

Mr. President

Distinguished Director-General

Esteemed Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Namibia I extend to you, Mr. President the compliments of my delegation and assure you of our resolve to work with you. We have no doubt that your able stewardship will lead this General Conference to a successful conclusion.

I commend the Director-General, Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, for his comprehensive report and the Secretariat for the excellent preparations for this Conference and for the good quality of documents provided to the delegates.

Mr. President,

The Government of the Republic of Namibia is committed to the social well-being and economic upliftment of its citizens. This commitment is articulated in Namibia's Vision 2030, the Second National Development

Plan (NDP II) and the Country Programme Framework (CPF). The cumulative objectives of the above mentioned national plans are to reduce poverty, provide quality health care services and empower our people economically by creating, promoting and sustaining a conducive environment for the realization of targets as outlined in these documents. In this regard, the Agency has been and is a reliable partner that complements our national efforts through the peaceful applications of nuclear techniques in Namibia.

Within the above context, my delegation feels compelled to mention some areas that are positively impacting on our development efforts for the benefit of our people. I believe that we should emphasize the role of nuclear techniques in our societies so that our peoples can appreciate the benefits they can derive from the peaceful use of nuclear applications and therefore change the negative perceptions among certain sections of the global community with regard to nuclear energy.

In addition to the invaluable AFRA Regional Projects and Inter-regional Projects from which Namibia benefits greatly, I would like to highlight the

following national projects of technical collaboration with the Agency and the positive impact these have in Namibia.

1. *Control of Animal Diseases*

Livestock farmers in the northern parts of Namibia, where 60% of the population lives, do not have access to the international meat export market as a result of animal diseases in this region. There are currently national efforts to effectively diagnose and eradicate animal diseases in the affected areas. This would open the international meat export market to farmers in this region and therefore economically empower them. Since farming accounts for 28% of income for Namibians, the role of the Agency in expanding the diagnostic capacity of the Central Veterinary Laboratory for control of animal diseases in Northern Namibia and the provision of Veterinary Health Services is most welcomed and appreciated.

2. *Water Resources Management*

Namibia is characterized as one of the most arid countries in Sub-Saharan Africa with a climate prone to seasonal bouts of droughts. It is thus very important that we explore other means of supplementing our water resources because water is an important source for socio-economic development. Hence, the Agency's immense contribution in assisting Namibia with technology transfer that would enable us to better exploit the underground water, recharge and flow mechanism of Namibia's aquifers is most appreciated. Comprehensive insight in the underground water resources will indeed significantly complement my Government's efforts in managing its underground water resources for the provision of clean and safe water to its citizens.

I am also pleased to note that the Agency is actively involved in seawater desalination activities that would enhance the understanding of the technical and economic feasibility of using nuclear power to produce clean, potable water. We will, in future,

consider the merits and viability of this technology for Namibia. According to the 2001 Population and Housing Census, 13% of the population does not have access to safe drinking water. My delegation is hopeful that our collaboration with the Agency in water resource management will reduce this deficit significantly.

3. *Human Resource Development*

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. We are therefore grateful to the Agency for its support through the National Technical Co-operation Project on Human Resource Development and Nuclear Technology Support. Assistance through this project is indeed a very positive development for Namibia that will strengthen the capacity and impact of the

Technical Co-operation Projects currently ongoing and those that are foreseen to come into effect in future.

We are exploring new areas of collaboration with the Agency to reduce and eradicate Armoured Bush Cricket and Fruit Flies that negatively affect crops that are most important for the Namibian subsistence farmers. I am confident that given the merit of our project proposals the Agency will provide us with the available technologies and resources.

Like in many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, malaria places a major burden on our societies and economies, representing a significant percentage of mortality of our people. This is particularly devastating to our population in the northern parts of the country. We would like to see re-doubling of efforts to ease this burden and therefore call for increased resources and intensified research into issues of malaria control by the Agency.

We also appreciate the success of Sterile Insect Techniques in alleviating the persistent problem of Tsetse infestation in some parts of Africa. The northeastern parts of Namibia also suffer a great deal as a result of

diseases transmitted by tsetse flies. I would therefore request the Agency to expand its campaign beyond its current focus to achieve Tsetse free zones on the Continent of Africa.

The above Technical Co-operation Projects' success would very much depend on the financial resources, including committed input from the Agency and my Government. In that regard, I assure you of our commitment and call for the Agency's commitment to our joint ventures. As I pointed out last year, I would like to re-iterate Namibia's position with regard to the Technical Co-operation Fund. We would like to see Technical Co-operation Funding increased sufficiently without diversion of financial resources to other projects within the Agency's mandate. We maintain this position for we regard the Technical Co-operation Fund as an important source that contributes significantly to sustainable development in developing countries. My delegation fully supports the draft Resolution on Strengthening of the Agency Technical Co-operation Operations activities as proposed by the Group of 77 and China. I therefore urge the donor community to support funding towards Technical Co-operation Projects. On our part, we will continue to

honour our financial obligation towards the Agency and call on the rest of the Member States to do likewise.

Implementation of Technical Co-operation Projects also calls on us to guard against complacency and not to overlook the importance of radiation, nuclear waste and transport safety. We should strive towards fully exploiting the benefits of nuclear technology while ensuring that no detrimental effects are caused as a result of our activities. Within this context I wish to highlight the Model Project on Strengthening the Radiation Protection Infrastructure in Member States. We have taken note that this project may not go on indefinitely and a distinct time frame is in sight to complete its activities in due course. The Model Project approach offers a very effective mechanism of addressing the Member States' common needs in meeting the principal requirements of the International Basic Safety Standards (IBSS). Namibia is witness to the significant impact the Model Project has had on its radiation protection infrastructure. This impact cannot be over emphasized and we call for the Agency's renewed commitment to the Model Project to enable Member States to attain the Milestones of this project. In the same

context, Namibia welcomes the addition of 30 Member States to this Model Project.

Namibia attaches great importance to security of nuclear and radioactive material. We have stringent administrative controls in place to effectively control trafficking in radioactive sources and nuclear material. These measures will be strengthened in due course by the enactment of new legislation. The Atomic Energy and Radiation Protection Authority Bill is at an advanced stage.

Namibia is one of the largest uranium mining countries in the world. Hence, it makes it important for us to ensure safeguards against illicit trafficking in nuclear material. There was an attempt to traffic illicitly in Uranium Oxide. The culprits were immediately arrested and the law will take its full course. Namibia, being party to the Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol to the Safeguards Agreement, would like to expedite its obligations under these agreements as soon as possible. In this context, the Model Protocol Additional to the Safeguards Agreement shall enter into force as soon as statutory requirements are met with the enactment of the pending bill mentioned earlier. In addition, technical

arrangements are underway to ensure that our safeguards obligations are met by setting up a National System for Nuclear Materials Accounting and Control that would support the legislative initiatives.

Mr. President, last year we noted and commended the formation of Advisory Committee on Nuclear Security (AdSec) to advise the Director-General on issues of nuclear security. In this regard, my delegation would appreciate that Member States are kept informed on a regular basis on the developments and activities of Advisory Committee on Nuclear Security (AdSec).

Lastly, Mr. President my delegation wishes to express it's concern on the under representation of developing countries in the Agency's secretariat. We call for deliberate efforts by the Agency to recruit staff members from developing countries as well as to increase women representation, especially from countries under or unrepresented.

I thank you, Mr. President