

STATEMENT BY THE AFRICAN GROUP DELIVERED BY AMBASSADOR H.E. SELMA ASHIPALA-MUSAVYI: PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA, AT THE JUNE IAEA BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING, 11-15 2007

Chairperson,

1. At the outset, the African Group associates itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished Chairperson of the G-77 and China, Ambassador Sayed Galal Eldin Elamin.
2. On behalf of the African Group, I would like to express our appreciation to the Director General, Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, for his introductory statement touching upon the main items on the agenda of the present session of the Board of Governors.

AGENDA ITEM 3: ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2006

Chairperson,

3. The African Group would like to express its appreciation to the Secretariat for the preparation of the Annual Report for 2006, as contained in the document GOV/2007/19.

Chairperson,

4. The Group would like to express its appreciation to the Agency for the activities carried out under the three pillars namely Technical Co-operation, Safety and Security and Verification. The African Group reaffirms the need to maintain the balance between the promotional and other statutory activities of the Agency.
5. The Group notes that at the end of 2006, there were 435 nuclear power reactors in operation worldwide, representing approximately 370 gigawatts (GW(e)) of generating capacity and supplying about 16% of the world's electricity.
6. The Group notes that the demand for energy around the world continues to increase rapidly, with the latest projections by the IAEA estimating that at current consumption levels, global energy consumption will increase by 53% by the year 2030, of which approximately 70% of this growth will come from developing countries. In this connection, the Group welcomes that the Agency established an interdepartmental 'Nuclear Power Support Group' to provide co-ordinated support to interested Member States considering the introduction or expansion of nuclear power. The Group is of the view that the inter-departmental support group will assist those African countries wishing to pursue the peaceful application of nuclear technology.

Chairperson,

7. The Group welcomes the Agency's continued efforts in the planning and implementation of nuclear power programmes and in strengthening Member States national nuclear power infrastructures. The Group recognizes that 2006 was a challenging year for the Agency, and acknowledges that the demands for nuclear power will continue to grow. In this respect, the Group is of the view that the availability of nuclear energy is central to improving the living standards in developing countries, especially in Africa. The Group

commends the Agency for its on-going efforts to train professionals from Africa and other developing countries in nuclear energy field.

8. The Group takes note that the Agency continues to do research on innovative and advanced reactor designs for categories of nuclear reactors, such as Generation IV International Forum (GIF) and the Agency's INPRO project. While welcoming these endeavours, the Group is of the view that such activities should not place any unwarranted restrictions on the rights of Member States to promote the peaceful applications of nuclear technology.

Chairperson,

9. The African Group commends the Agency for its enduring efforts in promoting the peaceful application of nuclear science and technology. Even as we speak, Chairperson, millions of children are dying throughout the developing world due to poor nutrition. The Group commends the Agency's contribution and assistance to Member States in the use of stable isotope techniques as part of nutrition prevention intervention programmes to combat malnutrition of children. The Group expresses its appreciation to the United Kingdom for providing training to participants from 13 African countries in collaboration with the Agency at the Centre for Human Nutrition Research, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom.

10. The Group welcomes the establishment in 2006 by the Agency of the IAEA Nobel Peace Prize Fund Schools for Nutrition in Africa and Latin America. The Group believes that the IAEA Nobel Cancer and Nutrition Fund will further enhance and strengthen the efforts of the Agency in combating malnutrition of children in developing countries, as well as, expanding human resources capacity in the field of cancer management and radiation oncology.

Chairperson,

11. The Group takes note and commends the Agency for its continued cooperation with the Global Rinderpest Eradication programme to maintain rinderpest free status in a number of African countries. The Group encourages the Agency to expand this programme to as many developing countries as possible that are adversely affected by this disease. In the southern Rift Valley, tsetse population suppression carried out by local farmers and the Ethiopian Government, in preparation for sterile tsetse fly releases, has already reduced the prevalence of nagana disease in livestock in certain areas. The Group especially expresses appreciation to the UN Trust Fund for Human Security, funded by Japan and to the USA for its contribution.

