



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

GENERAL DEBATE STATEMENT

DELIVERED

**AT THE
THE 69TH REGULAR SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY
AGENCY (IAEA) GENERAL CONFERENCE**

VIENNA, AUSTRIA

15TH TO 19TH SEPTEMBER, 2025

Statement delivered by

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ZAMBIA

MR. PRESIDENT,

DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES,

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

YOUR EXCELLENCY, WE EXTEND OUR WARMEST CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR ELECTION AS PRESIDENT OF THE 69TH GENERAL CONFERENCE AND ASSURE YOU OF ZAMBIA'S UNWAVERING SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT TO MEANINGFUL DELIBERATIONS DURING THIS CONFERENCE.

MR. PRESIDENT,

MY DELEGATION EXTENDS ZAMBIA'S GRATITUDE TO THE DIRECTOR GENERAL, HIS EXCELLENCY MR. RAFAEL MARIANO GROSSI, AND HIS TEAM FOR THEIR DEDICATION AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE RECENT PAST. WE PARTICULARLY COMMEND THE AGENCY'S SUCCESSES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAMME AND IN OTHER AREAS OF WORK, INCLUDING HEALTH, AGRICULTURE AND NUCLEAR SAFETY. THESE CONTRIBUTIONS PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN SUPPORTING MEMBER STATES IN ADVANCING NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES.

FURTHER, MY DELEGATION ACKNOWLEDGES THE VALUABLE SUPPORT RENDERED TO ZAMBIA BY THE AGENCY DURING THE RECENT EXPERT MISSIONS WHICH CONTRIBUTED TO STRENGTHENING OUR NATIONAL NUCLEAR SECURITY REGIME AND ENHANCED OUR PREPAREDNESS FOR THE FORTHCOMING INTEGRATED NUCLEAR INFRASTRUCTURE

REVIEW (INIR) MISSION, TO BE HELD IN ZAMBIA IN THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 2026.

MR. PRESIDENT,

I WISH TO REPORT THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA DECLARED ITS INTENTION TO PURSUE THE PEACEFUL USE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY ON A LARGE SCALE, SIGNIFICANT STEPS HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO MEET AND UPHOLD OUR INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE IAEA'S SAFEGUARDS AND CONVENTIONS.

IN THIS REGARD, MY GOVERNMENT HAS APPROVED **FIVE (5) INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS FOR SIGNATURE AND TWO (2) CONVENTIONS FOR RATIFICATION**, A CLEAR DEMONSTRATION OF ZAMBIA'S UNWAVERING COMMITMENT TO THE GLOBAL NUCLEAR SAFETY, SECURITY, AND NON-PROLIFERATION REGIME. THESE ACTIONS UNDERScore OUR DETERMINATION TO ENSURE THAT ZAMBIA'S NUCLEAR PROGRAMME IS DEVELOPED RESPONSIBLY, TRANSPARENTLY, AND IN FULL ALIGNMENT WITH INTERNATIONAL NORMS AND BEST PRACTICES.

MR. PRESIDENT,

ALLOW ME TO ALSO HIGHLIGHT SOME KEY ACHIEVEMENTS RECORDED IN SELECETED SECTORS THROUGH THE APPLICATION OF NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.

HEALTH SECTOR

MR. PRESIDENT,

IN THE HEALTH SECTOR, ZAMBIA HAS EMBARKED ON AN AMBITIOUS NATIONWIDE EXPANSION OF CANCER CARE FACILITIES. TO THIS END, REHABILITATION WORKS AT THE CANCER DISEASES HOSPITAL (CDH) IN

LUSAKA ARE ADVANCING STEADILY, WITH CIVIL WORKS FOR THE INSTALLATION OF FOUR STATE-OF-THE-ART LINEAR ACCELERATORS AND ADVANCED IMAGING EQUIPMENT CURRENTLY AT 40% COMPLETION.

