



GOVERNMENT OF ZAMBIA

**ZAMBIA'S STATEMENT TO
THE 61ST REGULAR SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC
ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA) GENERAL CONFERENCE**

VIENNA, AUSTRIA

18TH TO 22ND SEPTEMBER, 2017

Statement delivered by

**HON. PROFESSOR NKANDU LUO, MP
MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

ZAMBIA

MADAM PRESIDENT

ON BEHALF OF THE ZAMBIAN DELEGATION, I WISH TO THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THIS CONFERENCE. I WISH TO CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR ELECTION AS PRESIDENT OF THE 61ST REGULAR SESSION OF THE IAEA GENERAL CONFERENCE. MY DELEGATION IS VERY CONFIDENT THAT YOU WILL NAVIGATE THE DELIBERATIONS OF THIS GENERAL CONFERENCE SUCCESSFULLY.

ZAMBIA WISHES TO CONGRATULATE THE REPUBLIC OF GRENADA FOR JOINING THE IAEA FAMILY.

I CONGRATULATE MR. YUKIYA AMANO ON HIS RE-APPOINTMENT AS DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR ANOTHER TERM OF OFFICE. THIS IS AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF HIS REMARKABLE AND COMPETENT LEADERSHIP. MY DELIGATION NOTES THAT UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP, THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE AGENCY HAVE BEEN EXEMPLARY.

MADAM PRESIDENT,

MY DELEGATION WOULD LIKE TO COMMEND THE AGENCY FOR ITS EFFORTS IN STRENGTHENING AND ACCELERATING THE PEACEFUL USES

OF NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY. ZAMBIA BECAME A MEMBER STATE OF THE AGENCY IN 1969. SINCE THAT TIME, THE USE OF NUCLEAR TECHNIQUES HAS CONTINUED TO CONTRIBUTE TO ZAMBIA'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROWTH IN THE AREA OF; HEALTHCARE, NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, AMONG OTHERS.

IN ORDER TO FURTHER ACCELERATE AND SUSTAIN THE APPLICATION OF NUCLEAR TECHNIQUES IN THE COUNTRY AND THANKS TO THE AGENCY ZAMBIA HAS EMBARKED ON A NUMBER OF INITIATIVES, AIMED AT DEVELOPING THE REQUIRED HUMAN RESOURCES CAPACITY LOCALLY IN ZAMBIA. IN THIS REGARD, ZAMBIA WILL CONTINUE, CALLING UPON THE IAEA TECHNICAL EXPERTISE TO STRENGTHEN AND REALIZE OUR HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA AND OTHER ASPIRATIONS WE SHALL HAVE AS A COUNTRY.

MADAM PRESIDENT,

MY DELEGATION IS PLEASED TO NOTE THAT THE AGENCY HAS CONTINUED TO PUT RELEVANT MEASURES TO ENSURE THAT NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY IS NOT DIVERTED FOR MILITARY PURPOSES. TO THIS END,

I WISH TO ASSURE YOU OF ZAMBIAS SUPPORT FOR ALL YOUR EFFORTS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IAEA SAFEGUARDS. I ENCOURAGE OTHER MEMBER STATES TO BE STEADFAST IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IAEA SAFEGUARDS.

MADAM PRESIDENT,

BUILDING ON PREVIOUS ACHIEVEMENTS, A NUMBER OF DEVELOPMENTS HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN ZAMBIA: FOR EXAMPLE:

STRENGTHENING OF RADIATION SAFETY MECHANISMS

TO ENSURE EFFECTIVE PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC AND ENVIRONMENT FROM HARMFUL EFFECTS OF IONISING RADIATION, ZAMBIA HAS PUT IN PLACE MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN REGULATORY CAPACITY IN THE COUNTRY AND TOOLS TO ASSESS EXPOSURE TO RADIONUCLIDES. THIS HAS INVOLVED, A REVIEW OF THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK, HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE; DEVELOPMENT AND ENSURING AUTONOMY OF THE REGULATORY AUTHORITY.

MADAM PRESIDENT

ZAMBIA, WITH ASSISTANCE FROM THE IAEA, HAS STARTED THE REVIEW PROCESS OF THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK GOVERNING OUR RADIATION REGULATORY INSTITUTION AND ALSO HAS BEEN ADDRESSING THE EXISTING REGULATORY GAPS IN THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK.

