

Statement

By

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Mr. President,

Excellencies Ministers and Heads of Delegations,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me, at the outset, begin by congratulating you on your election as the President of this 59th Session of the General Conference of the IAEA and other elected members of the Bureau to steer our deliberations on timely issues of global significance. May I also assure you of Ethiopia's full support and cooperation to the success of the Session.

My delegation commends the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Sri Lanka- Ambassador Abdul Azeez, for the contributions he made to the preparations of the Conference.

My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to warmly welcome the States of Turkmenistan to the family of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Mr. President,

The Ethiopian economy shows a very robust and consistent growth as indicated by the average 10.5% GDP growth over the past decade. This has

made our economy one of the fastest growing in the world. This growth by any standard, for a non-oil producing country like Ethiopia, is indeed remarkable and the principal reason for this economic success, we believe, is our government's determined and strong leadership, development strategies and policies that we have pursued. In this regard, the successful implementation of the just concluded the first Five Year Growth and Transformation Plan has made critical contributions not only to this astounding economic performance, but also laying a solid foundation for the future economic prosperity of the country. In our efforts to achieve better life for Ethiopians in line with the post 2015 Sustainable Development agenda, my Government is embarking its second phase of the next five years Growth and Transformation plan, which focuses on various programmes of sustainable development issues. Of course this will lead us to realize our long-term vision of making Ethiopia a middle income state by 2025

Mr. President,

For continuing our mission of national development and economic growth, science and technology is a paramount ingredient. We have realized this, as many other countries, that the transfer of technology and know-how is critical to our vision of development. Let me, in this connection, touch upon briefly and share with you and the distinguished delegates gathered here what

we in Ethiopia, in collaboration with IAEA, have done to help realize our socio-economic development goals through applications of various technology and peaceful nuclear techniques in a number of national and regional projects.

Mr. President,

The TSETSE Fly Eradication Project (STEP) is a major project aimed at eradicating the tsetse fly from 25,000 square kilometres land initially, but has now expanded to cover large infested areas of the country employing the Sterile Insect Technique (SIT). Our National Institute for Control and Eradication of Tsetse fly and Trypanosomosis is currently focusing on three major components: namely- suppression of the existing fly population centrally operated sterile insect production and actual field operation of fly population control; and eradication using the SIT technology. Despite the fact that much work remains to be done, I am glad to note here that concrete progress has been made in reducing the prevalence of Trpanosomosis disease of the livestock in the treated areas. In fact, the field assessment of aerial release of sterile male Tsetse Fly has indicated that significant achievements have been obtained in the suppression of activities carried out so far.

In addressing this huge challenge, we are facing in these areas, in an ineffective and sustainable fashion; my government has planned to provide short and long term training courses for professional and technical staff with a

view to upgrading their knowledge and skill with a particular emphasis on tsetse fly. I would like to call upon, in this regard, the IAEA and all our development partners to further enhance their support towards the successful implementation of this project as it is, we believe, has advantages in terms of experience sharing and exchange of information to other African nations similarly affected by these diseases.

The other important project being undertaken is in the area of human health to build a modest national infrastructure for the application of nuclear medicine and radio therapy. Currently, we have a single radio therapy centre with inadequate infrastructure to serve more than 90 million people. According to the preliminary data assessment, there are about 30,000 cancer patients annually treated by the existing radio therapy service centre despite an estimated 115,000 new cancer cases per annum. In order to address this glaring and growing challenge, we have developed, in collaboration with IAEA, an action plan to expand Radiotherapy and Nuclear Medicine services to five University Hospitals located in Addis Ababa and other regional states of the country. My government has shown its commitment by allocating budget from its own meagre resources. Obviously, IAEA's and partner countries' assistance and cooperation is required for the successful completion of this project which will help save thousands of lives of our compatriots.

The application of the isotope techniques in managing our surface in ground water resources is another project with the objective of building basic capacity to generate useful isotopic data for sustainable exploitation of ground water resources. Today, strengthening the Isotope Hydrology Laboratory at the Addis Ababa University and the establishment of a national ground water data base system as well as the provision of training to personnel, the laboratory is currently providing sample analysis services to a number M.Sc and Ph.d students, national and regional institutes. Moreover, there is a plan to accredit the Laboratory and enable it to become a regional centre of excellence.

Mr. President,

We have also put in place legal and institutional mechanisms that deal with registration and licensing of all activities involving nuclear safety and security. In this respect, the Ethiopian Radiation Protection Authority is the competent government body which controls the use of ionizing radiation and other related practices, and is currently in the process of developing a draft legislative framework to re-establish an appropriate regulatory body.

My government continues to attach great importance to the mandate and functions of the IAEA in enhancing the peaceful use and application of nuclear energy and other technology for member states, and appreciates the Agency's continued efforts to ensure the implementation of the international

safe guards. Ethiopia has demonstrated its unwavering commitment to supporting this noble task of the IAEA by signing and ratifying several treaties related to peaceful application that have great significance and relevance to ensuring global nuclear safety and security. I would like, in this regard, to thank the United States Department of Energy for the assistance rendered to us to strengthen our regulatory capacity under the Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI) to combat nuclear and radiological materials located at civilian sites we hope such assistance will be extended in other fields of the regulatory activities in the future.

Mr. President,

Ethiopia is undertaking its own self-assessment, which is closely followed and monitored by the IAEA Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS), to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of our regulatory infrastructure for radiation safety, radioactive waste and transport safety, and the security of radioactive sources. This undoubtedly requires continuous capacity building activities to enhance our safety, security and safeguard functions. Furthermore, Ethiopia is actively participating in regional projects supported by the Agency. Waste management, radiation safety and security, energy planning, non-destructive testing and molecular detection of drug resistance in malaria and TB are the major areas where the required basic capacity has been

built and useful data is being generated. In regards to regional cooperation programs, I would like to commend the role being played by the regional AFRA initiative from the inception of the projects to ensuring sustainability of their results. We believe that the efforts being made by AFRA to strengthen the technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) and to devise national and regional strategies for human resource development in nuclear science and technology deserve to be well recognized and encouraged by the IAEA and its member States.

Mr. President,

Ethiopia remains committed to the peaceful application of nuclear technologies, with due respect to global, regional and national security and safety, and is firm as it has been thus far, and is also adhering to the vision of a world without any nuclear threat under the long standing motto of “atom for peace” . That is why we strongly support the core mission of the Agency, that is, to ensure a nuclear free world through complete nuclear disarmament and implementation of all relevant international agreements and treaties, including the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban-Treaty (CTBT) and the Pelindaba Treaty.

In closing, I wish to cease this opportunity to express our appreciation for the leadership and commitment demonstrated by the Director General of the IAEA, Mr. Yukiya Amano, and his dedicated staff as well as all partner countries for the support and cooperation extended to us in carrying out the national and regional projects referred to above as well as to our efforts to employ peaceful and safe applications of nuclear technology for realizing our inclusive, transformative national development agenda.

Thank you.