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Republic of Zambia

STATEMENT

BY

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**PERMANENT SECRETARY AT THE MINISTRY OF TECHNOLOGY AND
SCIENCE,**

DURING THE

**THE 68TH INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA) GENERAL
CONFERENCE**

SEPTEMBER, 2024

**MR. PRESIDENT OF THE 68TH GENERAL CONFERENCE,
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE IAEA,
EXCELLENCIES,
DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

ON BEHALF OF THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT, I JOIN OTHER DELEGATES IN EXTENDING OUR HEARTFELT SYMPATHY TO THE PEOPLE OF THE REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA AS THEY COPE WITH THE SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS THAT HAVE AFFECTED THIS COUNTRY IN RECENT DAYS.

MR. PRESIDENT,

IT IS AN HONOR AND A PRIVILEGE TO ADDRESS THIS ESTEEMED ASSEMBLY. I WOULD LIKE TO BEGIN BY CONGRATULATING YOU AND YOUR TEAM ON YOUR ELECTION AS PRESIDENT OF THE 68TH REGULAR SESSION OF THE IAEA GENERAL CONFERENCE. WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT UNDER YOUR ABLE LEADERSHIP, OUR DELIBERATIONS WILL BE PRODUCTIVE AND CONCLUDE ON TIME. REST ASSURED, ZAMBIA FULLY SUPPORTS YOUR PRESIDENCY.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO COMMEND THE DIRECTOR GENERAL, MR. RAFAEL MARIANO GROSSI, FOR HIS OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP. UNDER HIS GUIDANCE, THE AGENCY CONTINUES TO MAKE REMARKABLE STRIDES AND PLAYS A CRUCIAL

ROLE IN ADVANCING THE PEACEFUL USE OF NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.

MR. PRESIDENT,

WE ARE PLEASED TO NOTE THE INCREASING INTEGRATION OF NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY INTO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES, NOT ONLY IN ZAMBIA BUT IN MANY MEMBER STATES. THIS INTEGRATION IS VITAL IN ADDRESSING SOME OF THE MAJOR CHALLENGES THE WORLD FACES TODAY, SUCH AS FOOD INSECURITY AND THE SPREAD OF EMERGING DISEASES. MANY OF THESE CHALLENGES ARE EXACERBATED BY CLIMATE CHANGE, WHICH HAS LED TO EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS LIKE PROLONGED DROUGHTS AND SEVERE FLOODING. IN REGIONS RELIANT ON HYDROPOWER, SEVERE DROUGHTS POSE A THREAT TO ENERGY SECURITY.

MR. PRESIDENT,

WE RECOGNIZE THAT MANY OF THESE GLOBAL CHALLENGES ARE BEING TACKLED THROUGH NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. WE COMMEND THE AGENCY FOR ITS ONGOING EFFORTS TO PROMOTE THE PEACEFUL APPLICATIONS OF NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY WORLDWIDE. IN THIS REGARD, THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT REAFFIRMS ITS COMMITMENT TO COLLABORATE WITH THE AGENCY.

ALLOW ME NOW TO HIGHLIGHT SOME OF ZAMBIA'S NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS THROUGH OUR TECHNICAL COLLABORATION WITH THE AGENCY:

MR PRESIDENT, ON RADIOTHERAPY

ZAMBIA IS IMPLEMENTING ITS SECOND CANCER CONTROL STRATEGIC PLAN, DEVELOPED IN 2022, TO INCREASE ACCESS TO CANCER TREATMENT. ZAMBIA HAS EMBARKED ON UPGRADING THE CURRENT CANCER DISEASES HOSPITAL. WE ARE DECOMMISSIONING OLD EQUIPMENT AT THE CANCER DISEASES HOSPITAL AND REINSTALLING FOUR ADVANCED LINEAR ACCELERATORS, TWO BRACHYTHERAPY UNITS AND NEW DIAGNOSTIC AND SIMULATION IMAGING TECHNOLOGIES.

ADDITIONALLY, CONSTRUCTION OF A SECOND RADIOTHERAPY TREATMENT CENTER IS EXPECTED TO BE OPERATIONAL BY FEBRUARY 2025. THE PROCUREMENT OF THE THIRD RADIOTHERAPY TREATMENT CENTER IS CURRENTLY UNDERWAY.

