



NIGERIA'S COUNTRY STATEMENT

DELIVERED BY

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TO

**THE SIXTIETH REGULAR SESSION OF
THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL
ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA) AT VIENNA, AUSTRIA
SEPTEMBER 26, 2016**

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Government and good people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, my delegation congratulates you on your election as the President of the 60th Session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We assure you of our full support and commitment.

2. My delegation appreciates and thanks the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban ki Moon for his message of solidarity to this Conference. We wish to commend the United Nations for its continued role and intervention in seeking solutions to the many perennial global crises and challenges. We also congratulate the newly admitted Member States of Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the Islamic Republic of Gambia and encourage them to take full advantage of the benefits membership of the Agency confers on them in the area of peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

3. My delegation would like to acknowledge the balanced reporting on the activities of the IAEA in the past year and its focus for the coming year and wishes to commend the Director General, Mr. Yukiya Amano for his statement. We appreciate his commitment in paying priority attention to enhanced access of the global community to safe and secure application of nuclear technology for societal development, particularly, in assisting Member States to effectively deploy nuclear power for electricity generation to meet their ever increasing energy needs, as well as evolving appropriate mechanisms and developing innovative methods for improving human health.

Mr. President,

4. Please, permit me to join other speakers to congratulate the IAEA and all its Member States on its sixtieth anniversary. This is quite an important milestone, and we urge all Member States to remain committed to the tenets of the Agency, and work towards the deepening of the peaceful applications of nuclear technology as enshrined in its pillars.

Mr. President,

5. My delegation acknowledges the "*essential responsibility and the central role*" of the International Atomic Energy Agency in strengthening the global nuclear security architecture and in developing international

guidance, and its leading role in facilitating and coordinating nuclear security activities among international organizations and initiatives and supporting the efforts of States to fulfil their nuclear security responsibilities”, as affirmed in the Communiqué of the Fourth Nuclear Security Summit, held in Washington DC in March 2016. Furthermore, in line with Nigeria’s declaration at the Summit, I would like to underscore Nigeria’s commitment to the planned activities of the Nuclear Security Contact Group. Nigeria welcomes the efforts of the Agency to pursue the goal and priority for 2015–2016 set out in the Nuclear Security Report 2015 which heralded the coming into force of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM). We are hopeful that the gains of the amendment entering into force alongside the expected outcomes of the Ministerial Meeting on Nuclear Security scheduled for December 2016 would further strengthen the Nuclear Security framework internationally as well as in individual Member States.

6. Nevertheless, while we acknowledge the efforts made by the Agency to deepen the nuclear security framework, we uphold the view that measures to strengthen nuclear security should neither hamper international cooperation in the area of peaceful activities nor undermine the established priorities of the IAEA technical cooperation programme. This is in light of the fact that African countries and other parts of the developing world require nuclear technology to fast track their developmental objectives. As such, at all times, the Agency’s measures to promote Nuclear Security or any other objective should further and not hamper this developmental aspirations of such countries.

7. On its own, Nigeria has validated and finalized its Draft Regulations on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials and Nuclear Facilities to fulfil the objects of the amended CPPNM. Consequently, Nigeria also calls for all Member States to constructively work together to detect and prevent access to nuclear materials and facilities by non-state actors, unauthorized groups and individuals.

8. As a further affirmation of our commitment, Nigeria, under the auspices of the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), has finalized the institutional and technical framework for the establishment of a National Nuclear Security Centre (NNSC) in Abuja.

The newly established NNSC, currently under construction at the Nuclear Technology Centre in Sheda-Abuja, will soon become fully operational, and will provide the pertinent architecture to support and facilitate the development of sustainable human resources, as well as provision of the technical systems for the sustenance of an effective and robust national nuclear security. It is also strategically positioned to adequately support both national and regional initiatives.

Mr. President

9. Nigeria would also like to express appreciation for the approval granted by the Agency for the establishment of a Regional Nuclear Security School for Africa, to be hosted in Abuja, Nigeria. The School which will takeoff in 2017, would further strengthen the foundation for education and training in nuclear security matters in the region, and contribute to the enhancement of the capacity of a large number of Member States to effectively deploy nuclear technology in various areas of application for their respective national socioeconomic development.

