



**G-77 and China Statement during the IAEA Board of Governors,  
14-18 September 2020, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Maria Cleofe Natividad,  
Permanent Representative of the Philippines**

**Agenda Item 3: Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action (ZODIAC) Project**

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank the Director General for his remarks under this agenda item, and notes his report entitled “Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action Project, Early Detection and Global Response”, as contained in GOV/INF/2020/13, which contains a description of the Agency’s approach to implement the ZODIAC initiative.

Madam Chairperson,

2. The Group acknowledges the role of the Agency in assisting Member States to address their socio-economic development goals especially in maintaining and strengthening their public health systems including in human health, food and agriculture, animal health and zoonotic diseases.

3. The Group believes that nuclear science, technology and applications and nuclear-derived techniques are useful tools to assist Member States in detecting and responding to and combatting zoonotic diseases.

4. The Group recognizes that the establishment in 2013 of the Veterinary Disease Diagnostic Laboratories (VETLAB) Network continues to fulfil a crucial role in enabling Member States to fight zoonotic diseases, through building capacity and enabling cross- boundary collaborations.

5. Building upon the lessons learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Group is also of the opinion that there is a need for an integrated global approach and a concerted international effort involving all relevant stakeholders in research, technology development and innovation to reduce the risk of exposure of human beings to dangerous pathogens.

6. Likewise, the Group maintains that all Member States should benefit from the application of nuclear and nuclear-derived techniques in responding to zoonotic diseases, as well in addressing these key issues through interdisciplinary measures at national, regional and international levels.

7. In this regard, the Group acknowledges that the Agency is at the forefront of research, development and application of nuclear and nuclear-derived techniques for the characterization of zoonotic pathogens and tracing their circulation at the environment–animal–human interface, and thereby is uniquely placed to lead, facilitate and coordinate international efforts to support Member States in building their capabilities for combating zoonotic diseases through science and technology.

8. The Group Welcomes the Director General’s formal announcement on the establishment of the IAEA’s Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action (ZODIAC) project at the Board of Governors meeting on 15 June 2020.

9. The Group welcomes the objective of the ZODIAC project that is to strengthen the ability of the Agency and through the Agency to its Member States, to prepare and respond to future zoonotic disease threats and outbreaks, as well as the outbreaks of transboundary animal and zoonotic diseases. In this regard, the Group wishes to stress the need for the IAEA, in accordance with its Statute, to respond to the needs and priorities of Member States including in building the capacity of national laboratories to enable Member States to play the central role in the implementation of ZODIAC.

10. The Group underlines that ZODIAC project shall be Member States driven, and in line with their needs and priorities, with respect to the implementation of all the programmatic activities of the IAEA.

11. The Group also takes note that ZODIAC intends to build on the existing partnership between the IAEA and the FAO, and to include coordination with the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and other partner institutions and laboratories. Therefore, the Group requests the Secretariat to avoid duplication and to build and expand on existing IAEA delivery mechanisms and networks, in its implementation of ZODIAC.

Madam Chairperson,

12. The Group takes note that ZODIAC will be based on five interconnected pillars and requests the Secretariat to further expand the details of ZODIAC, in close consultation with Member States with a view to making this initiative responsive to the needs of Member States.

13. The Group takes note that the ZODIAC project will be fully reliant on extra-budgetary resources and will focus on building the capacity of laboratories in Member States including through the proposed interregional TC project “Supporting national and regional capacity in integrated action for control of zoonotic diseases”. The Group looks forward to further discussion at the TACC, including about the impact of this project on the overall Technical Cooperation programme and emphasizes that ZODIAC should be focused primarily on providing assistance to developing countries.

14. The Group urges the Secretariat to strengthen its resource mobilization efforts, including by seeking project-specific extra-budgetary funding for the implementation of ZODIAC, as well as by building on its previous experience in mobilizing non-traditional and private sector donors.

15. The Group urges the Secretariat to sustain focus on the priorities and activities outlined in the TCP, as well as the programme and budget, including efforts to mobilize extrabudgetary resources for them.

