



STATEMENT BY THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA DURING THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE IAEA STARTING ON 12 JUNE 2017, DELIVERED BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77 H.E. AMBASSADOR REZA NAJAFI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

Agenda Item 2: The Annual Report for 2016

Mr Chairman,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to thank the Director General for his introductory statement and the Secretariat for preparing the draft of the Annual Report for 2016 as contained in document GOV/2017/8 and its annex.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China under this agenda item.

Nuclear Technology

2. The Group notes that nuclear power remains an important option not only for countries with existing nuclear programs, but also for developing countries with growing energy needs and that 10 new nuclear reactors were connected to the grid in 2016.. The Group further notes that around 30 countries are considering, planning or starting Nuclear Power Programmes, of which the majority are developing countries. The Group encourages the Agency to continue providing the necessary support to Member States interested in launching and expanding their nuclear power programmes. The Group takes note with satisfaction of the guidance provided by the Agency in its support to existing nuclear power programmes, as well as its facilitating role in the sharing of knowledge among interested countries, and encourages the Secretariat to continue pursuing activities in this field.

3. The Group welcomes the Agency's active participation in the 22nd session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP22), in Marrakech, Morocco, during which the Agency highlighted the role of nuclear technology in meeting the goal of limiting the global temperature rise to below 2°C above pre-industrial levels. In this context, the IAEA should further strengthen the role of nuclear technology in meeting the goal of limiting the global temperature rise..

Mr. Chairman,

4. The Group welcomes the work of the Agency in the applications of nuclear technologies and, specifically, the assistance provided to Member States in this regard. Nuclear technologies and applications make an important contribution to sustainable development goals and, therefore, the Group welcomes the fact that in 2016 the Agency continued to assist Member States, based on their national priority needs. The Group encourages the Agency to continue helping Member States to build, strengthen and maintain capacities in safe, peaceful and secure use of nuclear technology, as well as to keep providing assistance to interested Member States in building up their capacities for national energy assessments and planning through technical assistance, review services, training, capacity-building and knowledge networks.

5. The Group reiterates the fundamental need to increase the transfer of nuclear technology to and sharing of nuclear knowledge with developing countries, to enhance their capabilities. Preservation and management of nuclear knowledge continues to be a high priority for many Member States. In this regard, the Group is pleased to note that the Agency continued to conduct Knowledge Management Assist Visits during the period under review, including to G-77 countries. The Group also welcomes the continued support by the

Agency to activities of and collaboration among regional nuclear education networks and further welcomes the work conducted in 2016 with regional networks for nuclear education in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The Group encourages the Secretariat to continue providing assistance to interested Member States in capacity building and nuclear knowledge management.

6. On the collection and dissemination of information, the Group acknowledges the International Nuclear Information System (INIS) as a resource for information on the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology. The Group encourages the Agency to continue providing assistance and on the job training to national INIS centres as well as perfecting the capabilities and maximizing the potential of INIS. The Group appreciates the significant increase in the number of electronic journals available through the Library, which enables the sharing of knowledge, resources and best practices.

7. The Group encourages the Agency to continue to provide support to Member States, in particular to developing countries, in the enhancement of the skills of human resources involved in their nuclear programmes.

8. The Group attaches high importance to the International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO), as a relevant forum gathering technology holders and users with the aim of achieving innovations in nuclear reactors and fuel cycles. The Group welcomes the several INPRO related training activities carried out by the Agency, including a Regional Training Course. The Group also welcomes the growing interest of Member States in INPRO and calls for continued support for INPRO from the Regular Budget.

9. The Group also values the support of the Agency to Member States, upon request, for an integrated use of assistance in building national capacities in energy analysis and planning; Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review (INIR) missions, and National Nuclear Energy System Assessments (NESAs) for the development of long term strategies for nuclear energy deployment using the INPRO methodology.

10. The Group notes with appreciation the meetings and projects organized by the Secretariat during the reporting period on uranium exploration, resources and production. The Group encourages the Agency to continue on this path, and requests the Secretariat to continue to promote the participation of experts from developing countries in future activities organized to this end.

