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President: Mr FARHANE (Morocco)

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¹ In view of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Conference decided that delegations so wishing could attend in a virtual manner using the Interpretive IT platform or make their statements by means of a pre-recorded video.

² GC(64)/19.

Abbreviations used in this record

CSA	comprehensive safeguards agreement
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review and Extension Conference	Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review Conference	Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NWFZ	nuclear-weapon-free zone
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
PMO	Policy-Making Organs
UK	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
SQP	small quantities protocol
WMD	weapon of mass destruction

9. Election of members to the Board of Governors (continued) (GC(64)/9 and 20)

1. The PRESIDENT reiterated that, since no State had obtained the required majority of votes for the vacant seat for Eastern Europe, a second ballot would be held. Pursuant to Rule 80 of the Rules of Procedure, it was restricted to the two candidates who had obtained the largest number of votes in the first ballot: Poland and Romania.
2. A vote was taken by secret ballot.
3. Mr Moeller (Norway) and Mr Srisukwattana (Thailand) again acted as tellers.
4. The PRESIDENT proposed that the General Conference take up item 20 while the votes were being counted.

20. Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East (GC(64)/11; GC(64)/L.1)

5. The PRESIDENT said that item 20 had been included in the agenda pursuant to resolution GC(63)/RES/13. The Director General had accordingly submitted the report set out in document GC(64)/11, which had also been considered by the Board of Governors the previous week. Document GC(64)/L.1 contained a draft resolution submitted by Egypt.
6. Mr ELMOLLA (Egypt) said that ridding the Middle East of nuclear weapons was crucial to the security of all States and the future of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Since the entry into force of the NPT half a decade earlier, Egypt and other States conscious of the pivotal importance of the issue had striven to achieve that goal through numerous initiatives and resolutions that it had submitted to the United Nations and other international forums, and to the General Conference.
7. All those resolutions had been adopted either by consensus or with a significant majority, yet none had been implemented owing to a lack of political will. The resulting stalemate undermined the legitimacy of the non-proliferation regime and called into question the sincerity of certain Member States which, despite professing their commitment to ridding the Middle East of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in various international forums, in reality adopted irrational positions towards genuine efforts to achieve that goal.
8. Although 25 years had passed since the adoption by consensus of the Resolution on the Middle East — which had served as the basis for the indefinite extension of the NPT, to which all remaining Arab States had since acceded — the international legal commitment set out in that resolution was far from being met. For the current stalemate to be overcome, the Member States must work together to support the initiatives called for in the resolutions on the application of safeguards in the Middle East proposed by Egypt to the General Conference each year, which were based on agreed goals regarding the universalization of the safeguards agreement and the NPT. The implementation of such initiatives

would be an important step towards the establishment of a verifiable NWFZ in the Middle East and would build confidence among the international community.

9. In 2020, Egypt was again submitting to the General Conference a draft resolution on the application of safeguards in the Middle East. The text reflected the will of the international community and provided a strong basis for strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and establishing an NWFZ in the Middle East, without excluding any party. Egypt encouraged consultations between the Director General and Member States in the region with a view to ensuring the implementation of the resolution. Egypt also expected the Secretariat to give due attention to ensuring the universalization of the comprehensive safeguards regime and the application of comprehensive safeguards to nuclear facilities in the Middle East, in particular those not subject to any verification or monitoring measures.

10. There was no justification for simply accepting the status quo. Member States had a duty to address the challenges faced and prevent any serious repercussions for international peace and security. Failure to vote in favour of the resolution — which had undergone technical updates only in 2020 — demonstrated a lack of respect for States' obligations to support the non-proliferation regime and for ongoing efforts in that regard. Egypt therefore hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted with the greatest possible majority.

11. Mr CHACÓN ESCAMILLO (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that the effective and efficient application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East promoted greater confidence among States in the region. Achieving the universality of comprehensive Agency safeguards in the Middle East was the first practical step towards that goal and was necessary for establishing an NWFZ in the region.

