



**STATEMENT OF THE G-77 AND CHINA DURING THE MEETING OF
THE IAEA TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION
COMMITTEE STARTING ON 18 NOVEMBER 2019**

**DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR OMAR AMER YOUSSEF,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF EGYPT**

Vienna, 18 November 2019

Agenda Item 2: Technical Cooperation: The Agency's proposed Programme for 2020-2021

Madam Chair,

1. At the outset, the Group of 77 and China would like to congratulate again Ambassador Rafael Grossi on his appointment by the Board of Governors as the new Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The Group expresses its conviction that Technical Cooperation is a true transformative tool for developing countries that must be enlarged and made more effective and efficient to address their priorities and the needs of Member States. And, in this regard, the Group believes that Ambassador Grossi's leadership, experience and knowledge will enhance the work and activities of the Agency in continuing to meet the growing challenges, taking into account in particular the needs of the developing countries especially in the field of peaceful uses of the Atomic Energy.

2. The Group would like to thank the Secretariat for preparing the Agency's Proposed Technical Cooperation Program for 2020-2021, as contained in documents GOV/2019/47, Add. 1 and Add. 2, as well as Deputy Director General, Mr Dazhu Yang, and the staff of the Department of Technical Cooperation for the briefing provided to Member States on November 6th. We also thank DDG Yang for his introductory remarks under this agenda item. [not to be read]

Madam Chair,

3. The Group reiterates the paramount importance of the Agency's Technical Cooperation Program (TCP) as the main vehicle for the Agency's statutory function of encouraging and assisting research on, and development and practical application of, atomic energy for peaceful uses throughout the world. The Technical Cooperation Program plays an important role for the sustainable socioeconomic progress in developing countries and contributes towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

4. The Group also 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 needs and evolving priorities of those Member States in which TC projects are implemented. In this regard, the Group reiterates that "the nature, extent and scope of technical assistance to be provided to the requesting

State or group of States shall be defined by the Government or Governments concerned”, as is the established practice and is reflected in paragraph (f) of the Revised Guiding Principles and General Operating Rules to Govern the Provision of Technical Assistance by the Agency (INFCIRC/267), and in preambular paragraph (k) of Resolution GC(61)/RES/10. The Group is of the view that this important principle should continue to guide the provision of Technical Cooperation by the Agency and requests the Secretariat to reflect it explicitly in future proposed Programmes, in particular in the section on the programming process.

Madam Chair,

5. The Group notes that the Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF) target for 2020 is €88.1 million, as decided by the General Conference in September 2019, and that for 2021 it is €89.6 million, as per the recommendation submitted to the Board of Governors (GOV/2019/25). The Group also notes that a rate of attainment of 94% has been used as a basis for calculating the resources that are expected to be available. 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 continue working closely with Member States to achieve high-level rates of attainment on payments to the TCF.

6. The Group reiterates its view that the resources available for the TC Programme should be sufficient, assured and predictable to meet the objectives mandated in Article II of the Statute, and should be increased taking into account the Indicative Planning Figures (IPFs), the increasing number of Member States with a national TCP, the evolution in the level of the regular budget, the Board’s 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.

7. The Group notes that the total Footnote-a/Activities amount to almost €55.7 million in 2020 and to over €45.8 million in 2021, which shows that the current level of resources available falls short of the resources needed. The Group further stresses the importance of maintaining an adequate balance between the Agency’s promotional and non-promotional activities.

8. The Group recalls the success of 2017 International Conference on Technical Cooperation and welcomes the convening in 2018 of the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology and further appreciates the high participation by Ministers from Member States. The Conference provided a useful platform for Member States to reaffirm their commitment to the Agency’s objectives and functions, and recognize the important role of science, technology and innovation in addressing the current challenges and meeting the common goals of achieving sustainable development.

9. The Group also welcomes the decision taken by the 63rd Session of the General Conference of the IAEA on convening a Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science, Technology and Applications and the Technical Cooperation Programme in 2023 with a view to convening every four years thereafter.

