G-77 and China Statements during the IAEA Board of Governors, 9-13 September 2024, delivered by H.E. Ms. Ambassador Laura Gil, Permanent Representative of Colombia

Agenda Item 3: Programme Performance Report for 2022-2023

Mr. Chair,

1. The Group of G-77 and China, would like to thank the Director General for his introductory statement and the Secretariat for preparing the Programme Performance Report 2022-2023, contained in document GOV/2024/36, and reaffirms that the Agency's programmatic activities should continue to be implemented in accordance with the objectives of its Statute.

2. The Group is pleased to note that the Secretariat continues to take various measures to strengthen the implementation of results based approach to programme planning and looks forward to the implementation of actions based on Agency-wide lessons learned. The Group notes that all Major Programmes, in the operational portion of the Regular Budget for 2023, had a utilization rate from 99.99% to 100%, demonstrating high usage of the funding provided. The Group further notes that the Agency met 98 of 107 target indicators, or 92%, at the programme level for 2022-2023, while eight are slightly below target and one is far below. The Group encourages the Secretariat to take further actions to improve this situation in the future, taking into account lessons learned and experience gained.

3. On Major Programme 1, the Group appreciates the Agency's continued assistance to Member States considering, planning or operating nuclear power plants, research reactors, small and medium-sized or modular reactor (SMRs), other advanced reactors, and fuel cycle facilities, as well as in nuclear science through various means of delivery, and looks forward to further refinements as brought out in the report. The Group notes with satisfaction that the Agency's participation in COP27 and COP28, contributed to the understanding of the role of nuclear power in addressing climate change. The Group looks forward to the Agency's participation in the upcoming COP29 in Azerbaijan.

4. On Major Programme 2, the Group is pleased to note the continued support to Member States in the peaceful uses of nuclear technology in the areas of food and agriculture, human health, water, environment and radioisotope production and radiation technology. The Group welcomes the significant progress in the Renovation of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories (ReNuAL). The Group particularly notes the contribution of the Joint FAO/IAEA Programme of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture in the development and deployment of nuclear applications for food security. The Group further notes the launch of the Atoms4Food initiative between the IAEA and FAO.

5. On Major Programme 3, the Group notes the support to Member States in their efforts to improve nuclear safety and security. The Group notes that the work will continue to strengthen the global safety and security framework through the publication and revision of standards and guidance, as needed, and promoting their application. The Group appreciates the Agency's activities supporting adherence to and implementation of relevant international instruments. The Group remains of the view that nuclear safety and nuclear security considerations should not hamper the utilization of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

6. On Major Programme 4, the Group notes the Agency's application of the relevant safeguards agreements, the updating and development of State-level safeguards approaches, and the Modernization of Safeguards Information Technology project. The Group notes that the Agency completed the pilot phase of the IAEA Comprehensive Capacity-Building Initiative for SSACs and SRAs (COMPASS) in the seven participating States and that the experience gained through COMPASS was incorporated into the Agency's overall SSAC capacity-building programme while COMPASS will continue to be implemented by the Agency as part of the suite of assistance delivered to States.

7. On Major Programme 5, the Group notes the continued efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of programme delivery. The Group stresses the importance of enhanced transparency and communication with Member States in the implementation of policy, management and administrative changes. The Group notes that the Agency developed a pilot knowledge test and participant follow-up surveys to ensure better and more timely measurement of capacity building results. The Group further notes the Agency's continued contribution of the Ethics function to promoting an ethical culture at the Agency while the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) provides recommendations for improving the Agency's work.

8. The Group notes that the Major Programme 6 continued to transfer nuclear and related technology to Member States through human and institutional capacity building and supported Member States in the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology. The Group also notes that the rate of attainment on the payments to the TCF were 97.5 for both 2022 and 2023. The Group emphasizes the importance of the TCF in the implementation of the Technical Cooperation 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 reiterates that the TCP which should be based on the needs, evolving priorities, national ownership and national circumstances of Member States, is a shared responsibility and that its successful planning and implementation depends on the combined efforts of the TC Department, other relevant departments and Member States.

9. 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.