12. In that respect, Venezuela expressed regret that no further progress had been made in fulfilling the Director General's mandate under resolution GC(63)/RES/13 concerning the application of the comprehensive Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities in the Middle East. As establishing an NWFZ would improve peace and stability in the region, efforts to ensure the application of the resolution should be stepped up. His country considered, moreover, that establishing such a zone was a positive step towards global nuclear disarmament, and reiterated its support for the creation of such a zone, pursuant to the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference.

13. At a number of international forums, Venezuela had stressed the urgent need for Israel to accede immediately to the NPT, place its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards in order to dispel any existing doubt about its nuclear programme, and contribute to the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East.

14. His country highlighted the importance of the 2019 Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, in which all States of the region, except Israel, had participated and had demonstrated a willingness to reach an agreement. Venezuela hoped that Israel would participate in the second conference.

15. Most of the States of the region understood the need for an integrated process that reduced tensions and served as a starting point to continue discussions in good faith.

16. Venezuela stressed that the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, together with other decisions adopted at the NPT Review Conferences, remained valid until such time as a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs had been established.

17. Mr NUSBAUM (Israel) said that, in the past, his country had joined the consensus on the General Conference resolution on application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East, reflecting a shared vision for regional stability and security. However, the language of the draft resolution currently under discussion implied that adherence to the NPT was a means of enhancing peace and security in the Middle East. Such a concept was inherently flawed as it did not take regional realities into account. While Israel

had repeatedly expressed its commitment to the non-proliferation regime, four States in the region — the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic — had failed to comply with their obligations under the NPT. Violations included the development of covert nuclear weapons programmes and the covert construction of a military nuclear reactor in Syria. Accordingly, while Israel shared the vision articulated by the draft resolution, the lack of a solid foundation for adherence to agreements in the region, coupled with an absence of mutual recognition and trust, led to the conclusion that the text lacked the required balance, given the regional circumstances.

18. Israel attached high importance to the non-proliferation regime and shared its goals. Nevertheless, the geopolitical situation in the Middle East clearly demonstrated that the NPT did not provide a remedy for the unique security challenges of the region, especially considering the repeated violations of the NPT by several States Parties. Accession to the NPT was not a goal in and of itself. Calls for universal accession to the NPT must also be judged against the views held by some in the region concerning the State of Israel, the existence of which was not recognized by several Arab States, and the position of Iran, which had openly and explicitly called for Israel's destruction.

19. Lessons learned from other regions had shown that a regional security framework could stem only from the shared political will of all regional parties to engage directly with each other and to take into consideration the security concerns of each and every State on the basis of consensus. A comprehensive and durable peace in the Middle East and full compliance by all States of the region with their non-proliferation obligations were prerequisites for the establishment of a zone free of all WMDs. The current regrettable situation in the Middle East and the manifold threats, conventional and non-conventional alike, justified Israel's approach.

20. Such a resolution should therefore be uncontroversial rather than disputable. Until the current situation changed, Israel was obliged to vote against paragraph 2 of the draft resolution and to abstain on the draft resolution as a whole; he accordingly requested that separate votes be taken on paragraph 2 and on the draft resolution as a whole.

21. Ms REDONDO FALCÓN (Cuba) said that her country had supported the establishment of NWFZs around the world, as part of the efforts to strengthen nuclear non-proliferation and achieve the goal of nuclear disarmament. Latin America and the Caribbean was the first of the world's densely populated regions to have declared itself an NWFZ through the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean. Cuba was convinced that the establishment of internationally recognized NWFZs, strengthened the non-proliferation regime, enhanced international peace and security, and contributed significantly to nuclear disarmament.

22. It was regrettable that a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs had not yet been established in the Middle East, despite calls from the international community and the many resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Conference and the UN General Assembly.

23. Besides contributing significantly to nuclear disarmament, the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East would be a momentous step in the region's peace process. As the only State in the region not to be party to the NPT, and having failed to declare its intention to do so, Israel must respond, without delay or constraints, to the justified calls of the international community: it must renounce its possession of nuclear weapons, accede without delay to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State and subject all its nuclear facilities to comprehensive Agency safeguards.

24. Mr ELMOLLA (Egypt) requested a roll-call vote on operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution and a roll-call vote on the draft resolution as a whole, under Rule 72 of the Rules of Procedure.