THE REVISED LEGAL FRAMEWORK WILL FACILITATE INCREASED CAPACITY OF THE AUTHORITY AND HENCE PROVIDE FOR EFFECTIVE REGULATION OF THE PLANNED EXPANSION OF NUCLEAR PROGRAMMES IN ZAMBIA. THE IMPROVED CAPACITY WILL INCLUDE RADIATION PROTECTION INFRASTRUCTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, ESTABLISHMENT OF A FULLY FUNCTIONAL RADIOMETRIC LABORATORY, DEVELOPMENT OF A NATIONAL NUCLEAR ENERGY POLICY. WE HAVE ALSO COMMENCED THE PROCESS OF TRANSFORMING AND RELOCATING THE RADIATION PROTECTION AUTHORITY TO A NEUTRAL INSTITUTION.

STRENGTHENING OF ONCOLOGIC SERVICES IN ZAMBIA

ZAMBIA REMAINS COMMITTED TO EXPANDING CANCER CONTROL PROGRAMS IN THE COUNTRY. THANKS TO THE AGENCY; GREAT STRIDES HAVE BEEN MADE IN CANCER CARE IN ZAMBIA. ACCESS TO CANCER INCREASED TO ABOUT 16,000 NEW CASES IN THE LAST 10 YEARS OF OPERATION. WE ARE PROVIDING TRAINING IN RADIATION THERAPY AT THE CANCER DISEASES HOSPITAL TRAINING COLLEGE. OTHER PLANNED TRAINING PROGRAMMES INCLUDE CLINICAL ONCOLOGY, MEDICAL PHYSICS AND ONCOLOGY NURSING.

THIS, WILL NOT ONLY LOWER THE HIGH COST INCURRED FOR TRAINING ABROAD, BUT WILL ALSO CONTRIBUTE TO THE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OF THE REQUIRED CRITICAL MASS IN THE DECENTRALISATION OF ONCOLOGY SERVICES IN ZAMBIA.

IN OUR EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ACCESS AND REVERSE THE INCIDENCE AND PREVALENCE OF CANCER, ZAMBIAN HAS LAUNCHED A NATIONAL CANCER CONTROL STRATEGIC PLAN AND PLANS TO CONSTRUCT TWO (2) MORE RADIOTHERAPY CENTRES ARE QUITE ADVANCED.

ALL THIS PROGRESS HAS BEEN DUE TO THE TIMELY INPUT OF THE AGENCY'S TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAMME THROUGH WELL DESIGNED AND TAILOR NATIONAL PROJECTS THAT HAVE OVER THE YEARS IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY.

ENHANCING FOOD SAFETY AND SECURITY

THE HEALTH OF ZAMBIANS ESPECIALLY THE YOUNG AND RURAL COMMUNITIES, CONTINUES TO BE NEGATIVELY AFFECTED BY MULTIPLE FACTORS SUCH AS FOOD SAFETY. MYCOTOXIN CONTAMINATION OF OUR FOODS REPRESENTS AN IMPORTANT AND PERSISTENT FOOD SAFETY PROBLEM. MYCOTOXINS HAVE BEEN LINKED TO STUNTING AND REDUCED IMMUNITY. THIS IS WORRISOME ESPECIALLY THAT THE RATES OF STUNTING, LIVER CANCER AND HIV/AIDS ARE COMPARATIVELY HIGH.

I AM GLAD TO REPORT THAT ZAMBIA HAS ESTABLISHED A PROGRAMME TO MONITOR HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES IN FOODSTUFFS, INCLUDING VETERINARY DRUG RESIDUES, PESTICIDES AND HEAVY METALS. WE HOPE THAT THE AGENCY WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT ZAMBIA IN THIS ENDEAVOUR SO THAT THE HEALTH OF

ZAMBIANS IS NOT COMPROMISED BY THE VERY NOURISHMENT THEY NEED

EXPANSION OF NUCLEAR ENERGY PROGRAMMES IN ZAMBIA

ZAMBIA RECOGNIZES THE CRITICAL ROLE THAT ENERGY PLAYS IN ITS DEVELOPMENT PROCESS SINCE ENERGY IS ONE OF THE PILLARS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND INDUSTRIALIZATION, POVERTY ERADICATION AND PROVISION OF BASIC HUMAN NEEDS.

