

# THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA



## RWANDA STATEMENT AT THE 68<sup>TH</sup> REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA)

**DELIVERED BY:**

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**Vienna, 18 September 2024**

- ❖ **Mr President,**
- ❖ **Director General Mariano Grossi,**
- ❖ **Distinguished Delegates,**
- ❖ **Ladies and Gentlemen.**

**1. On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Rwanda, I would like to extend congratulations to you, Mr President and all other elected officials of this 68<sup>th</sup> IAEA General**

Conference; and I wish to pledge our full support and cooperation.

2. I take this opportunity to welcome the Federal Republic of Somalia and the Cook Islands as new Member States of the Agency.
3. We commend the work and leadership of Mr. Mariano Grossi as the IAEA Director General in promoting the peaceful uses of Nuclear Energy for Sustainable Socio – Economic Development.

**Mr President,**

4. The Republic of Rwanda is integrating peaceful nuclear technology solutions to trigger the socio – economic transformation towards the realization of its long-term Vision 2050. The drafting of the national nuclear science and technology policy and the updating of the existing radiation protection law into a full-fledged nuclear law have been completed and we appreciate the support received from the Agency during this process. Both documents have been now submitted to national competent organs for their formal approval procedure. The overall objective of the national policy is to provide guidance for promotion of safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear science and technology while strengthening its coordination and regulation mechanisms for sustainable socio - economic development.

**Mr President,**

5. The Rwanda Nuclear Energy Programme comprises two main flagship projects. The Centre of Nuclear Science and Technology project is designed as a one stop centre to

promote non - energy nuclear applications in several priority areas such as Food and Agriculture, Human Health, Water Resources Management, Environment Management and Industry. The Nuclear Power Plant project based on Small Modular Reactors is designed to meet the increasing energy demand, ensure energy security of the country and contribute towards net – zero emissions objective. The preliminary feasibility studies of these two projects have been completed and the Rwanda Atomic Energy Board is tasked to implement these projects.

6. The Government of Rwanda has established an independent nuclear regulatory body which is continually being strengthened to ensure a safe and secure implementation of the national nuclear energy programme. In line with this, Rwanda has hosted the advisory IAEA Expert mission on Regulatory Infrastructure for Radiation Safety and Nuclear Security (RISS) to advise and support in improving the regulatory infrastructure for the safety of radiation sources, the security of radioactive materials, enhance emergency preparedness by evaluating the status of the national regulatory infrastructure for radiation safety against IAEA safety standards and IAEA best practices.
7. The Government of Rwanda is establishing strategic partnerships with interested companies involved in the development of SMR and microreactors technologies with the objective to start close collaboration during the technology development process, part of which can take place in Rwanda. This is in line with our national strategy to remain a proof – of – concept destination for companies with new innovative nuclear technology solutions as a pathway

to accelerate knowledge and technology transfer towards building a knowledge-based economy. To successfully implement nuclear projects, Rwanda is committed to working closely in collaboration with the IAEA to ensure all nuclear safety, security and safeguards standards are strictly followed.

8. In this regard, the Republic of Rwanda under the framework of the African Regional Cooperation Agreement (AFRA), in March, 2024 hosted a five-day IAEA Expert Mission aimed at providing an expert's opinion on the Safety Analysis and Design features of a Criticality Demonstration Experiment for the Dual Fluid Reactor technology expected to be conducted in Rwanda.
9. The contribution of this expert mission left behind a package of necessary and adequate tools for Rwanda Atomic Energy Board together with the national nuclear regulator to re-assess and improve the safety design features of the facility and its management with ultimate goal to protect the people and the environment from radiological and other risks associated to the project.

**Mr President,**

10. The Republic of Rwanda appreciates the support it receives from the IAEA through its different departments, as well as through the African Regional Cooperative Agreement on Research, Training and Development related to Nuclear Science and Technology. Rwanda is also keen to work closely with the African Commission on Nuclear Energy to advance the integration of nuclear civil applications in Africa. Rwanda avails itself to establishing further regional collaboration

aimed at accelerating the integration of peaceful use of nuclear energy technologies to uplift living standards of our populations in Africa and beyond.

**Mr President,**

**11.** In conclusion, Rwanda reiterates its commitment to the IAEA principles and guidelines related to nuclear safety, security and safeguards. We thank the Agency, the Director General and his entire team for the commendable contribution towards expanding and promoting peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology for sustainable socio – economic development in all countries.

**I Thank You!**