Mr. President,

10. The theme of the Scientific Forum at this year's Conference, "*Nuclear Technology for the Sustainable Development Goals*", is quite apt and of particular interest to my delegation. The focus of its primary objective on how the application of nuclear technology in various aspects of human endeavour could contribute towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by Member States, is in tandem with our national policy framework to effectively utilize nuclear technology. Thus, this year's scientific forum, we believe, will also offer Member States an opportunity to further appraise and discuss the central role nuclear technology can play in helping them to attain their respective socioeconomic developmental aspirations.

Mr. President,

11. Nigeria appreciates the importance of Nuclear Safety and encourages all Member States engaged in the use of Nuclear Technology, to place premium on their responsibilities in ensuring safety in their activities. In this regard, Nigeria welcomes all activities and efforts by the Agency to promote Nuclear Safety amongst Member

States and notes the on-going preparations for the 7th Review Meeting of the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS) and welcomes the Agency's call on Member States yet to become contracting parties to the CNS to do so. We also welcome the preparation of the Generic Safety Observations Report by the Secretariat for the Organizational Meeting for the Seventh Review Meeting, held in Vienna in October 2015. The report summarizes the major global trends and issues in nuclear safety, based on information gained from various Agency safety review activities, including on the Fukushima Daiichi accident. We believe the report is a valuable document that could offer practical guide and experiences in various areas to Member States.

Mr. President,

12. Nigeria appreciates the Agency's continued effort in supporting Member States to implement pertinent projects aimed at establishing national nuclear safety infrastructure, as well as strengthening critical national capacity for the effective management of nuclear safety through enhancing their governmental, legal and regulatory frameworks and infrastructure. We acknowledge the utility of this effort and encourage the Agency to remain steadfast with a view to ensuring that the countries with the greatest need continue to receive support from the Agency as much as possible, particularly, through the framework of the relevant Agency review missions.

13. In this regard, my delegation would like to inform with appreciation that, Nigeria has been a beneficiary and has taken the needed actions, as well as the activation of the requisite processes to implement the recommendations of both the Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review (INIR) and Emergency Preparedness Review (EPREV) Missions conducted by the Agency in the country in 2015. This entailed building synergy and the enthronelement of a robust framework for cooperation and partnership between the relevant national stakeholders and the regulatory institutions to strengthen the national nuclear/radiological safety architecture and pertinent infrastructure.

14. Consequently, significant progress has been made in strengthening the interface for cooperation and collaboration amongst the key national institutions. These include the Nigeria Atomic Energy Commission (NAEC) (promotional agency), the Nigerian Nuclear Regulatory Authority (NNRA) (nuclear regulator) and the Nigerian Environmental Standards

Regulation and Enforcement Agency (NESREA) (environmental regulator), as well as the Federal Ministry of Environment (FMEnv) and the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). The processes involve the development of appropriate regulations and mechanisms, to ensure compliance with, and implementation of the relevant safety requirements in the sector, and strengthening our national response capabilities and preparedness for the management of nuclear/radiological emergencies.

Mr. President,

15. Nigeria appreciates the value of its partnership with the Agency through the Technical Cooperation programme to effectively and optimally deploy nuclear science and technology for its national socioeconomic development. We continue to commend the Agency for its assistance, and wish to re-echo the overarching need for the Agency to fine-tune the framework for partnership with Member States, particularly the developing ones, by intensifying its efforts in the development of appropriate national tools for education and training, and in nuclear knowledge management, to enhance the capacities of Member States to effectively plan and implement their respective, home-grown nuclear technology programmes.

Mr. President,

16. It is in furtherance of this objective that in the design and implementation of national TC projects in line with our Country Programme Framework (CPF), Nigeria has collaborated with the agency in major areas of priorities, to build national capacity through education and training and emplacement of pertinent national nuclear technology infrastructure, to support sustainable programme implementation. This has informed our national strategy in the conception, design, implementation, coordination and effective management of large national TC projects in the various sectors, imbued with mechanisms for sustainability.

17. Some of the specific activities include projects to build facilities and national capacity by strengthening national health institutions to develop training programmes for growing the critical manpower in the sector within the country. In this regard, a number of national institutions are being assisted to develop postgraduate and clinical residency programmes to educate and train professionals in nuclear

medicine, radiation oncology and medical physics for the implementation of the national programme for the prevention, control and management of cancer.

