



**G-77 and China statement during the virtual IAEA Board of Governors,
Starting on 15 June 2020 delivered by
H. E. Ambassador Ganeson Sivagurunathan,
Permanent Representative of Malaysia**

Agenda Item 2: The Annual Report for 2019

Madam Chair,

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 2019 as contained in document GOV/2020/8 and for the virtual presentation uploaded on May 22nd.

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 six new nuclear reactors were connected to the grid in 2019. The Group encourages the Agency to continue providing the necessary support to Member States interested in launching and expanding their nuclear power programmes.

3. The Group takes note of the IAEA's International Conference on Climate Change and the role of nuclear power held in Vienna in October 2019.

4. 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, while reiterating its call for continued support for INPRO from the Regular Budget. The Group also values the support provided to Member States upon their request through the Integrated Nuclear Infra-structure Review (INIR) missions and National Nuclear Energy System Assessments (NESAs).

Madam Chair,

5. The Group welcomes the work of the Agency in the application 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 and, therefore, the Group welcomes the Agency's continued assistance to Member States, based on their national priority needs.

6. The Group reiterates that there is a fundamental need to enhance the transfer of nuclear technology to and sharing of nuclear knowledge with developing countries. As preservation of nuclear knowledge continues to be a high priority for many Member States, the Group requests the Secretariat to continue providing assistance to interested Member States in capacity building and nuclear knowledge management, including through the Knowledge Management Assist Visits and Regional Nuclear Education Networks in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

7. The Group attaches great value to Small and Medium Sized or Modular Reactors (SMRs), their potential benefit as a source of power generation, especially for Member States with limited electrical grids, and their successful use in seawater desalination, taking into account their

demonstrated overall cost-effectiveness. The Group requests the Secretariat to continue its support to Member States in this regard.

Madam Chair,

8. The Group welcomes the various activities of the Agency in the field of nuclear data, research reactors and accelerator technologies. The Group reiterates its full support for the activities of the Agency in nuclear science, and urges the Secretariat to enhance its assistance on developing nuclear science application capabilities of Member States as a tool for their technological and economic development.

9. The Group highlights the important role of the various applications of nuclear and isotopic techniques in the field of food and agriculture, human health, management of water resources, environment, industry as well as radioisotope and radiation technology. The Group requests the Secretariat to enhance its efforts to strengthen national capabilities of Member States, particularly developing countries, in these areas.

10. 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 and ReNuAL+) Projects. The Group continues to encourage Member States to support the ReNuAL + project.

11. The Group continues to support the work of the Agency in the field of Food and Agriculture, specifically in combating multiple outbreaks of transboundary animal diseases, the development of the Sterile Insect Technique and addressing crop diseases.

12. In the field of human health, the Group commends the work of the Agency in 2019, especially in the fight against cancer. In this regard, the group welcomes the new Roadmap towards a National Cancer Control Programme developed jointly by the Agency and the World Health Organization that brings together the technical knowledge and information about the services that countries require when designing and establishing a comprehensive national cancer control programme.

13. The Group recognizes the unique role that the Agency plays in enhancing the capabilities of Member States in managing water resources as well as marine and terrestrial environmental pollutants using nuclear techniques.

14. The Group also wishes to highlight the important role of the Agency in radioisotope production and the development of radiation technologies.

Nuclear Safety and Security

Madam Chair,

15. The Group reiterates its appreciation for the IAEA's continuing efforts to promote nuclear safety worldwide and welcomes the diverse activities undertaken in 2019. 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 its Statute. The Group remains of the view that nuclear safety and security considerations should not hamper the utilization of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

16. The Group attaches great value to the IAEA'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. In this context, the Group values the Agency's support, provided to Member States, upon their request, through the peer review and advisory services conducted in 2019.

