

**NATIONAL STATEMENT**

**DELIVERED BY H. E. DUNOMA UMAR AHMED, PhD, PERMANENT  
SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE FEDERAL  
REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA AT THE 68TH REGULAR SESSION OF THE**

**IAEA GENERAL CONFERENCE**

**VIENNA, AUSTRIA FROM 16TH TO 20TH SEPTEMBER, 2024**

**DELIVERED ON**

**17<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024**

**Mr. President,**

Allow me, on behalf of the delegation of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, to congratulate you on your well-deserved election as the President of the 68th Regular Session of the General Conference of the IAEA. Let me assure you of our support towards the attainment of the goals of this Session as we are confident in your leadership and hope that you will bring your wealth of experience to bear on your new assignment.

2. In the same vein, we congratulate the IAEA Director-General, Mr. Rafael Mariano GROSSI and his team for the excellent arrangements put in place to ensure the overall success of this Conference. We commend him on the elaborate report he presented at the opening of this Conference.

3. Over the years, the IAEA has continued to play significant roles towards the safe deployment of nuclear science and technology for the socio-economic development of the Member States. These efforts are already yielding results thereby making it possible for several Member States in Africa, including Nigeria to strengthen arrangements for the integration of nuclear technologies into the overall energy mix of their countries.

4. As part of our efforts to achieve this goal, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, two weeks ago signed an MOU on Nuclear Energy Development as well as Human Resources Development during his State visit to China. We anticipate that this will be a partnership that would support our Nuclear Energy Programme.

5. As Mr. President would recall, a High-Level Regional Seminar on Promoting Cancer Awareness and Advocacy Programmes for the member countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) was held in Abuja, in May this year. We commend the participation of the Director-General Mr. Grossi during the event where participants discussed measures towards equitable access to cancer diagnosis and treatment within the framework of the Rays of Hope Initiative rolled out by the IAEA. We are confident that such efforts would lead to the attainment of the objective of the framework, and provide benefitting countries with access to affordable and quality cancer management services.

6. The Director General's discussions with Nigeria's senior Government officials, including the Vice President of Nigeria, His Excellency, Kashim Shettima, GCON on Nigeria's Technical Cooperation programme with the IAEA and his visits to a number of Institutions where IAEA projects are being implemented is not only commendable but will also foster cordial relations between the IAEA and Member States.

7. Recently, Nigeria celebrated the 20th Anniversary of the safe and successful operation of her Research Reactor – the Nigeria Research Reactor – 1 (NIRR-1). This milestone would not have been possible without the support of the IAEA. I would like to assure the Agency and indeed, other partners of our desire to continue to operate this Reactor within the ambit of the relevant international regulations and instruments.

8. It is pertinent to recall that Nigeria, in collaboration with the IAEA, conducted an imPACT Review Mission in March 2011 during which Nigeria's cancer control capacities and needs were assessed and priority interventions identified to effectively respond to the country's cancer burden. I am glad to report that in anticipation of the visit of another review mission, a national team has been constituted and preliminary discussions with the IAEA has commenced in order to address the surging cancer cases in Nigeria in a seamless and efficient manner.

9. As part of our collaboration with the Agency in 2024, we hosted IAEA programmes including Coordination Meetings for the Regional Projects on Enhancing Member States' Capacities for Improved Cancer Diagnosis and Treatment (RAF6060) and the project on Enhancing the Radiation Safety Infrastructure (RAF9070). We are satisfied with the successes recorded on these events and look forward to hosting more IAEA programmes in Nigeria.

## **Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,**

10. Nigeria welcomes the theme of this year's Scientific Forum on **Atoms4Food – Better Agriculture for Better Life**. This is apt as it comes at a time food insecurity is growing at an alarming scale in many countries of the world, posing danger to human survival. It is, therefore, pertinent for the global community to adopt nuclear techniques that include multi-sectoral partnership in identifying global solutions for the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goal No. 2, on creating a world free of hunger by 2030.

11. We commend the plan of the IAEA to organise a Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science, Technology and Applications and the Technical Cooperation Programme in November, this year. This conference is expected to enable Member States to engage in high level dialogue and proffer solutions to the emerging global issues that hinder the attainment of global sustainable development.

12. Similarly, we appreciate the role of the IAEA in facilitating the Expert Mission to Nigeria in June this year to review the Stakeholder Engagement strategy document for our Nuclear Power Plant. This serves as a guide for ensuring effective and constructive engagement in the development as well as the life cycle of Nigeria's Nuclear Power Plant (NPP).

**Mr. President,**

13. The IAEA's efforts in disseminating information on the evolution of Small Modular and Micro Reactors have been very beneficial in making critical information available to Member States which enabled us to consider the different SMR technologies and to take informed decision on individual country basis. In this regard the International Conference on Small Modular Reactors scheduled for October in Vienna is timely as it would expectedly provide the platform for robust engagements for key stakeholders in exploring technologies that can be tailored to country specific needs.

14. With new partnerships collaboration and concerted efforts to domesticate nuclear technology, it is our hope that Nigeria will transit from an IAEA recipient country to an IAEA donor country in the nearest future.

15. I thank you all for your attention.