11. The Group attaches great value to Small Medium or Modular Reactors (SMRs), and their potential benefit as a source of power generation, especially for Member States with limited electrical grids; as well as their successful use in seawater desalination and their overall cost-effectiveness, as demonstrated through various projects in some Member States. The Group urges the Secretariat to continue its support to Member States in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

12. The Group welcomes elaboration of the various activities of the Agency in the field of atomic and nuclear data; research reactors and accelerator based technologies which serve social and economic development and have a wide variety of applications in sectors such as scientific research, energy, health, agriculture, education, water and environment. The Group hereby reiterates its full support for the activities of the Agency in the realm of nuclear science, and urges the Secretariat to enhance its efforts in terms of the assistance provided to Member States to increase their capabilities in the development and application of nuclear science as a tool for their technological and economic development. The Group attaches the utmost importance to the attainment of this objective, which is enshrined in Article III.A.1 of the IAEA Statute.

13. The Group attaches great importance to the various activities in the application of nuclear and isotopic techniques in the fields of food and agriculture, human health, management of water resources, environment, industry, as well as in radioisotope and radiation technology. The Group calls the Secretariat to continue its

support to Member States, in particular in developing countries, in enhancing the applications of these techniques, in the fulfillment of its statutory responsibilities, and notes that they play an important role, including in the attainment of the SDGs and the objectives of the Paris Agreement, including in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

14. The Group attaches great value to the role of the Agency's Nuclear Applications Laboratories at Seibersdorf, which have assisted Member States in enhancing their access to the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies since 1962. The Group appreciates the contributions made by Member States for the construction and renovation of the laboratories, through the Renovation of the Nuclear Application Laboratories (ReNuAL) Project. The Group is pleased to note that the work on the ReNuAL project progressed on schedule and within budget in 2016. Further construction required to complete the modernization of the laboratories will be addressed under ReNuAL plus (ReNuAL+). The Group welcomes the pledges and contributions made by several Member States to ReNuAL+ and encourages all Member States, in a position to do so, to contribute to the project.

15. The Group recognizes that radioisotope products are essential for nuclear applications and therefore appreciates the Agency's activities in this field, which focus on promoting innovation in Member States. In light of the importance of this field of activity, the Group urges the Secretariat to enhance its efforts to strengthen national capabilities for radioisotope production and for the use of radiation technology; and to effectively contribute to improve health care and safe and clean industrial development in Member States.

Mr. Chairman,

16. The Group commends the work that the Agency has been conducting over the years in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), through the Joint FAO/IAEA Division of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture. In particular, the Group welcomes the work done in 2016 in the areas of sustainable management of major insect pests; animal production and health; Food Safety and Control; mutation breeding for crop improvement; and Land and water management and crop nutrition. We urge the Secretariat to maximize its efforts with a view to enhancing the capabilities of Member States in the application of nuclear techniques for sustainable development in these areas, with due focus placed on the needs of developing countries. The Group also encourages further expansion of the techniques in these areas to help attain essential objectives such as the eradication of animal diseases and increased yields in food production.

17. The Group notes with satisfaction the Agency's continued support to Member States to fight outbreaks of several zoonotic and transboundary animal diseases in 2016, including Ebola virus disease (EVD), the highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza and the Zika virus. The Group also notes with satisfaction the Agency's continued contributions to strengthening regional capacities, including through several training courses. The Group requests the Agency to continue with this work.

18. In the field of human health, the Group commends the work of the Agency in 2016 in expanding the use of radiation medicine for the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. The Group welcomes the participation of the Agency in the Joint Global Programme on Cervical Cancer Prevention and control under the United Nations Interagency Task force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases, which aims at reducing cervical cancer mortality in participating countries by 25% by 2025. The Agency's expertise in radiation medicine is of great added value to the Joint Global Programme.

19. As groundwater is the largest reservoir of fresh water on earth, the Group appreciates the Agency's efforts aimed at assisting Member States to use isotope hydrology for the assessment and management of water resources, including the characterization of climate change impacts and water availability. The Group encourages the Secretariat to continue conducting research and training in this important field.

20. The Group recognizes the unique role that the Agency plays in enhancing the capabilities of Member

States in managing the marine and terrestrial environmental pollutants using nuclear techniques. As Ocean acidification is a growing global concern and a specific target under the SDG 14 on oceans and sea, the Group supports the continued strengthening of Agency's work in areas where ocean acidification data are scarce and where the problem is most severe.