18. Another main area for which the Agency has provided valuable assistance to Nigeria is in developing our national capacity to plan and implement streamlined activities in building pertinent national infrastructure for introducing nuclear power. Nigeria acknowledges the support the Agency has provided to us in our national effort to train and build a competent and experienced human resource base for the successful and sustainable implementation of the programme. In this sector too, Nigeria, through its atomic energy commission, has partnered with the IAEA to develop and implement undergraduate, professional and postgraduate programmes in nuclear science and engineering in collaboration with some selected educational institutions.

19. In furtherance of our partnership with the IAEA and commitment to transparency and the desire to subject our programme implementation to external scrutiny, Nigeria successfully hosted two important review missions from the IAEA in June 2015; the Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review (INIR) Mission for phase 2 and the Emergency Preparedness Review (EPREV) Mission.

20. As part of the national effort to implement the respective report recommendations in partnership with the Agency, Nigeria has developed and is currently implementing an "Integrated Work Plan (IWP)", a mutually agreed working document which describes the Agency's planned nuclear infrastructure support activities to address all the relevant INIR-2 and EPREV recommendations within a specified timeframe. In addition, Nigeria fully understands that as a newcomer country, it will require the continuous support of the Agency, the goodwill of the international community and collaboration with other well-meaning development partners.

Mr. President,

21. My delegation appreciates the significance of the modernization work being undertaken by the Agency towards the Renovation of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories (ReNuAL) at Seibersdorf. This renovation, no doubt, will position the eight laboratories of the Department of Nuclear Sciences and Applications (NA) to meet the growing and evolving needs of Member States, particularly in the early

detection and management of zoonotic diseases such as Ebola Virus Disease and the Zika Virus, amongst others. We commend the dexterity displayed in the management of the projects through effective prioritisation of procurements. Nigeria also commends the Member States that have contributed towards reaching the funding target, particularly the Friends of ReNuAL chaired by South Africa and Germany who created a sound technical and financial basis for the construction of the new buildings and infrastructure.

Mr. President,

22. While we continue to applaud the good works of the Agency in stimulating socioeconomic development in Member States through proper application of nuclear technology, we must take cognizance of the fact that the benefits of the application of nuclear science and technology can only be effectively and optimally realized in a world community that is at peace with itself. It is in this connection that Nigeria would like to acknowledge the success of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) signed on July 14, 2015 in resolving the safeguard issues in respect of the Islamic Republic of Iran. This remains an affirmation of the effectiveness the Agency's commitment to partnering with Member States, through technology and effective diplomacy, for the gainful and peaceful use of nuclear energy while putting adequate structures in place to prevent non-peaceful applications. We urge the Agency to continue to thread this path of diplomacy in dousing the flares from other global nuclear 'hotspots'.

23. In the same vein, my delegation would like to reiterate and underscore the cardinal point that, like many other peace loving Member States of the Agency, Nigeria wishes to express its deep concern over the slow pace of global commitment towards a world free of nuclear weapons. Just as the global community, through the respective declarations of the various nuclear security summits at the level of Heads of Governments, has repeatedly affirmed the essential responsibility and the central role of the IAEA in strengthening the global nuclear security architecture, we must in our various actions, redouble our efforts to reinforce the key role of the IAEA and its commitment to also "work for a world free of all nuclear weapons".

24. Consequently, my delegation would like to reiterate our national position as a committed signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation

Treaty (NPT) and the African Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Treaty, also known as the Treaty of Pelindaba, to urge Member States to rededicate themselves to the positive consideration for the establishment of "Nuclear Weapons Free Zones" in all regions of the world. It is not an easy task and may take time, but with conviction, persistence and the collective commitment of all Member States, it is achievable.

25. In concluding, Mr. President, I would like to commend the continued commitment of the Agency and the pivotal role it is playing in leading the global efforts to efficiently harness cutting-edge research and innovation for the effective application of nuclear science and technology for societal development, while affirming its resolve to entrench and strengthen a global framework for the entrenchment of and adherence to nuclear safety and security.

26. I thank you, Mr. President.