

# REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT BY  
HON. DR. KALUMBI SHANGULA, MP, MINISTER OF  
HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES, ON THE OCCASION OF  
THE 68<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE IAEA GENERAL  
CONFERENCE.**

**16 - 20 SEPTEMBER 2024**

**VIENNA, AUSTRIA**

*\*Check Against Delivery.*

**Mr. President,** accept my delegation's heartfelt congratulations on your election as President of the 68<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Conference. Rest assured of our full support and cooperation.

We thank the Director General, Rafael Grossi, for his relentless efforts in advancing the mission of the IAEA to ensure that the benefits of nuclear technology become accessible to all.

Namibia is steadfast in our support of the Agency's mandate, particularly in the realms of *Non-Proliferation; Nuclear Safety, Nuclear Security;* and the *Application of Nuclear Technologies*. We take note of the Agency's 2023 Annual Report, detailing significant progress over the past year.

As one of the world's major uranium producers and suppliers, Namibia places immense value on the IAEA's safeguards system, which is the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. We call for universal adherence to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and encourage all Member States to conclude Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements with the Agency, and to sign and ratify the Additional Protocol. Namibia has and will continue to maintain strict compliance with these protocols, ensuring that our uranium resources are utilized for peaceful purposes only.

During our tenure on the Board of Governors for the 2022-2024 period, Namibia actively contributed to advancing the objectives of the IAEA, and fully supported the vision

encapsulated in '*Atoms for Peace and Development*.' At a time of pronounced geopolitical tensions, we advocate for dialogue, diplomatic negotiations, and consensus-building as the preferred methods to resolve differences.

**Mr. President,** the Agency's Technical Cooperation (TC) Programme is central to building capacity and fostering the acquisition of critical skills in nuclear science and technology. It positions the IAEA at the center of the development agenda, as opposed to the narrow view of the Agency as a "nuclear watchdog" only. Through this programme, Namibia has been able to enhance expertise in various nuclear applications, including cancer treatment, food safety and food security.

We commend Member States that have consistently supported the TC Programme through financial contributions, whether assessed, voluntary, or extra-budgetary. The TC Programme remains the primary vehicle for implementing developmental initiatives that directly impact the daily lives of our citizens. Thus, we have a duty to ensure and prioritize predictable and assured funding that matches the needs expressed by Member States.

**Mr. President,** in Namibia, cancer has become a leading cause of death, accounting for approximately 9% of all deaths annually. While Primary Health Care is critical to combating this scourge, we recognize nuclear medicine and radiation therapy as vital in the continuum of care for cancer patients.

Hence, we look forward to strengthening the Agency supported interventions through the *Rays-of-Hope Initiative*.

**Mr. President**, the global supply of radiopharmaceuticals continues to be a challenge, especially for small markets like Namibia. We urge the Agency to support the implementation of targeted interventions to address supply chain issues and ensure equitable access to radiopharmaceuticals.

Food security and safety, alongside health and education, are central to Namibia's national development agenda. We will continue to pursue technical cooperation initiatives in enhancing food security, particularly the development of high-yielding, drought-tolerant crop varieties as this has been promising, showing increased crop yields by 30% in arid regions.

**Mr. President**, the nuclear industry has been a catalyst for sustained economic and industrial development in many industrialized nations. Developing countries, including Namibia, aspire to similarly harness nuclear technologies to accelerate socio-economic development. In recent years, Namibia has witnessed a three-fold increase in uranium production, driven by rising global demand for nuclear power. The 2023 IAEA Annual Report projects continued growth in this sector, with Namibia being a key supplier to meet the increasing demand. Our Government is committed to exploring the feasibility of incorporating nuclear power into our national energy mix, recognizing its potential to contribute to energy

security, reduce emissions, and accelerate socio-economic development. We are focused on promoting nuclear energy as a component of our national energy strategy.

Mr. President, Namibia places great importance on women's empowerment and has made notable progress in increasing female representation at all levels. We fully support the Agency's efforts to enhance this representation and to continue striving for equitable geographical representation of women across all levels.

Mr. President, the Namibian delegation looks forward to a successful and productive General Conference. We stand ready to contribute constructively to the important discussions and decisions that lie ahead. We congratulate Cook Islands and Federal Republic of Somalia on attaining membership of the Agency.

Thank you.