25. Mr MOHAMMAD POUR FERAMI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the issue of the universality of the NPT, and specifically the nuclear weapons capability of the Middle East, should be

addressed without prejudice. His country believed that overlooking such an important issue directly affected regional and international peace and stability, challenging the established global arms-control norms and architecture, and damaging the credibility and viability of the Agency and its safeguards regime. Iran stressed that ignoring the continued and dangerous presence of unsafeguarded nuclear facilities and activities of the Israeli regime was no longer sustainable.

26. Since all in the Middle East region, except the Israeli regime, were parties to the NPT and had undertaken to accept comprehensive Agency safeguards, the Israeli regime's acquisition of a clandestine nuclear capability, in complete disregard of international law, posed an ongoing serious threat to the security and stability of its neighbouring States and beyond. The situation also provided a compelling reason for the region's States to seek the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East, which was part and parcel of the 1995 agreement on the unlimited extension of the NPT.

27. His country reiterated that the current nuclear crisis in the Middle East would be remedied only if the Israeli regime promptly and unconditionally acceded to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State and placed all its nuclear capabilities, materials and installations under comprehensive Agency safeguards.

28. The Agency undoubtedly played a distinct role in implementing decisions and resolutions of the General Conference and was well aware of what its professional work entailed. As such work was based on Agency reference documents and decisions taken by the PMOs, the Agency's mandates should not be affected by any political circumstances. Professional rationale required the Agency to take measures with the objective of implementing safeguards throughout the Middle East, as requested in the General Conference resolutions, and to provide the Member States with independent and impartial assessments and reporting on who, how, why and to what extent the professional work of the Agency was impaired.

29. Nuclear weapons posed a serious threat to security both in the Middle East and globally, and ignoring the facts no longer served the best interests of the region and the international community in their desperate aspiration for peace and security. The legal norms on nuclear disarmament, and the prohibition and proliferation of nuclear weapons, should therefore be upheld so that world peace and security could be strengthened.

30. The PRESIDENT recalled that Israel had requested that a separate vote be taken on operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution set out in document GC(64)/L.1.

31. At the request of Egypt, a roll-call vote was taken.

32. Saint Lucia, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first. In the absence of a representative of Saint Lucia, the voting started with San Marino.

33. The result of the vote was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Chad, Chile, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Holy See, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar,

Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Viet Nam.

Against: Israel.

Abstaining: Benin, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Honduras, India, Myanmar, Rwanda, Togo, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America.

34. There were 105 votes in favour and 1 against, with 12 abstentions. Paragraph 2 of the draft resolution was adopted.

35. Mr MAZUMDAR (India), speaking in explanation of vote, said that, as in the past, his delegation had abstained because it believed that paragraph 2 of the draft resolution contained elements that were extraneous to the Agency.

36. The PRESIDENT noted that Israel had requested a vote on the whole of the draft resolution contained in document GC(64)/L.1.

37. At the request of Egypt, a roll-call vote was taken.

38. Mexico, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

39. The result of the vote was as follows:

In favour³: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Chile, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Holy See, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam.

Abstaining: Brazil, Canada, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Israel, Rwanda, Togo, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America.

40. There were 111 votes in favour and none against, with 8 abstentions. The draft resolution was adopted.

³ South Africa later advised the Secretariat that, had it been present, it would have voted in favour.

41. Ms MAMMADOVA (Azerbaijan), speaking on behalf of NAM in explanation of vote, welcomed the report set out in document GC(64)/11 and confirmed that the Group was committed to its principled position on the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East. In its conviction that the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East would be a positive step towards global nuclear disarmament, NAM reiterated its support for the establishment of such a zone in accordance with the relevant UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. Moreover, NAM was convinced that the effective and efficient application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East promoted greater confidence among States in the region. Achieving the universality of comprehensive Agency safeguards in the Middle East was the first practical step towards such confidence-building — and was necessary for establishing an NWFZ in that region.

