at nuclear power-stations was 36 per cent of overall electric energy production in the country. We are now completing our construction of block No. 6 of the nuclear power-station at Kozloduy, and continuing with the construction of a nuclear power-station in Belen. With the assistance of the Agency, we are also carrying out a number of measures to enhance nuclear and radiological safety. Our country actively supports the Agency's programme of technical assistance and co-operation and regularly discharges its obligations in voluntary contributions.

The People's Republic of Bulgaria provides study grants for members of the Agency and to the extent possible makes available equipment and expert assistance to the Agency. In 1990 we shall make a voluntary contribution of \$72,800 in national currency to the fund for technical assistance and co-operation. Here we should like once again to repeat our view that there is no need for the 8 per cent allowance for compensation for technical assistance; that allowance has lost its

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original purpose. We wish also to point out the need for more universal support for programmes of technical assistance and co-operation, and we call upon all countries to take an active part in making voluntary contributions to the fund for technical assistance and co-operation. We cannot deem as normal a situation whereby only 40 per cent of the States members of the Agency support the technical assistance programme.

We express our gratitude to the Agency for the assistance given in 1988 and for the excellent co-operation we have had with it. We are prepared in future to expand our participation and to strengthen our relationship with the Agency and these activities.

The Agency's safeguards programme is a unique contribution to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the strengthening of confidence in the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. All countries have an interest in the successful achievement of such safeguards.

We note with satisfaction that in 1988 the Agency did not detect any diversion of nuclear materials under safeguards or the misuse of nuclear facilities for the production of nuclear weapons.

The People's Republic of Bulgaria has put all its nuclear activities under Agency safeguards. Last year for the first time we put under safeguards block No. 5 of the nuclear power-station in Kozloduy - the first block of the VVER-1000 type outside the Soviet Union's borders. In this block we worked out, with the active participation of Bulgarian experts, operations for the safe and proper control of nuclear materials, including underneath the reactor's shell. Bulgarian specialists worked out and presented to the Agency a computerized system for the accounting of nuclear materials.

(Mr. Sotirov, Bulgaria)

Next year we shall have the Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In our view it should play an important role in the further strengthening of the non-proliferation régime and strengthen international confidence and security. We are certain that the Agency will play its part in preparing for the conference.

Our delegation is prepared to endorse the proposals of the Governing Council on a draft budget for the Agency for the year 1990 and also on the scale of assessments. We assure members that we shall honour our obligations vis-à-vis the budget in due course. In this connection we draw attention to the fact that arrears of States members of the International Atomic Energy Agency to the regular budget have gone above \$12 million and that no administrative measures can replace the timely payment by member States of their financial obligations to the regular budget. We endorse the Agency's report for the year 1988 and express our gratitude for the work done.

Our position on the staff of the Agency's secretariat and on the amendment to section A.2 of article VI of the statute and to article VI as a whole are well known, and we shall not repeat them here.

In conclusion, I should like to express our gratitude for the high quality of the work done and our support for the activities of the IAEA in developing international co-operation in the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. We are prepared to do our utmost for the further strengthening of the Agency and for enhancing its authority.

Mr. PETROVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The Soviet delegation has listened with satisfaction to the statement of Mr. Hans Blix, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), who presented the Agency's 1988 report. Though traditional in format, this

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

document is different in that it shows an imaginative search for ways and means of attaining the objectives facing the Agency in such a way as to meet today's growing requirements. The fact that the report is meaningful and innovative - two features that complement one another - is in large measure the outcome of the fruitful work of the International Atomic Energy Agency and its Director General.

I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Blix on his appointment as Director General of the Agency for yet another term and to express our gratitude to him for all the useful work he does as head of that authoritative international organization.

The IAEA's vigorous and fruitful activities are held in high esteem in the Soviet Union. When the Agency was established it was at the time of the world community's collective response to the challenges of the nuclear age, a response stemming from the peaceful use of atomic energy as an alternative. Nowadays the IAEA's involvement in addressing such global problems as using atomic energy exclusively for peaceful purposes, meeting man's energy needs and improving the world's environmental situation provides conclusive evidence that this unique international organization is gaining in effectiveness and dynamism.

There is no denying that the IAEA's expanding activities are inseparable from improvements in the international political atmosphere. The real features of this new stage in international relations may be seen in nuclear disarmament, which got off the ground with the entry into force of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - in intensified negotiating efforts to reach an agreement on 50 per cent cuts in strategic

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

offensive weapons; in a search for a solution to the nuclear-testing problem; in the emerging outlines of a convention banning chemical weapons; in the businesslike frame of mind displayed by the participants in the talks on conventional armed forces and confidence-building measures in Europe; and in every form of verification, openness and conversion to be asserted as concomitant disarmament measures.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

But there is also some feedback: the Agency not only relies on changes for the better in the world, but also promotes the progressive evolution of those trends in the interests of all. Moreover, the United Nations and the system of its international bodies form a whole in which the IAEA emerges as one of the principal driving forces fostering this process.

Today the IAEA conducts three-pronged activities: reinforcing the nuclear weapon non-proliferation régime, expanding international co-operation in the peaceful use of nuclear power, and promoting the safe development of nuclear power engineering.

The leading part the Agency plays in ensuring the verification of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is recognized everywhere.

We note with satisfaction the section in the report that states that

"In 1989, as in previous years, the [Agency's] secretariat did not detect any deviations which would indicate the diversion of a significant amount of safeguarded nuclear material - or the misuse of facilities, equipment or non-nuclear material subject to safeguards - for the manufacture of any nuclear weapon, or for any other military purpose, or for the manufacture of any other nuclear explosive device". (A/44/450, IAEA GC (XXXIII)/873, para. 447)

The Soviet Union consistently presses for an increase in the effectiveness of the IAEA safeguards system and for an extension of the verification régime to cover all nuclear activities of non-nuclear-weapon States. In a situation where the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons has in practice demonstrated its effectiveness and usefulness, and where article VI of the Treaty increasingly gains in substance as a result of the United States-Soviet negotiating process - which was given fresh impetus in Wyoming - there are no grounds whatsoever to question

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

the peace-making significance of this crucial international instrument. It is our deep conviction that the non-proliferation Treaty can be superseded only by a comprehensive international treaty on the non-revival of nuclear weapons after their complete and definitive elimination. Purposeful efforts are needed to maintain and further strengthen the Treaty with a view to making it universal in scope. Strict compliance by all parties with the Treaty's provisions, including their obligation to place their peaceful nuclear activities under IAEA safeguards and to conclude relevant and timely agreements with the Agency, is of increasing importance to the enhancement of universal security.

Those are the positions we have adopted in approaching the preparations for and the holding of the Fourth Review Conference, in 1990 - a landmark forum called upon to promote further consolidation of the non-proliferation régime.

The controlled cessation of fissionable material production for military purposes is an essential element also in switching over to the exclusively peaceful use of atomic energy.

The Soviet Union announced that this year it is ceasing the production of highly enriched uranium, that in 1987 it closed down one reactor producing weapons-grade plutonium, and that it plans to shut down a few more such reactors in 1989 and 1990. In his address to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session, the head of the Soviet delegation, Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, said that the Soviet Union had adopted a programme to end production of all plutonium-producing reactors by the year 2000.

Our delegation is under instructions today to inform the General Assembly in greater detail about that programme: In addition to the three reactors for weapons-grade plutonium already shut down near the town of Kyshtym, two more reactors of that type at the same facility will be put out of service within the

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

next year. We plan to put an additional two reactions of that type out of service by the end of 1990. Finally, out of six remaining plutonium-producing reactors, three will have been closed down by 1996 and the last three by the year 2000.

So the Soviet Union has demonstrated in practice and in concrete deeds its willingness to achieve a radical solution to the problem of ending the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes. At the same time, the Soviet Union proposes to all nuclear Powers that preparations be started for concluding an agreement on the verifiable cessation and prohibition of the production of materials; verification of such an agreement could draw upon the abundant experience of applying IAEA safeguards. We are also prepared for a substantive discussion of the non-use for military purposes of nuclear materials released as a result of nuclear disarmament agreements, and we would press for the initiation of work on an appropriate verification mechanism. Moreover, as a step towards conversion in this regard, we propose that right now scientific and technological feasibility studies on using such materials for peaceful purposes be started in this field.

We want to see the Agency's activities playing a central role in expanding international co-operation in the peaceful and safe use of nuclear energy in the future.