Nuclear Safety and Security

Mr. Chairman,

21. The Group reiterates its appreciation for the Agency's continuing efforts to promote nuclear safety worldwide and welcomes the diverse Agency activities undertaken in 2016 in this area. While recognizing that the primary responsibility for nuclear safety rests with the States, the Group believes that the Agency plays an important role in this field as provided for in Article III of the Statute. The Group remains of the view that nuclear safety and nuclear security considerations should not hamper the utilization of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

22. The Group attaches great value to the Agency's assistance to developing countries embarking on nuclear power programmes and encourages the Agency to continue its support to Member States, upon request, in developing and strengthening their nuclear safety infrastructure.

23. The Group also values the Agency's support provided to Member States to strengthen their national safety regulatory bodies and takes note of the IRRS Missions and follow-up missions undertaken in 2016. The Group also takes note of the Operational Safety Review Team (OSART) missions, and the Safety Aspects of Long Term Operation (SALTO) peer review missions.

24. The Group takes further note of the major outcomes of the key nuclear safety conferences as presented in the report and requests follow up of these outcomes in close consultations with Member States wherever necessary. The Group also appreciates the Agency's efforts in conducting a large number of capacity building activities across its programme of work for nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety, and emergency preparedness and response. The Group further appreciates the Agency's efforts to strengthen global, regional and national networks and forums.

25. The Group notes the Agency's continued efforts in 2016 to contribute to global efforts to achieve effective nuclear security. The Group reiterates its view that the responsibility for nuclear security within a State rests entirely with that State, and that nuclear security should not be a condition or pre-requisite for technical cooperation projects

Technical Cooperation

Mr. Chairman,

26. With regard to the section on the Management of Technical Cooperation, the Group of 77 and China reiterates its call for the strengthening of the promotional activities of the Agency, including technical cooperation through the provision of adequate resources, so as to properly respond to the increasing number of Member States and the growing needs of Member States receiving TC, and to enhance the use of nuclear technology for sustainable development in Member States. The Group will provide detailed comments on this topic in its statement under agenda item 4, on the Technical Cooperation Report for 2016.

27. With these comments, the Group takes note of the Agency's Annual Report for 2016 contained in document GOV/2017/8 and its Annex. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Agenda Item 3: Strengthening of the Agency's Technical Cooperation Activities-Technical Cooperation Report for 2016

Mr. Chairman,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank the Deputy Director General and Head of the Department of Technical Cooperation, Mr. Dhazu Yang, for his introductory remarks under this agenda item. The Group also thanks the Technical Cooperation Department for preparing the Technical Cooperation Report for 2016 and its Supplement, both contained in document GOV/2017/17 and for the briefing provided to delegations on the 19 May 2017.

2. The Group of 77 and China highlights the paramount importance of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) in the promotion and transfer of nuclear technology for sustainable socioeconomic progress in developing countries, which is the main statutory function of the Agency.

3. The Group reiterates that the Technical Cooperation Programme is a shared responsibility and that its success depends on the combined efforts of the Department of Technical Cooperation, other relevant departments and Member States. These efforts are crucial for the planning and successful implementation of the Programme, which should be based on the needs and evolving priorities of Member States implementing TC projects.

4. The Group wishes to emphasise the importance of a TC Programme that is tailored to respond to the specific needs of individual countries, sub-regions and regions. In this regard, the Group notes that the Secretariat issued document GOV/INF/2016/12, 'Addressing the Challenges Facing Least Developed Countries in the Peaceful Application of Nuclear Energy through the Technical Cooperation Programme', in October 2016 in response to resolution GC(60)/RES/11. This report notes, inter alia, that LDCs share a number of characteristics and challenges with respect to the peaceful application of nuclear energy including safety infrastructure, human and technical capacity, and financial limitations. In this regard, the Group calls on the Secretariat to make every effort to assist LDCs in addressing these challenges.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The Group notes that the IAEA regional programmes are an essential tool to promote technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC), foster the exchange of best practices, and promote networks. The Group appreciates the support given by the Agency in this regard, and requests that the Secretariat continues to make additional efforts to increase and enhance the effective and efficient management of regional programmes. The Group also notes and supports the efforts made by the Secretariat to enhance the effectiveness of TC programme delivery to new Member States, including Small Island Developing States (SIDS), inter alia by developing a sub-regional approach for focused capacity building support that will best meet their specialized development needs.