42. NAM welcomed the fact that its members which were party to the NPT had concluded CSAs with the Agency as non-nuclear-weapon States. Noting that consultations would be continued in accordance with the aforementioned mandate, NAM also welcomed efforts to encourage new ideas and approaches that might aid progress, and requested that Member States continue to be briefed regularly on the issue.

43. NAM States Parties to the NPT regretted that the 2015 NPT Review Conference had not been able to reach agreement on its draft final document, which could have a negative impact on the NPT regime.

44. NAM welcomed the first Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, held in New York in November 2019, in accordance with UN General Assembly decision 73/546 (2018), and its political declaration. Looking forward to the convening of the second conference to be chaired by Kuwait, NAM called upon all States in the region, without exception, to participate actively in the conference, negotiate in good faith and bring to a conclusion a legally binding treaty on the establishment of such a zone. NAM appreciated the Agency's participation in the first conference and its background document and requested the Secretariat to participate in the second conference as mandated by decision 73/546 (2018).

45. In concluding, she said that NAM endorsed the draft resolution contained in document GC(64)/L.1.

46. Ms AL-HADID (Jordan)*, speaking on behalf of the Arab Group in explanation of vote, recalled that all countries in the Middle East, apart from Israel, were parties to the NPT and had concluded CSAs. Efforts to universalize the NPT and the CSA, the legal standard of the Agency's safeguards system, therefore needed to be consolidated.

47. The Group regretted that no progress had been made on the implementation of resolution GC(63)/RES/13, despite its adoption by a majority vote. The Agency must do more to implement the resolution, including through additional consultations, and break the deadlock on the establishment of an NWFZ in the Middle East. Such action would support the non-proliferation regime and would be consistent with the outcomes of the NPT Review Conferences, in particular the 1995 Resolution, which had laid the legal foundations for the indefinite extension of the NPT.

48. Noting the importance of providing more detail on the progress and outcomes of future sessions of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, the Group welcomed the successful outcomes of the first session, held in New York in November 2019 under Jordan's presidency, and looked forward to the second session, to be presided over by Kuwait.

49. UN General Assembly decision 73/546 (2018), on the annual convening of the conference, could be added to the list of reference documents on the topic, which included the 1995 Resolution and the Final Documents of both NPT Review Conferences. States that had not voted in favour of the decision

should reconsider their positions and participate in the conference, avoiding double standards in dealing with international instruments on non-proliferation and disarmament.

50. The work of the first Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction complemented that done by the preparatory committees with a view to a successful NPT Review Conference in 2021. Praising the States that had supported the 2019 conference, the Group emphasized that all concerned States must participate effectively in the second conference, an opportunity to revive international action to rid the Middle East of nuclear weapons and WMDs.

51. Mr HALL (United Kingdom), speaking in explanation of vote also on behalf of France and Germany, said that all three countries had supported the resolution in the same spirit as at previous sessions. They viewed it exclusively in the context of the NPT and the Agency. The word “relevant” in paragraph 3 clearly related solely to the application of safeguards, in line with the title of the resolution. France, Germany and the UK continued to support efforts to promote a Middle East free of nuclear weapons and all other WMDs and their delivery systems.

52. Mr MOLEKANE (South Africa), speaking in explanation of vote, recalled that the universalization of the NPT was essential for international peace and security. South Africa joined calls for Israel to become a State party to the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon State. Such a step was essential for achieving lasting peace in the Middle East and would ultimately make the world safer.

53. Ratifying the NPT would also bring Israel into the Agency’s global safeguards system, a key step towards achieving the long-standing goal of establishing a WMD-free zone in the Middle East. It was essential that Israel signed a CSA and additional protocol and laid to rest the concerns of its neighbours and the international community as to the nature of its nuclear programme.

54. As a State party to the Pelindaba Treaty, which had established the entire African continent as an NWFZ, South Africa was a strong proponent of establishing the entire world as an NWFZ, which could only be done if those evil weapons were totally eliminated from the face of the earth.

55. He therefore welcomed the first UN Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone free of Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction, and encouraged Israel to join that process, where it could openly and freely raise its security concerns and actively contribute towards an important goal of the NPT.