Chairperson,

12. The African Group notes that the Agency's main areas of work in 2006 were human health, food and agriculture, radiation and transport safety, nuclear science, physical and chemical applications, water resources, and the management of radioactive waste. The Group attaches great importance to these areas of the Agency's work. The Group welcomes the fact that in 2006, a total of \$97 million of TC funding was disbursed in over 115 countries, 172 training courses were arranged for 2477 participants, 3041 expert missions were organized, 1697 fellows and scientific visitors were trained, and \$51.8 million worth of equipment and supplies were provided.

Chairperson,

13. The Group would like to reiterate the importance that it places on the role of nuclear energy in sustainable development, and on the need for innovative nuclear techniques to address the major challenges of hunger, disease, poverty and management of natural resources facing Africa, particularly in a time when many African countries are not making adequate progress to meet the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

Chairperson,

14. The Group believes that it is important to continue to highlight the pandemic caused by HIV/AIDS in Africa. HIV/AIDS is a global issue which should require co-operation by all Governments, International Organisations and Civil Society. The Agency's assistance to Africa is an example of such co-operation.

Chairperson,

15. The African Group wishes to reiterate its concern over the acute water shortages that Africa faces. The Group concurs with the Agency's view that Member States need precise information to enable them to make decisions about sustainable water resources management. In this connection, the Group welcomes the efforts of African countries in this field particularly in the Nile Basin riparian countries in formulating a proposal for joint IAEA- UNDP/GEF funding to improve the understanding of groundwater in the Nile Basin and facilitate equitable sharing of water resources among the countries in that region.

Chairperson,

16. In the area of agriculture and food, the African Group appreciates the work of the Agency in assisting Member States to achieve sustainable food security by application of nuclear techniques. The Group welcomes the Agency's work in the use of the Sterile Insect Technique (SIT) and encourages the expansion of the ongoing project aiming at assessing the feasibility of using SIT to control malaria transmitting mosquitoes to include the possible application of this technique to other devastating insects such as locusts.

Chairperson,

17. Concerning the safety of nuclear installations, the African Group welcomes the Agency's assistance to Member States in this field. The Group takes note of the Agency's Safety Culture Assessment Review Team (SCART) which carried out its first mission from 27 February to 10 March at Pebble Bed Modular Reactor (Pty) Limited, in Pretoria, South Africa. The Group notes that this was the first SCART mission to review a design organization. The African Group supports South Africa's Pebble Bed Modular Reactor which is a shining example of how Africa can promote the peaceful application of nuclear energy.

With these comments, the Group agrees to the recommended action as contained in document GOV/2007/19.

Thank you Chairperson.

AGENDA ITEM 4: TECHNICAL COOPERATION REPORT FOR 2006

Chairperson,

18. At the outset, the African Group wishes to express its gratitude to Mrs. Ana Maria Cetto for her comprehensive introductory statement. It would also like to thank the Secretariat for the report on the item under discussion. The African Group has read carefully the report on technical cooperation for 2006 contained in document GOV/2007/16.

19. The African Group associates itself with the statement made by His Excellency the Ambassador of Sudan on behalf of the G77 and China and would like to add the following comments.

20. Naturally, the African Group attaches great importance to the Technical Cooperation Programme of the IAEA. As stipulated in Article II of the Statute, the promotion of peaceful uses of atomic energy is a basic objective of the Agency, and Technical Cooperation is one of the three main pillars of the Agency's activities. The Group considers the excellent work done by the Agency in this field as a key component of the peaceful benefits of its membership of the Agency.

21. The African Group notes that since 2003, the TC programme has increased from \$105 million to \$144 million and the number of Member States from 137 to 143. Regarding financial resources, the African Group takes note of the summary resources expected to be available for 2008 and 2009. The Group **welcomes the achievement for the first time** of the rate of attainment goal of 90% with payments standing at 90.1% as of 30 September 2006. The Group thus encourages Member States **to sustain the momentum of this very positive development**. The Group notes with appreciation that in 2006 the TC programme provided support to 35 Member States in Africa. Net new obligations in 2006 reached \$26.8 million, compared with \$20.7 million in 2005. The financial implementation rate for the TC programme in the Africa region was 78.7%, compared with 77.6% in 2005.

