

tion of the environment and harmful residues in agricultural products, and to preserve food for human consumption.

*(e) Nuclear physics and applications*

The IAEA's program in the physical sciences is designed to assist in exchanging and disseminating basic knowledge that will eventually be of practical use, and to assist developing countries in its employment. Jointly with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the IAEA operates the International Centre for Theoretical Physics at Trieste, Italy. The agency (in co-operation with the FAO and UNESCO) uses isotope techniques to investigate water-resources and -patterns in an effort to increase supply. In industry, radiation sources are used as a means of conferring desirable characteristics on textile, plastic and fibrous products. The agency is also working to facilitate uranium exploration in developing countries.

*(f) Life sciences*

Working closely with the World Health Organization, the IAEA has contributed to the development of applications for nuclear science in medicine and biology. Examples are the use of radioactive isotopes, in "tracer" quantities, to help diagnose disease, and for biomedical research, as well as the use of high-radiation doses in cancer therapy, in

the sterilization of medical supplies and in the preparation of vaccines. The agency also supports the use of nuclear methods in assessing environmental contamination.

*(g) Information*

The IAEA is required by its statute to encourage the exchange of scientific and technical information on the peaceful uses of atomic energy. In carrying out this task, it organizes ten to 14 national conferences and symposia a year, as well as about 100 smaller panels and technical meetings. Papers presented at these meetings are subsequently published and given world-wide distribution. In 1970, the agency established the International Nuclear Information System, through which information from member states is checked, combined and then redistributed to national information centres. This system benefits member states by making the results of current scientific research more accessible while avoiding expensive duplication of information-processing efforts.