

Information Circular

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Statement by the outgoing Chairperson of the Board of Governors regarding the working arrangements of the Board

At the request of the outgoing Chairperson of the Board of Governors, her statement delivered in the Board of Governors meeting on 22 September 2009, regarding the working arrangements of the Board, is reproduced herewith for information.

**Statement of H E Ms Taous Feroukhi,
Governor for Algeria
Chairperson of the Board of Governors of the IAEA**

Vienna, 22 September 2009

Dear Colleagues,

1. I would like to express my profound gratitude to all Board members, and in particular to the African Group, for the confidence you have shown in me in electing me to the post of Chairperson of the IAEA Board of Governors in September 2008.

2. I have been personally honoured, as has my country, to be of service to members and the Board of Governors whose role is related to peace and collective security. The support and constructive cooperation with which I have been surrounded throughout this exciting year have helped me persevere in the pursuit of our common objective: the strengthening of the multilateral framework for mutual understanding and the improvement of living conditions throughout the world.

3. In accomplishing my mandate, I have been able to rely on two exceptional Vice-Chairpersons who have carried out the tasks I entrusted to them brilliantly: the Ambassador of Finland, Ms Kirsti Kauppi, who expertly ran the working group on the long-term future of the IAEA, and the Ambassador of Romania, Mr Cornel Feruță, who successfully chaired the consultations on the programme and budget for 2010–2011.

4. My sincere thanks go to the Ambassador of Brazil, who has agreed to manage the work on the future of the Agency, and to the Ambassador of Finland, who will chair the open-ended working group on the programme and budget.

5. Allow me also to pay tribute to the Director General, Mr Mohamed ElBaradei, for his accessibility and his encouragement, and to the Secretariat for its effective assistance and its professionalism, in particular Mr David Waller for his invaluable cooperation and Mr Kwaku Aning who has had to support me throughout the year. Many thanks to the interpreters, translators and officials of all categories who have contributed to the smooth running of our work.

Dear Colleagues,

6. The end of my mandate as Chairperson of the Board gives me the opportunity to share with you a number of ideas aimed at improving the preparatory consultative process for the work of the Board.

7. As you know, the four annual sessions of the Board of Governors are preceded by information meetings run by the Chairman (Chairperson) with the regional groups, immediately followed by informal consultations with each of the 35 Board members.

8. These informal consultations, lasting two weeks, are an opportunity for the Chairman (Chairperson) to gather members' views on the agenda, to take note of and to react to any initiatives on their part, and to provide answers to their questions.

9. In doing this, the Chairman (Chairperson) of the Board finds himself (herself) in the midst of a vertical consultation mechanism in which he (she) has the task of providing the horizontal dimension by acting as the interface between members and the Secretariat. This is a vaguely defined responsibility, since the Chairman (Chairperson) may transmit all or part of the information communicated to him (her) by the members. For my part, I opted for transparency.

10. In that context, I have been able to measure the growing interest in greater transparency and more interactive exchanges in order to give greater depth to the decision-making process. However, the formal framework of the Board does not encourage these kinds of informal exchanges which have proved extremely useful for the topic of the long-term future of the IAEA (Agenda 20/20).

11. Informal meetings of the Board could doubtless contribute to meeting this expectation, instead of the traditional informal consultations with each of the 35 Board members. It is understood that the information meetings with regional groups would continue, and that the Chairman (Chairperson) of the Board of Governors must continue to be at the disposal of members.

12. There is another subject that is worth raising: that of national statements on annual reports and reports by the Director General of the IAEA relating to technical cooperation, safety and security, transport, waste, etc. The high number of national statements, together with their repetitive nature, has the major disadvantage of blunting the interest of members. It might perhaps be useful to limit the (often exhaustive) interventions of regional groups on this type of report, without ruling out the possibility of taking the floor for those who wish to raise a specific point.

13. Furthermore, I continue to be convinced of the virtues of the 15-minute pause which I proposed during morning and afternoon meetings of the Board. This break, which can be used for consultations, allows for a breath of fresh air which is necessary in view of the density of debates and particularly heavy Board agendas.

14. I would like to conclude on a lighter note by recalling the title "Madam Chair", and the stuttering caused by the English acronym IAEA, which I will remember well.

15. Allow me to hand the baton of the chairmanship of the Board of Governors for 2009–2010 to my colleague and friend, the Ambassador of Malaysia, and let me also warmly congratulate the two Vice-Chairmen: the Ambassador of Germany, and the Ambassador of Romania who was re-elected. I take this opportunity of reiterating my best wishes for their success and assuring them of the cooperation and support of my delegation.

Thank you for your attention.