



**G-77 and China Statement during the IAEA June Board of Governors,
5-9 June 2023, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Aftab Ahmad Khokher,
Permanent Representative of Pakistan**

Agenda item 2: The Annual Report for 2022

Mr. 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 2022 as contained in document GOV/2023/13 and for the informal briefing provided on 19 May 2023.

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. 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 appreciates the Agency's participation at the 2022 Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27) in which the Agency organized for the first time a nuclear-themed pavilion at the COP, Atoms for Climate Pavilion. This participation helped raise visibility for the role nuclear technology can play in both effectively mitigating and adapting to the increasingly severe consequences of the climate crisis. The Group encourages the Agency's continued engagement in high-level dialogue on nuclear energy and nuclear techniques and applications at COP28, to be held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates in 2023.

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 Infrastructure Review (INIR) missions.

Mr. 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 priorities.

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 and welcomes that Nuclear knowledge development remained an area of focus in 2022. 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 (KMAVs) 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, their successful use in energy planning and seawater desalination, taking into account their demonstrated overall cost-effectiveness. In this regard, the Group takes note of the progress of work under the Agency-wide Platform on SMRs and their Applications to provide ‘one-stop shop’ support for Member States and stakeholders including through an SMR Coordination and Resource Portal for Information Exchange, Outreach and Networking.

Mr. 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 ability of the laboratories to provide timely assistance to Member States in the early-detection and diagnosis of COVID19 is a testament to the invaluable work that these laboratories continue to do. The Group appreciates the support already given by Member States to the ReNuAL and ReNuAL+ projects. As the project enters its final phase, ReNuAL 2, the Group appreciates their continued support and calls on other Member States, in a position to do so, to contribute as well.

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 zoonotic and animal diseases, the development of the Sterile Insect Technique, addressing soil erosion and enhancing water resources management. The Group continues to support the Zoonotic Diseases Integrated Action (ZODIAC) and takes note that around 150 Member States have designated ZODIAC National Coordinators and more than 120 ZODIAC National Laboratories in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Europe. In this regard, the Group encourages the Secretariat to pursue efforts of mobilizing sufficient resources for the implementation of the project.

12. The Group welcomes the work undertaken by the Agency in environmental protection, in particular the NUClear TEChnology for Controlling Plastic Pollution (NUTEC Plastics) initiative, launched in 2021, which builds on the Agency’s efforts to deal with plastic pollution through recycling using radiation technology and marine monitoring using isotopic tracing techniques. The Group notes with appreciation the regional workshops and trainings organized by the Secretariat

for implementation of this initiative, and further highlights the leading role played by developing countries in the pilot phase of the programme tools.

13. In the field of human health, the Group welcomes the various activities of the Agency in the field of nutrition, biodosimetry and advanced radiotherapy technologies. The Group also commends the work of the Agency, especially in the prevention, control and fight against cancer. The Group notes the activities undertaken in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). In this regard, the Group would like to express its support for the Rays of Hope initiative aimed at supporting developing Member States, beginning with those in Africa, in providing their people access to diagnostic and radiotherapy facilities, equipment as well as capacity-building for cancer control.

14. The Group recognizes the unique role that the Agency plays in enhancing the capabilities of Member States in using isotope hydrology for assessment and management of their water resources, including characterization of climate change impacts on water availability.

15. 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

Mr. Chair,

16. The Group reiterates its appreciation for the IAEA's continuing efforts to promote nuclear safety worldwide and welcomes the diverse activities undertaken in 2022. The Group reaffirms that the responsibility for nuclear safety within a State rests entirely with that Member State and that the IAEA can provide upon request assistance through expertise and advice to Member States. We reiterate our support for the Agency's central role, in coordinating international efforts to strengthen Nuclear Safety globally, and in promoting Nuclear Safety standards in line with Article III of its Statute. The Group remains of the view that nuclear safety should not hamper the promotion, transfer and utilization of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

17. 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 17 publications in the Safety Guides series in 2022.

18. 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 2022 across all safety areas. The Group also encourages the Agency to enhance the participation of experts from the developing countries in conducting such peer reviews and advisory services.

19. The Group notes the Agency's continued efforts in 2022 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. The Group reiterates its principled

position that nuclear security considerations should not hamper international cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear activities, the production, transfer and use of nuclear and other radioactive material, the exchange of nuclear material for peaceful purposes and the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and should not undermine the established priorities of the Agency's technical cooperation programme.

20. The Group also expresses its previous concerns regarding the Nuclear Security Review. It further reiterates its concern, voiced at previous Board of Governors meetings, regarding the reference to applying a holistic approach to safety-security-safeguards by design for nuclear installations, in particular for SMRs, as reflected in the Nuclear Security and Nuclear Safety Reviews. In this regard, the Group welcomes the consultations which the Secretariat is conducting in response to the request of Member States on these concepts, taking into consideration their various positions and legal commitments, and in accordance with the IAEA Statute and the GC resolutions.

