



STATEMENT

BY

**MR. SHELDON BARNES
ALTERNATE TO THE RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF JAMAICA TO THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

ON

**THE OCCASION OF THE 63RD REGULAR SESSION OF
THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC
ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA)**

VIENNA, AUSTRIA – 16TH TO 20TH SEPTEMBER 2019

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Madam Chair,

On behalf of the Government of Jamaica, I wish to congratulate you on your election as chair of this 63rd Session and thank you and the members of the Bureau for effectively guiding the work of the Conference.

Let me at the outset, express my delegation's sincere condolences to the staff and members of the IAEA on the passing of Director General Yukiya Amano. The international community has lost an exemplary Diplomat who through his commitment, dedication and devotion to the work of the Agency, has made a significant contribution to international peace and security as well as building the capacity of countries in the use of nuclear technology for development. Our sincere condolences to his family. He will be sadly missed.

Madam Chair,

We join other delegations in welcoming St. Lucia, our sister CARICOM Member State, as the newest member of the IAEA family. We are indeed pleased at the growing membership of this important organisation. Small developing countries, in particular, stand to benefit from the technical assistance, capacity-building and transfer of knowledge offered by the IAEA. In that regard, we encourage all fellow Member States, in a position to do so, to continue to contribute to the IAEA's technical co-operation fund in order to ensure that there are sufficient resources to meet the growing demand for the Agency's assistance.

Madam Chair, Jamaica attaches significant importance to the work of the Agency in the promotion of safeguards applications for the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. To this end, my delegation reiterates our support for the aims and objective of the Agency and will continue to give our full cooperation to the IAEA.

We note with great satisfaction that the Agency now implements safeguards in over 180 countries, confirming that the Agency remains

indispensable for promoting cooperation in the nuclear field and for promoting safe, secure and the peaceful use of nuclear technologies.

Madam Chair, my delegation continues to be pleased with the level of support being extended by the Agency towards the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As we draw closer to 2030, it is fitting that our collective efforts should be directed towards ensuring the attainment of the Goals, in particular those related to health, water and sanitation, as well as to sustainable and modern energy.

As the first English-speaking country in the Caribbean to join the IAEA in 1965, three years after we achieved our independence, Jamaica has continued to work closely with the Agency in its efforts to peacefully harness nuclear energy for sustainable development. In this context, Jamaica welcomes the fact that there continues to be such a strong focus on capacity-building through technical cooperation. We are deeply appreciative of the strong partnership that has been forged over the past 54 years of being a member of the IAEA and we are pleased that it is a partnership that continues to be deepened and strengthened.

Jamaica currently has nine (9) active national projects, four (4) of which commenced in January 2018 under the 2018-2019 project cycle. The national projects in which we are engaged with the Agency cover a range of issues and concerns, such as: agricultural production, medicine, water quality control and infrastructure development.

We are pleased to report that approval has been granted for the funding of new projects for the 2020-2021 cycle, which target among other things, coastal and marine pollution.

Given existing high priority initiatives directed at the treatment of cancer, we look forward to further updates on the proposal to create a one-house approach to cancer-related issues as part of the ongoing review of the Agency's Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT).

Madam Chair, as we continue to deepen our partnership with the Agency on technical cooperation, we are pleased to inform that Jamaica has hosted a number of regional capacity building workshops throughout 2019. These include a training activity on the 'Application of Stable Isotope Techniques in Environmental Enteric Dysfunction Assessment and Understanding its Impact on Child Growth' in January 2019, and a Regional Training Course on Radiation Protection in Medical Imaging in July 2019. Jamaica is also set to host an Interregional Training Course on Water Resources Assessment using Isotope Hydrology in October 2019 and a Regional Workshop on Threat Assessment and Design Basis Threat in November 2019. Jamaica is happy to play its part with assisting the capacity building efforts of the Agency and looks forward to building on this existing working relationship.

At the regional level, the crucial role of ARCAL, the Regional Co-operation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean, cannot be over-emphasised. ARCAL is an important mechanism for technical co-operation in our Region, and Jamaica has taken the necessary steps to benefit from the extension of the Agreement, by being the first Caribbean country to deposit its instrument of acceptance in 2017.

Madam Chair, Jamaica remains fully committed to the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). As we look to the Third Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference, we hope that we, as an international community, will be able to fully commit to the obligations that have guided us for the past 48 years of existence of the Treaty.

We are pleased to note that the non-proliferation regime has also been bolstered by the adoption in December 2017 of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Jamaica is pleased to have signed this Treaty and look forward to working with others to advance its objectives. We encourage countries who have not yet signed the agreement to do so.

Madam Chair,

The Jamaican Government, through the Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology and the International Centre for Environmental and Nuclear Sciences (ICENS), is also working closely with the IAEA to strengthen the regulatory infrastructure in the Region to provide for effective "cradle to the grave" control of radioactive sources.

The Scientific Research Council is collaborating with the IAEA to improve the quality of crops by using experimental mutagenesis and diagnostic technologies to produce 'clean' ginger and sweet yam seedlings, two crops that are of high economic value to Jamaica.

In keeping with our commitment to use nuclear energy for scientific and peaceful purposes, the Jamaican Parliament passed a bill entitled, the Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection Act in 2015, which established the Hazardous Substances Regulatory Authority (HSRA) in 2016. Regulations governing the use of ionizing radiation and nuclear sources was promulgated in 2019.

The IAEA is assisting Jamaica to build the capacity of the HSRA by providing relevant training to regulate activities, to observe practices and to establish facilities involving ionising radiation and nuclear technology, for the protection of people, property and the environment from the harmful effects of radiation, utilising these and other frameworks'.

Jamaica has benefitted tremendously from the IAEA and will continue to partner with the Agency to achieve the objectives of the Vision 2030 National Development Plan that relate to the sectors targeted for IAEA support.

In closing, Madam Chair, Jamaica would wish to reiterate its full support to the Acting Director General and his team and assure them of our unwavering commitment towards the attainment, by the Agency, of its mandate. Jamaica remains committed to the goal of the safe and effective use of nuclear technology for the greater good.

I thank you.