22. The Group underlines the importance for the Agency to continue to identify elements within the TC Programme that could be harmonized with the development goals of New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The Group believes that the development of strong operational partnerships with regional organizations, other international agencies and financial institutions can make a substantial contribution towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that are so far lagging behind the targets set for 2015. In this context, the Group would like to reiterate its appeal to all Member States to make their contributions to the Technical Cooperation Fund in full and on time in order to forestall any shortages and/or delay in projects' rate of implementation in 2007.

Chairperson,

23. The African Group recalls the IAEA's General Conference Resolution, GC (50)/RES/12 on strengthening the Agency's technical co-operation activities adopted by the 50th Regular Session of the General Conference in September 2006. The Resolution mandated the Secretariat to explore means to ensure that resources to the Technical Cooperation Programme are sufficient, assured and predictable. The resolution recommends that the Agency consider the possibility of establishing a mechanism for ensuring that the funding of the TC Programme is assured, predictable, and sufficient and encourages further consultations between the Secretariat and Member States in this regard.

24. The African Group therefore requests that the Agency urgently develops an appropriate forum through consultations with Member States to develop a mechanism that will ensure that funding for the TC Programme is assured, predictable in order for the 51st General Conference to take an appropriate decision.

Chairperson,

25. The Group notes with appreciation that in 2006, the issues of human resource development and knowledge management received particular attention, notably under the AFRA programme. African specialists and consultants prepared guidelines to help Member States develop and implement national strategies for the development of human resources and management of nuclear knowledge, including a higher education network (AFRA-NEST) in nuclear science and technology.

Chairperson,

26. The African Group expresses its appreciation to the Agency for its support in assisting concerned member states for the eradication of tsetse fly through the use of the sterile insect technique. The Group especially pays special tribute to South Africa for investigating the feasibility of integrating the sterile insect technique (SIT) in an area-wide, integrated pest management programme in northern South Africa and a small area in southern Mozambique to create a zone free of the *Glossina brevipalpis* and *Glossina austeni* species of tsetse flies.

Chairperson,

27. The Group could not agree more with the Agency's assessment that despite considerably large endowments of natural energy resources, energy supplies in Africa are extremely poor. Most of the population, particularly in rural areas, have little access to modern energy amenities. The Agency plays an invaluable role in Africa through its programmes. During 2006, several countries from Africa — Algeria, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ghana, Libya, Niger, Nigeria, Sudan, United Republic of Tanzania, Zimbabwe received support in this field under national or regional TC projects, or both. Projects in support of establishing the infrastructure needed for the introduction of nuclear power for electricity or desalination purposes have been established for Algeria, Egypt, Ghana, Morocco, Nigeria and Sudan.

With these comments, the Group takes note of the Agency's TC report for 2006 as contained in document GOV.2007/18

Thank you Chairperson.

AGENDA ITEM 5: DRAFT 2008/2009 PROGRAMME AND BUDGET

Chairperson

28. Firstly, the African Group takes note of the report of the Programme and Budget Committee contained in document GOV/2007/20 and deeply regrets the lack of consensus of the Agency's Draft Programme and Budget for 2008-2009. The Group welcomes and expresses its appreciation to H.E. Ambassador Milenko Skoknic, Resident Representative of Chile for chairing the open-ended working group. The Group is confident that consensus will be reached within the open-ended Group to adopt the Draft Programme and Budget.

29. Secondly, the Group fully concurs with the G-77 and China's views on the preservation of the Agency's competence across all its statutory activities and the need to ensure a balance between verification and promotional activities, particularly the technical cooperation programme. All 3 pillars are integral and important and we cannot fund one at the detriment of the others. As we continue to consult on the budget, the Group therefore calls on the Secretariat to give due consideration to the views expressed in the G-77 letter of 25 May 2007 by H.E. Ambassador Sayed G. Elamin, Permanent Representative of Sudan.

I thank you.