10. In full conformity and with the view to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals as contained in UNGA resolution A/RES/70/1, the Group takes note of the IAEA's activities in cross-cutting issues such as resource mobilization, building partnerships and gender equality and empowerment of women, as well as cross-cutting projects such as the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme, Rays of Hope, Atoms4Food, ZODIAC, and NUTEC Plastics.

11. The Group remains concerned over the asymmetry between the promotional and non-promotional activities of the Agency, and therefore believes that sufficient funding from the regular budget must be secured for Major Programmes 1, 2 and 6 in order to respond to the growing needs of developing countries.

12. With these comments, the Group takes note of the Programme Performance Report for 2022-2023 as contained in GOV/2024/36.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

G-77 and China Statements during the IAEA Board of Governors, 9-13 September 2024, delivered by H.E. Ms. Ambassador Laura Gil, Permanent Representative of Colombia

Agenda Item 4: Nuclear and Radiation Safety

Mr. Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank Deputy Director General Lydie Evrard for her remarks under this agenda item, and commends the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security for the preparation of document GOV/2024/40, pursuant to the General Conference resolutions GC(67) RES/10 and GC(66)/RES/9.

Mr. Chair,

2. The Group attaches great importance to nuclear safety, a key element in any nuclear programme. While recognizing that the primary responsibility for nuclear safety rests with the States, the Group believes that the Agency plays an essential role in this field, as provided for in Article III of the Statute. The Group reiterates its emphasis that the Agency must retain a central role in nuclear safety, owing to its mandatory functions, its broad membership and its longstanding expertise.

3. The Group also stresses its principled position that nuclear safety and nuclear security considerations must not hamper the utilization of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

4. The Group highlights the importance of maintaining, improving and promoting nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety, and emergency preparedness and response worldwide. The Group appreciates the Agency's continuous efforts aimed at supporting Member States, especially the developing countries, in capacity building and sharing of knowledge, expertise, technology and information on all aspects of nuclear safety, as well as the activities aimed at supporting nuclear safety infrastructure development in Member States, upon their request

5. The Group appreciates, the continuation of the assistance provided by the Agency, to developing countries operating, expanding or embarking on nuclear power and radiation technology programmes in establishing or enhancing their national safety infrastructure, in particular the activities related to building competence in the regulatory functions, improving leadership and management for safety and promoting safety culture.

6. The Group remains concerned regarding the reference to applying a holistic or integrated approach to safety-security-safeguards by design for nuclear installations, in particular for SMRs, as it has been 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. The Group looks forward to further consultations on the matter.

7. The Group welcomes the IAEA's commitments to provide long term monitoring and periodic review before, during and after the discharge of water including maintaining an onsite presence at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant.

Mr. Chair,

8. The Group welcomes the continued assistance provided by the Agency to the activities of regional forums and related networks, including the Global Nuclear Safety and Security Network (GNSSN) and other events focused on strengthening collaboration among national authorities, specialists and international organizations. The Group requests the Secretariat to further pursue activities aimed at strengthening regional safety forums and related networks, as mandated by the General Conference.

9. The Group commends the Agency for the activities carried out in the field of radiation safety and environmental protection, including, inter alia, the organization of regional workshops, and appreciates, in particular, the Agency's continued activities aimed at strengthening radiation protection in medicine.

10. The Group attaches high importance to transport safety, and appreciates the involvement of the Secretariat in international efforts to discuss issues related to the transport of radioactive material. The Group supports the continued efforts by the Agency to address problems related to denials of and delays in the shipment of radioactive material, particularly by air and urges Member States to facilitate the safe transport, and to identify, if they have not done so, a national focal point on denials of shipments to achieve a satisfactory and timely resolution of this issue.

11. The Group takes note of the Second and Third Meetings of the Denial of Shipment Working Group (DoS WG) held in Vienna in July 2023 and April 2024 respectively in order to discuss and focus on the progress achieved and future plans of the Working Group with the view to address issues related to denial of shipment of radioactive material.

12. The Group notes the activities developed by the Agency in the area of decommissioning and environmental remediation, such as in support to Member States' programmes by providing guidance and training material and the development of TECDOCs.

13. The Group commends the Agency for conducting advisory missions on the regulatory infrastructure for radiation safety.