10. The Group takes note of the decision contained in GOV/2019/25 and is of the view that in the implementation thereof, the principles of fairness, neutrality and universality should be preserved. The Group also believes that the application of the mechanism should not adversely affect the TC programme and should guarantee the maximum quality of all national, regional and interregional TC projects as well as the TC programme.

Madam Chair,

11. With these remarks, the Group joins the consensus in having the Committee recommend to the Board the actions listed in the Agency's proposed Technical Cooperation program as contained in document GOV/2019/47, and requests that its views and comments be duly reflected in the official records of the TACC meeting.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Agenda item 3: Evaluation of technical cooperation activities in 2018

Madam Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) for presenting its evaluation of the Agency's technical cooperation activities in 2019, as contained in document GOV/2019/53 and its corrigenda GOV/2019/53/Corr.1. The Group also thanks the OIOS for the technical briefing organized on November 12th.

2. The Group continues to attach great importance to the work of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) to strengthen the Agency's ability to ensure management efficiency and programme effectiveness, and to enhance accountability.

3. The Group of 77 and China welcomes that, this year the Overview activities results were reflected on the first produced synthesis report, a pilot project of the OIOS to deliver a report that consolidates the common observations noted in the three CLEAs and presents cross-cutting findings and related recommendations, with the intention on helping to strengthen the management of TC activities through systematic solutions.

4. The Group notes the increase on the overall cost of OIOS's TC-related evaluation activities in 2019 amounted to €695 005. The Group stresses that the OIOS should, in the course of their regular work and within resources allocated to these offices from the Regular Budget, evaluate projects, in a balanced manner across all major programmes.

5. In this regard, the Group encourages the OIOS to perform evaluations of the activities of the other departments in the Agency, so that evaluation activities are applied in a balanced manner across all major programmes. The Group takes note of OIOS Action Plan for 2020 which includes an increase in the number of CLEAs, while also stresses the importance of a balanced allocation of resources for evaluation purposes between TC-related activities and other activities of the Agency, which require similarly intensive evaluations, since these activities account for a larger portion of the Agency's budget. Given the increasing demands on the Agency's budgetary, human and other resources, the Group encourages the OIOS to carry out its audit and evaluation functions in an effective and judicious manner, utilizing opportunities for synergies presented by other existing audit, evaluation and assessment mechanisms in the Agency and in the Member States.

6. The Group would also like to reiterate the importance in receiving information on the criteria used by OIOS to select countries and thematic areas for evaluation.

7. With regard to Part B of the document, on "Common Findings across Evaluations Completed in 2019", the Group notes the work made by the OIOS in identifying recurrent findings that have emerged from evaluations, presenting in this report:

a. Effective corporate knowledge management is crucial for the Agency to maintain its efficient and effective support to Member States in the context of its staff rotation policy.

b. National ownership and the Agency's responsiveness to the needs of Member States are key to demonstrable and sustainable results.

c. In-house coordination and knowledge sharing to foster synergies between the TC programme and other initiatives within the Agency would contribute to further gains in efficiency and effectiveness.

8. The Group notes that the Report on the evaluation of technical cooperation activities in 2019 has made 25 recommendations which were all accepted by the Secretariat. The Group would like to draw attention, on the matter that specific efforts are needed to be taken to incorporate a gender equality perspective within outcomes and indicators and requests the secretariat to continue its efforts to improve this situation. The Group takes note that the Secretariat is already working on the implementation of the 25 recommendations made.

9. The Group further takes note of the 11 overdue Programme Evaluation Recommendations as well as the 37 overdue Internal Audit Recommendations, taking into consideration that they are not related to TC activities, and requests the Secretariat to continue working towards their implementation, as appropriate.

10. The Group notes with concern that from the CLEAs conducted in 2019, there is still limited strategic efforts from the Agency to adequately seek or strengthen partnerships with relevant country offices of other UN organizations.

11. With these comments, the Group of 77 and China takes note of the Evaluation of Technical Cooperation Activities in 2018, as contained in document GOV/2018/45, and requests that its views and comments be duly reflected in the official records of the TACC meeting.

Thank you, Madam Chair.