The progressive social and economic development of States is intrinsically linked to growing energy needs and to a search for new and ever-more-powerful energy sources. In these circumstances, the generation of electric power at nuclear plants while, at the same time, ensuring the safety of their operation, takes on particular importance. The safety and social and environmental acceptability of nuclear energy plants appear to be a key problem in this respect in a number of countries, not least the Soviet Union. The Chernobyl accident - and

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

the IAEA has made a major contribution to the clean-up operations, for which we are most grateful - has had painful repercussions in people's hearts and minds and has sown the seeds of mistrust in nuclear energy - which is quite natural and understandable from the viewpoint of emotional reasoning.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

It is clear that IAEA can and should have an important role to play in providing rational answers to these questions, which are anything but simple. The Agency possesses sufficient expertise, analytical ability and information to enable it to take an unbiased, balanced approach to these problems and a reasonable approach to the development of nuclear engineering. In this context, we are considering setting up, on the basis of the Chernobyl nuclear plant, an international research centre to study, together with foreign experts, a broad range of issues related to accidents at nuclear power plants and to analyse ways of controlling their consequences. Bilateral research, and specialized co-ordination programmes involving experts from many countries, could be conducted at the centre. The Agency could take on the management of programmes of interest to IAEA.

The Agency is making a substantial contribution to the development of a new generation of safe, more economical reactors, the training of personnel for nuclear power plants, the application of nuclear technologies in medicine, agriculture, hydrology and other areas of the economy, and the dissemination of scientific and technical information.

Based upon its principled policy of co-operation with developing countries, the Soviet Union consistently supports the Agency's transfers of technical aid and actively participates in the implementation of relevant programmes.

We wish to see the development of nuclear power on a safe basis - that is, on the basis of an international régime. In this regard, more intensive efforts are required to resolve problems such as those relating to the prevention of attacks on nuclear facilities and of nuclear terrorism, and international legal regulation of liability for nuclear damage.

The content and tone of most statements made in the general debate at this session of the General Assembly show that the international community is deeply concerned about the deterioration of the world environment. Prevention of

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

environmental catastrophe was singled out as a priority problem in establishing the system of values for mankind's survival. The treatment of nuclear waste is part and parcel of this problem. We welcome the special attention paid by the Agency to the solution of this problem and support the creation of a technical working group, international in character, to draft a code of practice on international operations relating to nuclear waste.

In conclusion, the Soviet delegation wishes to express its satisfaction with the activities of the Agency and their expansion in 1988, and with the report of the Director General, Mr. Hans Blix. We will support the draft resolution on the item.

Mr. PAWLAK (Poland): I take this opportunity to express our delegation's gratitude and appreciation to Mr. Hans Blix for his able presentation of the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for 1988. We followed with close attention the Director General's statement, in which a thorough review of the Agency's activities was presented. My delegation fully shares his positive assessment of the Agency's achievements. I should like to emphasize the importance that Poland attaches to the work of IAEA and our commitment to its established principles and objectives.

Poland traditionally extends its support to the Agency's function of strengthening the régime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons as an important component of the system of measures aimed at preserving peace and increasing confidence among States. My delegation would like to stress also that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons constitutes one of the most important international agreements limiting nuclear armaments. Verification of the implementation of the Treaty is one of the most important tasks of the Agency, which is being fulfilled in an exemplary manner. In this context, the Polish

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

delegation believes that IAEA will also make its traditional contribution to the preparations for the Fourth Review Conference of the parties to the non-proliferation Treaty, which is to be held in 1990.

With respect to the coming Conference, it should be stressed that the universalization of the Treaty and, in general, the strengthening of the non-proliferation régime are prerequisites for broad international co-operation in the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes. On the other hand, we are aware of the need for the full implementation of the Treaty, including article VI thereof. We welcome the headway recently made in this field and believe that a significant move in the desired direction would be the prompt conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. The elements of the Polish plan for strengthening security and reducing armaments in Central Europe, put forward by President Jaruzelski, are aimed in this direction.

With regard to measures conducive to the enhancement of confidence among States, our delegation notes with satisfaction the progress in carrying out the Agency's safeguards programme. We are of the opinion that only a comprehensive and complete system of safeguards can successfully prevent the misuse of atomic energy.

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

Many years of fruitful activities in the field of the peaceful use of atomic energy have gained the Agency international recognition. It is praiseworthy that the IAEA has not fallen prey to various contradictory trends and phenomena of the contemporary world. On the contrary, every State, be it large or small, has benefited from the Agency's work. The IAEA has always played the role of unifier and moderator, being a unique forum for the promotion of co-operation between countries with different levels of achievement in the nuclear field.

Poland is convinced that in this context nuclear safety - the prevention of large-scale radioactive releases - must be one of the dominant issues. Therefore my delegation reiterates its support for the expanded nuclear-safety programme of the Agency.

We are convinced that an international convention on States' liability with regard to damage caused by nuclear accidents, especially large-scale accidents, should be worked out. In this light, my delegation welcomes the IAEA Board's decision to establish an open-ended working group to study all aspects of liability for nuclear damage.

I should like to inform the Assembly that, a month ago, a visit preceding the mission of the IAEA Operational Safety Review Team (OSART) took place at the construction site, in Zarnowiec, of the first Polish nuclear-power plant. This mission found that all the preparatory work had been completed to a high professional standard. At the same time, its members discussed thoroughly with our specialists the best ways of ensuring safe and reliable implementation of further stages of the construction cycle.

My country is very interested in ecological questions. For this reason we welcome with great interest the document reviewing the practical contributions of nuclear energy and of IAEA activities to environmentally sound and sustainable international development. As we know, this document has already gained the

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

endorsement of the Agency's Board. We remain convinced that nuclear power, if it is handled properly, causes - relatively speaking - least damage to the environment. In addition, I want to confirm my country's readiness to share the results of experience gained at one of Warsaw's electricity- and heat-generating plants from the use of radiation technology to purify flue gases by the removal of sulphur and nitrogen oxides.

It is appropriate at this point to note the remarkable progress achieved by the secretariat of the IAEA, and in particular by the Department of Technical Co-operation, towards the more efficient use of the resources allocated for technical assistance.

We in Poland are supplying specialized instruments and services to, and are training specialists from, developing countries. Last year we received 33 specialists, and this year we have granted 10 additional scholarships. These have been put at the Agency's disposal.

In conclusion, I should like to inform the Assembly that Poland is satisfied with the annual report of the IAEA for 1988, as well as with the draft resolution on it.

Mr. MARDOVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): The report on the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) during the year 1988 and the statements of the Director General show convincingly that in the period under review the Agency continued to carry out its activities successfully. There has been a further increase in the authority of the Agency. The very development of nuclear energy stemmed from a reappraisal of earlier decisions and from increased public interest in nuclear problems.

(Mr. Mardovich, Byelorussian SSR)

The Byelorussian SSR believes that there is a need to develop nuclear energy further and, simultaneously, to establish and strengthen an international régime for its safe production and use as well as for the safe handling of radioactive waste materials.

In the Byelorussian SSR there is high regard for the contribution of the IAEA to the establishment of an atmosphere of trust, mutual understanding and co-operation between States. To a significant extent, this has been achieved through the effective application of the monitoring functions of the Agency, which have been perfected over a comparatively short period and, as a result, have ensured the necessary reliability, efficiency, scope of inspection and information.

We note with satisfaction the fact that in 1988 no nuclear material under safeguards was registered as having been diverted for the production of weapons or facilities for nuclear explosions.

As in the past, we attach great importance to technical assistance and co-operation. The recipient countries still need experience, know-how, technology and equipment for the peaceful use of nuclear energy for further social and economic development. The Byelorussian SSR supports such activities and continues to increase its voluntary contributions to the relevant Agency fund. We are also prepared to consider organizing, within the framework of the programme of co-operation, seminars and individual training programmes for specialists in a number of scientific-research institutes of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic, and also to recommend Byelorussian specialists to work, as experts of the Agency, in developing countries.

(Mr. Mardovich, Byelorussian SSR)

At the same time, we are most sincerely grateful to the Agency for the assistance it has lent us in connection with the steps taken to undo the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear station. Priority will be given to the provision of badly needed equipment, such as dosimetric devices. The Agency plans to begin a long-term programme of technical assistance, the implementation of which will enable us to establish effective machinery to monitor the level of radioactivity in the exposed territory.

(Mr. Mardovich, Byelorussian SSR)

It would also be important to implement the USSR proposal to organize at the Chernobyl facility an international scientific research centre for the study of a large number of issues relating to nuclear reactor accidents and their consequences.

