



STATEMENT OF THE G-77 AND CHINA AT THE PROGRAMME AND BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE IAEA BOARD OF GOVERNORS STARTING ON 3 MAY 1999 DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR YOGESH M. TIWARI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF INDIA

On behalf of the Group of 77 and China I would like to convey to the Director General, Mr. ElBaradei, our appreciation for his important introductory statement on the Agenda of the current Programme and Budget Committee's meeting. We also thank the Deputy Director General for Administration for his comprehensive briefing regarding the Agency's Programme and Budget. If you allow, me Mr. Chairman, I will address items 2 and 3 of the Agenda in one single statement.

On item 2, the Group believes that, although the Agency should continue to encourage certain countries to contribute extra-budgetary resources to useful Agency's activities, there is an obvious danger in relying too heavily on such contributions due, among other things, to the risks associated with the unavoidable unpredictabilities involved. Since the Agency's capabilities to deal with the growth of activities vis-à-vis available resources cannot last for too long, the need for a more appropriate long term solution to this problem should be seriously addressed.

On Item 3, Mr. Chairman, the Group supports effective savings measures aimed at the implementation of programmes with the resources currently available. At the same time the Group is of the opinion that these measures are applied in a fashion that, directly or indirectly, do not diminish the effectiveness of Agency's developmental activities which are of benefit to the Member States.

The Group was concerned about the significant reduction of resources allocated to non staff travel, with the view to strengthening other priority areas within available resources. The reduction in non-staff travel would undoubtedly affect the participation of experts from developing countries in many events and other activities organized by the Agency. The Group is now confident that with the assurances given by the Secretariat this will not be the case.

However, the Group is still concerned about the reduction in the number of meetings. The Agency Meetings provide an opportunity for experts from the developing countries to interact with experts from developed countries and exchange views, ideas and consolidate their understanding, thereby ensuring technology transfer. In view of this, the Group would like to request the Secretariat to take this into account while formulating the budget. In this regard the Group would like to appeal to the developed countries to continue supporting the participation of their experts in such activities.

Regarding Unfunded Regular Programme Activities (URPA's), as contained in Annex V of document GOV/1999/1/Mod.1 (page 49), the Group is of the view that the Secretariat should prioritize such programme activities in consultation with Member States, and make budget allocations accordingly should savings materialize, or voluntary contributions become available. The Group would like to follow up these matters with the Secretariat.

Item 7: Personnel Questions: Proposed Amendments to the Provisional Staff Regulations

The Group of 77 and China would like to ascertain as to the rationale behind the introduction of a one year probationary period for all initial fixed-term appointments. It would appear that one year may be considered too long, taking into account the three year duration of the appointment. The Group would like to be informed as to whether this policy is in consonance with the prevailing practice in other UN System Organizations, for appointments of equal duration.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

