



## **Statement of Federal Republic of Nigeria**

to the

63<sup>RD</sup> Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference

Presented by

**Mr Simon P. Mallam**

Chairman/Chief Executive Officer  
Nigeria Atomic Energy Commission

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## Madam President

1. My delegation would like to congratulate you on your election as the President of the 63<sup>rd</sup> Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference. We assure you of Nigeria's full support and cooperation towards the success of this Conference. We are sure that, under your able leadership, this Conference will attain its objectives.
2. Once again, Nigeria expresses her heartfelt condolences to the Agency and to the government and people of Japan over the death of Mr. Yukiya Amano. I recall, the visit of Mr. Amano to Nigeria in March, 2016 and his encouraging remarks to the Nigerian President on Nigeria's nuclear programme. I have no doubt that the late Director General advanced his desire of making the IAEA a "unique stakeholder" and a global leader reflecting the IAEA's slogan of 'Atoms for Peace and Development'. He will be greatly missed by all of us.
3. In this regard, on behalf of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, I congratulate the Acting Director General of the IAEA, Mr. Cornel Feruta on his selection by the Board of Governors. We are appreciative of his insightful opening statement to this Conference. My delegation also commends the enormous work of Secretariat and their professionalism and commitment to the Agency.

## Madam President,

4. The theme of this year's Scientific Forum '**A Decade of Action on Cancer Control and the Way Forward**' is both timely and appropriate due to rise in global cancer cases particularly in the developing countries. We hope that this forum will provide an opportunity for collaboration and sharing of ideas among scientists and experts across the globe that will strengthen the processes already in place for cancer management.
5. Nigeria, through the Federal Ministry of Health's recently launched a new Cancer Control Plan incorporating public education, cancer prevention, early diagnosis and referral, effective therapy and

palliative care. The Ministry is working with the IAEA and other relevant stakeholders including the World Health Organisation, Nigeria Atomic Energy Commission, Clinton Health Access Initiative, American Cancer Society towards full implementation of the Plan.

6. Arising from the implementation of Nigeria's IAEA projects in the health sector, a Nuclear Medicine Centre at the University College Hospital (UCH) Ibadan was established for the management of cancer cases in the country and beyond. I am glad to report that after rigorous assessment by the University Academic Board and the National Universities Commission (NUC), the Senate of the University approved the conversion of the Centre to a full-fledged Department for the award of postgraduate degrees in nuclear medicine. With this development, the department has become the first department of nuclear medicine in a University setting in English speaking West Africa. While we continue to appreciate the cooperation and assistance provided by the IAEA in the realization of this feat, I would like to assure that my country will do her best to ensure that this achievement is sustained to serve the Africa region.

### **Madam President**

7. It may be recalled that the first ever training workshop on how to establish clinical training programmes for radiotherapy medical physicists was held under the Africa Regional Cooperation in Abuja, Nigeria, from 18 to 20 December 2018. The workshop reiterated collaboration and cooperation in training as the key for effective and safe cancer care taking cognizance of the shortage of medical physicists in the region.
8. Nigeria welcomes the IAEA International Virtual Conference on Theranostics held earlier this month. The conference, focused on the trends in Theranostic approaches for managing patients with cancer and neuroendocrine tumours with participation from Africa. We implore the IAEA to introduce the Virtual Conferences in other areas of nuclear science technology and applications.

**Madam President,**

9. My delegation wishes to inform that arising from the activation of Nigeria's Country Programme Framework document, Nigeria and Agency have finalised five new projects for the country commencing in the 2020/2021 TC Cycle. These projects are in the fields of regulatory infrastructure for nuclear and radiation safety, energy planning focusing on the introduction of nuclear power, livestock production, radiation oncology and cancer management and research reactor applications.
10. Nigeria appreciates the support of the Agency and international community in strengthening regulatory control of radiation sources through various missions, and looks forward to the upcoming Occupational Radiation Protection Appraisal Service (ORPAS) mission, as well as follow up Missions on IRRS and EPREV all in 2020; we note the plan to launch the new version of RASIMS, aimed at ensuring that the information contained therein accurately reflects the radiation safety infrastructure in Member States.
11. In line with Nigeria's drive for enhanced global nuclear security, significant effort was made with the support of the IAEA through relevant trainings and workshops to enhance our nuclear security architecture and create the much-needed awareness among decision makers. Earlier this year, Nigeria received an INSSP review Mission which has further strengthened the framework for Nuclear Security activities in the country. On the Margins of that Mission, an Awareness Raising Workshop on Nuclear Security was also held for relevant officials. Furthermore, as part of Nigeria's efforts in Human Resource Development (HRD) for nuclear security, the process of developing HRD programs in Stakeholder Organizations has been created through an IAEA assisted workshop held in August 2019.

**Madam President,**

12. On the margins of the Nuclear Security Summits, Nigeria had made a voluntary commitment to convert the HEU fuel of Nigeria Research Reactor 1 to LEU. I am glad to report that the conversion from High Enriched Uranium to Low Enriched Uranium has since been concluded with the repatriation of the High Enriched Uranium fuel to

its country of origin - China. This is indeed an important contribution of Nigeria to Nuclear Security. Nigeria is grateful for the support it received from the IAEA, China, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States during the entire process of the conversion.

13. As a follow up to the successful conversion of the reactor fuel of the Nigerian Research Reactor–1, the IAEA recently concluded an Integrated Safety Assessment for Research Reactors (INSARR) mission in our country, at the end of this assessment, a number of recommendations were proposed towards further improvement of safety at the reactor location. I am happy to inform that Nigeria has commenced implementation of the recommendations.

**Madam President,**

14. As a party to the negotiation and adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, Nigeria will continue to engage other nations on the need for the Treaty to be seen as complimentary to the NPT and taken as an important global instrument for the promotion of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime. Nigeria will support all initiatives put forward towards ensuring the ratification of this treaty for it to come into force within the shortest possible time.

**In conclusion Madam President,**

15. The negative impact of Climate Change on the global environment is becoming apparent daily. This impact has been partly attributed to man-made factors including the increase in the emission of greenhouse gases. The low greenhouse gases emission posture of nuclear makes it an important alternative energy source. As part of her commitment to addressing climate change, Nigeria is also vigorously pursuing an agenda for the generation of electricity from nuclear and other renewable sources so as to add to the current national energy mix for the country's energy security.
18. I thank you all.