



KINGDOM OF LESOTHO

STATEMENT DELIVERED BY
THE MINISTER OF TOURISM, ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE
HON. 'MAMAHELE RADEBE
TO THE 58TH REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF
THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA).

VIENNA, AUSTRIA

23 SEPTEMBER, 2014

Mr. President,

Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mr Yukiya Amano

Honourable Ministers, Your Excellencies, Heads of Missions and International Organizations

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr President,

Allow me at the outset to add my congratulations on your election as the president of this 58th Regular Session of the International Atomic Energy Agency General Conference. Let me assure you, members of your Bureau and the Secretariat, of my delegation's full support.

May I also congratulate and extend a warm welcome to Union of Comoros, Republic of Djibouti, Co-operative Republic of Guyana and the Republic of Vanuatu on their notable decision to accede to the International Atomic Energy Agency. The growing number of the members to the Agency demonstrates a recognisable role played by the Agency in ensuring the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Mr President,

This 58th Regular Session of the Agency General Conference comes just a few months before the convening of the 2015 Review

Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

To this end, my Government commends the Agency in its concerted efforts to implement Article 3 of the NPT, which provide for Non-Nuclear-Weapon State Parties to the NPT to accept safeguards, as set forth in an agreement negotiated and concluded with the Agency in accordance with its Statute and the Agency's safeguards system. The Agency safeguards regime therefore serves as the cornerstone for verification of non-diversion of nuclear energy from peaceful uses to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

The Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho further commends the Agency through its technical cooperation programme, for implementation of Article 4 of the NPT which provides for the inalienable right of all the Parties to the NPT to develop research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles 1 and 2 of the NPT.

This inalienable right is however qualified by an undertaking by Parties to co-operate in facilitating the application of the Agency safeguards on peaceful nuclear activities. We thus call on all Parties to co-operate with the Agency as an assurance to other member States of non-diversion of nuclear energy from peaceful uses.

Lesotho attaches great importance to her cooperation with the Agency as it is a platform for exploiting nuclear science technologies in addressing her developmental challenges in the following thematic areas: human health; agriculture and food security; water resources management; sustainable energy development; radiation and waste safety. To this end, my Government acknowledges with appreciation the Agency's assistance in the implementation of projects in these thematic areas.

My Government therefore welcomes the convening of the upcoming Symposium on International Safeguards to be held in Vienna, Austria from the 20-24 October 2014. It is our wish that the objectives of this Symposium will be achieved.

Mr President,

We further recognise the steps being taken by the Agency to support State's efforts, upon request, to establish and strengthen their national nuclear security regimes and enable them to meet their international obligations.

We therefore, encourage member States who have not acceded to the Amendment to the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material to do so without delay, as this Amendment sets global standards for the security of nuclear material and facilities.

Mr President,

My Government further acknowledge the huge role being played by the Agency in supporting the African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (AFRA), in the implementation of its programmes for the past 25 years.

The scope of AFRA activities include the peaceful application of all technically and developmentally sound nuclear techniques, which contribute significantly towards the achievement of national and regional development objectives.

To this end, the Agency provided technical, scientific, financial and administrative support to AFRA, and end users in the member States benefitted immensely. The AFRA achievements exhibited here at the A-Building ground floor bear testimony to this.

However, these achievements go hand in hand with perpetual challenges facing AFRA, which among others include: inadequate qualified and skilled human resources in the field of nuclear science and technology in many member States limiting the outreach of AFRA Projects. We therefore call for cooperation in nuclear science and technology with other member States from other regions with AFRA.

Mr President,

As you will recall, the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho hosted the AFRA 25th Technical Working Group Meeting and Meeting of IAEA National Liaison Officers in May, 2014, Maseru, Lesotho. Allow me, therefore, to reiterate once again my Government's appreciation as a relatively new member State to the IAEA and AFRA to have been given an opportunity to host these important meetings. The support received from both the IAEA and AFRA is incalculable.

My Government is therefore, committed and dedicated to efficiently discharge her chairmanship duties. We undertake to provide proactive leadership, efficient coordination of AFRA Management towards achievement of maximum implementation of AFRA Programme and AFRA Regional Strategic Cooperative Framework of 2014 – 2018.

Mr President, I wish you and your Conference every success.

I thank you!