17. The Group takes note of the outcomes of the key nuclear safety conferences as presented in the report and requests that their follow-up be done in close consultations with Member States whenever necessary. The Group appreciates the Agency's efforts in conducting capacity building activities across its programme of work for nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety, and emergency preparedness and response, as well as in strengthening global, regional and national safety networks and forums. The Group also recognizes the Agency's important role in developing Safety Standards and welcomes the issuance of new publications in the Safety Guides series in 2019.

18. The Group notes the Agency's continued efforts in 2019 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

Madam Chair,

19. The Group recalls the convening of the International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology, co-chaired by Costa Rica and Japan, in November 2018 and its Ministerial Declaration. The Group reaffirms the importance Member States attach to the Agency's work in promoting nuclear science and technology and its applications and their delivery through technical cooperation programme and, in this regard, the Group looks forward to the follow up International Ministerial Conference on this subject in 2023.

20. The Group reiterates its call for strengthening the promotional activities of the IAEA, including Technical Cooperation and Coordinated Research Projects (CRPs), through the provision of sufficient, assured and predictable resources, so as to properly respond to the increasing number of Member States and their growing needs, as well as to enhance the use of nuclear technology for sustainable development.

21. With these comments, the Group takes note of the Agency's Annual Report for 2019 contained in document GOV/2020/8.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Agenda Item 3: Strengthening of the Agency's Technical Cooperation Activities

Technical Cooperation Report for 2019

Madam Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank the Deputy Director General and Head of the Department of Technical Cooperation, Mr. Dazhu Yang, for his introductory remarks under this agenda item. The Group also thanks the Technical Cooperation Department for preparing the Technical Cooperation Report for 2019, contained in document GOV/2020/19 and for and the briefing provided on June 3rd.

2. The Group of 77 and China believes that the promotion and transfer of nuclear technology for sustainable socioeconomic progress in developing countries is the main statutory function of the Agency. The Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) is the main delivery vehicle for this statutory function.

3. 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.

4. 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 of the Agency and Member States. These efforts are crucial for the planning and successful implementation of the Programme, which should be tailored to respond to the evolving needs and priorities of individual Member States, in particular the developing countries. Such an approach would also be in accordance with Section 2, Operative Paragraph 4 of resolution GC (62)/RES/8, dealing with assistance to developing and least developed countries. The Group calls on the Secretariat to continue making every effort in addressing the challenges facing LDCs in the peaceful application of nuclear energy through the Technical Cooperation Programme, as set out in GOV/INF/2016/12.

Madam Chair,

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 Secretariat's support in this regard, and requests that the Secretariat continues its efforts to enhance the effective and efficient management of regional programmes. The Group also supports the Secretariat's efforts to enhance the effectiveness of TC programme delivery to new Member States, including Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Madam Chair,

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

7. The Group takes note of the continued efforts undertaken by the Secretariat to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the TC Programme. 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.

Madam Chair,

8. The Group notes that the rate of attainment on payments to the TCF for 2019, as of 31 December 2019, was 94 %. The Group emphasizes the importance of the TCF in the successful 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 pledges and payments to the TCF.

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

activities. The Group requests the Secretariat to include in future reports the details of the increasing number of participants in TCP and increasing demands over the past several years.

10. 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 repeatedly in its resolutions on technical cooperation. The Group also reiterates its call for sufficient human resources and adequate funding to be assigned to Major Programme 6, in order to facilitate the successful delivery of the Technical Cooperation Programme.

11. The Group appreciates the extra budgetary contributions to the TC Programme and the decision of some countries to participate in the government cost-sharing mechanism. The Group emphasizes that such contributions and decisions are not assured and predictable. They therefore cannot replace the Technical Cooperation Fund, which is the primary funding mechanism essential to a stable and strategic TC Programme.

Madam Chair,

12. 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 Secretariat's efforts to help Member States to benefit from the synergies between the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 and the TC Programme, while recognizing their specificities. The Group also maintains that 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 form of conditionality, and requests the Secretariat to continue 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.

Madam Chair,

13. The Group 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.

14. 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.

Madam Chair,

15. The Group reiterates that 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 which may allow the Agency to identify 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.

