



STATEMENT OF NIGERIA

AT THE

65TH REGULAR SESSION OF THE IAEA GENERAL CONFERENCE

PRESENTED BY

AMBASSADOR ZUBAIRU DADA
HONOURABLE MINISTER OF STATE
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

20TH TO 24TH SEPTEMBER, 2021
VIENNA, AUSTRIA

Mr. President

1. My delegation wishes to congratulate you most warmly on your election as the President of the 65th Regular Session of the General Conference of this Agency and to assure you of my Country's cooperation and full support. We are confident that under your leadership, the work of this Conference will succeed greatly.
2. My delegation also appreciates the efforts of the Agency's staff members for their dedication, commitment and excellent services and for introducing different innovative and novel ideas that have continued to ensure the sustenance of IAEA activities and programmes across the globe despite the challenges posed by the pandemic leading to international lock-down. It is a reassurance for Member States that IAEA is indeed a global player that can be relied on to deliver in whatever situation.
3. The challenges of COVID-19 have continued to reverberate thereby overstressing the global healthcare system. My country appreciates the role of the medical personnel across the world for rising to the occasion and for responding in a coordinated and effective manner. With the wide spread administration of the vaccines and the adoption of non-pharmaceutical interventions to the management of COVID-19, we are hopeful that the spread of the virus will soon be contained.

Mr President

4. The support delivered within the framework of the Agency's project on 'Strengthening Capabilities of Member States in Building and Restoring Capacities and Services in Case of Outbreaks, Emergencies and Disasters' assisted Nigeria in responding to the challenges of COVID-19. My delegation is grateful to those countries and other international partners that made the donations by the Agency possible through their extra budgetary contributions.
5. In this regard, Nigeria calls on the Agency to continue to deepen collaboration with countries and other relevant international organisations including the United Nations and some of its Agencies such as the World Health Organisation, Food and Agricultural Organisation, World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) amongst others in order to create a unique response mechanism for both human and animal disease outbreaks.

6. The theme of this year's Scientific Forum 'Preparing for Zoonotic Outbreaks: the Role of Nuclear Science' is apt. We have no doubt that this Forum will provide an opportunity for collaboration and sharing of ideas and best practices among scientists and experts.

Mr President

7. Nigeria welcomes the introduction of the Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action (ZODIAC) project by the Agency last year. Nigeria will continue to support and participate in the project. In this regard, my country has developed a national strategic framework for the ZODIAC project and looks forward to the support of the Agency for its implementation.
8. The global plastics burden threatens efforts towards combating climate change. To this end, Nigeria welcomes the introduction of the Nuclear Technology for Controlling Plastic Pollution (i.e. NUTEC Plastics) by the Agency aimed at assisting countries to address the challenges of plastic pollution using nuclear techniques. Nigeria reaffirms her support to the project.
9. The attainment of a nuclear-weapons-free world is paramount today more than ever before. To this end, my delegation will continue to appreciate the efforts of the United Nations for declaring 29th August of every year as the *International Day against Nuclear Tests*. Nigeria looks forward to the '*International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons*' on 26th September. My country believes that these initiatives are important in sustaining global efforts towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

Mr President

10. Nigeria appreciates the Agency's work in Nuclear Verification and Monitoring; we consider this work to be an important building block for international peace and security and will continue to support the Agency in implementing its mandate as appropriate.
11. Nigeria appreciates the efforts of the Agency at strengthening and enhancing her regulatory capacity for nuclear safety, security and safeguards. Nigeria is hopeful that the Agency's Projects '**Developing**

Safety Infrastructure for Regulating Nuclear Power Plants in Nigeria’ and ‘Developing Safety Infrastructure for Regulating Non-Power Nuclear and Radiation Applications’,would enhance the capacity of regulatory staff to regulate nuclear power plants and strengthen Nigeria’s national infrastructure for radiation protection, nuclear safety, emergency planning and radioactive waste system in relation to radiation application, exploration, mining, milling of radioactive ores and other ores associated with radioactive material.

Mr. President

12. The strategy for ensuring gender inclusiveness in the IAEA’s Marie Sklodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme is recognized and commended. We believe that this scholarship will help to increase the participation of our women and support an inclusive workforce contributing to and driving global scientific and technological innovations in the field.
13. Through Nigeria’s Technical Cooperation programme with the IAEA, nuclear techniques have been applied in the effective management of water resources. The country is currently participating in the ongoing Sahel Project on ‘Adding the Groundwater Dimension to the understanding and Management of shared Water Resources in the Sahel Region. Nigeria appreciates the logistic support from IAEA for conducting this sampling campaign earlier this year.
14. In conclusion, Mr. President, I want to reaffirm the commitment of my country to the ideals of the Agency, particularly in the promotion of nuclear security, safety and safeguards which are key ethics in the work of the Agency. Nigeria will continue to strengthen cooperation with other partners towards ensuring that nuclear science and technology is deployed in a more effective manner.
15. I thank you all.