Mr. Chair,

14. The efforts of the Agency in the area of education and training, and knowledge management in nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety are of foremost importance to the Group. We reiterate our support for the Agency's efforts to acquire, preserve and transfer knowledge and organizational memory in nuclear safety to Member States.

15. The Group appreciates the Agency's activities in the area of Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) and highlights the importance of supporting the work of regional forums and networks through the conduct of regional EPR workshops in Asia and the Pacific, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean.

16. The Group highlights the important role the Commission on Safety Standards (CSS) plays in providing guidance on the approach and strategy for establishing the Agency's safety standards and in endorsing standards for publication. The Group takes note of the meetings the Commission and the affiliated Committees held during the reporting period as well as of the Secretariat's efforts to optimize and streamline the processing times for publications within existing resources keeping in view the expected increase in safety standards publications over the coming three years.

17. With these remarks, the Group of 77 and China takes note of document GOV/2024/34-GC(68)/10.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

G-77 and China Statements during the IAEA Board of Governors, 9-13 September 2024, delivered by H.E. Ms. Ambassador Laura Gil, Permanent Representative of Colombia

Agenda Item 5: Nuclear Security

Mr. Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank the Secretariat for preparing the Nuclear Security Report 2024, as contained in document GOV/2024/35-GC(68)/7. The Group also expresses its thanks to Deputy Director General Lydie Evrard for her introductory remarks.

2. The Group reaffirms the principle that the responsibility for nuclear security within a State rests entirely with that State. The Group regrets that this important principle has not been reflected once again in the Nuclear Security Report in accordance with the Nuclear Security Resolutions despite the expression of strong concern by the Group. Therefore, the Group urges that this matter be rectified forthwith.

3. The Group remains of the view that nuclear security considerations should not hamper the utilization of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, and international cooperation in that regard, including through the Technical Cooperation Programme.

4. The Group recognizes the importance of coordination among the Agency's departments in development and implementation of its activities, and calls any effort in this regard to be done in full respect of all the positions presented by the Group in particular regarding the allocation of resources for the Technical Cooperation Programme.

5. The Group concurs with the notion that the role of the Agency in enhancing nuclear security and the scope of its activities must be determined by Member States, as reflected in the Board decisions and General Conference resolutions, with due account of the need to ensure an appropriate balance between activities in the promotional and non-promotional areas.

6. The Group notes that successive GC resolutions have affirmed the Agency's central role in assisting Member States for strengthening the nuclear security globally and in coordinating international activities in the field of nuclear security. The Group appreciates the Agency's efforts by organizing or participating in a number of major meetings and coordination in response to the GC resolutions and. requests the Secretariat to provide more information in its future Nuclear Security Reports.

7. The Group notes of the efforts of the Secretariat to distinguish between the Nuclear Security Report and the Nuclear Security Review and that this distinction and their respective utility will be further developed.

8. The Group appreciates the Agency's continued efforts to assist Member States, upon request, to build and develop their nuclear security capacity which include facilitating adherence to and implementation of relevant international legal instruments, developing nuclear security guidance and supporting States in the voluntary implementation of the guidance, and helping States in the establishment of effective, sustainable and comprehensive national nuclear security infrastructure.

9. The Group remains concerned regarding the reference to applying a holistic or integrated approach to safety-security-safeguards by design for nuclear installations, in particular for SMRs, as it has been 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. The Group looks forward to further consultations on the matter.

10. The Group welcomes the voluntary reporting of Member States to the Agency's Incident and Trafficking Database (ITDB) and notes that the Agency does not have the mandate or capability to verify such reporting.

11. The Group requests the Secretariat to continue to provide further reassurance that the information, including on the ITDB, is handled with care, especially those with sensitivity and confidentiality.

12. With regard to public communication, while the Group welcomes the ongoing efforts by the Secretariat to improve communication with the public and Member States about its Nuclear Security activities, the Group stresses the importance of preserving and protecting the confidential information relevant to such activities.

13. The Group notes the continued efforts of the Secretariat to develop and implement Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plans (INSSPs) to assist Member States, upon request, in applying a structured and comprehensive approach to nuclear security improvements including through capacity building and increased coordination, while also stressing that such information should be handled with care, especially those with sensitivity and confidentiality.