16. The Group thanks the Secretariat for the briefings provided to Member States on 14 July, 3 and 10 September 2020. We request that the Secretariat continues to consult with Member States and provide further information including a detailed project plan, which outlines the proposed timeframe for implementation, as well as the financial, organizational, and human resource implications of the project, and to provide periodic reports to the Board of Governors.

17. With these remarks, the Group of 77 and China takes note of documents GOV/INF/2020/13 and GOV/2020/37.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

#### **Agenda Item 4: Programme Performance Report for 2018-2019**

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China, would like to thank the Director General for his introductory statement and the Secretariat for preparing the Programme Performance Report 2018-2019, contained in document GOV/2020/29.
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, had a utilization rate of either 99.9% or 100%, demonstrating high usage of the funding provided. The Group further notes that the Agency met 89 of 93 target indicators, or 96%, at the programme level for 2018-2019, while three are slightly below target and one is far below.
3. In the Major Programme 1, the Group appreciates the Agency's continued assistance to Member States considering, planning or operating nuclear power plants, research 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 convening of the first International Conference on Climate Change and the Role of Nuclear Power, as well as the Agency's participation in COP25, contributed to the understanding of the role of nuclear power in addressing climate change.
4. Under 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, the 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 Program of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture in the development and deployment of nuclear applications for food security, the Agency's complementarity and synergy with other organizations such as the WHO, the expanded use of ICT to improve access to radiation medicine professionals, the support for Member States in using isotope hydrology tools and methods, and the development of new nuclear and isotopic techniques to address climate change impacts on marine ecosystems.
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.
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 takes note of Agency activities towards cross-cutting issues such as resource mobilization and gender equality.

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 for 2018 and 2019, were 91.4% and 94% respectively. The Group emphasises the importance of the TCF in the implementation of the TCP 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 Technical Cooperation Programme is a shared responsibility and that its success depends on the combined efforts of the Department of Technical Cooperation, other relevant departments and Member States. These efforts are crucial for the planning and successful implementation of the Programme, which should be based on the needs, evolving priorities and ownership of Member States implementing TC projects.

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. 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.

11. With these comments, the Group takes note of the Programme Performance Report for 2018-2019 as contained in GOV/2020/29.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

#### **Agenda Item 5: Measures to strengthen international cooperation in nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety**

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank Deputy Director General Juan Carlos Lentijo for his remarks under this agenda item, and commends the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security for the preparation of document GOV/2020/35-GC(64)/7, as well as for the work carried out between 1 July 2019 and 30 June 2020, pursuant to the General Conference resolution GC(63)/RES/4.

Madam Chairperson,

2. The Group would like to express its condolences to and its solidarity with the Member States that have suffered or continue to suffer loss of lives and livelihoods on account of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as to acknowledge the Agency's support to Member States on the safety of operations of nuclear and radiation facilities and related activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. In this regard, the Group welcomes the report of the Director General, as contained in GC(64)/INF/6 “IAEA Activities related to the Performance of Nuclear and Radiological Facilities and Activities during the COVID-19 Pandemic”;
  4. 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 long-standing expertise.
  5. 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.
  6. The Group highlights the importance of maintaining, improving and promoting nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety, and emergency preparedness and response worldwide, including during the challenges and restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Group appreciates the Agency's continuous efforts aimed at supporting Member States in sharing knowledge, expertise, technology and information on all aspects of nuclear safety. The Group also welcomes the Agency's activities aimed at supporting nuclear safety infrastructure development in Member States, upon their request. The Group requests the Agency to adapt itself to this new situation and to continue these activities, in spite of the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
  7. The Group emphasizes the importance of building and strengthening capacities in all Member States, especially the developing countries. In this regard, the Group appreciates, in particular, the assistance provided by the Agency, upon request, to developing countries operating, expanding or embarking on nuclear power and radiation technology programmes in establishing or enhancing their national safety infrastructure. We value the activities related to building competence in the regulatory functions, improving management for safety and promoting safety culture. The Group requests the Secretariat to continue its efforts in assisting interested Member States in the development of capacities and technical skills in nuclear safety, as well as in strengthening the regulatory system and infrastructure needed for the development of nuclear energy.
  8. The Group notes the importance of incorporation, where appropriate, of lessons learned from the 2011 Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, the experience of States in implementing the Action Plan, as well as the observations and lessons contained in the IAEA Fukushima Report and the principles of the Vienna Declaration, into the Agency's programme of work. In this regard, the Group supports the continuation of the Secretariat's cross-departmental activities concerning strengthening nuclear safety.
- Madam Chairperson,
9. 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 events focused on strengthening collaboration among national authorities, specialists, international organizations, forums and working groups. The Group requests the Secretariat to further pursue activities aimed at strengthening regional safety forums and related networks, as mandated by the General Conference.

