



**Republic of Botswana**

**STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA**

**Delivered by**

**Honourable David Tshere**

**Minister of Communications and Innovation**

**69<sup>th</sup> Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference**

**15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> September 2025, Vienna, Austria**

- **President of the General Conference**
- **Director General Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi**
- **Distinguished Delegates**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

Let me begin by conveying warm greetings from the Republic of Botswana.

1. It is a distinct honour to deliver Botswana's national statement at this 69<sup>th</sup> Regular Session of the International Atomic Energy Agency General Conference.
2. Mr. President, allow me to congratulate you on your election to preside over this important Conference. We assure you of our full support and wish you every success.
3. I also extend appreciation to Director General Grossi and the IAEA Secretariat for their unwavering efforts in preparing for this Conference and advancing the Agency's work.
4. Mr. President, Botswana attaches great importance to the IAEA's mandate and we once again unreservedly re-affirm our commitment to meeting our financial obligations. The benefits that Botswana attained through the Technical Cooperation, AFRA and other IAEA initiatives such as the Rays of Hope have yielded tangible impacts particularly in healthcare, agriculture, water resource management, and capacity building.

5. Through IAEA support, Botswana has strengthened its national institutions and built expertise in nuclear applications. Our scientists many of whom were trained through IAEA programmes are now contributing meaningfully in critical areas such as oncology, food safety, and environmental monitoring.
6. As we continue on our economic transformation journey, we remain committed to deepening our engagement with IAEA initiatives, including "Atoms4Food", and "Atoms for Water". His Excellency the President of the Republic of Botswana recently launched the **Botswana Economic Transformation Programme (BTEP)** which has identified nine priority sectors inclusive of agriculture, energy, healthcare, and water. Nuclear technology innovations can play a significant role in making measurable progress in this regard.
7. Various natural challenges limit Botswana's agriculture growth, and nuclear techniques aimed at developing crops that are resilient to climate change and diseases, and those aimed at improving animal productivity remain pivotal to improving food security. Water availability remain crucial for the functioning of other economic sectors; hence this year's scientific forum resonates well with our country's need. At the recent AU-AIP Water Investment Summit in Cape town, South Africa, our President underscored the urgent need for transboundary water cooperation and climate adaptation. Nuclear technologies such as isotope hydrology offer vital tools for sustainable water resource management, and we are privileged to host of Africa's Noble Gas facility which is yet to be fully operational.

**8.** President, in line with our universal health policy we continue to work towards expanding access to cancer treatment and diagnostic services. In the past year, with IAEA support, Botswana developed a bankable document to guide the expansion of our **radiotherapy services**. In June this year, the Sir Ketumile Masire Teaching Hospital successfully performed the **first interstitial gynaecological brachytherapy procedure** a milestone in our cancer treatment capabilities. The procedure was led by a Radiation Oncologist trained through an IAEA-supported national project. This is a clear testament to the value of international cooperation and the positive impact of IAEA programmes.

**9.** While we embrace the benefits of nuclear science, Botswana remains deeply committed to ensuring the highest standards of **nuclear safety, security, and safeguards**. We continue to strengthen our regulatory systems, invest in training, and align with international best practices to ensure that nuclear technologies are applied only for peaceful purposes.

**10.** In support of the African regional agenda, Botswana is honoured to assume the **Chair of AFRA** this month, following the successful hosting of the **36<sup>th</sup> AFRA Technical Working Group Meeting** from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> June 2025 in Gaborone. We reaffirm our commitment to regional collaboration in areas such as agriculture, health, energy, and water resource management, and

we look forward to working closely with the IAEA and partners to advance AFRA's goals.

**11.** Mr. President, I take this opportunity to appreciate the IAEA's role in supporting and promoting female participation in nuclear science and technology as evidenced by the various initiatives including the Marie Curie fellowship Programme. I would like to appreciate the recognition of three outstanding female students from the University of Botswana who are participating in this year's General Conference. They were selected after winning a national competition under the theme "*Shaping Africa's Future through Nuclear Science and Technology.*" Their project on **induced mutagenesis using gamma radiation** to develop drought and waterlogging tolerant vegetables showcases the innovative spirit of Africa's youth. We are proud of their achievement, which inspires other young women to pursue careers in science and innovation.

**12.** In conclusion, Botswana reaffirms her commitment to the peaceful and responsible use of nuclear science and technology. We remain fully aligned with the IAEA's vision of **Atoms for Peace and Development** and express our sincere gratitude to the Agency and its partners for their continued support to all Member States.

**I thank you for your kind attention, and wish you all a successful and productive Conference.**