14. The Group appreciates the Agency's efforts in responding to requests of Member States for support in information and computer security through developing additional nuclear security guidance and providing training courses.

15. The Group also reiterates its appreciation to the Nuclear Security Guidance Committee, the Interface Group, the Advisory Group on Nuclear Security, the International Nuclear Safety Group and the Secretariat for their work on and contributions toward the Agency's Nuclear Security Series publications. The Group notes the Secretariat's efforts to facilitate the participation of Member States in the process of development and review of the Agency's Nuclear Security Series publications. The Group reiterates its call on the Secretariat to facilitate a broader participation of

representatives from developing countries in its meetings to ensure greater transparency and consensus in the development and review of such publications.

16. Regarding human resource development, the Group appreciates the Agency's continued support of comprehensive human resource development activities to ensure the sustainability of national nuclear security regimes, including the International Nuclear Security Education Network (INSEN) and International Network for Nuclear Security Training and Support Centres (NSSCs).

17. The Group notes that during the reporting period, the Agency continued its training and train-the-trainers programmes, which resulted in 3051 users who completed 5177 e-learning modules and the implementation of 138 nuclear security training events. The Group encourages the Secretariat to further enhance its activities oriented at capacity-building in Member States, particularly developing countries.

18. The Group takes note of the Agency's activities, undertaken at the request of Member States, in the area of risk reduction and security improvement and calls on the Secretariat to continue its efforts aimed at strengthening the capabilities of Member States in this regard, including in the areas of threat characterization and assessment, the promotion of nuclear security culture, nuclear material accountancy and control, transport security, and nuclear forensics, among others.

19. The Group takes note of informal technical briefings by the Secretariat on the progress related to the Nuclear Security Training and Demonstration Centre (NSTDC) and welcomes its inauguration in October 2023. The Group underscores the need to maximize the potential benefits of this centre, while emphasizing its complementarity with the activities of the Nuclear Security Support Centres (NSSCs) in Member States. The Group requests that the Member States may continue to be kept abreast of the planning of extra budgetary resources needed for the long-term sustainability of the centre.

20. The Group requests the Secretariat to avoid the use of ambiguous language in its reports, taking into account views of Member States.

21. The Group notes the Agency's main goals and priorities concerning nuclear security for 2024 and beyond, as identified by the Agency and its Member States and in line with the Nuclear Security Plan 2022-2025, for strengthening nuclear security. The Group encourages the Secretariat to develop the next Nuclear Security Plan 2026-2029 in an inclusive and transparent manner, in close consultation with Member States, with the aim of aligning it with their expressed priorities and needs.

22. With these remarks, the Group takes note of the Nuclear Security Report 2024.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

G-77 and China Statement during the IAEA Board of Governors,
9-13 September 2024, delivered by H.E. Ms. Ambassador Angela Mariana Vigliotta Mella,
Permanent Representative of the Dominican Republic

Agenda Item 6: Strengthening the Agency's activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications

Mr. Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China thanks the Secretariat for the report on Agency activities in the area of nuclear science, technology and applications, as contained in document GOV/2024/34 - GC(68)/10, in response to General Conference resolutions GC(67)/RES/10 and GC(66)/RES/9.

2. The work done by the Agency in nuclear power and non-power applications highlights the need to continue increasing the transfer of nuclear technology and the sharing of nuclear knowledge to developing countries so as to enhance their capabilities and thus contribute to maximizing the benefits of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Group urges the Agency to continue to provide training and education, to support national and regional laboratories and institutions and to further enhance the coordinated research activities. The Group also welcomes the contributions made by Member States to various Agency projects, and encourages those in a position to do so, to continue providing such support.

3. On Annex 1, related to the 'General' part of the non-power nuclear applications, the Group welcomes the convening of the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science, Technology and Applications and the Technical Cooperation Programme, to be held on 26-28 November 2024 in Vienna and encourages Members States to participate at the Ministerial Level.