As can be seen from the annual report for 1988, along with activities in the sphere of nuclear safeguards, technical assistance, nuclear safety and radiation protection, the Agency has successfully carried out work in other areas, in particular such areas as nuclear energy and the fuel cycle; the application of nuclear technology to medicine, agriculture, and hydrology; the gathering and dissemination of scientific and technological information; liability for nuclear damage; the effect of conventions relating to nuclear accidents, and so on. We believe that the efforts made by the Agency in connection with a comparative study of nuclear and other types of energy from the perspective of their effect on the environment, and its endeavours to enlighten world public opinion on the ecological advantages of nuclear energy, if used safely and securely, deserve the utmost support.

In the future we need to develop and intensify this direction in the Agency's activities. For closer co-ordination in ecological problems connected with nuclear energy, we should in our view do further work on the feasibility of establishing a structure in the Agency for a joint division composed of the United Nations Environment Programme and IAEA. It would also be important to encourage more active participation by the Agency in a broad discussion of world energy and ecological problems, especially in connection with the 1992 United Nations conference on environment and development. More active participation by the Agency in protecting the environment and greater attention to the problems of the interrelationship between the safe use of nuclear energy and the improvement and protection of the environment are in our view the most promising ways and means of restoring public trust in nuclear energy.

(Mr. Mardovich, Byelorussian SSR)

In conclusion, the delegation of the Byelorussian SSR joins those who have already expressed their approval of IAEA's 1988 annual report. We take a positive view of the Agency's activities and we believe that the success achieved is due to the effective work of its Director General, Mr. Hans Blix. We should like once again to congratulate him on his re-election to that important post.

We are certain that, in the future, IAEA will be a reliable instrument for the peaceful and safe use of atomic energy in conditions of consistent non-proliferation of nuclear weaponry.

Mr. ČIANDOGA (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): On behalf of Czechoslovakia, I should like first of all to take this opportunity to congratulate the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Hans Blix, on his interesting and comprehensive statement on the Agency's work, as well as on his re-election to his lofty post in that authoritative international organization. At the same time, I should like to express our gratitude for the report on the activities of IAEA for the year 1988, which covers a broad range of activities under the Agency's aegis. In that respect I should like to assure all those present here, including Mr. Blix, that Czechoslovakia will continue in the future to give its full support and assistance to the Agency as it carries out its broad-based programmes designed to achieve the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes alone and to develop broad-based co-operation. As further evidence of this, I would cite the fact that Czechoslovakia is now a member of the Agency's Governing Council.

In our view, IAEA in its practical activities can serve as an excellent example of the collective search for ways and means to form new models for international co-operation and universal security. In the increasingly favourable

(Mr. Chandoga, Czechoslovakia)

international political situation - where a key role is being played by the limitation of the arms race, nuclear disarmament, and arms control - there is special significance in the experience accumulated by the Agency in that sphere.

One important area in the Agency's activity to promote international peace and security is the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation régime on the basis of the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Czechoslovakia, an adherent to the Treaty from its inception, is giving due attention to the preparations for the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The results achieved at the two previous sessions of the preparatory committee have shown that the Treaty not only serves as a reliable barrier to the use of nuclear weapons but also allows for broad co-operation in the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. In our view, the IAEA safeguards have fully justified themselves. That, however, does not mean that they should not be further developed.

Czechoslovakia firmly supports the efforts to achieve universality of the non-proliferation Treaty. We believe that those countries that have developed nuclear programmes and possess sophisticated nuclear technology should also be parties to the Treaty. We hope that the Fourth Review Conference will help in the achievement of that noble objective. In an attempt to promote the successful convening and outcome of the Conference, Czechoslovakia has strengthened its national working body. In that connection, we appreciate the activities of the IAEA secretariat, which has already prepared a number of materials for the work of the Conference.

In order to comply with the relevant provisions of the Treaty, Czechoslovakia has been firmly striving at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament to achieve a comprehensive ban on nuclear-weapons testing. We shall be prepared to take part in

(Mr. Chandoga, Czechoslovakia)

due course in the work of an international conference to study the possibility of extending the 1963 partial test-ban Treaty to include the banning of nuclear testing underground as well.

Part and parcel of the strengthening of the non-proliferation régime is, we feel, the observance of existing and the establishment of new nuclear-free zones. In that connection, we should like once again to recall the timeliness of the proposal made by the Governments of Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic in April 1987 for the establishment of a nuclear-free corridor in Central Europe. We shall also warmly support any other constructive proposals to establish nuclear-free zones in Northern Europe, the Balkans and other parts of our world.

Along with the entire international community, we were heartened by the results of the talks on nuclear and outer-space weapons between the Foreign Ministers of the USSR and the United States in Wyoming. It is gratifying that they not only strengthened and developed the existing agreements but agreed on supplementing article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty with practical provisions.

(Mr. Chandoga, Czechoslovakia)

An international agreement on a controlled ban on production of fissionable materials could be one reliable element of a new model for security. We are prepared to play an active part in practical work on such an agreement. We very much appreciate the Soviet Union's statement that this year it will ban unilaterally production of high-quality uranium for military purposes, that in 1987 it closed one reactor producing weapons-grade plutonium and plans to close two more such reactors in 1989 and 1990, and that by the year 2000 all such reactors will be closed. This was eloquently explained to us a few moments ago by Vladimir Petrovsky. We are certain that similar steps taken by the other nuclear Powers would be a positive response.

We also support the proposal of the Soviet Union concerning an agreement on the non-use for military purposes of nuclear materials freed as a result of agreements on nuclear disarmament, and on the development of appropriate control machinery. At the same time, a study should be undertaken of the possibility of using those materials for peaceful purposes.

Broad multilateral co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the prevention of misuse of the destructive force of the atom are directly linked to the safe functioning of nuclear energy installations. We fully support the efforts of the IAEA and its Director General, and also of many States members of the Agency to improve operational standards in nuclear power stations. A specific result of those efforts was the development of the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency. With a view to expanding the number of States acceding to those Conventions, Czechoslovakia submitted to the thirty-third session of the General Conference of IAEA an appropriate draft resolution, which, to our great satisfaction, was adopted.

(Mr. Chandoga, Czechoslovakia)

Czechoslovakia is interested in IAEA efforts to work out basic principles of nuclear safety, for inclusion in relevant codes, rules and instructions. They should then be used in practice by States members of IAEA, as emphasized in the Final Document of the Vienna meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

We greatly value the work of the Operational Safety Review Team and are pleased that the review carried out by a team at the Czechoslovak nuclear power station in Dukovany last month showed a high level of servicing and equipment. At the same time, we welcomed some useful organizational comments and recommendations made by the Team on the basis of international experience.

The strengthening of international security in the nuclear sphere requires also measures to prevent nuclear terrorism. We have in mind here first and foremost consistent observance of the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. Czechoslovakia is prepared to take an active part in the work of the relevant technical committee of IAEA.

Due attention has been paid in recent years to international legal solutions to the problem of the responsibility of States for damage resulting from accidents in nuclear power stations. A step in the right direction, we believe, is the work of the IAEA working group on the liability of States for nuclear damage. Czechoslovakia takes a favourable view of the activities of the group and hopes that work will soon be concluded on the legal aspects of the problem.

We believe the agreement between the Governments of Czechoslovakia and Austria on the settlement of issues of mutual interest pertaining to nuclear security and protection against radiation, which will be signed at the end of this year, to be a good example of the solution of complex problems of nuclear security. It provides

(Mr. Chandoga, Czechoslovakia)

for maximum transparency in exchange of information on nuclear installations. We are preparing such an agreement also with the Federal Republic of Germany. We are certain that such close co-operation between neighbouring States will help to bring about a significant improvement in international relations. That is the goal of the Czechoslovak proposal of February 1988 on establishing a zone of trust, co-operation and good-neighbourly relations between the States parties to the Warsaw Pact and the States members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

We are pleased that the work of the Agency has promoted increased faith in nuclear energy. In many States, including Czechoslovakia, it offers clear advantages for the solution of important environmental problems. Czechoslovakia continues to carry out changes in the production and use of fuel and energy. There has been a reduction in the use of coal and the production of energy by traditional procedures. Nuclear power stations last year produced 28.2 per cent of the electric power used in Czechoslovakia. We are convinced that the effective use of nuclear energy can make a significant contribution to world economic and scientific development, help us to achieve a balance in nature and reduce the release of harmful wastes into the atmosphere.

We pay special attention to supplying open, and accurate information to the Czechoslovak public on the advantages of nuclear energy, but at the same time we realize that broader international co-operation in this sphere is necessary. That is where we see prospects for fruitful work by the IAEA.

