

Statement

By

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Republic of Ethiopia

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Madam President,

Mr. Director General Dr. Muhammed El Baradei,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and my Delegation, I would like to join the previous speakers in congratulating you, the president, upon your unanimous election to the presidency of the 53<sup>rd</sup> Regular Session of the General Conference. We are more than confident that the conference will conclude successfully under your competent leadership. I would also like to congratulate all those elected to the Bureau to steer the Conference to a fruitful completion.

Madam President,

My delegation would also like to join others who spoke before me to congratulate the outgoing Director General, Dr. Mohamed El Baradei for successfully leading the Agency in his three-terms of office. His success towards achieving the 'atoms for peace' motto of the Agency is permanently embodied in the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize trophy that he won jointly with the Agency honoring all the Member states. I wish you a happy and joyous life hereafter.

The Ethiopian delegation wishes to take this opportunity to warmly welcome the States of Cambodia and Rwanda to the family member of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Our warmest congratulation also goes to Ambassador Yukiya Amano for his appointment as the incoming Director General of the IAEA. My delegation believes that Mr. Amano's rich diplomatic experience and his deep

knowledge in the area of peaceful and safe application of nuclear energy will greatly contribute towards enhancing the capability of the agency to discharge its responsibilities in professional, impartial, efficient and effective manner. It is my utmost pleasure to reconfirm that my country will continue to fully cooperate and support the efforts of the Director General towards achieving the noble 'atoms for peace' objective of the Agency through promoting and ensuring peaceful and safe applications of nuclear energy.

Madam President,

I have the honor to inform you that my government is undertaking far reaching reforms in public organizations. The reforms are aimed primarily at creating effective and transparent institutions that can better execute policies, strategies and action plans of a developmental state. While doing this, good governance and citizens' rights to accessing services are also ensured. We have defined the critical items needed in any developmental state; such as infrastructural gaps, fundamental political-economy transformation, Science and Technology capacity building etc.

It is with this line that we have established the Ministry of Science and Technology in order to take up the right leadership for the growth of the sector. Madam President, at this juncture on behalf of my new ministry, I also like to reaffirm our commitment to work with IAEA.

Madam President,

My country has been engaged in a number of national and regional projects that apply nuclear techniques to address various socio-economic development problems in the areas of agriculture, human health, water resources development, non-destructive testing, energy planning, nuclear instrumentation and radiation

protection. It is a pleasure for me to mention that not only the number of active national projects increased from year to year, but also the content and depth of the projects are changing; thanks to the continued support of the IAEA in the area of technical cooperation.

Our biggest and high priority technical cooperation project is the Southern Ethiopia Tsetse Eradication Project (STEP). This project aims at eradicating tsetse fly from 25,000 square kilometers land in the Southern Rift Valley of Ethiopia using the Sterile Insect Technique (SIT) as part of an area wide integrated pest management. The success of this project to a large extent depends on a wide community participation and strong technical support from the Agency. This project has been given top priority in our technical cooperation with the Agency because of the fact that over 240,000 square kilometers of fertile agricultural land in the Western part of Ethiopia is infested by five different species of tsetse fly that transmit Trypanosomiasis. Trypanosomiasis is a devastating disease which severely affects human beings and domestic animals.

Madam President,

The project includes three major components: namely, suppression of the existing fly population, establishment of centrally operated sterile insect production plant and actual field operation of fly population control and eradication using the SIT technology. The suppression activities have already reduced the prevalence of the Trypanosomiasis disease of the livestock in the treated area.

I would like to indicate that the Tsetse Fly Eradication Model Project is moving towards achieving its objectives gradually, and it has now reached at a decisive stage for which cooperation and assistance of all our partners is more crucial than ever. The project requires additional equipment and materials to intensify tsetse population suppression activities to be followed by SIT application.

Madam President,

I understand that the performance of this project did not match with the will of the government; it is delayed and not looked after as should be. The organizational set-up has also contributed to this weak performance. To reverse this trend, we have already planned to undertake strong measures; suppression of the fly on the entire pilot project area while serious capacity building of the SIT lab is undertaken, this is to be followed by the application of SIT to eradicate the fly. The Project has to be also restructured so that it has stronger capacity and mandate. Finally, the new organizational arrangement will be scaled up to country wide.

On Behalf of my government, I would like to take this opportunity to extend our deepest gratitude to the IAEA, to friendly countries and international organizations that have supported our efforts to make this model project a success story in the African Continent.

Madam President,

The Technical co-operation activities we had with the Agency in the areas of human health and water resources management have also enabled us to build a modest national infrastructure for the application of nuclear medicine, radiotherapy and isotope hydrology. I would, however, like to underline that we have still a single radiotherapy center with a single cobalt machine to serve more than 75 million people. Preliminary assessment data indicate that only about 400 cancer patients are annually treated by radiotherapy despite an estimated 115,000 new cancer cases per annum. I think this clearly shows the inadequacy of the services. To narrow the wide gap between the increasing demand and the very limited supply of radiotherapy services, we, in collaboration with the IAEA, have developed an action plan to expand radiotherapy and nuclear medicine services to five University Hospitals located in different parts of the country. My government is therefore making the necessary preparation to engage in the process of mobilizing resources from local, bilateral and multilateral sources. I would

therefore like to urge the IAEA and the Member States to augment their technical and financial support to our endeavors to save thousands of lives annually, through strengthening and expanding the radiotherapy services in the country.

Madam President,

Our technical cooperation with the Agency to apply isotope techniques in developing groundwater resources has resulted in building basic capacity to generate useful isotopic data. What has been achieved so far is:- establishment of an isotope hydrology laboratory at the Addis Ababa University, establishment of a national groundwater database system as well as training of personnel. I would like to inform that memorandum of understanding between counterpart institutions have been signed. Moreover, a high level steering and technical committees are established to follow up its proper function. On the otherhand, mutation breeding, energy planning, non destructive testing and molecular detection of drug resistant malaria are at varying degree of implementation.

Madam President,

In summing up TC with IAEA, though the programs are important, there is clear gap in the implementation. This gap is basically in the leadership and ownership of different projects. I am thus convinced to evaluate and rectify the problems and reset the projects with the right leadership.

Madam President,

As one of the founding members of the Agency, I would like to reaffirm my country's commitment to the peaceful application of nuclear technologies by

respecting global, regional and national peace, security and safety. We would, therefore, like to urge all member states of the IAEA to adhere to the vision of a globe without any nuclear threat. The ultimate mission of the Agency and its member states is to create a nuclear weapon free world through implementation of all the relevant international guiding principles and treaties including the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban-Treaty (CTBT) and the regional nuclear free zone treaties including the Pelindaba Treaty. My delegation is convinced that the recent entry into force of the Pelindaba Treaty is a clear reflection of the commitment of the African States for more transparency and cooperation among themselves. We, therefore, call up on all African Member States to keep this momentum through ratification of the Pelindaba Treaty for its universal application. On the other hand, we support a safe and secure nuclear energy development since it is reliable and clean. Our world is currently suffering from global warming, to which Africa has contributed nothing. For the first time, Africa is going to the forthcoming Copenhagen conference on global climate as a negotiator. We are proud and thankful for the election of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia, a committed environmental advocate, to lead African Group to Copenhagen meeting. May be a safe and secure nuclear energy is a solution or part of a solution to global warming.

Finally, my delegation wishes to thank all officials and staff members of the IAEA for their dedication and hard work to make the cooperation between the Agency and Ethiopia more relevant.

Thank you very much for your attention.