Mr. Chairman,

6. The Group would also like to draw attention to the established process of the mid-term national planning mechanisms, such as Country Programme Frameworks (CPFs), regional profiles and strategic frameworks through which these needs of Member States are identified and defined. The Group would like to reiterate that any changes to the established TC programmatic approach by the Secretariat should be considered in close consultation with Member States and, in particular, those participating in the TC Programme.

7. The Group takes note of the continued efforts undertaken by the Secretariat in 2016 with the purpose of enhancing transparency and efficiency in the delivery of TC projects, including through strengthening the analytical content of the Country Programme Frameworks. In this context, the Group reiterates that the present guidelines and criteria as contained in INFCIRC/267 for the screening of TC project proposals, programme implementation and subsequent evaluation are sufficient and effective.

Mr. Chairman,

8. The Group notes with appreciation that the rate of attainment on payments to the TCF for 2015, as of 31 December 2015, was 92.9%. The Group also notes that excluding the deferred or additional payments made by Member States, the 2016 rate of attainment on payments would have been lower by 0.9%. The Group emphasises the importance of the TCF in the implementation of the TCP and reiterates its call on all Member States to pay their contributions in accordance with the indicative scale of assessment in full and on time. The Group also requests the Secretariat to work closely with Member States to improve the rate of attainment on payments to the Technical Cooperation Fund.

9. Furthermore, the Group notes with concern that despite the increasing number of developing countries that are recipients of technical cooperation from the Agency, the resources for the Technical Cooperation Programme, both financial and human, have not increased accordingly. This situation becomes all the more striking when comparing the TCF to the availability of increased funds for the non-promotional activities.

10. In this context, the Group remains concerned that the resources available to the TC Programme are still not sufficient, assured and predictable (SAP) to meet the objectives mandated in Article II of the Statute, as called for by the General Conference year after year in its resolutions on technical cooperation. The Group also reiterates its call for sufficient human resources and adequate funding assigned to Major Programme 6 in the Regular Budget, in order to facilitate a successful delivery of the Technical Cooperation Programme and to enable the Technical Cooperation Department to meet the increasing needs of Member States.

11. In this regard the Group recalls the comments made by the External Auditor in the Agency's Financial Statements for 2012, on the case load of Programme Management Officers. The External Auditor had noted that the approximately 23 projects per PMO per year on average was a fairly large average and recommended that the Agency consider undertaking an evaluation of the number of personnel it requires to discharge the current obligations towards the projects. Twenty new states have joined the IAEA or have had their membership approved since 2012. With the increase in the number of countries that require technical cooperation programmes, the Group reiterates its concern regarding the case load of PMOs and requests the Agency to evaluate the situation and report to Member States in this regard.

12. The Group appreciates the extra budgetary contributions to the TC Programme. The Group reminds Member States that extra-budgetary contributions are not assured and predictable and cannot replace the Technical Cooperation Fund, which is essential and the primary funding mechanism for ensuring a stable and strategic TC Programme. The Group calls on all Member States to ensure that the TC Fund has sufficient resources to fully implement the TC Programme. Similarly, the Group values the decision of some countries to participate in government cost-sharing mechanism. The Group would like to emphasize that the individual voluntary choice of the States to participate through government cost-sharing mechanism should not be promoted as a substitute for drawing assistance from the Technical Cooperation Fund.

Mr. Chairman,

13. The Group takes note of the important contribution the Agency's TCP could make to the achievement of the Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as to the Paris Climate Change Agreement. The Group welcomes the efforts under way to benefit from the synergies between the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 and the TC Programme, while recognizing their specificities.

14. The Group encourages the Secretariat to continue its efforts to align the TC programme with the national priorities, including in sustainable development as identified by the Member States based on SDGs as appropriate. This notwithstanding, alignment with the SDGs should not constitute a limitation or condition for TC projects, nor a tool for their reprioritization. In this regard, the Group also reiterates its strong position that TC should not be subject to any kind of conditionality under any guise, and requests the Secretariat to adhere to this principle. The Group also holds the view that the SDGs places a greater demand for additional resources to address the increasing socio-economic challenges and to meet the developmental

needs of developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

15. The Group welcomes the success of the Technical Cooperation activities in the different regions, and commends the Secretariat for its support and assistance to Member States. In particular, the Group takes note, with appreciation, of the Technical Cooperation projects aimed at developing human resources and capacity-building, as well as promoting technical cooperation and networking among developing countries.

