



Republic of Botswana

**STATEMENT BY THE
HONOURABLE MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF
INFRASTRUCTURE, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

MR. NONOFO MOLEFHI

OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

**TO THE 59TH REGULAR SESSION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA)
GENERAL CONFERENCE IN VIENNA, AUSTRIA**

14-18, September 2015

- Mr. President;
- Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mr Yukiya Amano;
- Honourable Ministers, Your Excellencies, Heads of Missions and International Organizations
- Distinguished Delegates

1.0 It is an honour and privilege for me to address the 59th regular session of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conference on behalf of the Botswana delegation. Mr President, allow me to congratulate you on assuming the Presidency of this year's General Conference. I would like to assure you of Botswana's full cooperation in making it a success.

2.0 Mr. President,

I also wish to congratulate and welcome the countries of Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda as new members of the Agency and wish that this becomes the beginning of a rewarding strategic partnership. We are confident that they will make a positive contribution to the Agency and we assure you of our firm support. Let me

also use this opportunity to commend Director General Amano and his staff for their dedication, professionalism and excellent work.

3.0 Mr President,

My delegation has noted with a high degree of satisfaction the achievements attained by the Agency in the last year, particularly in the areas of Technical Co-operation, Nuclear Safety, Safeguards and Security despite the limited financial resources to meet the diverse challenges and expanding demands in the safe use of nuclear technology for development.

4.0 Mr. President,

Peaceful uses of nuclear energy go far beyond producing electricity. Safe water supplies, better crops, nuclear diagnostics and medicine, energy planning and pest control are just a few of the areas where the Agency provides assistance. Botswana supports the IAEA's Technical Cooperation programme and welcome other countries' experts to come to Botswana on scientific visits and fellowships. Botswana reiterates that the IAEA can make a positive contribution to the

efforts to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals in close partnership with other UN organisations.

Botswana is fully committed to the ideals and objectives of the Agency. It is for this reason that Botswana continues to honour her financial obligations to the Agency to allow for the successful implementation of the Agency mandate. I am happy to announce that Botswana has fully paid the annual contributions for the year 2015.

5.0 Mr. President,

Permit me to thank the IAEA for the Technical Co-operation Programmes and projects being implemented for the benefit of my country; and the warm and cordial relationship that exists between the IAEA and my country. However, Botswana like many other African Member States needs support and assistance for the acquisition, adoption, adaptation and use of appropriate nuclear technologies for socio-economic

development and contribute towards poverty alleviation amongst our people.

6.0 My country has noted with great appreciation the growing attention being given to cancer therapy in developing countries. The teaching hospital, where a radiotherapy centre will be established, has been completed and will be operational in earnest. This gives us hope that a sustainable, cost saving and convenient solution on cancer treatment is within reach. It is noted that there is a large deficit in equipment and expertise that exists in developing countries in relation to cancer management. This deficit, which prevents many patients from receiving appropriate radiotherapy treatment, is real in my country. My Country therefore welcomes parallel programmes for early cancer diagnosis, particularly in collaboration with the WHO and other UN organs.

7.0 Mr President,

We are also beneficiaries of the National and Regional Projects supported by the Agency. We are currently generating useful data and encouraging results in

Mutation breeding of indigenous crops, Improvement of milk and meat production, environmental Monitoring and nutritional interventions

The activities under these various projects resulted not only in acquisition of the appropriate techniques, but also have motivated the relevant institutions to commit themselves to addressing the challenges that affect the people of Botswana.

8.0 The objectives of the above-mentioned Technical Co-operation Programmes can only be achieved if the human resource skills and capabilities are upgraded and strengthened to their fullest capacity. The transfer of scientific and technical knowledge through fellowships, scientific visits and workshops is in this regard a very important mechanism essential for projects success.

9.0 Mr president

Botswana is also participating in the African Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training related to Nuclear Science and

Technology (AFRA). The immense benefits of the AFRA projects are also being realized in the fields of agriculture, human health, and food and Nutrition. It was therefore prudent that we accede to the 5th extension of AFRA of which we submitted the Instrument of Accession.

10.0 Mr President,

Botswana Government has recently submitted the instrument of accession to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. The joint convention will assist in ensuring that there is safe management of radioactive waste and disused sources. Plans are underway for the construction of a radioactive waste management and storage facility.

11.0 Mr. President,

Botswana remains committed to the implementation of relevant international instruments in relation to nuclear Safety, Security and Safeguards. We have recently ratified the Amendment to the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and encourage

other Member States to do so. There has been real momentum in recent years towards its entry into force, which is one of the most significant measures which the world could adopt to strengthen nuclear security.

12.0 Nuclear safety and nuclear security cannot be dealt with in isolation. This work must also involve non-proliferation and disarmament. Nuclear safety, security and non-proliferation are global concerns that must be dealt with in a coordinated manner in order to minimise the various inherent risks. This organisation is crucial to achieving the goals of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful, safe and secure uses of nuclear energy.

13.0 In this regard, I would like on behalf of my country to express our profound appreciation to the US government, The European Union and the IAEA for the assistance extended to Botswana and other countries in the region to address the threat of nuclear safety and security. The bilateral assistance rendered to Botswana by the Department of Energy (US)

through the Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI) for nuclear security upgrades in the facilities with significant radiation sources and nuclear waste management is highly appreciated.

14.0 Mr President,

My delegation would like to emphasize the importance of the Agency's Safeguards system and of continuing steps to reinforce it. I would like to encourage Member States to conclude Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and Additional Protocols, which enable thorough inspections and strengthen the system's capability for detecting undeclared nuclear material and activities. This will buttress safeguards regime and promote greater confidence among States in the peaceful use of nuclear material.

15.0 Mr. President,

In order to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the regulatory legislative framework and infrastructure, the Government of Botswana has requested for Integrated Regulatory Review Service

(IRRS) mission in 2017. The review mission shall enhance the effective independence of the Regulatory Body in ensuring that the Body fulfills its core mandate of ensuring the safe uses of nuclear technology in the country.

16.0 Mr. President,

In conclusion, I wish to express our sincere gratitude to the Agency for the continued support and assistance to ensure that Botswana benefits from the safe and peaceful uses of nuclear technology.

Thank you