4. The Group notes with appreciation the continued progress made in the area of human health and medical radioisotopes and radiopharmaceuticals production, as well as the strengthening of Agency's relationship with WHO. The Group also appreciates the Agency's continued efforts to work with Member States' Collaborating Centres and requests the Secretariat to increase the number of Collaborating Centres from developing countries. The Group further appreciates the Agency's support in facilitating effective research through Coordinated Research Projects (CRPs) to allow research institutes in both developing and developed Member States to collaborate.

5. The Group appreciates the Secretariat's continued efforts in the implementation of the Rays of Hope initiative. The Group further welcomes the designation of nine Anchor Centres, including six from the Group, towards improving access to cancer diagnosis, treatment and care for all. The Group encourages the Secretariat's efforts in coordinating with Member States to identify and establish additional Anchor Centres.

6. On Annex 2, related to "Development of the Sterile Insect Technique Package for the Management of Disease-Transmitting Mosquitoes", the Group appreciates the Agency's continued efforts, in particular the Joint FAO/IAEA and the IPCL in Seibersdorf, to develop, validate, and optimize the sterile insect technique (SIT) package as a complementary tool for the management of mosquito populations. The Group notes that mosquito-borne diseases remains among the most severe threats to the health of millions of people worldwide. In this regard, the Group encourages the Agency to continue to pursue its efforts to develop SIT package for mosquitos to effectively combat disease-transmitting mosquitos. The Group encourages Member States to contribute additional funds in order to ensure the sustainability of the programme.

7. On Annex 3, related to "Strengthening the Support to Member States in Food and Agriculture", the Group commends the Agency for the work carried out in response to a demand of technical assistance from Member States that remains high in the area of nuclear applications in food and agriculture delivered including through CRPs and technical cooperation projects. The Group appreciates the continued demand-driven research and development activities on various important topics, in response to Member States' requests. The Group appreciates the efforts done in development and enhancement of laboratory networks including the VETLAB, ZODIAC National Laboratories, RALACA, AFoSaN, FSA, MBN and Tephritid Workers Database networks. The Group further appreciates the Agency's securing of extrabudgetary funds for this important area. The Groupe welcomes the launch of the Atoms4Food initiative between IAEA and FAO which seeks to provide countries with ground-breaking solutions tailored to their specific needs and circumstances on Food security.

8. On Annex 4, on the "Use of Isotope Hydrology for Water Resources Management", the Group notes the Agency's efforts to strengthen isotope hydrology activities, with a focus on research, training, protocol development and analytical services to expand the use of groundwater age dating with isotopes to map water resources. These efforts include the upgrading of isotope hydrology laboratories (IHL), expanding activities related to the IAEA Water Availably Enhancement (IWAVE) Project, and strengthening activities, which contribute to the understanding of climate and its impact on the water cycle. The Group commends the Agency for its activities aimed at expanding access to isotope techniques and capacity building.

9. On Annex 5, related to the "Support to the African Union's Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign (AU-PATTEC)", the Group appreciates the Agency's continuous efforts to support the AU-PATTEC Plan of Action through TC projects providing training, expert services and equipment to countries in the African region affected by this problem, which constitute one of the greatest constraints on the African continent's socio- economic development. The Group encourages the continuation of the Agency's support toward the AU PATTEC initiative and also encourages Member States to contribute additional funds in order to ensure the sustainability of the programme.

10. On Annex 6, in relation to the "Renovation of the Agency's Nuclear Applications Laboratories at Seibersdorf", the Group commends the efforts of the Secretariat, Friends of the ReNuAL and Member States, in mobilizing resources from traditional and nontraditional donors. The Group takes positive note of the successful conclusion of resource mobilization made to the

ReNuAL 2, so as to ensure that the laboratories are fit-for-purpose and can meet the needs of Member States, well into future.

12. On Annex 7 related to the "Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action (ZODIAC) Project", the Group reiterates its support for this project and related activities through the Animal Production and Health Laboratory in Seibersdorf, the VETLAB Network and supporting Member States through interregional TC project INT0098. The Group welcomes the coordination and cooperation with relevant international organizations such the WHO, FAO, WOAH and UNEP, and encourages the Secretariat to continue strengthening their cooperation with international initiatives such as One Health and PREZODE relationships further. The Group takes positive note of the first meeting of the ZODIAC Ad-Hoc Scientific Panel (ZOSP) in January 2023.

