



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

**COUNTRY STATEMENT BY
THE HEAD OF THE UGANDA DELEGATION,
HON. OKAASAI SIDRONIUS OPOLOT
MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENERGY
DURING THE 68TH REGULAR SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC
ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA) GENERAL CONFERENCE,
16TH - 20TH SEPTEMBER 2024
VIENNA INTERNATIONAL CENTRE, VIENNA AUSTRIA**

Mr. President, Excellencies, Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I wish to extend our sympathies and prayers to our host country for the unprecedented adverse weather conditions that have affected the lives of many.
2. **Mr. President**, it is now my honour and privilege to address the Sixty Eighth General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency.
3. On behalf of the Government of Uganda, I congratulate you and the members of your bureau upon your election to steer the deliberations of this important assembly and I duly express my delegation's support to your work.
4. I seize the opportunity to welcome the Cook Islands and the Federal Republic of Somalia as new member states.
5. **Mr. President**, I take this opportunity to extend my sincere appreciation to Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi, the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency for his leadership in accelerating the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and nuclear applications.
6. There are notable initiatives under Mr. Grossi's leadership that include: -
- **"Rays of Hope"**, an impeccable initiative for improving access to radiation therapy for cancer management in low and middle income countries and
- **"ZODIAC"** aimed at addressing zoonotic diseases, which continue to challenge humanity with the latest being M-Pox.

7. In line with food security and safety, the Agency under DG Grossi, is catalysing the realisation of a world free of hunger by 2030, by the introduction of **Atoms4Food Initiative**. This initiative brings forth practicable solutions geared towards enhancing and scaling-up agricultural productivity, food safety and human nutrition. Uganda hereby expresses her interest to participate in the initiative.
8. Uganda welcomes the Agency's interventions and continued support in various sectors through the technical cooperation programme and African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training related to Nuclear Science and Technology (AFRA).
9. This year Uganda signed the fifth Country Programme Framework with a focus on advancing nuclear science and technology in key priority areas such as; nuclear and radiation safety, food and agriculture, human health, water and the environment, introduction of nuclear power and uranium production.
10. In line with Uganda's priority in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the Government of Uganda is committed to strengthening the national nuclear regulator, the Atomic Energy Council in order to ensure protection of the people and the environment, while facilitating responsible development of nuclear energy and applications. We applaud the Agency for the unwavering support to the Atomic Energy Council within the Agency's mandate.

11. In line with cancer management, Uganda Cancer Institute was recognised as a Centre of Excellence for Oncology in the East African Community. To this end, Uganda has made significant strides in the field of radiotherapy and has now flagged-off a specialised training programme in radiation, to contribute to capacity building for radiotherapy in the East African region. In this regard, Uganda wishes to avail its facilities as a Rays of Hope Anchor Centre in the region and is available for consideration.
12. **Mr. President, “*Net Zero Carbon Emissions*”** cannot be fully realised without increasing the share of nuclear power in the electricity generation mix. Therefore, Uganda appreciates all efforts and technological advancements aimed at enhancing the contribution of nuclear power to climate change mitigation, energy security and sustainable development.
13. This aligns with the commitments made during COP28 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. I am confident the same level of commitment to advancing Nuclear Energy will be made at COP 29 in Baku, Azerbaijan.
14. Nuclear power is a major component in Uganda’s energy transition plan. To this end, the Government of Uganda has embarked on “Phase two” of the Agency’s Milestones Approach for developing the national infrastructure for nuclear power activities which focuses on building specialised nuclear institutions and preparatory works towards construction of the first nuclear power plant.

15. Some of the key developments towards this end include; establishing legal framework, identification of sites for the nuclear installations and establishing the Center for Nuclear Science and Technology to support human resource development at Soroti University. The centre will host a medium range multipurpose research reactor for education, training, basic and applied research in the nuclear field.
16. **Mr. President**, Uganda hosted the first of kind Integrated Uranium Production Cycle Review Mission in May 2024. The outcome of the mission was well aligned with Uganda's aspiration to develop the uranium resources following the milestone approach in the development of national infrastructure for the uranium production cycle.
17. With nuclear power prospects, uranium development and the significant rise of atomic energy applications, Uganda is committed towards strengthening the national infrastructure for nuclear Safety, Security and Safeguards. Accordingly, Uganda is in advanced stages of amending the Atomic Energy Act, 2008 to put in place a comprehensive nuclear law. We welcome the Agency assistance towards this end.
18. Last but not the least, I wish to commend the Agency for its international coordination role in enhancing nuclear safety, security and for monitoring and safeguarding nuclear material to ensure that peaceful nuclear endeavours do not result in nuclear terrorism and nuclear weapons proliferation.

19. In conclusion, Uganda reiterates her firm support to the mandate and activities of the Agency aimed at advancing nuclear science and technology for the social wellbeing of humanity.

20. I thank you.

For God and My Country