



GOVERNMENT OF ZAMBIA

STATEMENT TO  
THE 59<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF  
THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY  
(IAEA)

**REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA**

VIENNA, AUSTRIA

14<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2015

Delivered by

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The President of the 59<sup>th</sup> Session of the IAEA General Conference;

The Chairperson of the Executive Committee;

The Director General of the IAEA;

Your Excellencies;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

I join all other previous speakers in congratulating you, Mr. President, on your election to the Presidency of this 59<sup>th</sup> Regular Session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). My delegation and I have the utmost confidence in your able leadership, and are in no doubt that you will guide the deliberations of the General Conference to a successful end.

I wish to assure you, Mr. President, and your team, of Zambia's full support and contribution to the successful conclusion of this General Conference.

Mr. President,

I particularly wish to recognize and applaud the efforts and able leadership of the Director General of the IAEA, Mr. Yukiya Amano, during a difficult period that has seen the IAEA deal with a number of challenging nuclear situations including the Fukushima accident in Japan; the Ebola outbreak in West Africa; and the continued threat to international and global peace presented through nuclear proliferation.

Mr. President,

Zambia joins the rest of the IAEA family in welcoming the new members, ANTIGUA AND BERBUDA; TURKMENISTAN AND BARBADOS. I urge the new members to stand by the norms and standards on which the IAEA is premised, and these are centered around the peaceful use of nuclear technology. I also wish to assure them that they will find support, mutual respect, and progressiveness as the tenets on which our big nuclear family is premised. The harnessing of nuclear technology for the socio-economic benefit of our peoples is the single-most important driver of all efforts under this family.

Mr. President,

My Country last year celebrated its Golden Jubilee and as part of my address to the General Conference, we highlighted some of the achievements attained by Zambia, in partnership with the IAEA, in the 50 years of our existence as an independent state.

This year, we hope to build on those achievements and also to reinforce our post Golden Jubilee agenda in nuclear use towards improving the livelihood of our people in the areas of health, agriculture, and industry. We consider this agenda as timely because it also coincides with the global review of the Millennium Development Goals, and agreement on the post 2015 Sustainable Development Agenda and Goals.

Mr. President,

Zambia is challenged with finding solutions towards sustainable energy sources as well as food security and human health. All these areas can be enhanced through the use of nuclear technology. It is in these areas that my country seeks to enhance our collaboration with the International Atomic Energy Agency, and also with other developing countries, particularly those closest to us in the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

As a country therefore, our focus in the next phase will center around exploring nuclear technology as a sustainable energy source, and enhancing human capacity development, particularly in the areas of nuclear safety and security, human and animal health, as well as food security.

Mr. President,

The general focus for Zambia's nuclear aspirations in the next 50 years is premised on the progress made so far, and the cooperation and support received from the IAEA in the past. With the support from the IAEA in technical, financial and human resource development, Zambia currently hosts one of the advanced Radiotherapy Facilities in the region. We also have enhanced the capacity of the Radiation Protection Authority, and we have established a Radiometric Laboratory for monitoring of radioactive contamination of both underground water and surface water, especially in our mining areas. Further the IAEA has supported a number of programmes in crop yield improvements and livestock productivity using nuclear techniques.

Mr. President,

Zambia finds itself at a landmark stage in its management, development and use of nuclear techniques. On the one hand, the harnessing of nuclear technology through clinical and other safe uses has proved invaluable to the socio-economic progress of the country. On the other hand, my country continues to grapple with the challenges of managing radioactive materials especially from mining and other related practices. It is in these areas of challenge that the IAEA's technical expertise becomes invaluable to Zambia.

Mr. President,

Zambia is encouraged by the strong foundation on which we are now basing our plans for the next fifty years. The continued collaboration and support from the IAEA gives us the impetus to envisage tremendous progress in harnessing nuclear science and technology for the future. A few examples of this strong foundation for our future plans include the following:

1. Progress in strengthening the Radiation Protection Authority;
2. Enhancing the Radiotherapy facility ;and
3. Enhancing the capacity of the Radiometric Laboratory in monitoring and assessing radioactive contamination in the environment.

Mr. President,

With regard to the progress made in establishing the Radiation Protection Authority (RPA), we wish to report that the Radiation Protection Authority is now fully established to regulate the importation, exportation, and local use of radioactive materials. The legal framework, including regulatory and safety guidelines have also been developed and finalized.

Mr. President,

The Authority has already developed and is implementing an inspection programme. An environmental monitoring programme is also on-going. Further, the Authority has now engaged key stakeholders such as the customs authorities as well as research institutions to enhance its regulatory mandate.

We should mention that, in all this progress, IAEA has been supportive and was instrumental in procuring and supplying various pieces of equipment to the Radiation Protection Authority.

Mr. President, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

With regard to enhancing the radiotherapy facility, Zambia continues to strengthen the application of nuclear medicine and the consolidation of delivery of the cancer treatment services.

The Cancer Diseases Hospital, which became operational in 2006, has greatly contributed to improved access to Radiotherapy and Chemotherapy for cancer patients as well as improving capacity in human resources on the subject. The Hospital, in collaboration with the IAEA, has positioned itself to be a regional training centre for cancer control personnel. Zambia, through Cancer Diseases Hospital, has helped train IAEA fellows from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Malawi, Namibia and Nigeria.

The Government has completed the construction of a 260 bed in-patient facility and the equipment currently being installed. This facility has an out-patient Chemotherapy Unit, Nuclear Medicine and a Brachytherapy treatment unit which is supported with a dedicated theatre.

In order to increase access to Radiotherapy in the country, Zambia has resolved to create one Radiotherapy Center in each Province, and it is anticipated that these will become the Epicenters of Cancer Control in Zambia, supervised by the Cancer Diseases Hospital.



In this regard Zambia has sourced financing for the construction the first two Radiotherapy Centers, starting 2016.

Zambia has also completed the National Cancer Control Strategy, and implementation of this strategy will begin in 2016. In this Strategy, particular emphasis has been placed on the prevention and control of Breast, Cervical and Prostate Cancer, as well as Retinoblastoma.

Mr. President,

Zambia is grateful for the IAEA technical cooperation that has made all this success possible through well tailor-designed national projects that have, over the years, improved the services at the Hospital.

We are committed to enhancing the capacity of the Radiometric Laboratory in monitoring and assessing radioactive contamination in the environment. In this regard, the IAEA, through the Technical Cooperation Programme, has continued to assist Zambia in environmental radioactive monitoring. This is a critical project for Zambia as we are trying to establish regulatory limits for environmental radioactive contamination.

Mr. President,

We consider that Science and Technology holds the key to the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda. Zambia strongly believes that her plans for the post 2015 agenda, and her aspirations for progress in the next fifty years, rely on her harnessing science and technology in general and nuclear technology in particular.

Mr. President,

In this light, Zambia is committed to supporting the IAEA through Technical Cooperation as well as through meeting its financial obligations to the Agency on time.

In this regard, allow me to report that Zambia is current on all payments and obligations to the Agency and the pledges for 2016 are already lodged with the Agency. All these obligations will be met in time for the 2016 cycle.

Mr. President,

Zambia also commits to acceding to the 6<sup>th</sup> Five Year Term of AFRA and all financial obligations that come with the accession.

Mr. President

In conclusion, allow me to reiterate my country's resolve on nuclear proliferation that continues to be of great concern to all. As a country, it is our hope and desire that the IAEA is supported in ensuring that the application of IAEA safeguards is done in the most fair and comprehensive manner, in order to come to a just conclusion for all involved.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank you for your attention.

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