



**STATEMENT OF THE G-77 AND CHINA DURING THE MEETING OF THE IAEA
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION COMMITTEE STARTING ON
16 NOVEMBER 2020 DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MARIA CLEOFE
NATIVIDAD, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PHILIPPINES**

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

[Not to read] The Group would like to thank the Secretariat for preparing the Agency's Proposed Technical Cooperation Program for 2021, as contained in documents GOV/2020/44, as well as Deputy Director General, Mr. Dazhu Yang, and the staff of the Department of Technical Cooperation.

Madam Chair,

1. Firstly, the Group would like to thank you, Ambassador Hulan, for chairing under these adverse and challenging circumstances and to assure you of the Groups full support. The Group is of the view that this is a time for the international community to demonstrate its capability to work together in solidarity to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. Only through international solidarity will we be able to rise up to the challenges posed and not throw away our shot at successfully assisting Member States in building their capacity to respond efficiently to COVID-19.

2. 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, 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.

3. 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 (l) of Resolution GC(64)/RES/11. 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,

4. The Group notes that the implementation of the 2021 portion of the 2020–2021 TC programme remains unchanged from the budget figures provided in documents GOV/2019/47/Add.1 and GOV/2019/47/Add.2. The Group further notes that Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF) target for 2021 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 and that this Committee is consequently expected to recommend the sum of up to €84,184,520 to the Board for approval. The Group emphasises the importance of the TCF in the implementation of the TCP and while appreciating the continued commitment of Member States over the years, reiterates its call on all Member States to pay their contributions in accordance with the indicative scale of assessment in full and on time.

5. 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.

6. The Group welcomes the efforts exerted by the Secretariat to adapt to challenges brought by spread of COVID, including through rescheduling the work plan of the TCP cycle 2020-21, and the advancement of procurement planned under 2021 using resources from 2020. The Group requests to extend the implementation of the projects therein beyond their lifetime, with a view to ensure that the planned outcomes and objectives of these projects are achieved. The Group stresses that the resources of the TC programme shall not be affected in any way by the current situation and that the goal of achieving sufficient, assured and predictable resources shall be always our priority during the preparation of the Program and Budget 2022-23.

7. The Group notes that the total Footnote-a/Activities over the last two years indicates that the current level of resources available falls far 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 reaffirms its view that the above-mentioned factors be taken into account in the preparations of the Programme and Budget 2022-23. The Group requests the Secretariat to provide information on efforts to address the gap between needed resources and available resources for 2022 and beyond.

Madam Chair,

9. 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/2020/44, 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: Zoonotic Diseases Integrated Action initiative (ZODIAC)

Madam Chair,

1. The Group welcomes the Zoonotic Diseases Integrated Action initiative (ZODIAC), approved by 64th the General Conference earlier this year and would like to underline its strong support for the initiative.

2. The Group welcomes the focus on inclusivity through the involvement of all Member States in the development and implementation of ZODIAC, as outlined in Resolution GC/64/RES3. The Group believes in the importance of the implementation of the initiative in a systematic format, in line with the Resolution, as we move forward with continued dialogue between Member States and the Secretariat. In this regard, we thank the Secretariat for its continued engagement with Member States and its willingness to share information.

3. ZODIAC will be the largest project in the history of the Agency and the Group is fully convinced of its positive implications. In this regard, the Group would like to comment on the possible impact of this project on the implementation of other Technical Cooperation Projects. Accordingly, the Group underlines the need for careful discussion and implementation, in striving to avoid any adverse impact on other Technical Cooperation Projects, including unfunded projects in footnote a/. In this regard, we call on the Agency to focus on strengthening its efforts at mobilisation of additional resources.

4. With this, the Group welcomes the Proposed Technical Cooperation Project on 'Supporting National and Regional Capacity in Integrated Action for Control of Zoonotic Diseases, as contained in GOV/2020/37, and recommends its approval by the Board of Governors.

I thank you, Madam Chair.

Agenda item 4: Evaluation of technical cooperation activities in 2020

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 2020, as contained in document GOV/2020/46. The Group also thanks the OIOS for the technical briefing organized on November 10th.

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 takes note of the presentation results of the three CLEAs undertaken in 2020, with the intention on helping to strengthen the management of TC activities through systematic solutions. In this regard, cognizant of the changed circumstances in particular due to the travel constraints around COVID-19, the Group would like to seek further clarifications regarding why three of the six planned CLEAs were completed. 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.

4. The Group noted, positively, the decrease on the overall cost of OIOS's TC-related evaluation activities in 2020 (€569 371 in relation to €695 005 in 2019). 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. 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 notes with concern some of the shortcomings, as revealed in the Report, of the outputs and outcomes as defined in the Logical Framework Matrices. The Group requests the Secretariat to address these issues accordingly.

7. The Group further notes that the Report on the evaluation of technical cooperation activities in 2020 has made 13 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 13 recommendations made.

8. The Group further takes note of the 9 overdue Programme Evaluation Recommendations as well as the 40 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.

9. The Group notes with concern that from the CLEAs conducted in 2020, there is still limited strategic efforts from the Agency to adequately seek or strengthen partnerships with relevant country offices of other UN organizations.

10. With these comments, the Group of 77 and China takes note of the Evaluation of Technical Cooperation Activities in 2020, as contained in document GOV/2020/46, and requests that its views and comments be duly reflected in the official records of the TACC meeting.

Thank you, Madam Chair.