10. 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.

11. 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 continued efforts by the Agency to address problems related to denials of and delays in the shipment of radioactive material, particularly shipment by air and urges Member States to facilitate the transport of radioactive material, and to identify, if they have not done so, a national focal point on denials on shipment of radioactive materials to achieve a satisfactory and timely resolution of this issue.

12. The Group notes that the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic have exacerbated the challenges related to delays and denials of shipment of radioactive sources including medical isotopes, the Group calls on all Member States to facilitate to the highest extent possible, the shipment of these materials through their sea ports and airports and to minimize delays and denials even during this difficult period. Finally, the Group calls on the Agency to convene a technical meeting before the end of the year virtually to further discuss measures which may be taken to overcome delays and denials of shipment.

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

14. The Group commends the Agency for conducting advisory missions on the regulatory infrastructure for radiation safety, as well as for addressing radiation safety infrastructure in Member States that have expressed an interest in establishing or enhancing their cancer control capacity through integrated missions of the Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (imPACT) review missions.

Madam Chairperson,

15. 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.

16. The Group appreciates the Agency's activities in the area of Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) and encourages the Agency to continue them. The Group 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.

17. The Group takes note of the Revised Process for the Sharing of the Information as States' Implementation of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and its Supplementary Guidance (2019 edition) while underlining the voluntary nature of the Code of Conduct. The Group requests the Secretariat to brief Member States regarding its implementation.

18. With these remarks, the Group of 77 and China takes note of document GOV/2020/35-GC(64)/7. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

## **Agenda item 6: Nuclear security**

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank the Secretariat for preparing the Nuclear Security Report 2020, which covers the period 1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020, as contained in document GOV/2020/31-GC(64)/6. The Group also expresses its thanks to Deputy Director-General Juan Carlos Lentijo for his introductory remarks under this agenda item, as well as to the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security for the technical briefing provided to delegations on 28 August 2020.
2. The Group reiterates its view that the responsibility for nuclear security within a State rests entirely with that State. The Group urges the Secretariat to always reflect this important principle in full in accordance with the Nuclear Security Resolutions.
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.
5. The Group notes that successive General Conference 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 Agency has responded to these GC resolutions by organizing or participating in a number of major meetings and coordination efforts. The Group appreciates the Agency's efforts in this regard and requests the Secretariat to provide more information in this respect in its future Nuclear Security Reports.
6. The Group appreciates the Agency's continued efforts to assist Member States, upon their 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.
7. The Group welcomes the voluntary reporting of Member States to the Agency's Incident and Trafficking Database (ITDB). The Group notes that the Agency does not have the mandate or capability to verify such reporting. The Group also notes the information provided by the Secretariat on external users of the ITDB and their access level and on the occasions where the Agency shared the information from the ITDB to States.
8. 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.

9. 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.

10. The Group appreciates the continued efforts of the Agency to develop and implement Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plans (INSSPs) to assist Member States, upon request, in applying a structured and holistic 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.

11. The Group welcomes the continued improvement of the Nuclear Security Information Portal (NUSEC). The Group also notes improvements made to NUSEC including the continued enhancements of the IPPAS Good Practice Database, the International Network for Nuclear Security Training and Support Centres (NSSC Network) database, and the common calendar to provide information on all training courses and other events hosted by NSSC Network members.

