



**G-77 and China Statement during  
the Technical Assistance and Cooperation Committee,  
18 November 2024, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Laura Gil,  
Permanent Representative of Colombia**

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

1. The Group would like to thank the Secretariat for preparing the Agency's Proposed Technical Cooperation Program for 2025, as contained in documents GOV/2024/58 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 23<sup>rd</sup>. We also thank DDG for his introductory remarks under this agenda item.

Mr. Chair,

2. The Group reiterates the paramount importance of the Agency's Technical Cooperation 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 TCP plays an important role for the sustainable socioeconomic progress in developing countries and contributes towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. In this regard, the Group stresses the role of the IAEA TCP as a major mechanism in transferring and access to nuclear technology, materials, equipment and expertise to Member States for peaceful purposes.

3. The Group also reiterates that the TCP is a shared responsibility and the result of the combined efforts between the IAEA technical Departments and the Member States. 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 (m) of Resolution GC(68)/RES/10. The Group is of the view that this important principle should continue to guide the provision of Technical Cooperation by the Agency and requests the Secretariat to reflect it explicitly in future proposed Programmes, in particular in the section on the programming process.

Mr. Chair,

4. The Group notes that Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF) target for 2025 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 € 94 623 777 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 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 TCP 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 over €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 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. The Group calls upon Member States in a position to do so to provide extra budgetary contributions for the TCP for the benefit of developing countries and to address the funding gap therein.

7. The Group also welcomes the decision taken by the 68<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Conference, as mandated in GC(68)/RES/10 on convening the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science, Technology and Applications and the Technical Cooperation Programme to be held on 26-28 November 2024, and encouraging Member States to participate at ministerial level. In this regard, the Group appreciates the consultations with Member States undertaken by the Co-Chairs, the Ambassadors of Ghana and Finland, in preparation for the Conference, including on the draft Declaration.

8. The Group looks forward to the active participation of the IAEA in the upcoming United Nations 2024 Climate Change Conference (COP29). The Group takes positive note of the efforts of the Agency in promoting peaceful uses of atomic energy as a means to help mitigate and adapt to climate change.

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.

Mr. Chair,

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/2024/58 and requests that its views and comments be duly reflected in the official records of the TACC meeting.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

### **Agenda item 3: Evaluation of technical cooperation activities in 2024**

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 2024, as contained in document GOV/2024/59. The Group also thanks the OIOS for the technical briefing provided on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024.

2. The Group continues to attach great importance to the work of the 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 three Regional Country-level Evaluation and Audit (CLEA-R) undertaken in 2024, with the intention of helping to strengthen the management of TC activities through systematic solutions.

3. The Group takes note of the two TC related oversight assignments finalized during 2024: the CLEA-R of the Agency's Work in Africa and the Evaluation of the Regional and Interregional Projects of the Agency's TCP.

4. The Group notes that the overall cost of these two OIOS activities amounted to €657,197, compared with €700,871 for the OIOS activities that were reported to the TACC in 2023. The Group stresses that the OIOS should, in the course of their regular work and within resources allocated to these offices from the Regular Budget, evaluate projects, in a balanced manner across all major programmes.

5. In this regard, the Group encourages the OIOS to perform evaluations of the activities of the other departments in the Agency, so that evaluation activities are applied in a balanced manner across all major programmes. The Group stresses the importance of a balanced allocation of resources for evaluation purposes between TC-related activities and other activities of the Agency,

which require similarly intensive evaluation, since these activities account for a larger portion of the Agency's budget. Given the increasing demands on the Agency's budgetary, human and other resources, the Group encourages the OIOS to carry out its audit and evaluation functions in an effective and judicious manner, utilizing opportunities for synergies presented by other existing audit, evaluation and assessment mechanisms in the Agency and in the Member States.

6. The Group notes that the CLEA-R exercise for 2024 combined audit and evaluation methodologies to provide a comprehensive assessment of the Agency's performance and facilitate a more efficient and effective comparative study. The Group further notes that OIOS adopted a revised methodology with a focus on the Agency's work in three areas relating to food and agriculture, including consideration of the context of the Atoms4Food initiative.

7. The Group acknowledges the importance of this year's evaluation focusing on Africa and takes further note of the finding that the IAEA should focus on scaling-up, dissemination and greater visibility of its work on food and agriculture in Africa. In terms of methodology, the Group looks forward for a comprehensive evaluation of all TC projects in future OIOS reports. An evaluation of the efficiency and adequacy of TC projects, based on a results-oriented approach, which would provide valuable insights into their impact and areas for improvement and help ensure that the delivery of nuclear science and technology applications aligns effectively with the specific needs of Member States.

8. The Group takes note that OIOS identified 116 national projects and 11 regional TC projects that fell within the scope of the 3 thematic areas and were active between 2018 and 2024 covering all African subregions and total expenditure of over €40 million across the three biennia from 2018.

9. The Group also takes note that OIOS conducted a number of field missions as part of the CLEA-R and that its team observed three coordination meetings relating to regional projects in food and agriculture, as well as other relevant meetings and events.

10. The Group notes that the OIOS completed the Evaluation of the Regional and Interregional Projects of the Agency's TCP commenced in mid-2023, which comprise 579 national, regional and interregional TC projects. The Group also notes that the CLEA-R concluded that the scientific knowledge creation and transfer of nuclear technologies in food safety, mutation breeding and insect pest control are highly effective through productive research collaborations and joint publications with a wide reach.

11. Furthermore, the Group notes that the Report on the Regional Country-level Evaluation and Audit of the Agency's Work in Africa emphasizes nine CLEA-R recommendations to be implemented by the Secretariat. The Group also notes that the Report on Evaluation of the Regional and Interregional Projects of the Agency's TCP underscores seven recommendations to be implemented by the Secretariat. In this regard, the Group highlights the recommendations to strengthen the alignment of regional and interregional projects with national development objectives and the SDGs as well as the improvement of country level coordination between

regional projects sponsored by regional cooperative agreements and TC projects outside agreements.

12. The Group appreciates that the Secretariat agrees timescales for the implementation of actions to address the accepted recommendations made by evaluations and looks forward to reporting on their implementation.

13. The Group notes that 7 Programme Evaluation Recommendations and 28 Internal Audit Recommendations are overdue this year. The Group notes with appreciation that there are now no recommendations open from audit reports issued before 2018, and the number of open recommendations from reports issued between 2018 and 2022 has further decreased from 55 in February 2024 to 31 in August 2024. However, it is pertinent to note that the overdue recommendations for both the Programme Evaluation and Internal Audit are not sufficiently 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,

14. The Group takes note of the key cross-cutting findings and recommendations highlighted in the synthesis report. In particular, the Group notes that the CLEA-R identified systematic delays in the implementation of national and regional projects compared to the planned timelines, while stressing that procurement timelines are the leading cause of these delays. Every measure in order to enhance effectiveness of the TCP is welcome. In this regard, the Group looks attentively to the continued implementation of the PCMF+, urges that the comments made in the report are taken into consideration, and looks forward to the results of the related management tools.

15. 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.

16. With these comments, the Group of 77 and China takes note of the Evaluation of Technical Cooperation Activities in 2024, as contained in document GOV/2024/59, and requests that its views and comments be duly reflected in the official records of the TACC meeting.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.