The activities of the Agency in the area of technical assistance and co-operation are of enormous significance, especially for those countries which are just beginning to develop their nuclear energy programmes. We are prepared, as in previous years, to ensure in Czechoslovakia opportunities for individual and collective study by specialists from developing countries and to provide expert

(Mr. Chandoga, Czechoslovakia)

services and expertise on energy activities. We also believe that it is important for the secretariat of IAEA to pay more attention to improving the qualifications of specialists by means of seminars and courses.

In conclusion, I wish to express once again our deepest gratitude to IAEA for the work done by it in the period under review and our high opinion of the competence of the secretariat of the Agency and its Director General in carrying out their difficult tasks. We hope that the multifaceted activities of the Agency will help to strengthen world peace and security, promote the development of nuclear energy for the good of mankind, and ensuring a situation whereby this great conquest of man and his genius will never be used for purposes of destruction and devastation.

Mr. MGBOKWERE (Nigeria): It gives me great pleasure to warmly thank the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Hans Blix, for the comprehensive report for 1988 and for his very informative statement. His recent appointment as Director General of the Agency for a further term of four years undoubtedly reflects the enormous confidence the States members of the Agency have in him because of his distinguished performance and dedication in the conduct of the Agency's affairs.

My delegation has read with close interest the annual report of the Agency, in IAEA document GC(XXXIII)/873. We are pleased to note the continued emphasis placed by the Agency on nuclear applications. In the area of food and agriculture, developing member States continued to receive assistance to improve their agriculture and food production through nuclear application techniques. We cannot but stress that the problem of feeding the growing populations in the developing countries is often compounded by a high percentage of post-harvest losses. It is our view, therefore, that the extension of the shelf-life of the available food through global development of food irradiation is a vital tool in the fight against hunger.

It is not in doubt that the Agency's technical co-operation activities, which not only cover food and agriculture but also medicine, industry, hydrology, training and provision of equipment and experts, clearly represent the most tangible benefits that most developing States members of the Agency, which for obvious reasons are not yet in a position to share meaningfully in nuclear power activities, derive from the Agency.

The increase in 1988 of the total resources for technical assistance of nearly 10 per cent over 1987 is a welcome development. It is our hope that the Agency will build on this trend and will continue to exert greater efforts in finding acceptable, more assured and predictable ways of financing technical assistance

(Mr. Mgbokwere, Nigeria)

than the present arrangements, embodied in the indicative planning figures, allows. I should, however, like to express my Government's appreciation of the support evidenced by the Governments of Belgium, the United Kingdom and the United States of America in funding Nigeria's footnote a/ projects, including the Biological Insect Control Technique (BICOT), aimed at the eradication of the tse-tse fly from a large cattle-producing area of Nigeria.

Last year the Agency took the opportunity of the thirty-second regular session of the General Conference to convene a preliminary meeting in Vienna to discuss the modalities for establishing a regional co-operative agreement related to research, development and training in nuclear science and technology for the African region along the lines of the existing arrangements for Asia and the Pacific (RCA) and Latin America (ARCAL). We deeply value the lengthy efforts and contributions of the Agency's secretariat in the success of the negotiations held in September 1989 between the Agency and African member States, during the recent thirty-third regular session of the General Conference, to produce a draft agreement as a framework for regional co-operation. We are expecting the IAEA Board of Governors to approve the draft agreement at the earliest possible date in the coming year. We are particularly encouraged by advance declarations of intent on the part of certain industrialized countries to make contributions for projects to be executed under this agreement.

The Director General, in his report, made references to certain resolutions adopted by the Agency's General Conference on matters of special interest to the Agency discussed in the United Nations General Assembly. In this regard, the Director General in his statement devoted very appropriate attention to the issue of environment, which has been a subject of major concern to the international community, particularly during the past year. In the case of nuclear waste, what

(Mr. Mgbokwere, Nigeria)

is uppermost in our mind is the potential hazards associated with radioactive contamination and environmental pollution. The Director General is aware that public confidence in nuclear energy depends largely on the extent to which this issue can be addressed apart from the question of nuclear safety. We welcome the measures the Agency has undertaken in the past year in radioactive-waste management and the handling, treatment, conditioning and storage of radioactive wastes, particularly of spent radioactive sources used in industry, medicine, research and technology.

The Agency was more involved in 1988 in the area of waste management and radiological protection problems of the developing countries. Both the Waste Management Advisory Programmes (WAMAPs) and the Radiation Protection Advisory Teams (RAPATs) undertook several missions to a number of developing countries in 1988 to assist in their radioactive waste management and radiological protection plans and policies. In this regard, Nigeria benefited from the visit last year of a radiation protection team that assessed its radiation protection activities. Following that visit, a long-term co-operation agreement between the Agency and Nigeria is now being finalized.

The Assembly may recall that the issue of dumping of nuclear wastes, or hazardous wastes generally, was a subject of intense debate last year. My delegation notes with satisfaction that following IAEA General Conference resolution GC(XXXI)/RES/490, a representative technical working group of experts was convened in Vienna to formulate a draft code of practice for international transactions involving nuclear wastes. The group went a long way in its first meeting in putting together the contents and structure of a code of practice for transboundary movements of radioactive wastes. It is my delegation's expectation that when completed the practice will command enough support by the member States to become a binding international convention.

(Mr. Mgbokwere, Nigeria)

I wish now to turn to the issue of South Africa's nuclear capabilities. As stated in the IAEA annual report for 1988, now before us, the General Conference of the Agency decided to consider and take a decision on the recommendation of the Board of Governors, contained in its report in document GC(XXXI)/807, to suspend South Africa from the exercise of the privileges and rights of membership, in accordance with article XIX.B of the statute, at the thirty-fourth session of the General Conference.*

It is a matter of deep regret to my delegation that the Agency was not able to take a decision this year and has had to hold it over to its General Conference next year. It is clear that since the IAEA Board of Governors took the historic decision to recommend to the General Conference the suspension of South Africa's exercise of its privileges and rights of membership of the Agency in 1987, the Pretoria régime has resorted to its game of diversionary tactics in order to blunt the will of the Agency's member States to endorse its suspension, by dangling the prospects of acceding to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

As my delegation has said in the past, the non-proliferation Treaty is open to any country that wishes to accede to it. Accession to the Treaty requires neither negotiations nor consultations with the depositary States. The procedure the racist régime is taking in its so-called intention to sign the Treaty is unusual and unnecessary.

* Mr. Lohia (Papua New Guinea), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Mgbokwere, Nigeria)

My delegation is not unaware of the events taking place in and around South Africa. But we have to be extremely cautious in our reading and assessment of these events. We are yet to see concrete measures by the apartheid régime to dismantle the massive burden of oppressive race laws involving hundreds of apartheid laws and regulations. The new leader in Pretoria has to prove not only that he has the inner resources and courage to introduce comprehensive reforms but also to keep them firmly on course to end the apartheid system.

We strongly maintain that since the régime in Pretoria has continued to violate the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter by its apartheid policy, and has continued to seek to promote the non-peaceful use of nuclear activities, we do not see how it can continue to belong to the Agency where universality is practised irrespective of the colour of the skin. We fully share the view that it will take continuing pressures from outside to bring about reforms in South Africa, and the Agency, like several other international organizations, should contribute to the mounting international pressure on South Africa to establish a political and social structure based on the principle of the equality of all its citizens.

In conclusion, my delegation welcomes the steps the Agency has been taking to strengthen international co-operation in the vital areas of nuclear safety and radiological protection. We fully commend the Agency for its remarkable achievements in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and contributing to the efforts to prevent a further spread of nuclear weapons.

With the foregoing remarks we support the draft resolution on the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Mr. AL-ANBARI (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): Allow me at the outset to congratulate Mr. Hans Blix, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), on his re-election to a new term of office. On behalf of my delegation, I wish to thank him for the valuable information contained in his report on the activities of the Agency for 1988. We also wish to thank the Agency's secretariat for their positive efforts which were reflected in the Agency's work and achievements in its various tasks, notwithstanding the difficulties it is facing, foremost among which is the financial crisis owing to tardy payment by certain States of their assessed contributions.

It is impossible at the present time to deal with all the activities and programmes of the Agency in 1988 in expanding the use of nuclear energy among member States. Consequently, I shall confine myself to issues of special significance, first and foremost the use of nuclear energy to generate electricity, a matter which figures prominently among the priorities of all countries, including the developing countries that need electric power to accelerate their development programmes. In this respect, the Agency made a substantial contribution by providing expertise through missions, technical assistance and training, and various reports on nuclear safety standards.