12. The Group further notes the continued maintenance and update of the Nuclear Security Information Management System (NUSIMS), a web-based platform for States to perform nuclear security self-assessment on a voluntary basis.

13. Recognizing the growing requests of Member States for the Agency's support in information and computer security, the Group appreciates the Agency's efforts in responding to those requests through developing additional nuclear security guidance and providing a number of training courses.

14. 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.

15. Concerning the Agency's advisory services, the Group notes that the Agency's International Physical Protection Advisory Service (IPPAS) mission was conducted, upon request, in Member States and that the Agency began implementing the new guidelines for International Nuclear Security Advisory Service (INSServ) mission.

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 with satisfaction that, during this reporting period, the Agency has provided instructor-led training to over 2400 participants from 142 States and e-learning modules



to 1800 users from 134 States. The Group further encourages the Secretariat to enhance its activities oriented at capacity-building in Member States, particularly developing countries, thus helping to ensure their adequate human resources.

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. The Group 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 is of the view that the Secretariat should avoid ambiguous language in its reports that can be interpreted in different ways and requests the Secretariat to use a language that reflects the broader views of the Agency's Member States.

20. The Group notes the Agency's main goals and priorities concerning nuclear security for 2020-2021, which include preparations for the next International Conference on the Safe and Secure Transport of Nuclear and Radioactive Materials to be held in December 2021, and the continued preparations for the Review Conference of the CPPNM and its 2005 Amendment to take place in 2021.

21. With these remarks, the Group takes note of the Nuclear Security Report 2020.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

### **Agenda Item 7: Strengthening the Agency's activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications**

Madam Chairperson,

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/2020/28-GC(64)/5, in response to General Conference resolutions GC(63)/RES/10 and GC(62)/RES/19. (Not to be read).

2. The work done by the Agency in nuclear power and nuclear applications highlights the need to increase 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 to further enhance the coordinated research activities. The Group also welcomes the contributions made by Member States to various Agency projects, and encourages all Member States, in a position to do so, to continue providing such support through the Agency.

3. On Annex 1, related to the 'General' part of the non-power nuclear applications, the Group recalls the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology, co-chaired by Costa Rica and Japan in November 2018 and its Ministerial Declaration. The Group notes with satisfaction that the conference attracted the highest ever-ministerial level participation, which underscores the importance Member States attach to the Agency's work in promoting nuclear science and technology and its application and delivery through TCP. The Group reiterates its position that the

Agency should organize a follow-up International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science, Technology and Applications and the Technical Cooperation Programme in 2023. In this regard, the Group looks forward to participating in consultations due to start in 2021, with a view to holding the conference as scheduled.

4. The Group notes with appreciation the 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, to implement its programmatic activities and promote the practical use of nuclear techniques, and 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. Recognizing the positive impact of CRPs in the Technical Cooperation Programme, and their resulting publications, the Group urges the Secretariat to further ensure benefits from possible synergies and avoiding duplication in this regard.

5. On Annex 2, 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. The Group notes with appreciation the 35<sup>th</sup> General Conference of the International Scientific Council for Trypanosomosis Research and Control, which were held in Abuja in September 2019. The Group takes note of the assessment that tsetse flies and the trypanosomosis problem constitute one of the greatest constraints on the African continent's socio- economic development, affecting the health of humans and livestock, limiting sustainable rural development and thus causing increased poverty and food insecurity. The Group encourages the continuation of the Agency's support toward the AU PATTEC initiative to eradicate tsetse and Trypanosomosis from the African continent through the creation of sustainable tsetse and trypanosomosis free areas. The Group encourages Member States to contribute additional funds in order to ensure the sustainability of the programme.

