



**G-77 and China Statement during the IAEA Technical Assistance and Cooperation Committee, 14 November 2022, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Azzeddine Farhane, Permanent Representative of Morocco**

**Agenda Item 2: Technical Cooperation, The Agency's Proposed Programme for 2023**

1. [Not to be read] The Group would like to thank the Secretariat for preparing the Agency's Proposed Technical Cooperation Programme for 2023, as contained in documents GOV/2022/56 as well as Mr. Hua Liu, Deputy Director General, and the staff of the Department of Technical Cooperation for the briefing provided to Member States on November 4th. We also thank DDG for his introductory remarks under this agenda item.

Mr. Chair,

2. The Group reiterates the paramount importance of the Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme (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. The fact that development gains across the globe have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic should give impetus to efforts for further strengthening and expansion of the TC Programme, including through secure, assured and predictable funding. The Group commends in this regard the important role the Technical Cooperation Department plays in carrying out the TCP as mandated by the IAEA Statute.

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(65)/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.

Mr. Chair,

4. The Group notes that Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF) target for 2023 is €92.6 million as per the recommendation submitted to the Board of Governors (GOV/2021/25). 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 € 87,044,000 to the Board for approval. The Group would like to express its concern that resources for the TC Programme, like the Agency's Regular Budget, have also been subjected to the prevalent inflationary pressures across the globe with the

consequent loss of purchasing power. This entails that the goal of rendering resources for the TC programme sufficient, assured and predictable even more challenging. The Group, therefore, underscores that the funds available for the TC Programme in 2023 must also be increased accordingly should an agreement be reached on revised price adjustment to the Regular Budget for 2023.

5. The Group emphasizes 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. The Group also requests the secretariat to work 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 47.2 million in 2023. This clearly indicates 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 stresses that the implementation rate of the current TC cycle, which is impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, should not affect future budget considerations and that the goal of achieving sufficient, assured and predictable resources shall be always a priority.

9. The Group also welcomes the decision taken by the 66<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Conference, as mandated in GC(66)/RES/8 on convening a follow-up to the 2018 Ministerial Conference on nuclear science, technology and applications and the Technical Cooperation Programme in 2024 with a view to convening it every four years thereafter, and requests the Secretariat to commence consultations with Member States in preparation for the Conference as soon as possible.

10. The Group appreciates the important steps taken to enhance representation of women in the Secretariat, reaffirms its principle of equitable geographical distribution and gender balance, and reiterates that this principle should be reflected in all the Technical Cooperation activities of the IAEA. The Group takes this opportunity to continue requesting the Secretariat to significantly improve equitable geographical distribution and gender balance within the Agency at all levels of responsibility.

Mr. 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 Programme as contained in document GOV/2022/56, and requests that its views and comments be duly reflected in the official records of the TACC meeting.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

## Agenda item 4: Evaluation of technical cooperation activities in 2022

Mr. 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 2022, as contained in document GOV/2022/46. The Group also thanks the OIOS for the technical briefing.
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. The Group welcomes that the External Quality Assessment has given the OIOS's internal audit activity the highest rating of "generally conforms" to the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing of the Institutes of Internal Auditors.
3. The Group of 77 and China takes note of the evaluation results of the four CLEAs undertaken in 2022, with the intention of helping to strengthen the management of TC activities through systematic solutions. In this regard, the Group welcomes the increase of number of countries covered by CLEAs from four in 2021 to six in 2022 and the intention of the OIOS to maintain this number per annum in future.
4. The Group notes that the overall cost of the OIOs activities rose from €517 475 in 2021 to €644751 due the resumption of field visits and higher number of CLEAs. 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 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 evaluation, 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 takes positive note of the OIOS' finding that, overall, the TC Programme quality review process was making a significant contribution to the quality of project designs, which in turn facilitated the implementation of TC projects in Member States; and that the management of the TC programme had improved consistently over the past decade.
7. The Group further notes that the Report on the evaluation of technical cooperation activities in 2022 has made 15 recommendations, which were all accepted by the Secretariat.
8. The Group takes positive note that only 3 Programme Evaluation Recommendations are overdue and that the percentage of open recommendations from evaluations between 2016 and 2019 has further reduced from 5% to 2% between February and August 2022. We note that  
43 Internal Audit Recommendations were also overdue this year. It is pertinent to note that the overdue recommendations for both the Programme Evaluation and Internal Audit are not related to TC

activities and that they are Agency wide activities. Such a fact underlines the importance of striking a balanced approach in evaluating all the activities of the Agency. The Group requests the Secretariat to continue working towards the implementation of these recommendations, as appropriate.

Mr. Chair,

9. The Group takes note of the key cross-cutting findings and recommendations highlighted in the synthesis report. In particular, the Group notes that there were major delays of the Agency activities in all six CLEA countries, which suggests fundamental and systematic design issues as well as other problems with project implementation. The Group notes with concern the finding that knowledge sharing within the Agency is individual-centric and not supported by adequate systems. The Group, therefore, encourages the Secretariat to undertake appropriate measures for effective institutional knowledge management, preservation and handover for continuity purposes. The Group also fully endorses the OIOs recommendation that as the pandemic recedes, there would be increased demand for assistance to make up for missed training opportunities and to accommodate increased procurement of equipment.

10. While appreciating the important steps taken to enhance representation of women in the Secretariat, the Group also reaffirms its support for the principle of equitable geographical distribution and gender balance, and reiterates that this principle should be reflected in the Secretariat as well as in all the Technical Cooperation activities of the IAEA.

11. The Group takes this opportunity to continue requesting the Secretariat to significantly improve equitable geographical distribution and gender balance within the Agency at all levels of responsibility.

12. With these comments, the Group of 77 and China takes note of the Evaluation of Technical Cooperation Activities in 2022, as contained in document GOV/2022/46, and requests that its views and comments be duly reflected in the official records of the TACC meeting.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.