



**G-77 and China Statement during the Technical Assistance and Cooperation Committee, 20 November 2023, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Aftab Ahmad Khokher, Permanent Representative of Pakistan**

**Agenda Item 2: Technical Cooperation, The Agency's Proposed Programme for 2024-2025**

1. The Group would like to thank the Secretariat for preparing the Agency's Proposed Technical Cooperation Program for 2024-2025, as contained in documents GOV/2023/50, Add 1 and Add 2 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 October 25<sup>th</sup>. We also thank DDG for his introductory remarks under this agenda item.

Mr. Chairperson,

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 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 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(67)/RES/9. 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. Chairperson,

4. The Group notes that Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF) target for 2024 is € 96 million, as decided by the General Conference in September 2023, and that for 2025 it is €98 million as per the recommendation submitted to the Board of Governors (GOV/2023/32). 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 €94,751,332 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. The Group also requests the secretariat to work closely with Member States to achieve high-level rates of attainment on payments to the TCF.

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 increasing needs of the developing countries and the unmet demands in this regard, 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 notes that the total Footnote-a/Activities amount to €67.3 million in 2024 and to €59.1 million in 2025. These figures show that the current level of resources available falls short of the resources needed. The significant increase in the proposed funding of the Footnote-a/Activities for 2024-2025 indicates an urgent need to increase the TCF targets for the upcoming years in order to meet the increasing demands of Member States. The Group further stresses the importance of maintaining an adequate balance between the Agency's promotional and non-promotional activities.

7. The Group also welcomes the decision taken by the 67<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Conference, as mandated in GC(67)/RES/9 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.

8. The Group looks forward to the active participation of the IAEA and DG Grossi in the upcoming United Nations 2023 Climate Change Conference (COP28). The Group takes positive note of the efforts of the Agency in promoting peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy and other nuclear applications and techniques as a means to help mitigate and adapt to Climate Change and achieve zero carbon emissions. In that regard, the Group welcomes the Scientific Forum Nuclear Innovation for Net Zero held in the margins of the 67<sup>th</sup> session of the General Conference.

9. The Group reaffirms the principles of equitable geographical distribution and gender balance including the commitment to women empowerment, and appreciates the important steps taken to enhance the representation of women in the Secretariat. The Group reiterates that these

principles should be reflected in all the Technical Cooperation activities of the IAEA. The Group expresses its concern on the significant under-representation of developing countries in the Secretariat which needs to be addressed properly, taking into account the principle of equitable geographical distribution. While the Group continues to request the Secretariat to significantly improve equitable geographical distribution and gender balance within the Agency at all levels of responsibility.

Mr. Chairperson,

10. 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/2023/50, as well as Add 1 and Add 2, and requests that its views and comments be duly reflected in the official records of the TACC meeting.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



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**Agenda item 3: Evaluation of technical cooperation activities in 2023**

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 2023, as contained in document GOV/2023/52. 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 also takes note of the evaluation results of the six CLEAs undertaken in 2023, with the intention of helping to strengthen the management of TC activities through systematic solutions.
3. The Group notes that the overall cost of the OIOS activities rose from €644,751 in 2022 to €700,871. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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.

6. The Group further notes that the Report on the evaluation of technical cooperation activities in 2023 has made 21 recommendations, for which the Secretariat provided action plans to guide their implementation.

7. The Group notes that 9 Programme Evaluation Recommendations and 48 Internal Audit Recommendations are 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,

8. 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 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 delays caused by the lengthy times for TC procurements, as highlighted in the report, are also a source of concern. Every measure in order to enhance effectiveness of the TCP is welcome. In this regard, the Group looks attentively to the implementation of the PCMF+, urges that the comments made in the report are taken into consideration, and looks forward to the results of the new management tool.

9. The Group reaffirms the principles of equitable geographical distribution and gender balance including the commitment to women empowerment, and appreciates the important steps taken to enhance the representation of women in the Secretariat. The Group reiterates that these principles should be reflected in all the Technical Cooperation activities of the IAEA. The Group expresses its concern on the significant under-representation of developing countries in the Secretariat which needs to be addressed properly, taking into account the principle of equitable geographical distribution. The Group continues to request the Secretariat to significantly improve equitable geographical distribution and gender balance within the Agency at all levels of responsibility.

10. With these comments, the Group of 77 and China takes note of the Evaluation of Technical Cooperation Activities in 2023, as contained in document GOV/2023/52, and requests that its views and comments be duly reflected in the official records of the TACC meeting.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.