

**NIGERIA'S STATEMENT AT THE 69TH REGULAR SESSION
OF THE IAEA GENERAL CONFERENCE, VIENNA, AUSTRIA
15TH – 19TH SEPTEMBER 2025**

**Mr. President,
Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi,
Heads of Delegation,
Distinguished Delegates,**

On behalf of the Nigerian delegation, I extend my heartfelt congratulations on your election as President of the 69th Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference. We are confident that, under your capable leadership, this Session will be productive and impactful. I also wish to commend Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi and his dedicated team for their tireless efforts and excellent arrangements, despite the challenging global environment. Permit me to put on record from the outset that Nigeria is further pleased to welcome the Republic of Maldives as the newest member of our IAEA family.

2. Mr. President, this Session comes at a time of shifting global dynamics, marked by increasing concerns over rearmament. It is therefore imperative for Member States to reaffirm their commitment to the noble ideals of the Agency and to advance the cause of nuclear disarmament. In this context, Nigeria believes that “Africa has no business in nuclear weapons.” It is in this spirit, that we mark this year 2025, the 16th anniversary of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Pelindaba Treaty). Africa has played its part, and we now expect a renewed momentum from the international community in supporting the peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology to achieve the AU Agenda 2063 and the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

3. Nigeria commends the Agency's flagship initiatives in the areas of nuclear applications. We particularly note the Rays of Hope initiative, which has brought vital equipment, capacity building, and growing anchor centres for cancer care, especially in Africa. The Agency's return to the African Union in Addis Ababa June 2025, three years after the launch of Rays of Hope, is a testament to its relevance and impact. Nigeria's own commitment in this regard was reinforced by the successful conduct of the IMPACT Review Mission in October 2024. This mission brought together a diverse pool of global expertise while fostering valuable Regional and South-South collaboration, particularly in strengthening capacity-building efforts. The Mission's comprehensive assessment of Nigeria's cancer care infrastructure yielded actionable recommendations, which are already being implemented. We commend that vital support and highlight the need for continued partnership in the shared goal of realizing the full potential of the Impact Review Mission.

Mr. President

4. Nigeria warmly welcomes the theme of this year's Scientific Forum: "Atoms for Water." This is both timely and relevant, as access to potable water remains elusive in many low- and middle-income countries, despite water being the most abundant natural resource. The Agency's work in isotope hydrology has proven invaluable. Through the AFRA Sahel Projects, Nigeria has successfully applied isotope hydrology techniques for water resource mapping and management in semi-arid regions. We are grateful for the Agency's provision of field and laboratory equipment, as well as capacity-building initiatives at certificate and postgraduate levels. These efforts have helped bridge critical data gaps, strengthen national capacity, and enhance sustainable water management across the Sahel.

5. As a country of over 200 million people, Nigeria continues to prioritize the peaceful application of nuclear energy for power generation. We are steadily implementing our Integrated Work Plan (IWP) to develop nuclear power infrastructure, reflecting our determination to diversify the energy mix and expand access to sustainable electricity. In this regard, Nigeria appreciates the Agency's role in disseminating knowledge on Small Modular Reactors (SMRs).

6. The international conference on SMRs held in Vienna in October 2024 was particularly valuable in helping Member States evaluate available technologies. Nigeria remains engaged in exploring SMR options and looks forward to their full commercialization, while emphasizing that deployment must be in line with Member States' obligations and without prejudice to their right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Mr. President,

7. Nigeria recognizes the Agency's exploration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications to enhance nuclear technology. We welcome the work of the international network on innovation to support operating power plants. At the same time, we encourage the Secretariat, in consultation with Member States, to refine its strategy on AI by developing clear guidelines that maximize its benefits while managing attendant risks.

8. On nuclear safety and security, Nigeria commends the Agency's continued global commitment, including in conflict zones such as Ukraine and the Middle East, where efforts must support political solutions consistent with safeguards obligations. At the national level,

Nigeria remains resolute in strengthening its nuclear safety, security, and regulatory frameworks.

9. In the reporting period, we benefitted from the Integrated Nuclear Security Sustainability Plan (INSSP) Review Mission, the installation of an online National Dose Registry (NDR), the Operational Radiation Protection Appraisal Service (ORPAS) Follow-up Mission, and the Integrated Regulatory Review System (IRRS) Follow-up Mission. The recommendations of these missions are being implemented, further bolstering our national frameworks.

10. Nigeria was equally honoured to host important regional events such as the IAEA School of Radiation Emergency Preparedness and Response, and the Regional Training Course on Occupational Radiation Protection. These events enriched regional capacity building and knowledge exchange, and we thank the Agency for the trust and partnership in this regard.

Mr. President,

11. Nigeria reaffirms its commitment to the objectives of the IAEA. We look forward to working with all Member States to ensure that the peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology continue to advance human development, peace, and security.

12. I thank you.