AS ZAMBIA PREPARES TO OPEN THE REHABILITATED AND THE NEW RADIOTHERAPY CENTERS, WE WILL REQUIRE THE AGENCY'S TECHNICAL SUPPORT.

I AM PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT ZAMBIA HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE AGENCY AS A SECOND-WAVE COUNTRY UNDER THE RAYS OF HOPE INITIATIVE. AS A RESULT, WE WILL RECEIVE A LINEAR ACCELERATOR FOR ONE OF THE NEW RADIOTHERAPY CENTERS.

WITH ALL THESE DEVELOPMENTS ZAMBIA SHALL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE REGIONAL TRAINING IN THE FIELDS OF RADIOTHERAPY TECHNOLOGY, RADIOLOGY AND RADIATION ONCOLOGY. IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN THIS FURTHER ZAMBIA WILL BE ESTABLISHING ITS FIRST CYCLOTRON AND INSTALLATION OF PET/CT SCANS IN DIFFERENT LOCATIONS OF THE COUNTRY.

MR PRESIDENT, ON FISHERIES AND LIVESTOCK

THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT HAS IDENTIFIED THE FISHERIES AND LIVESTOCK SECTORS AS KEY DRIVERS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DIVERSIFICATION. TO THIS END, WE ARE IMPLEMENTING A STRATEGIC PLAN AIMED AT ENHANCING PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTIVITY IN THESE SECTORS USING NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY.

WITH THE AGENCY'S SUPPORT, ZAMBIA'S CAPACITY TO DIAGNOSE ZOO NOTIC AND TRANSBOUNDARY ANIMAL DISEASES HAS BEEN STRENGTHENED. WE ARE ALSO CONSTRUCTING A NEW VACCINE PLANT TO IMPROVE THE CONTROL AND PREVENTION OF THESE DISEASES.

MR PRESIDENT, ON AGRICULTURE

IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR, ZAMBIA HAS DEVELOPED IMPROVED COWPEA VARIETIES WITH A 25% HIGHER GRAIN YIELD POTENTIAL, THANKS TO SUPPORT FROM THE AGENCY. THESE NEW VARIETIES ALSO SHOW INCREASED RESISTANCE TO DISEASES AND GREATER TOLERANCE TO ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS.

ADDITIONALLY, ZAMBIA IS IMPLEMENTING A FOUR-YEAR TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROJECT AIMED AT DEVELOPING FURTHER IMPROVED CROP VARIETIES THAT ARE HIGH-YIELDING AND EFFICIENT IN BOTH WATER AND FERTILIZER USE.

MR PRESIDENT, ON REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

ZAMBIA IS CONDUCTING A RADIOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENTAL DOSE MAPPING EXERCISE TO DETERMINE THE LEVELS OF NATURALLY OCCURRING RADIOACTIVITY. THIS WILL PROVIDE BASELINE DATA ESSENTIAL FOR STRENGTHENING REGULATORY PROGRAMS IN THE COUNTRY.

WE ARE ALSO WORKING TOWARDS BOLSTERING OUR REGULATORY FRAMEWORK TO ENSURE THAT ALL NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY APPLICATIONS ARE EFFECTIVELY REGULATED.

WITH THE AGENCY'S TECHNICAL SUPPORT, ZAMBIA HAS DEVELOPED REGULATIONS TO ENHANCE OUR CAPACITY IN RADIOTHERAPY, NUCLEAR MEDICINE, AND THE MANAGEMENT OF NATURALLY OCCURRING RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS.

MR. PRESIDENT,

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO COMMEND THE AFRICAN REGIONAL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT FOR RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND TRAINING RELATED TO NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (AFRA) FOR ITS TIRELESS EFFORTS IN PROVIDING TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO ITS MEMBER STATES. ZAMBIA REAFFIRMS ITS COMMITMENT TO CONTINUED COLLABORATION WITH AFRA.

I AM PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT, IN JULY OF THIS YEAR, ZAMBIA'S PARLIAMENT APPROVED OUR ACCESSION TO THE CURRENT TERM OF AFRA, AND WE EXPECT TO SUBMIT THE INSTRUMENTS OF ACCESSION TO THE AGENCY SHORTLY.

IN CONCLUSION, MR. PRESIDENT,

ZAMBIA REMAINS FIRMLY COMMITTED TO THE MISSION OF THE AGENCY AND STANDS READY TO COLLABORATE FOR OUR MUTUAL BENEFIT.

THANK YOU.