56. Lastly, he reaffirmed South Africa’s long-standing position that global peace and security could be achieved only with the total prohibition and destruction of nuclear weapons and all other WMDs.

57. Ms WOLCOTT (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote, said that her country continued to support many of the goals outlined in the resolution, including the long-term goal of a Middle East free of WMDs and their delivery systems, along with comprehensive and durable regional peace. The USA strongly endorsed a number of key elements outlined in the resolution, including the importance of confidence- and security-building measures, the need for adherence by States of the region to existing non-proliferation obligations, and the necessity of pursuing those goals in the context of broader regional peace efforts.

58. The USA remained fully committed to supporting the States of the region as they pursued practical steps and inclusive, consensus-based dialogue to advance the shared long-term goal of a safer and more secure Middle East free of WMDs and their delivery systems. Efforts to that end should be pursued by the States of the region in an inclusive, cooperative and consensus-based manner, taking into account the legitimate concerns of all. The USA urged the States concerned to abandon misguided multilateral initiatives lacking consensus support in the region, and instead to engage with their neighbours directly on practical measures to build trust, enhance transparency and address

non-compliance in the region. All States in the region that had not yet done so should sign and bring into force an additional protocol without further delay and modify or rescind any outdated SQPs as appropriate.

59. For many years, the General Conference resolution on safeguards in the Middle East had been adopted by consensus pursuant to a mutually agreed approach among regional States. Unfortunately, that approach had been abandoned in recent years in favour of the submission of a draft resolution that could not command regional consensus and which was pursued alongside a divisive and politically motivated agenda item aimed solely at isolating one State in the region. The USA regretted that development and urged the sponsors of the resolution to re-engage with their regional neighbours to return to a consensus-based approach to such issues, so that they could be addressed in a more collaborative and productive manner.

60. Mr SABBAGH (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking in explanation of vote, said that, since the adoption of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, all NPT States Parties in the region had shown willing to take practical steps towards the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other WMDs. Regrettably, however, Israel had frustrated progress in that endeavour by continuing, with the full backing of its allies, to defiantly refuse to accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State. In 2003, moreover, a permanent Security Council member had vetoed a draft resolution, initiated by Syria during its term as a Council member, on the establishment of such a zone.

61. The Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference had confirmed that the 1995 Resolution remained valid until its objectives were achieved. It had also endorsed the convening of a conference, in 2012, to be attended by all States in the Middle East, on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other WMDs. Israel's repeated refusal to participate in the conference, however, had thwarted the organizers' efforts and had negatively affected the outcomes of the 2015 NPT Review Conference.

62. In 2019, the first Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction had been held, pursuant to General Assembly decision 73/546 (2018), in New York. The aim had been to reaffirm the terms of reference adopted and to break the stalemate on the implementation of the 1995 Resolution. Emphasizing that the General Conference annually adopted a resolution on the application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East, Syria looked forward to the convening of a second conference in the near future.

63. The clear lack of progress over the preceding 25 years was therefore extremely disappointing, not only because of Israel's refusal to accede to the NPT. The USA, for its part, had doggedly resisted any international resolution or initiative that would limit Israel's nuclear capabilities, thus excluding Israel from international accountability.

64. The establishment of a Middle East NWFZ would promote regional and international peace and security, which remained at risk as long as Israel refused to accede to the NPT and related treaties on WMDs.

65. Mr ALSHAHMAN (Iraq), speaking in explanation of vote, said that the resolution had emphasized the urgent need for all parties in the Middle East to immediately apply comprehensive Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities. It was an important measure for building confidence among all parties in the region and for strengthening peace and security as part of the establishment of a zone free from nuclear weapons and all other WMDs. All parties in the region, except for the Israeli entity, were NPT States Parties and had concluded CSAs.

66. Expecting progress in the implementation of the resolution, especially because it had been adopted by a majority of votes, Iraq called for intensified efforts to that end and further consultations.

The international community, especially the NPT depositary States, should take the necessary steps to implement the resolutions on establishing the zone in the Middle East: in particular, the resolution of the 1995 NPT Review Conference, which constituted the legal framework for the indefinite extension of the NPT, and the outcomes of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, in which the roadmap and fundamental principles for establishing that zone in the Middle East had been established.

