

International Atomic Energy Agency

SEVENTH GENERAL CONFERENCE

THE SEVENTH general conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency was attended by 74 of the 83 states which were members of the Agency as of the opening of the Conference in Vienna on September 24, and by a number of organizations as observers. Dr. B. F. Perera of Ceylon was elected President of the Conference by acclamation. Miss B. Margaret Meagher, Canadian Ambassador to Austria and Governor for Canada on the IAEA Board of Governors, headed a Canadian delegation of seven drawn from Atomic Energy of Canada Limited and the Department of External Affairs.

This General Conference was held in the very favourable political atmosphere engendered by the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. It was natural that this significant development in East-West relations should have had an especially beneficial effect on the deliberations of an international body devoted to fostering the peaceful uses of atomic energy. Throughout the meetings a spirit of conciliation and co-operation prevailed, and the few potentially contentious items on the agenda were disposed of without difficulty.

Membership Applications

On the recommendation of the Board of Governors, the General Conference approved the applications for membership of the Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Gabon, Cameroun and Algeria. When all of these states have deposited their instruments of acceptance of the Statute with the Government of the United States, the membership of the Agency will be brought to 88.

Statement by Director-General

In his opening statement, the Director-General stressed the fact that the long-term plan before the General Conference would cover a period in the Agency's growth during which the use of nuclear power would substantially expand and spread to the developing countries. This could be expected to have some effect on the structure of the Secretariat. In this connection, Dr. Eklund noted that he had proposed changes designed to concentrate in one department the various services giving technical assistance to member states. With respect to the staffing of the organization, he appealed to member states to nominate the best candidates possible and to facilitate broadening the geographical distribution of posts by accepting the principle that a vacancy in the senior ranks need not automatically be filled by an official of the same nationality as the previous incumbent.

The Director-General spoke also of the development of safeguards during the last year. Apart from the proposed extension of the Agency's safeguards