16. 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 Agency's

support in strengthening the role of the NLO, in particular through the NLO meetings hosted in Vienna. The Group welcomes the inclusion of gender as a consideration in TC project design.

17. The Group underlines the importance of cancer therapy in developing countries and 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. 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 notes that the DGOC is playing a coordinating role on PACT within the Agency, and while we will appreciate updates on this important subject, the Group urges that PACT should continue to be in a position to meet the needs of Member States.

18. With these remarks, the Group of 77 and China takes note of the Technical Cooperation Report for 2018 contained in document GOV/2020/19.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Agenda Item 4: Report of the Programme and Budget Committee

Madam Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China takes note of the Report of the Programme and Budget Committee. 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 DDG of Technical Cooperation, Dazhu Yang and his department for all the briefings provided and also the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and the External Auditor and his staff for the reports presented.

2. The Group had made detailed comments and observations on the related reports during the Programme and Budget Committee Meeting.

3. The Group is pleased to note that "an unqualified opinion" has once again been placed on the Agency's financial statements for 2019. The External Auditor has made several observations and recommendations for the improvement of the Agency's financial practices. While appreciating these comments, the Group reiterates that the Secretariat should take a cautious approach when considering these recommendations and, where appropriate, consult Member States prior to taking any measures in that regard

Madam Chair,

4. The Group would like to reiterate its principled position with regard to the Regular Budget, which calls for a balanced distribution of the budget so as to reflect the equal importance of the three pillars of the Agency, namely (a) the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear technology, including technical cooperation, (b) safety and (c) safeguards.

5. The Group believes that the promotional activities of the Agency are its main statutory function and the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) is the main vehicle for delivering on this statutory function. The Group notes that in the current biennium (2020-2021), 141 Member States, including 35 LDCs, will have a national TCP, representing an increase of 5 Member States compared to the previous biennium. This underscores the necessity of Sufficient, Assured and Predictable resources for the TCP in order to enable it to adequately respond to Member States' growing needs for the peaceful uses of nuclear technology for their sustainable development, and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in accordance with national priorities.

6. Regarding the staff, the Group would like to emphasize the need to maintain a balance across MPs in both numbers and level of staff. Further, recruitment to additional posts should be in line with the Secretariat's efforts to increase the representation of under-represented Member States and region, especially at the professional and managerial levels.

Madam Chair,

7. In light of the likely effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of the implementation of the Programme and Budget, including the TCP, in 2020 and possibly 2021, the Group requests that any changes required in implementation be addressed in close coordination with affected Member States and informed accordingly.

8. With these comments, the Group of 77 and China takes note of the Report of the Programme and Budget Committee as contained in document GOV/2020/25 and the Budget update proposals contained in document GOV/2020/1.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Agenda Item 10: The IAEA and the COVID-19 pandemic

Madam Chair,

1. At the outset the Group of 77 and China wishes to express its solidarity with all Member States of the Agency who have been affected by the global COVID-19 pandemic. The Group appreciates the efforts of the Director General and the Secretariat to ensure that the activities of the Agency continue to be carried out as much as possible, in spite of the current difficult situation pertinent to the pandemic.

2. Madam Chair, the Group also appreciates the initiative of the Director General in providing assistance to Member States in their efforts to tackle the effects of the pandemic, including through the nuclear derived techniques and related equipment. The Group also appreciates the extrabudgetary and in-kind contributions by Member States in this regard. The Group encourages the Secretariat to accelerate the provision of equipment to tackle these issues to requesting Member States.

3. The Group appreciates the new initiative presented by the Director General in his report focusing on identifying monitoring, tracing and early detection of zoonotic disease pathogens (ZODIAC), with a view to strengthening the ability of the IAEA and its Member States to respond to these kinds of disease outbreaks in the future. The Group expresses its full support to this initiative and to the Agency's efforts in leveraging the usage of nuclear derived techniques towards tackling such issues.

Thank you Madam Chair.