FURTHER, THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW CANCER CENTRE IN LIVINGSTONE HAS MADE REMARKABLE PROGRESS THROUGH THE SUPPORT OF THE IAEA. THROUGH THE IAEA'S RAYS OF HOPE INITIATIVE, ZAMBIA IS SET TO RECEIVE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT, INCLUDING THE ALLOCATION OF A LINEAR ACCELERATOR FOR THE PROPOSED LIVINGSTONE CANCER CENTRE

I AM ALSO PLEASED TO REPORT THE CONSTRUCTION OF ZAMBIA'S SECOND NATIONAL CANCER CENTRE IN NDOLA HAS REACHED 80% COMPLETION, WITH ALL MAJOR EQUIPMENT ALREADY DELIVERED. THE FACILITY IS ON TRACK FOR COMMISSIONING IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2026. THIS WILL SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVING ACCESS TO ONCOLOGY SERVICES FOR COMMUNITIES IN THE NORTHERN REGION OF THE COUNTRY.

BEYOND RADIOTHERAPY, WE ARE ALSO STRENGTHENING NUCLEAR MEDICINE SERVICES WITH SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS MADE IN THE PROCUREMENT OF SPECT/CT AND PET/CT SCANNERS FOR THE NEWLY ESTABLISHED KING SALMAN BIN ABDULAZIZ SPECIALIST HOSPITAL.

IN ADDITION, THE UNIVERSITY TEACHING HOSPITAL (UTH) WILL SOON HOST A PET/CT SCANNER AND A CYCLOTRON, ENABLING LOCAL

PRODUCTION OF ISOTOPES AND ENHANCING BOTH DIAGNOSTIC AND THERAPEUTIC CAPABILITIES.

THROUGH ROBUST INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT, ADOPTION OF CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGIES, AND THE TRAINING OF SPECIALISED HUMAN RESOURCES, ZAMBIA IS DETERMINED TO IMPROVE CANCER TREATMENT OUTCOMES AND CONTRIBUTE MEANINGFULLY TO THE GLOBAL FIGHT AGAINST CANCER UNDER THE AGENCY'S GUIDANCE.

IN THIS VEIN, MY GOVERNMENT STANDS READY TO SHARE EXPERTISE AND PROVIDE TRAINING SUPPORT TO OTHER COUNTRIES IN THAT ARE INTERESTED WITHIN THE REGION. I ALSO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO REQUEST THAT ZAMBIA'S CANCER DISEASES HOSPITAL BE DESIGNATED AS A **RAYS OF HOPE ANCHOR CENTRE** FOR CANCER TREATMENT, TO POTENTIALLY SERVE AS A REGIONAL HUB FOR CAPACITY BUILDING AND COLLABORATION IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CANCER.

ENERGY

MR. PRESIDENT,

IN OUR ONGOING QUEST TO DIVERSIFY ZAMBIA'S ENERGY MIX, THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA, IN MARCH 2025, REAFFIRMED ITS COMMITMENT TO INCLUDE NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY AS PART OF THE NATIONAL ENERGY PORTFOLIO. TO EFFECTIVELY STEER THIS AMBITIOUS INITIATIVE, THE NUCLEAR ENERGY PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION (NEPIO) IS BEING RECONSTITUTED

AND STRENGTHENED TO PROVIDE STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND COORDINATION FOR THE PROGRAMME.

WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA), ZAMBIA SUCCESSFULLY CONVENED A NATIONAL MEETING FROM 1ST TO 5TH SEPTEMBER 2025 IN LUSAKA TO REVISIT THE COUNTRY'S SELF-EVALUATION OF NUCLEAR INFRASTRUCTURE. THIS EXERCISE MARKED AN IMPORTANT MILESTONE IN OUR READINESS JOURNEY. BUILDING ON THESE OUTCOMES, THE IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP FOR THE NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAMME WILL BE UPDATED AND ENHANCED TO ENSURE FULL ALIGNMENT WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS, BEST PRACTICES, AND ZAMBIA'S NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES.