16. The Group notes with appreciation the efforts made by the Agency in 2016 to help Member States in their national and regional programmes for the 2016-2017 cycle. The Group also appreciates the continued efforts of the Secretariat to enhance the quality of the TC Programme by providing support to the Member States to ensure that the projects for the next TC cycle are relevant, effective, sustainable, have measurable and attainable objectives, and offer greater opportunities for social and economic benefits and long term national development impact.

17. The Group reiterates its call on the Agency to address long-standing obstacles such as delays and denials of equipment, as well as travel and visa restrictions arbitrarily imposed by a number of Member States, which negatively impact programme delivery and the rate of implementation.

Mr. Chairman,

18. As stated before by the Group, alignment with United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) should not be made a requirement for TC projects. However, the Group takes note of the Agency's increasing visibility within the UN system with a view to identifying linkages between the goals and objectives of the CPFs and, where appropriate, those of the UNDAF in order to facilitate close coordination with UN agencies to address national priorities in sustainable development.

19. In this context, the Group stresses the vital role of the National Liaison Officers (NLOs) in TC project design and implementation. The continued strengthening of the NLOs' management capabilities, together with the strengthening of the role of the Programme Management Officer (PMO) and the coordination with the Permanent Missions in Vienna, would be essential to enhance country programme delivery. In this regard, the Group expresses its appreciation for the support given by the Agency to a strengthened role of the NLO, in particular through the NLO meetings biennially hosted in Vienna.

20. The Group welcomes the information in Annex 1 of the Technical Cooperation Report, providing examples of technical cooperation projects by thematic sector in the fields of health and nutrition; food and agriculture; water and the environment; energy planning and nuclear power; industrial applications; radiation protection, nuclear safety and nuclear security; and nuclear knowledge development and management.

21. The Group highly commends the continued efforts to strengthen collaboration of the Agency with leading cancer organizations and other partners under the Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT). The Group urges the IAEA to continue building capacities in developing countries, including those that still have no access to radiation medicine techniques and radiotherapy. The Group encourages the Agency to continue addressing Member States' requirements for comprehensive cancer control capacity and needs through the integrated missions of PACT (imPACT), and to foster more regional PACT programmes.

22. With these remarks, the Group of 77 and China takes note of the Technical Cooperation Report for 2016 and its Supplement, both contained in document GOV/2017/17.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Agenda Item 4: Report of the Programme and Budget Committee

Mr. Chairman,

1. The Group of 77 and China takes note of the Report of the Programme and Budget Committee on its meetings held from 8 to 9 May 2017. The Group would like to thank DDG Mary Alice Hayward and the staff of the Department of Management for their efforts during the deliberations of the Committee, as well as the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and the External Auditor and his staff for the reports presented.

2. The Group thanks the co-chairs of the Working Group for their extensive work with the goal of facilitating an agreement among Member States on the level of the Regular Budget for 2018-2019, the TCF Targets for 2018-2019 and the Indicative Planning Figures (IPFs) for 2020-2021. The Group would also like to thank the Secretariat for presentations and explanation provided throughout the process.

3. The G-77 and China would like to reiterate the elements of its position on this matter, as expressed in the statements delivered by the Group during the meetings of the Working Group, the last meeting of the Programme and Budget Committee, as well as in the Group's non-paper issued on 10 May.

4. The Group expresses its disappointment at the lower budget proposed for Major Programme 6. In light of the reduction to the proposed increase for MP 6, as well as the further reductions to the proposed increases for MPs 1 and 2, as compared to the amounts contained in document GOV/2017/1, the Group believes that the balance between promotional and non-promotional activities will further deteriorate. In addition, as a result, the proposed increase in financial terms for MP 4 ended up representing an even larger proportion of the overall budget increase.

5. The Group has reaffirmed that more effort should be made to provide sufficient resources, including staff, for the management of the TCP if the priority areas for MP6 are to be given proper attention, such as ensuring adequate support to the growing number of Member States participating in the TCP and to the extended demand of Member States for the peaceful uses of nuclear technology for their sustainable development, including the achievement of the SDGs, as well as ensuring the capability to adequately respond to Member States' requests for support through the TCP. In this context, the Group has stressed that there should be a further increase of the budget for MP6.