IT IS, THEREFORE, GRATIFYING TO NOTE THAT THE AGENCY CONTINUES TO PUT IN PLACE VARIOUS MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN ENERGY PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT.

YOU MAY WISH TO NOTE THAT OVER 90% OF ZAMBIA'S ELECTRICITY SUPPLY IS FROM HYDRO-POWER AND AS SUCH, VERY VULNERABLE TO THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE, SUCH AS LOW RAIN FALL. INFACIT, IN 2015 ZAMBIA EXPERIENCED POWER DEFICIT DUE TO LOW WATER LEVELS IN THE HYDRO- POWER SYSTEMS.

IN ADDITION, WITH ZAMBIA'S CURRENT ECONOMIC AND POPULATION GROWTH RATES, THE DEMAND FOR ENERGY IS PROJECTED TO

INCREASE DRAMATICALLY, AND HENCE THE NEED TO INCREASE THE DIVERSITY AND RESILIENCE OF ENERGY SUPPLY OPTIONS.

MADAM PRESIDENT

YOU MAY RECALL THAT DURING THE 59TH REGULAR SESSION OF THE IAEA GENERAL CONFERENCE, ZAMBIA ANNOUNCED THAT SHE WILL PURSUE NUCLEAR POWER AS A WAY TO DIVERSIFY AND STRENGTHEN ZAMBIA'S ENERGY SUPPLY. THIS IS BECAUSE WE RECOGNIZE NUCLEAR POWER AS A RELIABLE AND ALTERNATIVE SOURCE OF ENERGY TO SUPPORT INDUSTRIALIZATION. IN THIS REGARD, ZAMBIA SOUGHT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO DEVELOP THE REQUIRED HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY, STRENGTHENING THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK, AND FULFILMENT OF THE 19 MILESTONES PRESCRIBED BY THE IAEA.

ZAMBIA HAS EMBARKED ON THE PROCESS OF ESTABLISHING A CENTRE FOR NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY WHICH WILL HOUSE A MULTIPURPOSE RESEARCH REACTOR, AN IRRADIATOR AND NUCLEAR MEDICINE FACILITY. NOTWITHSTANDING THE BILATERAL COOPERATION WITH THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, ZAMBIA LOOKS FORWARD TO

CONTINUED AND STRENGTHENED TECHNICAL COOPERATION WITH THE IAEA IN ORDER TO AUGMENT THE SPEEDY REALIZATION OF OUR NUCLEAR ENERGY PROGRAMME.

COUNTERPART FUNDING MECHANISM FOR IAEA SUPPORTED PROJECTS

ZAMBIA HAS A FINANCING MECHANISM FOR PROVIDING LOCAL COUNTERPART FUNDING TO TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROJECTS. ZAMBIA WILL CONTINUE TO EXPAND THE SCOPE OF THIS FINANCING MECHANISM IN ORDER TO ENHANCE THE PHILOSOPHY OF COST SHARING BETWEEN THE AGENCY AND THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT.

MADAM PRESIDENT

ZAMBIA WISHES TO REITERATE ITS CONTINUED SUPPORT TO THE AGENCY'S TECHNICAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE AFRICA REGIONAL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT FOR RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING RELATED TO NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (AFRA). AS I COMMEND AFRA ON ITS TIRELESS EFFORTS OF ENSURING INCREASED TECHNICAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES AMONG AFRA MEMBER STATES, I WANT TO

ASSURE AFRA OF ZAMBIA'S CONTINUED COLLABORATION. I AM, THEREFORE, PLEASED TO REPORT THAT, SINCE THE LAST GENERAL CONFERENCE, ZAMBIA HAS BEEN HOST TO SEVERAL AFRA EVENTS, AND IT IS MY HOPE THAT AFRA MEMBER STATES WILL STRENGTHEN THEIR COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS AND ENSURE THAT THE MISSION OF AFRA IS ACCELERATED AND SUSTAINED.

MADAM PRESIDENT,

IN CONCLUSION, I WISH TO PLEDGE ZAMBIA'S FULL CONTRIBUTION TO THE TECHNICAL COOPERATION AND THE AFRA FUNDS.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION - MAY THE GOOD LORD BLESS YOU ALL.