



GOVERNMENT OF ZAMBIA

**ZAMBIA'S STATEMENT TO
THE 58TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF
THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY
(IAEA)**

VIENNA, AUSTRIA

22ND TO 26TH SEPTEMBER, 2014

Statement delivered by

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ZAMBIA

Mr. President

On behalf of the Zambian delegation, I wish to thank you for this opportunity to address this important General Conference. Your Excellency, AMBASSADOR ABDUL AZEEZ OF SINGAPORE, I join all other previous speakers in congratulating you on your election to the Presidency of this 58th Regular Session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). My delegation and I have the utmost confidence in your able leadership and are in no doubt that you will guide the deliberations of the General Conference to its successful end.

I also wish to thank the Director General, Mr. Yukiya Amano, for his able and wise leadership.

Mr. President

Zambia joins the rest of the IAEA family in welcoming the new members, THE UNION OF THE COMOROS; THE REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI; THE COOPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA; AND THE REPUBLIC OF VANUATU to this organization. I wish to assure the new members that they will find support, mutual respect, and progressiveness as the tenets on which our big nuclear family is premised and I urge them to follow these tenets in their endeavor to be members of the IAEA. I also wish to inform our new brothers that the family you have joined is focused on harnessing nuclear science for the socio-economic prosperity of all people.

It is a family that encourages the peaceful and safe use of nuclear energy through the philosophy of “atoms for peace.”

Mr. President,

This year, Zambia celebrates its golden jubilee of independence. In this respect we are celebrating our achievements over the last 50 years. These achievements have been realized partly through the promotion of science and technology and in particular, nuclear science. Through our fruitful relationship with the IAEA over the past forty-five years, we have together harnessed the application of nuclear technology to improve the livelihoods of our people.

Through our Technical Cooperation Programme, we have recorded achievements in areas ranging from improved agricultural yields, to clinical uses that include cancer treatment.

Mr. President,

Zambia is at a crucial stage in its management, development and use of nuclear materials. On the one hand, my country is harnessing the power of nuclear energy through clinical and other safe uses while on the other, it is grappling with the challenges of managing nuclear waste especially from mining and other related sources. It is in these areas of challenge that the IAEA’s technical expertise becomes invaluable to Zambia.

Mr. President,

Zambia continues to build on past achievements within the Technical Cooperation Programme with the Agency and I am happy to report that since the last General Conference, several developments have taken place in my country. Some of these include the following:

1. Establishment of the Radiation Protection Authority

- **From last year when we reported the operationalization of a legal framework for radiation protection through the Radiation Protection Authority (RPA), Zambia has moved to establishing the RPA Board, appointed the Chief Executive Officer and recruited 7 inspectors as preliminary staff. The Authority is in the process of recruiting additional staff in order to meet the full establishment required to efficiently run the Authority. This will ensure efficient management and oversight with regard to radioactive waste; Ionizing Radiation Protection; and Transportation of Radioactive Materials which currently present a challenge to the country.**

2. Strengthening of the Cancer Diseases Hospital

- In this regard, we are strengthening the application of nuclear medicine and the consolidation of delivery of the cancer treatment services. In this regard Mr. President, the Cancer Diseases Hospital, which was operationalized in 2006 has greatly contributed to improved access to Radiotherapy and Chemotherapy for cancer patients as well as improving capacity in human resources on the subject. The Cancer Diseases Hospital has seen upgrades in the recent past that have included a second Cobalt 60 source and a second High Dose Rate Brachytherapy unit. Installations of these units are now complete.**
- Government has also just completed the construction of a 260 bed in-patient facility and is awaiting installation of equipment. This facility will house the out-patient Chemotherapy unit, the Nuclear Medicine and a Brachytherapy treatment unit, supported with a dedicated theatre.**
- Additionally, the Cancer Diseases Hospital has established a training programme to train Radiation Therapy Technologists at Diploma level. The first set of students on this course graduated in July 2014 and a second intake has started.**

The Master of Medicine in Clinical and Radiation Oncology course for medical doctors is also in the process of development and will commence soon.

- In order to increase access to radiotherapy in the country Zambia has resolved to create one radiotherapy center in each province and it is anticipated that these centres will become the epicenters of cancer control in Zambia supervised by the Cancer Diseases Hospital.**
- Zambia will this year complete the National Cancer Control strategy. Cervical cancer prevention has become one of the priorities of Zambia and vaccination and screening is currently available in all the ten provinces of Zambia. Government has also installed nine mammography units in the rest of the provincial hospitals to be used for breast cancer screening and early detection programme**

Mr. President, all this progress that the Cancer Diseases Hospital in Zambia has achieved is not without the timely input from the IAEA technical cooperation through well tailor-designed national projects that have over the years improved the services at the Hospital.

3. Assessment of radioactive contamination

- In this regard, the IAEA through the Technical Cooperation Programme is actively assisting my country in various projects among which is the assessment of radioactive contamination of surface, ground water and other resources in mining areas. This is a critical project for my country as it will unveil the true extent of the problem of radioactive waste management in Zambia. In the development of the next phase of these projects, the focus will be on surface and underground water contamination**

Mr. President,

As the Director General, Yukina Amano clearly mentioned in his opening speech, the importance of science and technology as a key area for the post-2015 sustainable development agenda cannot be over emphasized. My Country strongly ascribes to this principle and is positioning herself to take full advantage of science and technology and specifically, nuclear science, in the development of the post-2015 agenda.

Mr. President,

As Zambia continues on this path, and in the context of our accession to the Fifth, Five – Year term of AFRA, we look forward to improved communication between Zambia and AFRA. Zambia is also keen to establish the Nuclear Science Institute dedicated to training young Zambian scientists and technologists in socially and economically beneficial and safe use of nuclear materials. This Institute will also complement and enhance activities at our already established College of Radiation Therapy and Radiation Oncology.

In this effort, we look forward to the continued support of the IAEA and AFRA.

Mr. President

In conclusion, allow me to reiterate my country's resolve on the issue of nuclear proliferation that continues to be of great concern to all. As a country, it is our hope and desire that the IAEA is supported in ensuring that the application of IAEA safeguards is done in the most fair and comprehensive, manner in order in come to a just conclusion for all involved.

Mr. President,

Zambia will continue to support the IAEA and AFRA under its 5th Five Year Term and pledge to continue with our full share of the assessed voluntary contribution to the Technical Cooperation Fund, as well as the AFRA Fund.

I thank you for your attention.

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