It is also relevant to refer to the paramount importance attached by the Agency to assisting the member countries in establishing regional and national networks for monitoring and controlling radiation, especially after the Chernobyl incident which underscored the importance of creating such networks.

At its thirty-third session held in September 1989 the General Conference of the IAEA adopted two resolutions on the nuclear capabilities of Israel and South Africa and their refusal to subject their nuclear installations to the

(Mr. Al-Anbari, Iraq)

Agency's safeguards and to sign the non-proliferation Treaty, despite calls by the international community - especially the Security Council, the General Assembly and the IAEA - to do so. These two régimes' persistence in flouting international resolutions and in refusing to renounce the policy of nuclear armaments jeopardizes regional and world security. Therefore, we call on the Agency to take this into account and withhold any assistance to Israel that may help it develop its nuclear capabilities. Similarly, we call on all peace-loving States in the world to follow suit.

In conclusion, as an expression of our all-round support of the IAEA and the vital functions it is carrying out, we endorse the draft resolution contained in document A/44/L.18.

Mr. REESE (Australia): The Australian delegation would like to express too its appreciation for the statement made by the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Hans Blix, and for the report of the IAEA.

We also welcome Mr. Blix's reappointment by the Board of Governors of the Agency for a further term of four years. It is a vote of confidence in the contribution Mr. Blix has made to the work of the IAEA, and we look forward to the further contribution he will make in the period ahead.

Australia has a very direct interest in the Agency's work because of our commitment to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and our responsibilities as a uranium exporter. Central to that commitment and those responsibilities is our continuing strong support for the non-proliferation Treaty and, equally, our support for the role the Agency plays in the Treaty.

We regard the Treaty and the IAEA safeguards as fundamental to preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. The Treaty and the Agency remain vital forces for international security.

(Mr. Reese, Australia)

Agency safeguards of course are the means by which the fulfilment of States' obligations under the Treaty not to misuse nuclear material are verified.

Both the Treaty and IAEA safeguards are undergoing a period of change and challenge.

Next year's Review Conference of the non-proliferation Treaty will take place at a time of growing pressures towards proliferation in several regions of the world.

(Mr. Reese, Australia)

Technological developments may reduce the cost and difficulty of developing nuclear weapons. A small number of States, including some with significant nuclear facilities, continue to refuse to join the Treaty. Some Treaty members have so far failed to conclude NPT safeguards agreements with the Agency.

Difficult challenges also lie ahead for the Agency and its safeguards régime. One such challenge arises from the strict financial restraint that member States demand of the Agency, as of themselves in their national budgets. Australia commends the Agency on the efficiency improvements it has made in response to resource constraints.

Another challenge to safeguards is the increasing quantity of material subject to safeguards, the growing complexity of the nuclear-fuel cycle and rapid technological change in fuel-cycle processes. The Agency is well aware of these developments and is working to ensure that they do not outdistance safeguards capabilities.

A further challenge is enhancing public confidence in and improving understanding of safeguards. The safeguards system must not only work, it must be seen to work. It is a fact that anything to do with nuclear activities, safeguards included, will be regarded by many people with suspicion. That means that the explanation of safeguards operations must be accurate, clear and convincing. The Agency has a major role to play in that regard. I welcome the recent innovations it has made to get the safeguards message across to the public more effectively.

Australia also values and supports other areas of IAEA operations, particularly technical assistance. Australia has pledged \$A950,000 to the Technical Assistance and Co-operation Fund, which represents full payment of our assessed voluntary contribution for 1990. In addition, Australia will continue to make a substantial extrabudgetary contribution to the Regional Co-operative

(Mr. Reese, Australia)

Agreement for Asia and the Pacific (RCA). In the present Australian financial year our contributions to the RCA will total approximately \$A407,000, covering a range of project activity.

Australia also continues to contribute to Agency expert and advisory groups across a range of issues.

Let me say in conclusion that the fundamental value to the world of the IAEA's activities and the efficiency with which it goes about them have earned the organization high regard in the international community. The Agency can count on Australia's continued support in the challenging time ahead.

Mr. MONTAÑO (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation takes pleasure in expressing its congratulations to Mr. Hans Blix, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), on his detailed presentation of the Agency's activities. We should also like to acknowledge the important content of the annual report submitted to the General Assembly, which evidences his dedication to pursuing the goal of developing nuclear power for peaceful purposes.

This is obviously an appropriate occasion to reiterate to Mr. Blix the satisfaction of the Government of Mexico at the new mandate he received from the thirty-third General Conference of the Agency in September of this year. The Director General's management of the Agency is widely recognized, and we would urge him to continue with the same dedication and enthusiasm that has characterized his activities in his post. He may rely on the support of the Government of Mexico at all times.

As in earlier years, the report submitted by the Director General enables us to observe the growing importance of the peaceful application of nuclear power to every one of us. In such diverse fields as electric-power generation, agriculture, food and medicine, nuclear power plays a key and daily growing part. It is

(Mr. Montaña, Mexico)

clear that in this context the IAEA has played a highly relevant role and that it will enhance its participation in all activities designed to employ the atom for the well-being of all peoples.

The Agency has to face important challenges in the immediate future, and we believe that the Director General deserves our support in meeting them. At a time when agreement exists as to the profound changes taking place in international society, there is a need to adapt the Agency's strategy to the new situations facing us. In that connection, my delegation feels that there are four areas in which the Agency's activities should be adjusted.

First, we believe that the Agency should conduct an in-depth and far-reaching informational campaign on the potential of the peaceful uses of nuclear power. We must replace erroneous conceptions with a sense of balance and objectivity. It is important for everyone to be aware of the benefits that can derive today from the peaceful uses of the atom, which can have an effect on our everyday lives - for example in advances in food-production or medical technology. There is an urgent need to demystify nuclear power so that erroneous notions that limit its accessibility can be eliminated and so that the safety of its utilization can be improved. In other words, the Agency should disseminate information that can enable us better to understand the opportunities offered by the peaceful uses of nuclear power.

A second challenge is the need to improve the safeguards system. There is a need to create a differentiated system that makes distinctions between the various programmes or goals set by different States in the peaceful application of nuclear energy. It does not seem appropriate to rely on uniform models, given circumstances that are essentially different. On the other hand, it is essential that we seek with renewed determination to universalize the safeguards system. We

(Mr. Montaffo, Mexico)

realize the political problems that entails, but we think the time has come to move firmly towards that end. Attaining that goal would represent one of the most concrete and positive achievements in the new climate of détente in today's world.

We welcome the information in the Agency's annual report to the effect that in the past year no situations were detected to suggest any diversion of nuclear materials to non-peaceful uses. Another positive advance is the fact that with the agreement reached with China whereby that country will submit some of its facilities to the safeguards system the Agency is now able to apply safeguards to the nuclear systems of all five nuclear Powers.

A third aspect, which Mexico has often emphasized, concerns strengthening the Agency's technical-co-operation programmes. We are gratified to note that much has been done in that connection. One example is the Mediterranean fruit-fly programme, which has yielded important results for Mexico. We note that during the past year the developing world has shared to a greater degree in the benefits of that co-operation, and we believe that that trend deserves the broadest support.

Since the most important challenge mankind faces as it looks towards the future is overcoming the underdevelopment that besets the majority of the inhabitants of our planet, there is a need to adapt the Agency's ability to contribute to overcoming that problem. It is not enough to praise the marvels that can come about through the peaceful use of the atom in improving our lives. It is also urgent that we have the capacity to use that important resource. In that connection we are convinced that the Agency should restructure its priorities so that technical co-operation activities can be given the greatest possible support. To that end, mechanisms should be created to guarantee the financing of such activities and ensure their availability.

(Mr. Montafio, Mexico)

The delegation of Mexico considers the relationship between the IAEA and the environmental problems all our countries are facing to be of very great importance.

First, stricter measures must be taken in respect of nuclear wastes. There should not be the slightest doubt about our fierce opposition to the transboundary movement of these wastes, which are a threat to the environment. In particular, we must insist that the developing world not be used as a dumping ground for them.

Secondly, the use of nuclear power will obviously be a central element in the multilateral discussion of the environment and development. We must leave behind prejudices against this resource; but at the same time we should take advantage of the increased awareness of the importance of protecting the environment to strengthen the mechanisms which ensure that it is used safely. My delegation believes that the Agency should devote its attention to analysing the relationship between nuclear power and the environment in order to provide input to the international debate on the subject.