67. Iraq praised the efforts made towards establishing the zone, in particular the first session of the conference for that purpose, held in 2019 pursuant to UN General Assembly decision 73/546 (2018). While Iraq had been among the participating States, the Israeli entity had continued to give excuses for remaining outside the non-proliferation regime. Affirming its firm support for Kuwait's presidency of the second conference, Iraq looked forward to the participation of all relevant parties in the Middle East.

68. Exercising the right of reply, he fully rejected the claim made by the Israeli entity that the violation of the NPT and Agency safeguards by the previous political regime of Iraq demonstrated the inadequacy of those instruments to guarantee peace or security. Such reasoning undermined the commitments made by States to support the non-proliferation and disarmament regimes and was simply an attempt by the Israeli entity to evade its obligation to adhere to the NPT. In that connection, the international community must shoulder its professional and moral responsibility to implement UN Security Council resolution 487 (1981), in which the Israeli entity was called on to place its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards.

69. Ms HULAN (Canada), speaking in explanation of vote, said that her country continued to call on all States that had not yet done so to sign and promptly bring into force a CSA and additional protocol. Canada's support for the establishment of a verifiable NWFZ in the Middle East had been clear and consistent.

70. Where in previous years the resolution had had broad support, at recent General Conferences — to Canada's disappointment — language had been introduced that had resulted in the collapse of that consensus. In its present form, the resolution just adopted unduly and unhelpfully politicized a forum that had historically taken a more technical perspective on such issues. Canada had therefore decided to abstain from the votes both on paragraph 2 and on the resolution as a whole, calling on sponsors of the resolution to return to an approach that commanded consensus among States in the region.

71. Mr ISFAHANI (Indonesia), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his country appreciated the efforts undertaken by States in the Middle East to achieve the universality of comprehensive Agency safeguards in the region. It was regrettable, however, that resolution GC(63)/RES/13 could not be fully implemented, with no further progress made in the Director General's mandate to ensure the application of Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities in the Middle East. In that connection, Indonesia called on all States in the region to adhere unconditionally to comprehensive safeguards.

72. Indonesia continued to attach great importance to achieving a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other WMDs, the most important step towards bolstering peace and security in the region.

73. Mr ELMOLLA (Egypt), expressing sincere thanks to the States that had supported the resolution, said that their positions had been driven by a sense of duty towards the principles of consensus it contained and their genuine desire to break the deadlock hampering the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other WMDs.

74. Mr NUSBAUM (Israel), rising to a point of order, said that, according to Rule 74 of the Rules of Procedure, it was not permitted for the proposer to make a statement following the vote on a draft resolution.

75. Ms JOHNSON (Director, Office of Legal Affairs) said that, according to both Agency and UN practice, delegations that made a proposal were allowed to make a statement of their national position following a vote — but not to explain their vote. Egypt was exercising its right to the former.

76. Mr ELMOLLA (Egypt) called on the States that had abstained in the vote to reconsider their positions in 2021. They should stand on the right side of history in support of the world's conscience and the collective will of the international community to achieve the lofty goals and concepts laid out in the resolution and to shape a new reality in the Middle East.

9. Election of members to the Board of Governors (resumed) **(GC(64)/9)**

77. The PRESIDENT announced the result of the ballot for the fixed seat for Eastern Europe.

78. In the election of one Member for the fixed seat for Eastern Europe, the result of the vote was as follows:

<u>Ballot papers returned:</u>	120
<u>Invalid votes:</u>	0
<u>Abstentions:</u>	14
<u>Valid votes:</u>	106
<u>Required majority:</u>	54

Votes obtained

Poland:	62
Romania:	44

79. Having obtained the required majority, Poland was duly elected for the fixed seat for Eastern Europe.

80. The PRESIDENT congratulated the 11 Member States elected to the Board of Governors and recalled that, under Article VI.D of the Statute, they would hold office from the end of the current regular session of the General Conference until the end of its sixty-sixth (2022) regular session.

The meeting rose at 3.05 p.m.