FURTHERMORE, THROUGH AN ONGOING TECHNICAL COOPERATION (TC) PROJECT, THE IAEA CONTINUES TO PROVIDE CRITICAL SUPPORT TO BUILD NATIONAL CAPACITY FOR NUCLEAR POWER DEVELOPMENT. THIS INCLUDES STRENGTHENING TECHNICAL EXPERTISE, INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS, AND STAKEHOLDER READINESS—ENSURING THAT ZAMBIA IS WELL-POSITIONED TO ADVANCE THIS STRATEGIC ENERGY INITIATIVE RESPONSIBLY AND SUSTAINABLY.

AGRICULTURE

MR. PRESIDENT,

THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR IN ZAMBIA REMAINS A KEY DRIVER OF ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION AND POVERTY REDUCTION,

PARTICULARLY IN RURAL AREAS WHERE APPROXIMATELY 67% OF THE LABOUR FORCE IS ENGAGED IN AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES. DESPITE NOTABLE PROGRESS, THE SECTOR CONTINUES TO FACE PERSISTENT CHALLENGES THAT LIMIT ITS FULL POTENTIAL. A SIGNIFICANT YIELD GAP BETWEEN ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL PRODUCTION, ESPECIALLY IN SMALL-SCALE FARMING SYSTEMS, REMAINS EVIDENT. CONTRIBUTING FACTORS INCLUDE INCREASED VULNERABILITY TO CLIMATE CHANGE, AS WELL AS THE PREVALENCE OF PESTS AND DISEASES.

TO HELP ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES, THE AGENCY IS SUPPORTING ZAMBIA IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A TECHNICAL COOPERATION (TC) PROJECT. THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THIS PROJECT IS TO DEVELOP IMPROVED CROP VARIETIES OF MAIZE, SORGHUM, AND SWEET POTATO THAT ARE HIGH-YIELDING AND RESILIENT TO THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE. THE APPLICATION OF NUCLEAR TECHNIQUES IS EXPECTED TO PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN ACHIEVING THESE OBJECTIVES, THEREBY STRENGTHENING ZAMBIA'S HOUSEHOLD AND NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY WHILE PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS.

MR. PRESIDENT,

RADIATION SAFETY

MR. PRESIDENT,

A WELL-ESTABLISHED NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR RADIATION SAFETY IS ESSENTIAL TO ENSURING THE PROTECTION OF PEOPLE AND

THE ENVIRONMENT FROM THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF IONISING RADIATION. IN THIS REGARD, ZAMBIA HAS MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS. THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF OUR INFRASTRUCTURE FOR RADIATION SAFETY, AS REFLECTED IN THE IAEA'S RADIATION SAFETY INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (RASIMS), INDICATES CONSIDERABLE IMPROVEMENT IN ALIGNMENT WITH THE AGENCY'S SAFETY STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS. NOTABLY, ZAMBIA HAS PROGRESSED IN ITS RASIMS RATING FROM 'RED' TO 'AMBER'. THIS ACHIEVEMENT UNDERSCORES MY GOVERNMENT'S STRONG COMMITMENT TO STRENGTHENING RADIATION SAFETY AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL.

MR. PRESIDENT,

IN THE QUEST TO ENHANCE RADIATION MONITORING COVERAGE, THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA, THROUGH THE RADIATION PROTECTION AUTHORITY AS THE NATIONAL REGULATORY BODY, HAS EMBARKED ON A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMME FOR MONITORING RADIOACTIVITY IN FOOD AND DRINKING WATER UNDER NON-EMERGENCY CONDITIONS, WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF SAFEGUARDING PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY.

THIS MONITORING PROGRAMME IS FULLY ALIGNED WITH REQUIREMENT 51 OF THE IAEA'S INTERNATIONAL BASIC SAFETY STANDARDS (GSR PART 3), THEREBY DEMONSTRATING ZAMBIA'S

COMMITMENT TO ENSURING THAT MEASURES FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC MEET INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTED STANDARDS.

IN CONCLUSION, I WISH TO REAFFIRM ZAMBIA'S CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO THE TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAMME AND TO THE AFRA FUND.

I THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!