



NIGERIA'S NATIONAL STATEMENT

BY

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HONOURABLE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

TO THE

**MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY:
ADDRESSING CURRENT AND EMERGING DEVELOPMENTAL CHALLENGES
IN VIENNA, AUSTRIA, 28TH TO 30TH NOVEMBER, 2018**

NOVEMBER 2018

Co-Presidents

1. At the outset, my delegation would like to congratulate Costa Rica and Japan, the Co-chairs for all their hardwork leading to to this Conference and to pledge Nigeria's full support and cooperation towards the success of the Conference. We are sure that, under your able leadership, this Conference will succeed.

2. In the same vein, Nigeria extends its appreciation to the Director General of the IAEA, Mr. Yukiya Amano, for his insightful opening statement and the Secretariat for their efforts and commitments towards repositioning the Agency for better and effective service delivery to Member States.

3. Nigeria welcomes the convening of this Ministerial Conference which it considers both very necessary and timely as it will provide Member States with a platform to deliberate on the various peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology and to address other crucial issues hindering the effective deployment of nuclear science for the sustainable development of the Member States.

4. My delegation would like to use this opportunity to express Nigeria's appreciation to the IAEA for the enormous support and contributions the country has continued to receive through her partnership with the Agency particularly in the areas of Health, Agriculture, Water Resources, Human capacity development, nuclear safety and numerous other areas. Nigeria will continue to look forward to a more mutually beneficial partnership with the Agency in the years to come.

Co-Presidents,

5. Under the framework of the Agency's Technical Cooperation with Nigeria, I wish to report that Nigeria is currently participating in several TC projects at the Inter-Regional, Regional and National

levels. Recently, Nigeria's Country Programme Framework document for 2018-2023 programme cycle was signed during the 62nd Session of the IAEA General Conference that took place in September 2018 here in Vienna, Austria. This document identifies the priority areas of Nigeria's partnership with the IAEA in a clear and practical fashion. The signing of this document is a precursor to the commencement of additional national projects under the 2020-2021 TC Cycle and beyond. Nigeria appreciates the enormous support of the Agency in finalizing this document

6. In the same vein, my delegation wishes to inform you that arising from the activation of this Country Programme Framework document, the Agency has approved five new project concepts for Nigeria commencing in 2020. These projects are in the fields of governmental and regulatory infrastructure for nuclear and radiation safety, energy planning focusing on the introduction of nuclear power, livestock production, radiation oncology and cancer management and research reactor applications. The designs of these projects have since been completed and submitted to the IAEA for review.

Co-Presidents,

7. Nigeria's Research Reactor which was commissioned in 2004 with high-enriched uranium has contributed immensely to the use of nuclear science and technology in the country. It has been very useful in mineral exploration and processing and the agricultural sector in soil fertility analysis, besides the building of human capacity. Recently, this reactor was successfully converted from the use of HEU to LEU attaining criticality early this month. We are optimistic that the reactor will reach full power this week and continue to operate to strengthen the application of nuclear science and technology in the country. Nigeria also appreciates the support and cooperation of the IAEA and other strategic partners in this regard.

8. At this point, permit me to inform that arrangements have reached advanced stage towards the acquisition of a Multi-purpose Research Reactor by Nigeria. It is hoped that the acquisition of this reactor will significantly contribute to several developmental activities in the country particularly in the provision of radiopharmaceuticals to support cancer diagnosis and treatment in the country, research and training. An Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review Mission on this has already been carried out by the IAEA.

9. To ensure safety in the deployment of nuclear science and technology, Nigeria has since put in place an independent and robust regulatory system through the establishment of the Nigerian Nuclear Regulatory Authority. This body will continue to be strengthened so as to send positive signal and add credence to our National Nuclear Energy Programme and assure our neighbours and, indeed, the international community of our commitment and genuine interest in adhering to global best practices and the international regulations guiding the use of nuclear science and technology.

10. Nigeria believes that steady electricity is a key element in the development of any nation. On this premise, Nigeria's quest for the generation of electricity from nuclear resources cannot come at a better time especially with the dwindling of other energy resources and global efforts at mitigating climate change through the use of environmentally friendly technologies including nuclear. Meticulous planning and discussions are already ongoing towards Nigeria's acquisition of her first nuclear power plant.

11. With regards to the environment sector, my delegation believes that the near-zero Green House Gas emission posture of nuclear energy makes its inclusion in any country's energy mix even critical. This will further help to significantly address many environmental concerns associated with climate change like global warming.

Co- Presidents,

12. In the health sector, Nigeria appreciates the support of the Agency in the provision of facilities and training of the needed manpower for the diagnosis and management of cancer in country. The IAEA led training programmes have produced many qualified Nuclear Medicine Physicians, Radiation Oncologists, Radiographers, Medical Physicists and numerous other relevant professionals that are spread across the tertiary health institutions in the country. Nigeria is proud to have retained the services of most of these highly trained professionals who are offering critical services in the face of other limitations.

Co-Presidents,

13. My delegation also commends the efforts of the IAEA in Nigeria's water resources sector through its support in the provision of a Laser Spectroscopic Water Isotope Analyser and for conducting training programmes and workshops which have facilitated the acquisition of national capacity for effective participation in the IAEA Water Availability Enhancement (IWAVE) project and the application of Isotope Hydrology for the study of trans-boundary aquifer systems and basins among others.

14. In the area of food and nutrition, Nigeria is glad to report that the IAEA in 2015 after thorough auditing by its experts selected the country's National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control as one of the two Africa's Regional Designated Centres (RDCs) for Food Safety, which qualifies the Agency's Laboratory to be used for capacity building in the West Africa Sub-region. These efforts will continually be sustained by Nigeria.

15. In conclusion, Madam President, Nigeria commends the IAEA for its continuous role in promoting the safe and responsible deployment of nuclear science and technology for socio-economic development of Member States.

16. I thank you.