Mr. Chairman,

6. With regard to the discussions in the Working Group on the Programme and Budget and TCF Targets and the Co-Chairs proposal, the Group would like to make the following comments:

- The Group would like to emphasize that having a TCF with “sufficient, assured and predictable” resources is essential for the IAEA to fulfil its central role in the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Group reiterates its position about the need to have an appropriate balance between the promotional and non-promotional activities of the Agency. The level of the TCF Targets is central if we are to assure this balance.
- The TCF Targets should take into account the IPFs, the increasing number of Member States with a national TCP, the increasing number of Member States which will require full support under the 2018-2019 TCP, the evolution in the level of the Regular Budget, the Board decision of June 2016 to place the appropriate emphasis on the Agency's activities directly related to the implementation of the SDGs in Member States, the large unfunded components of TC projects in Member States, also termed as footnote a/ projects, the price increases and other relevant factors. The very conservative proposal contained in the Group's non-paper takes into account only some of these elements.
- The Group of 77 and China has agreed to join consensus on the proposal for TCF Targets for 2018 and 2019 as reflected in paragraph E.2 of the working paper. The Group is of the view that these figures fall

much short of what the Group had suggested, on the basis of concrete needs by new Member States. With this marginal increase in TCF targets, the cost impact of participation of an increasing number of Member States in National TC Programmes will not be fully addressed. In addition to this, the evolution of the TCF level will, once again, lag behind that of the Regular Budget. Furthermore, as a result, the resources in the TCF will continue to be insufficient to respond to Member States' needs and to allow the Agency to fulfil its statutory function to "accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world". This is a difficult concession for the Group to make, but it has been made in the spirit of compromise.

- The Group wishes to note that, while the proposal increases the disparity between the percentage evolution of the Regular Budget and of the TCF Targets, this should not be seen as setting a precedent.
- The Group views the IPFs for the biennium 2020-2021 as the basis for negotiations for the TCF Targets for that biennium. The Group shall negotiate for appropriate increases in the TC Targets for 2020-2021, taking into account the IPFs, price adjustments, the elements outlined above and all other relevant factors.
- The Group reiterates that the IPF is essential for the predictability of the TC Programme, as it enables the TC Department and Member States making use of Technical Cooperation to plan projects for the coming biennium.

7. With these comments, Mr. Chairman, the Group of 77 and China takes note of the Report of the Programme and Budget Committee as contained in document (GOV/2017/25), and of the recommended action as contained in Section F of the proposal by the Co-Chairs of the Working Group. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Agenda item: 11 - Any Other Business: The IAEA International Conference on the Technical Cooperation Programme

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China under this agenda item.

Mr. Chairman,

1. The Group of 77 and China would like to thank the Secretariat for the successful organization of the first International Conference on Technical Cooperation: 60 years and beyond, from the 30th May to 1st June 2017, as part of the Agency's initiatives to raise awareness about the TC Programme and to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the IAEA.
2. During the conference, the IAEA and its partners showcased the achievements and impact of the Technical Cooperation Programme over the last six decades. and the importance of the Technical Cooperation Fund. The numerous success stories showcased during the Conference demonstrate once again the paramount importance of the Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme, which is the main vehicle for the statutory function of promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including for the socioeconomic progress in developing countries and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by Member States.
3. The Group reiterates that the Technical Cooperation Program is a shared responsibility and that, as such, it has to be the result of the combined efforts mainly of the Department of Technical Cooperation, of the technical departments and of Member States themselves. These efforts are crucial for the planning and successful implementation of the Technical Cooperation Program, which is based on the growing needs and evolving priorities of those Member States in which TC projects are implemented.
4. In this context, the Group remains concerned that the resources available to the TC Programme are still not sufficient, assured and predictable (SAP) to meet the objectives mandated in Article II of the IAEA's Statute, as called for by the General Conference year after year in its resolutions on technical cooperation. The Group also reiterates its call for sufficient human resources and adequate funding assigned to Major

Programme 6 in the Regular Budget, in order to facilitate a successful delivery of the Technical Cooperation Programme and to enable the Department of Technical Cooperation to meet the increasing needs of Member States.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The G-77 and China believes that international conferences on the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme should be organized on a regular basis at the Ministerial level, in close consultation with Member States, and result in concrete outcomes with the aim of further strengthening the Agency's technical cooperation activities, promoting the visibility of the Programme and helping to further the commitments by both the donors and recipients of technical cooperation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.