

**STATEMENT OF THE GHANA DELEGATION TO THE  
44<sup>th</sup> REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE  
OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY,  
Vienna, Austria, 18<sup>th</sup> — 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2000**

Mr. President,

The Ghana Delegation has followed with increasing admiration the able and skilful manner in which you have so far steered the proceedings of this 44<sup>th</sup> Regular Session of the General Conference. With the assistance of the other members of the bureau, you have adequately justified the confidence, which distinguished delegations have reposed in you. My delegation, therefore, has great pleasure and satisfaction in joining other delegations to congratulate you and your bureau on your excellent performance, and confirms its full support and cooperation in the discharge of your delicate tasks.

We also extend our warm congratulations to the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Dr. Mohammed ElBaradei, for the able manner in which he has been steering the affairs of the Agency.

Mr. President,

The growing global concern about the need to channel the potential of nuclear energy exclusively to humanitarian uses underscores the indispensable role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in shaping a new world of peace, security and prosperity, free

from the threat of nuclear weapons. It is in this regard that the entry of Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and Central African Republic into the IAEA family to assist in the promotion of peaceful application of nuclear energy is most welcome. The world seems to be drifting towards a precarious situation which so acutely threatens the very survival of mankind that it is imperative for all states to subscribe to the objectives and commitments of the Agency to safeguard our common destiny. The afflictions of the deprived majority call for the judicious use of atomic energy and technology, including information and communications technology, for the advancement of the welfare of all peoples.

In a global village of accentuated interdependence and common destiny, the willful misuse of the much needed resources is out of step with the will and desire of the rest of the world and, as such, unacceptable. Human knowledge of atomic energy and technology therefore should be an asset, and not the bane, of humankind to the benefit of both the poor and the affluent.

Mr. President,

Ghana believes that human rights, good governance and democracy will remain mere concepts unless sustained efforts are made by all members of the international community to make them concrete instruments of peace and prosperity. These objectives could also be achieved through the elimination of weapons of mass destruction in order to enhance the global capacity for the promotion of peace, which is the obligation of both the powerful and

the weak, the rich and the poor. Ghana, therefore, supports the call upon all states to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and all treaties concluded to facilitate and accelerate the process of nuclear disarmament. It is only by universal adherence to the CTBT and NPT as well as full compliance with their provisions by all parties that the spread of nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices can be effectively prevented. In this connection, it is worrisome that despite the declared commitment of the Nuclear-Weapon States not to transfer nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, and the reaffirmed resolve of Non-Nuclear Weapon States not to receive any such transfers, the realities do not suggest that we are anywhere near the shared objective of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

It is therefore the desire of my delegation that the Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) as well as Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS) will be more fully committed to the objective of eventual complete nuclear disarmament in order to provide global peace and congenial environment for economic development and overall social progress. Universal application of all rules and regulations enshrined in the various conventions and treaties related to nuclear disarmament needs to be fairly and firmly enforced.

Ghana would like to reiterate her call for states in nuclear-weapon-free zones to be appropriately commended and encouraged for their bold decision to reject weapons of mass

destruction in preference for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We call upon the international community to support development projects that would utilize atomic energy for peaceful purposes in these zones in order to motivate other regions to bid farewell to nuclear arms.

Mr. President,

Ghana notes with satisfaction the sustained efforts of the International Atomic Energy Agency to encourage and assist its member states in utilizing atomic energy to enhance the quality of life of their peoples. It is in furtherance of this objective that the General Conference is urged to conclude the debate on the "Plan for Producing Potable Water Economically" in order to save precious lives, which are perishing for the acute lack of potable water. To continue to spend money on strengthening nuclear arsenals, while large sections of the human community do not have access to potable water is to undermine the worldwide campaign for human rights, for it is a basic right of every human being to have access to good drinking water in order to survive. Thus, by adopting a conclusive resolution on the Plan, which will make it feasible for sea water to be desalinated into potable water through nuclear energy, the Conference will not only be pursuing one of the commitments of the Agency, but also be promoting human rights in many communities of the world. The successful implementation of the Plan will be one of the most effective ways of bringing to the doorsteps of the ordinary people, one of the most important products of peaceful use of nuclear energy.

I hasten to state, in this regard, that within the framework of the excellent co-operation between the Agency and the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission, the Government of Ghana would support any joint project that would ultimately ensure constant supply of water, all the year round, for both domestic and agricultural purposes throughout the country.

Mr. President,

I can hardly conclude my statement without gratefully acknowledging the considerable assistance, which the Agency has continuously offered to the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission in its effort to use nuclear energy to improve the living conditions of Ghanaians. With the support and cooperation of the Agency, the Commission continues to explore the application of bio-technologies and related-nuclear technologies for increased agricultural output and overall socio-economic development of the country. Research achievements in this area include integrated control of tsetse flies in Northern Ghana, genetic analysis and classification of plantains and bananas, as well as field expeditions in 1999, which yielded 17 more accessions for experiments in the conservation and improvement of the African yam bean.

The National Nuclear Research Institute, under the aegis of the Commission, operates the National Radiotherapy Centre in Accra, the effectiveness and efficiency of which were enhanced by the arrival of three IAEA trained Ghana Oncologists early this year. The Nuclear

Medicine Unit of the Institute continues to handle thyroid, tuberculosis, tumour markers and prostate problems, while the Ghana Research Reactor provides facilities for multi-elemental analysis of industrial, geological and agricultural samples.

Our Radiation Protection Board also has become an important training Centre for African fellows, whilst our Biotechnology and Nuclear Research Institute is actively promoting plant tissue culture in the African region.

Mr. President,

This catalogue of remarkable achievements should not give the impression that Ghana Atomic Energy Commission is already firm on its own feet without any teething problems. Indeed, inadequate financial resources and the lack of appropriate equipment and other logistics continue to constrain the determination and efforts of the Commission to realize its full potential. However, the Government of Ghana remains resolved to co-operate fully with the Agency in support of the work of the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission to the benefit of Ghanaians and their neighbours in the West Africa sub-region. Ghana would therefore most gratefully welcome more technical assistance from the Agency and other member States. In the wider context, the IAEA can count on the support and co-operation of Ghana in the pursuit of our common objectives to promote the use of nuclear energy for prosperity, security and peace.

Finally, Mr. President, my delegation also very much appreciates the Agency's unflinching support to the Abdul Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), under the directorship of Dr. Maguel Virasoro. It is our hope that there will be more future support to consolidate the activities of the Centre to promote peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology in the developing countries.

I thank you, Mr. President, for your attention.