21. The Group welcomes the work underway to establish a Nuclear Security Training and Demonstration Centre at its Seibersdorf laboratories through extrabudgetary funds and appreciates contributing Member States. The Group notes that the Centre will complement and fill gaps in training capabilities that do not commonly exist among institutions in States and will further enhance Member States' capacity building, upon request.

22. With respect to the Nuclear Security Plan 2022-2025, the Group wishes to reiterate that given the significance and value of the NSPs, this strategic document must always be the product of a thorough consultation process led by Member States.

Technical Cooperation

Mr. Chair,

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

24. Therefore, 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.

25. The Group further notes the activities undertaken in relation to the Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT) and appreciates the targeted outreach to traditional and non-traditional donors in mobilizing direct and indirect resources for unfunded cancer-related activities in Member States. Broad access to nuclear medicine, radiation medicine techniques and radiotherapy remains a challenge and the Group urges the IAEA to collaborate with relevant international organizations, in order to continue building capacities in developing countries.

26. Cooperation and collaboration with relevant organizations within the UN system remains important in allowing for increased access to nuclear science and technology for Member States, in support of their national and development priorities. In this regard, the Group notes with

appreciation the existing, extended and new Partnership Agreements and Practical Arrangements related to technical cooperation.

27. With these comments, the Group takes note of the Agency's Annual Report for 2022 contained in document GOV/2023/13.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Agenda item 3: Strengthening of the Agency's technical cooperation activities Technical Cooperation Report for 2022

Mr. Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank the Deputy Director General for Technical Cooperation, Mr. Liu, for his introductory remarks and for preparing the Technical Cooperation Report as well as the informal technical briefing provided on 19 May 2023.

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 and that the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) is the main delivery vehicle for this statutory function.

3. The Group reiterates that the TC 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(66)/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.

Mr. Chair,

4. 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 amongst member states. 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) through the development of focused capacity building support that are tailored towards individual member states development needs.

5. The Group takes note of the continued efforts undertaken by the Secretariat in 2022 with the purpose of enhancing efficiency in the delivery of TC projects, including through linking the content of the Country Programme Frameworks (CPFs) to national development plans and the

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in accordance with priorities and needs identified by member states.

6. The Group would also like to recall the established process of the medium-term national planning mechanisms, such as 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.

Mr. Chair,

8. The Group positively notes that the rate of attainment on payments to the TC Fund (TCF) for 2022, as of 31 December 2022, was 97.5%, which is considered as the second highest rate of attainment over the course of the last 10 years. The Group commends the efforts exerted by the Secretariat in this regard, and emphasizes the importance of the TCF in the successful implementation of the TC Programme 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 TC 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 reiterates its request to the Secretariat to include in future reports the details of the increasing number of participants in the TC Programme 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 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 TC Programme in light of the growing demand.

11. The Group further appreciates the extrabudgetary contributions by Member States, the private sector and other non-traditional donors to the TC Programme. In addition, the Group notes the decision of some countries to participate in the government cost-sharing mechanism. The Group underscores, though, that extrabudgetary contributions cannot be a reliable source of funding. The Group, therefore, remains concerned about the increased reliance on extrabudgetary contributions for the delivery of the TC Programme and its potential impact on the funding being sufficient, assured and predictable. Extrabudgetary contributions therefore should not and cannot replace the TC Fund, which is the primary funding mechanism essential to a stable and strategic TC Programme.

Mr. Chair,

12. The Group takes note of the important contribution the Agency's TC Programme could make to the achievement of the Agenda 2030 and its 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 maintains that alignment with the SDGs should not constitute a limitation or condition for TC projects, nor a tool for their reprioritization. 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.

13. In this regard, the Group also reiterates its strong position that TC should not be subject to any form of conditionality, which is inconsistent with the statute of the IAEA and the guiding principles and operating rules as contained in INFCIRC/267 and requests the Secretariat to continue to adhere to them.

Mr. Chair,

14. 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.

15. 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. Chair,

16. The Group reiterates that alignment with United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDFs) 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 UNSDF in order to facilitate close coordination with UN agencies to address national priorities in sustainable development.

17. 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 bilateral and virtual NLO meetings. The Group welcomes the inclusion of gender as a consideration in TC project design. Moreover, the Group supports the Agency's efforts to expand female participation in the TC programme, including through encouraging Member States to nominate female NLOs, meeting and workshop participants, fellows and scientific visitors, and counterparts.

18. The Group underlines the importance of cancer control in developing countries and urges the IAEA to continue building capacities in developing countries, including those that still have no

access to nuclear medicine, 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 Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT), 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 such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), including in the conduct of imPACT reviews. The Group further welcomes the strengthening of existing partnerships with governments, the private sector and international financing institutions.

19. With these remarks, the Group of 77 and China takes note of the Technical Cooperation Report for 2022 contained in document GOV/2023/20.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.