The Mexican delegation is aware of the difficult task Mr. Blix has before him as he begins a new term as the head of the Agency. However, we recognize also that his task gives him an opportunity to make a significant contribution to the well-being of all of us, particularly in the developing countries. In this regard, we reiterate our support for Mr. Blix and his organization, in the conviction that all the nations gathered here will do the same.

Mr. TORNUDD (Finland): My delegation congratulates the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Hans Blix, on his clear and precise statement to the General Assembly. His statement reflected very well the atmosphere of the businesslike and efficient approach that prevails within the Agency.

(Mr. Tornudd, Finland)

It is becoming increasingly clear that the question of environmental effects can no longer be treated separately from the question of energy production, notably the production of electricity. This interdependence was acknowledged at an early stage but, as so often happens within the human community, efforts to tackle the problems involved have been initiated after prolonged hesitation. Today we must admit that we face massive damage to our environment. Leading environmentalists are quoted as saying that it may already be too late to repair what we, through carelessness or ignorance, or even deliberately in short-sighted pursuit of economic benefits, have destroyed. On the other hand, we realize that global energy production, mainly in the form of electric-power generation, must increase from present levels if an acceptable standard of living is to be achieved in all countries. The effects on our environment of this increase in energy production can be calculated using various scenarios involving different energy sources. The projections are, to say the least, worrying. The recent World Energy Conference adopted a number of resolutions that bear witness to the increased awareness of the urgency of this problem. It is gratifying to note that the Conference largely seemed to side with the International Atomic Energy Agency in its opinions.

The question of energy versus environment should have an important place in the deliberations within the United Nations. However, there seem to exist many different opinions about the way to tackle the problems. As to the role of nuclear power in this picture, we can note that the General Assembly annually affirms its confidence in the work done by the Agency in the field of nuclear energy and urges all States to strive for co-operation in carrying out its work. This reflects strong confidence in nuclear energy, but it is only part of the picture. As far as my delegation is concerned, we note with satisfaction that the Agency examines its own role in a broad context of energy policy and concern for the environment.

(Mr. Tornudd, Finland)

This approach is easily discernible, for example in the symposium on electricity and environment which will be hosted by Finland and sponsored by the IAEA and a number of international bodies in 1991. The requirement laid down in its statute that the Agency shall further the peaceful use of nuclear energy is clearly not an end in itself but only a part of the total energy spectrum.

A few weeks ago, the General Conference of the IAEA endorsed the Agency's budget for 1990. The growth over the previous budget was 0.2 per cent; yet the Agency is required to assume steadily increasing responsibilities. Zero growth can already be seen to be hampering the Agency's activities.

That is also the case, unfortunately, for safeguards activities, to which my country attaches the greatest importance. Faultless functioning of the safeguards system in all its aspect is a requirement the Agency must be able to fulfil. We can see that the financial constraints have limited an important sector of the safeguards system: safeguards for non-military nuclear activities in the nuclear-weapon States. Through skilful management of existing resources, the Agency was, again, able to carry through its verification programme in non-nuclear-weapon States - an achievement for which the Agency should be commended. However, safeguards activities will grow considerably over the next few years. That is evident already from the number of nuclear plants reaching completion. Furthermore, a completely new form of safeguards might be called for in the future: verification of compliance with nuclear disarmament agreements. When such services are called for, the Agency should be able to comply. Within the present constrained framework, that would not be the case. In our opinion, the Director General in his statement today has quite rightly drawn our attention to the difficulties in the application of safeguards encountered by the Agency because of the lack of resources.

(Mr. Tornudd, Finland)

The Agency's work in the field of nuclear safety is progressing satisfactorily. This is a field where intensive international co-operation is necessary, and the Agency has achieved excellent results in co-ordinating this co-operation. Although safety standards, of necessity, must be based on national considerations, the Agency's role is of the utmost importance.

The Agency is the depositary of a number of international conventions relating to nuclear accidents and damage. It is to be hoped that these conventions will never be called into use, but their existence is in itself reassuring. The conventions reflect the feeling of common responsibility that prevails in the international community. It is to be hoped that the same spirit will guide the Agency's working group appointed to study all aspects of liability for nuclear damage. Finland strongly supports these efforts and is actively participating in the group's work.

I want to touch now upon another important field of the Agency's activities: technical assistance and co-operation. The Agency's work to streamline these activities by introducing longer planning periods, new evaluation methods and improved data handling seem to have led to added efficiency in programme implementation. We believe the readiness of Member States to support technical assistance and co-operation through voluntary contributions reflects the appreciation they feel for the Agency's efficiency in the management of this sector. Momentum should be maintained and constant attention paid to possibilities for further development of project implementation methods.

(Mr. Tornudd, Finland)

Let me conclude by congratulating Mr. Hans Blix and all his staff on a successful year in the service of the international community. The Government of Finland appreciates their work and will continue to support the Agency in all its activities.

Mr. KIRSCH (Canada): It gives me great pleasure to express my delegation's appreciation of the report which the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has submitted to the Assembly. Canada has consistently supported IAEA and I wish to take this opportunity to reaffirm this support. The Agency plays several important roles. First, through its safeguards system, it serves as a guarantor of the international nuclear non-proliferation régime, and it also has the mandate, in the words of its statute,

"to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world." (article II)

I also wish to take this opportunity to extend my delegation's warmest congratulations to the Director General of the Agency, Mr. Hans Blix, on his reappointment for another term. His qualities of leadership and commitment are without question outstanding, and we wish him all possible success and personal satisfaction in his coming term. Under his leadership the Agency's record and achievements have served our common cause with unprecedented distinction.

My delegation welcomes the emphasis which Mr. Blix placed on environmental issues in his excellent remarks earlier today. My delegation was also pleased with his report to the General Assembly on IAEA's contribution to the achievement of sustainable development. This represented the response of the Agency to the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development. In this connection, we also note with pleasure that the Agency is participating fully in the United Nations system-wide medium-term environment programme. It is also collaborating

(Mr. Kirsch, Canada)

in the programmes of other United Nations agencies, including the atmospheric transport model evaluation study of the World Meteorological Organization and the analysis of marine pollutants undertaken by the United Nations Environment Programme.

Canada wishes to express its satisfaction with the recognition by the Paris economic summit of the fact that nuclear power plays an important role in limiting the output of greenhouse gases. The Director General of IAEA referred in his remarks to the World Energy Conference held in Montreal in September of this year. That Conference concluded that as the demand for electricity continues to grow in the industrialized countries nuclear power will increasingly be viewed as an indispensable means of producing economic and safe electric power. The World Energy Conference also recognized the urgent need to address the critical issue of public acceptance of nuclear power. Canada welcomes the increased emphasis being given to this issue by many countries around the globe, as well as by the Agency itself, and we will continue to work closely with IAEA in this area.

Mr. Blix's comments have highlighted the importance of fixing a locus within the United Nations system for the consideration of energy questions. Once such locus has been identified, Canada believes that one of its first priorities must be to undertake a comparative assessment of energy sources with respect to their costs, effectiveness and environmental impact. In order to be credible, such an assessment should not be carried out by a body already closely associated with one or other of the forms of energy to be assessed.

My delegation believes that the Technical Working Group charged with the development of a code of practice for international transactions involving nuclear waste is proving to be a constructive forum for substantive discussion. Canada is contributing to the work of this group through the participation of

(Mr. Kirsch, Canada)

Mr. David Smythe, who was appointed its Chairman on the occasion of its first meeting. We commend the efforts of the group to elaborate a code of principles for the proper care, control, management and disposal or long-term storage of radioactive wastes, and we support its objective of completing its work in time for the General Conference of IAEA in September 1990. For Canada, the work of the Working Group represents the best possible means by which the General Assembly can contribute to the prevention of problems which might arise from international transactions involving nuclear wastes.

Another important activity of the International Atomic Energy Agency is its ongoing consideration of the complex question of liability for nuclear damage resulting from nuclear accidents causing damage in more than one jurisdiction. Canada will be taking an active part in the Agency's consideration of this difficult issue with a view to ensuring that victims of nuclear accidents with transboundary effects, be they individuals or Governments, are effectively compensated.

Many States Members of the United Nations which are parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons are engaged in preparations for the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty, which will be held next year in Geneva. Last month the second Preparatory Committee successfully completed its agenda, which included the discussion of three excellent papers submitted by IAEA. As the preparations for the Fourth Review Conference continue, it is important that we continue to bear in mind the close links between the non-proliferation Treaty and the work of IAEA, particularly in the areas of safeguards and technical assistance. In reviewing the annual report of IAEA for 1988, Canada was pleased to note that, as in previous years, the Agency did not detect any diversions of significant amounts of safeguarded nuclear material from peaceful activities.