6. On Annex 3, 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 of the Agency, in mobilizing resources from traditional and non-traditional donors, including through an initiative to seek further private sector partners utilizing the UN Global Marketplace portal. The Group also welcomes the operationalization of the new Insect Pest Control Laboratory building at the end of 2019, as well as the completion and subsequent official opening of the Yukiya Amano Laboratories (YAL) at the IAEA laboratories in Seibersdorf in May and June 2020, respectively. The Group is further pleased to note that the YAL building is now operational and amongst others, houses the Animal Production and Health Laboratory which has continued to provide invaluable support to Member States in fighting transboundary and zoonotic diseases such as COVID-19.

7. On Annex 4 related to the "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.

8. On Annex 5, “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 efforts done in development and enhancement of laboratory networks including the VETLAB and RALACA networks. The Group further welcomes the Agency’s securing of extrabudgetary funds for this important area. The Group encourages the FAO/IAEA Joint Division to continue its efforts to increase the contribution of nuclear science and technology to raising agricultural productivity and sustainability, and also to respond major global trends framing agriculture development, including the adaptation to and mitigation of the effects of climate change.

9. On Annex 6, “Plan for Producing Potable Water Economically Using Small and Medium Sized or Modular Reactors”, the Group supports the various activities undertaken by the Agency to assist Member States in developing sea water desalination using nuclear energy and to collaborate with international organization in this area. The Group appreciates the comprehensive compilation of activities in this regard in various Member States of the Agency. The Group encourages the Secretariat to continue to support Member States in the conduct of innovative projects involving non-electric applications of nuclear power.

10. The Group believes that nuclear energy will make an increasing contribution to the sustainable development of human kind throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond. The Group further notes the role played by nuclear power in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and its contribution to addressing climate change issues and to United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. In this regard, the Group welcomes the convening of the IAEA International Conference on Climate Change and the Role of Nuclear Power held in Vienna, from 7-11 October 2019. 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, and in this regard, welcomes the focus of the 2020 Scientific Forum, “Nuclear Power and the Clean Energy Transition”.

Madam Chairperson,

11. The Group notes that the next International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, is scheduled to take place in the United States of America in October 2021. The Group looks forward to a successful conference with a view to advancing the role of nuclear power in meeting future energy demands, contributing to sustainable development and mitigating climate change. 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.

12. The Group reiterates the highest importance it attaches 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 notes with appreciation the three documents issued in 2020 in relation to INPRO methodology, namely

INPRO Methodology for Sustainability Assessment of Nuclear Energy Systems: Waste Management (IAEA-TECDOC-1901), INPRO Methodology for Sustainability Assessment of Nuclear Energy Systems.

13. The Group values the support provided to Member States embarking on or expanding a nuclear power programme, upon their request, through inter-alia, the Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review (INIR) missions, and National Nuclear Energy System Assessments (NESAs) The Group also notes the various activities undertaken by the agency to assist Member States interested in uranium production, as well in their efforts to deploy safe, secure and economically viable small and medium sized or modular reactors (SMRs).

14. The Group reiterates its support for the initiative launched by the Director General, titled “Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme (MSCFP)” through which the IAEA could accord a 2-year scholarship for up to 100 female graduate, pursuing master degree in nuclear science and technology or non-proliferation, with a view to promoting gender equality and diversity in the context of nuclear knowledge management.

Madam Chair,

15. The Group would like to highlight that as a result of the difficulties and restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic this year, parts of the General Conference resolution on “Strengthening the Agency’s activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications” (annexes 4, 5 and 6) that were scheduled to be presented and adopted at the 64<sup>th</sup> General Conference have been postponed to the 65<sup>th</sup> General Conference and requests that they be maintained as its agenda items. In this regard, in the part of the resolution on “non- power nuclear applications” drafted by the G-77 and China, the annexes on “Development of the sterile insect technique for the control or eradication of malaria-, dengue-, and other diseases transmitting mosquitoes”; “Strengthening the support to Member States in food and agriculture”; and “Plan for producing potable water economically using small and medium-sized nuclear reactors” (to be drafted by Morocco) will be postponed.

16. With these comments, the Group takes note of document under this agenda item (GOV/2020/28-GC(64)/5).

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.