12. The Group is fully convinced of ZODIAC's positive implications and appreciates that over half of the extrabudgetary funds received and pledged towards ZODIAC have been dedicated to capacity building and training and the Group encourages the Secretariat to continue strengthening its resource mobilization efforts in this regard.

13. The Group takes note of the Secretariat's NUTEC Plastics initiative, which aims at assisting Member States in harnessing nuclear and isotopic techniques to address the global challenges related to plastic pollution. The Group underscores the leading role played by developing countries in the various phases of the Programme, The Group also notes the ongoing TC projects and CRPs related to this initiative and welcomes the virtual events and roundtables that the Secretariat has held with Member States, in order to provide them with an important platform to discuss the IAEA ongoing efforts in this field.

Mr. Chair,

14. The Group believes that nuclear energy will make an increasing contribution to the sustainable development of humankind throughout the 21st century and beyond and further notes its role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions while ensuring a reliable source of energy, and its contribution to addressing climate change issues and to achieving the SDGs. The Group also welcomes the Agency's growing contributions to support interested Member States in mitigating the challenges of climate change through Nuclear Power and Nuclear Techniques. The Group appreciates the Agency's participation at the 2023 Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28) recognizing that 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 COP29.

15. The Group notes with appreciation the efforts by the Secretariat in supporting interested Member States in the field of nuclear power application, and its continuous engagement with stakeholders in charge of Nuclear Power Program. The Group also highlights the work done by the Secretariat in providing guidance and capacity building in managing the nuclear fuel cycle, and radioactive waste, as well as enhancing the different aspects of the research reactor life cycle, and strengthening excellence for the safe, secure, efficient, and sustainable operation of nuclear power plants and their life management, including decommissioning.

16. The Group values the support provided to Member States embarking on or expanding a nuclear power programme, upon their request, in particular through a variety of advisory and peer review missions, including the Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review (INIR) missions.

17. The Group notes the last International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century which took place in the United States of America in October 2022. The Group attaches importance to regular convening of this Conference and looks forward to interested Member States from the G-77 hosting the Conference in the future, given the growing number of embarking States on Nuclear Power Programmes within the Group.

18. On Annex 11 "Agency Activities in the Development of Innovative Nuclear Technology", the Group reiterates the highest importance it attaches to the International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO). The Group welcomes the growing number of its members in INPRO, and notes with appreciation the developing of multiple collaborative projects and CRPs in the framework of INPRO, while reiterating its call for continued support from the Regular Budget.

19. On Annex 13, "Small and Medium-sized or Modular Reactors", the Group underscores the important role these reactors as an option for enhancing energy availability in both expanding and embarking countries, as they are better suited to the small electrical grids of some developing countries. This is in addition to the great potential of the use of SMR technology for non-electric applications. The Group take notes the different activities by the Agency, such as the approval of new coordinated research projects, the organization of technical and consultancy meetings and the development of related publications and training material. The Group welcomes that the Agency is developing the Platform on Small Modular Reactors and their Applications, to ensure a cross-departmental approach and to provide the full array of Agency support and expertise on all aspects of the development, deployment and oversight of SMRs.

20. The Group reiterates its support for the initiative titled "Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme (MSCFP)" aimed at increasing the number of women in the nuclear field supporting an inclusive workforce of both men and women, raising the overall participation of women and the Lisa Meitner Program aimed at boosting women's career development in the nuclear sector. The Group reaffirms its commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women and welcomes the Secretariat's efforts, taking into consideration the Sustainable Development Goals as contained in UNGA A/RES/70/1. Finally, the Group requests the inclusion of equitable geographical representation as selection criteria in those programs.

Mr. Chair,

21. The Group takes note of the variety of data and information presented in the report that showcase the status of nuclear power today, its high prospects in the future, the technology advancements, as well as the different factors and challenges that impact the future deployment of nuclear power plants and reactors, including the availability of funding, fuel sustainability, human resources development and the regulatory frameworks.

22. With these comments, the Group takes note of document GOV/2024/34 - GC(68)/10.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.