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(Mr. Kirsch, Canada)

My delegation is pleased to express its approval of the annual report of IAEA for 1988 and hopes that all delegations present will join in adopting by consensus the draft resolution now before us.

Mr. HASMY (Malaysia): Let me begin by expressing my delegation's appreciation to Mr. Hans Blix, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for his comprehensive presentation of the Agency's annual report for 1988. The report attests to the important role the Agency has been playing since its founding in the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and non-proliferation.

I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Blix on his reappointment for another term, which is a clear expression of the continued confidence of member States in his leadership of the Agency.

Malaysia attaches great importance to the Agency's programme of work in the peaceful application of nuclear energy. We are convinced that nuclear science and technology could help alleviate many of the problems faced by the developing countries, especially in the areas of food and agriculture and human health.

Nuclear techniques are used to investigate environmental and ecological changes, to assess pollutants from coal-burning and industrial processes, to study marine pollution, to investigate the fate of pesticide residues and to optimize the use of nitrogenous fertilizers. These are just some of the examples of the contribution of nuclear science and technology to the protection of the environment. We note with satisfaction that about 17 per cent of the Agency's regular budget is for environment-related activities and that about 87 per cent of its technical co-operation projects in the area of nuclear energy and safety may be classified as environmental.

Malaysia is encouraged by this trend and is grateful to the Agency for assisting the developing countries, including Malaysia, in the application of these techniques to solve some of the environmental problems. However, more should be done in this area, and we call upon the developed countries to shoulder their share

(Mr. Hasmy, Malaysia)

of the responsibility for solving this global problem by stepping up their financial support to expedite the transfer of this technology to the developing countries.

It is beyond doubt that nuclear technology has played an important role in economic and societal development, and there can be no return from that position. However, scepticism and even outright opposition continue to be expressed with regard to the use of nuclear energy for power generation or for food preservation. Such opposition arises either from lack of information on the relative merits of nuclear energy or from genuine concern about the adverse effects to public health and the proliferation of nuclear materials.

To address this issue of public acceptance, there must be an effective public information strategy, in addition to greater efforts by the international community to achieve the highest standards of nuclear safety. In this regard, there must be early acceptance by all members of the international community of common standards on nuclear safety and the establishment and early agreement on a comprehensive liability régime for nuclear damage, including both civil and State liability.

While Malaysia is satisfied with the progress made by the Working Group which was set up to study all aspects of liability for nuclear damage, we regret the tendency of some countries to downplay the efforts to elaborate on the issues relating to State liability. We appeal to all concerned to exert their political will in supporting enhanced multilateral co-operation in the formulation of a comprehensive international liability régime which gives equal emphasis to civil and State liability.

In addressing the issue of public acceptance, we must also come to grips with another major area of increasing concern to the international community - that of indiscriminate dumping of toxic industrial wastes, including nuclear wastes. In

(Mr. Hasmy, Malaysia)

this regard, I should like to mention that this problem and the problem of environmental degradation in general were addressed by the recently concluded Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Kuala Lumpur, which adopted a special declaration on the environment, called the Langkawi Declaration, which, inter alia, called for

"the strengthening of international action to ensure the safe management and disposal of hazardous wastes and to reduce transboundary movements and particularly to prevent dumping in developing countries".

Another important measure to gain public confidence in nuclear energy is to strengthen the non-proliferation régime. In this respect, the Agency's safeguards programme is a major contributing factor in the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. However, it is disheartening that almost a third of the countries parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, including a number of countries with active nuclear programmes, have yet to conclude safeguards agreements with the Agency. Such a situation is unacceptable and contradicts efforts to create greater public confidence in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We therefore urge those countries to conclude the safeguards agreements without delay. This is particularly pertinent as we prepare for the Fourth Review Conference of the parties to the non-proliferation Treaty. Malaysia believes that the concluding of these safeguards agreements by States parties to the Treaty is vital if we are to strengthen and sustain the Treaty's validity.

To a large extent the future of nuclear energy depends on how we respond to the questions now preoccupying public opinion. It is through the concerted efforts and the political will of the international community in addressing these issues of public concern that we can ensure the continuing contribution of nuclear energy for the benefit of mankind.

Mr. WATSON (United States of America): The United States is pleased once again to join in commending the Director General for a fine annual report, covering the activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) during 1988. We are especially pleased also to offer our congratulations to the Director General on his recent appointment to a third four-year term of office at the Agency's helm. Under his able guidance, the Agency has steered a steady course in promoting the peaceful use of atomic energy, while striving successfully to prevent the diversion of civil nuclear materials and technology to any military purpose. The annual report for 1988 clearly demonstrates the continuity, the constancy of purpose and the programmatic effectiveness that have characterized the Agency under the Director General's management for the last eight years, and which we are sure will also mark the Agency's next four years under his continued guidance and direction. The United States, for its part, pledges to maintain its firm support for the IAEA, and to seek to strengthen its role in the world as we look forward to the challenges of the decade ahead.

The annual report for 1988, as recently approved by the IAEA's General Conference, shows modest but sustained growth in the use of nuclear power, a nearly 10 per cent increase in technical assistance to member States and a further expansion in the application of Agency safeguards against diversions to non-peaceful uses. Most important, of course, the Agency is in a position to affirm once more that no such diversions have occurred. It is by providing assurances of non-diversion that the IAEA plays its principal role in helping to preserve global peace and security, serving as one of the most important institutional barriers to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. This must continue to be the Agency's first priority, commanding the unwavering commitment and support of all members of the international community.

(Mr. Watson, United States)

The United States welcomes the report's mention of the conclusion of an agreement between the IAEA and China, implementing China's voluntary offer to place its peaceful facilities under safeguards. We look forward to the prompt conclusion of Agency safeguards agreements with all parties to the non-proliferation Treaty - especially those with active indigenous nuclear programmes.

The IAEA's system of safeguards is the very foundation of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, for without verifiable assurances against hostile use, the tremendous potential of the peaceful atom can never be fully realized. Second only to this primary requirement of assuring non-diversion, we face the need to ensure the safety, the reliability and the environmental acceptability of activities involving nuclear energy. Specific events in the last few years, as well as a growing general concern about our planetary ecosystem, have brought this issue to our attention as never before.

Safety is in the first instance a national responsibility but the IAEA offers an invaluable service in providing advice and facilitating the development of national safety programmes and policies under the sovereign control of its member States. In fulfilment of this mandate, we are pleased to note that in 1988 the Agency reviewed the national infrastructures for radiation protection in 12 countries, conducted operational safety reviews at power plants in six countries, and visited five countries to assess the safety of their research reactors.

Other safety-related efforts of particular significance include continued co-operation with the World Meteorological Organization on the use of the Global Telecommunications System under the new conventions on notifications of nuclear accidents and for emergency assistance. The United States urges all member States to adhere to these conventions, and encourages all parties to the conventions to

(Mr. Watson, United States)

designate their national points of contact and to complete any other arrangements necessary to ensure adequate responses to emergencies that may arise.

The United States also strongly supports the IAEA's plans to update its recommendations on the physical protection of nuclear materials, based on deliberations involving the secretariat and interested member States. These new guidelines will reflect recent developments and related advances in this area, and thus ensure continued access by the Agency's members to the most relevant advice available on this subject.

Also important are ongoing Agency efforts to identify gaps in coverage and suggest further measures for adoption to provide adequately for liability for nuclear damage, building on the foundation laid by the joint protocol on nuclear liability, adopted a year ago last month. The United States supports the full elaboration of the civil liability régime prior to attempting to apply other approaches to liability before their necessity or desirability are clearly demonstrated.

Proper handling of the by-products of nuclear activities is also a major safety concern. Among the Agency's many broad-based efforts to promote the safe and environmentally sound disposal of radioactive waste, the work now in progress on developing a code of practice for international transfers or disposals is of special interest.

The United States is gratified to see the continuing growth in the Agency's technical co-operation and assistance programmes. Total resources for these activities in 1988 increased by nearly 10 per cent over the previous year, thanks in large measure to the flexibility afforded by voluntary contributions, while the overall budget based on assessed contributions maintained the principle of zero real growth. For most of the Agency's members, it is perhaps the application of

(Mr. Watson, United States)

nuclear techniques in medicine, agriculture, the environment and related areas that are of greatest immediate interest in making the benefits of the peaceful atom available to their peoples. The Agency's technical co-operation programmes make this possible, with the indispensable support of contributions for technical assistance.

It seems fitting to close with a possibly presumptuous preview of the Agency's 1989 report, which is not yet written. Heightened sensitivity to the impact on the atmosphere of fossil-fuel-fired electrical power production is renewing long dormant world-wide interest in the promise and potential of nuclear power. It would not be too daring to predict that next year's report will devote some attention to the prospect of limiting greenhouse gas emissions by expanding the use of nuclear power. Indeed, the recent session of the Agency's General Conference included an extended technical discussion of the new and improved reactor technologies that may help to make this possible. That discussion concluded by noting that the technological future of nuclear power, bright as it is, cannot be realized without equally good prospects for the public acceptance of and confidence in these promising improvements and developments. The security of safeguards and safety in the broadest sense must be assured; and to a very great extent the world looks to the IAEA to perform these tasks. We know that it will continue to prove equal to them.

Mr. MAKAREVITCH (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic has high regard for the role played by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in deepening international co-operation in the field of the peaceful uses of atomic energy, guaranteeing the safe development of nuclear energy and preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The report submitted by the Director General,

(Mr. Makarevitch, Ukrainian SSR)

Mr. Blix, gives many details about the various tasks performed by the Agency which attest clearly to the enormous possibilities and benefits that derive from peaceful international co-operation in the development of science and technology for creative purposes. We would like to thank Mr. Blix for his lucid introduction.

Today the Agency is performing its tasks at a time of positive change in the international situation. For the first time in history a process of real reduction of nuclear weapons is under way. All this strengthens the political and material guarantees that the energy of the atom will be used exclusively for peaceful purposes in the interests of development.

At the same time, the international community has no grounds to be complacent. The nuclear threat has just been staved off, it has not been eliminated.

The job done by the Agency is growing all the time in the field of strengthening the non-proliferation régime. The role of the Agency in providing and implementing a system of safeguards is recognized by all since that system effectively and reliably ensures that nuclear material will not be used for producing nuclear weapons. The Agency is a prototype for providing a system of inspection measures to monitor compliance with future agreements in the field of the elimination of nuclear weapons, such as the agreement on the cessation and prevention of the production of fissionable materials for military purposes proposed to the nuclear Powers by the Soviet Union.

A key role in strengthening the non-proliferation régime is played by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The maintenance and strengthening of that régime and making it universal are important pre-conditions for providing for the stable process of nuclear disarmament and expanding the scope to include more weapons. This was particularly stressed at the Kiev seminar, held

(Mr. Makarevitch, Ukrainian SSR)

under United Nations auspices in September, on many multilateral measures for strengthening trust and preventing war.

We are convinced that the Fourth Review Conference to be held next year will have a favourable impact on the process of resolving the priority questions of nuclear disarmament and will help to expand international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

We attach great importance to the work done by the Agency in providing safeguards for the use of nuclear materials. These safeguards are closely linked with strengthening the non-proliferation régime and the creation of an atmosphere of trust in inter-State relations. As is clear from the report, the monitoring work done by the Agency has been expanded. The system of safeguards is being consistently improved and effectively and reliably ensures that nuclear material is not diverted from peaceful uses to the potential production of nuclear weapons. Together with the effective guarantees of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, an important contribution to universal security would be to continue the formation of international machinery for providing for the safe development and functioning of nuclear energy.

(Mr. Makarevitch, Ukrainian SSR)

Mankind can enjoy the advantages of nuclear energy only if atomic power stations are safe - as safe as possible. We support the Agency's efforts to fulfil the provisions of the Vienna Conventions on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency, which came into force as the result of the active process of ratification. If the number of parties to these important instruments increases, there will be an increase also in the community's confidence regarding the ability to overcome the potential danger of a nuclear accident.

A comprehensive approach to questions of international security in the nuclear field requires the working out of a reliable system of measures to prevent various forms of nuclear terrorism and attacks on nuclear facilities. We also support the speedy solution in the open-ended working group here of the remaining questions of civilian and State responsibility for nuclear damage.

In all these fields, the Agency must play a most active role. It is clear that the reliability and safety of nuclear energy is the basic question that will determine the future of this sector. It is from that standpoint that the programme for the development of nuclear energy in the Ukrainian SSR has been reviewed and qualitative and quantitative changes made in the light of the Chernobyl accident.

Today we are giving careful thought to the economic, ecological and social aspects of the construction of nuclear plants in our country. A decision has thus been taken not to rebuild reactors 5 and 6 as well as the second phase of the Chernobyl plant, and work has been halted in the Chigirin plant, the Odessa plant, and the Kharkov plant; we are seriously considering whether to continue work on building the Crimean plant, since the sites chosen do not fully meet the safety standards and are not acceptable to public opinion in the Ukrainian SSR.

The Government of the Ukrainian SSR has worked out a draft State programme to eliminate in 1990 to 1995 the consequences of the Chernobyl accident. That

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programme envisages additional public health measures to improve the material and social well-being of the people living in the area who experienced radioactive pollution. These measures include the resettlement of citizens, the building of houses, public facilities, schools, and so forth. Steps have also been taken substantially to improve the safety of working stations by increasing the effectiveness of the accident-protection systems, as well as other technical steps.

There is an increasing need to train people who work in nuclear plants. All deviations from the normal working régimes of plants are being analysed and in each case steps are being taken to prevent a repetition of accidents. Since the Chernobyl accident, no case of serious violation has been noted in the work of our reactors that could cause an accident.

We support implementation of the programme of the Operational Safety Review Teams (OSART), and we commend those teams for the quality of the services they provide. In December last year, we hosted an OSART mission at the Rovno plant. The specialists in the group concluded that the ecological situation at the plant was up to standard, and they made a number of useful recommendations.

The work done by the Agency in transmitting experience, know-how and technology as well as equipment under the Technical Assistance Programme, primarily to the developing countries, is a major way of promoting broad-based use of peaceful nuclear energy on an international scale. We support the plans for developing this work further through the Voluntary Fund for Technical Assistance and Co-operation. The Ukrainian SSR makes regular contributions to that Fund. Our voluntary contribution in national currency for 1990 is equivalent to \$564,000.

The Agency's work has successfully continued in other areas also, including the nuclear fuel cycle and radioactive waste management, the collection and dissemination of scientific information, and the use of nuclear methods in various sectors of the economy.

(Mr. Makarevitch, Ukranian SSR)

The last area I have mentioned is a matter of priority for many developing countries since the broad-based use of sources of ionizing radiation in agriculture, medicine, hydrology and so forth is a real factor in their ongoing development. The Agency's growing focus on questions such as comparisons between nuclear and other types of energy from the point of view of their impact on the environment and the dissemination of information to people on the ecological advantages of nuclear energy, so long as it is used safely, deserves full support. The Agency could become even more involved in settling problems relating to the social acceptability of nuclear energy and the attitude of public opinion towards the use of nuclear energy. The Agency has the necessary expertise and the analytical, informational and great intellectual potential to do that.

Having touched on the question of the Agency's co-ordinating role in implementing a number of research programmes, we should like to draw attention to our country's recent proposal, which met with a positive reception from States members of the Agency - concerning the possibility of establishing an international research centre at the Chernobyl plant to study a broad range of questions connected with electric power and plant accidents and eliminating the consequences of such accidents. The centre could, for example, carry out joint studies on a bilateral basis and special co-ordinating programmes, with the participation of specialists from many countries. The agency too could play a part in setting up the centre and could act as co-ordinator of the various studies.

In conclusion we should like to join other delegations in voicing approval of the IAEA's annual report for 1998. We fully associate ourselves with the draft resolution on this question introduced by Japan. We think that the Agency's successful work is directly related to the effective activities of Mr. Hans Blix, the Director General of the Agency. We are completely satisfied with his work and

are happy that he has been reappointed to this responsible post for a further term of four years.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/44/L.18.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt that draft resolution?

Draft resolution A/44/L.18 was adopted (resolution 44/13).

The PRESIDENT: I shall now call on representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote.

May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. COSTA FILHO (Brazil): Brazil joined the consensus on draft resolution A/44/L.18 on the understanding that such action does not modify or prejudge the positions it has been taking in the appropriate bodies.

Mr. JACOB (Israel): My delegation did not wish to break the consensus on draft resolution A/44/L.18. However, had there been a vote paragraph by paragraph, my delegation would have voted against the last preambular paragraph.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: I have been informed that the Fifth Committee has not concluded its review of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/44/L.17 on agenda item 32, "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security", and that it will therefore be necessary to allow more time for the Committee to carry out this review. In the light of that situation the consideration of this item in the plenary Assembly has to be postponed to a date that will be announced in the Journal.

The meeting rose at 6.30 p.m.