



Republic of Botswana

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION,
RESEARCH, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

HONORABLE MR NGAKA NGAKA

OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

TO THE 62ND REGULAR SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL
ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA) GENERAL CONFERENCE IN
VIENNA, AUSTRIA

17-21, September 2018

- Madam President;
- Acting Director General, International Atomic Energy Agency
- Honorable Ministers, Your Excellencies, Heads of Missions and International Organizations
- Distinguished Delegates

1. It is a great pleasure for me to address the 62nd regular session of the International Atomic Energy Agency General Conference on behalf of the Botswana delegation.

2. Madam President, let me start by congratulating you on your election as the President of the 62nd Regular Session of the International Atomic Energy Agency General Conference. We are very confident that with your guidance, the agenda of this Conference will be achieved. I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation in the proceedings of this Conference to make it a success.

3. Allow me, Madam President, to extend our appreciation for the excellent work done by the Director General, Mr Yukiya Amano and his team. We wish him improved health and his

soon return to Vienna. The achievements attained by the Agency over the last year, particularly in the areas of Technical Co-operation, Nuclear Safety, Safeguards and Security are highly commendable.

4. Madam President, we were very delighted by the Director General's visit to Botswana in January 2018. This gave us an opportunity to enhance our familiarity with IAEA work in areas of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, nuclear safety and nuclear security. The Director General had an opportunity to meet His Excellency the President. His Excellency the President expressed his appreciation for the support received from the Agency, and highlighted areas of possible cooperation. The Director General also appreciated the impact made by the contribution of the Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme for development in Botswana. Leveraging on the use of nuclear technology for development has yielded several successes in the agricultural sector, radiation safety and human nutrition in Botswana. We still remain relentless in our endeavor to establish the much needed Radiotherapy centre, and we will continue to enlist the Agency's support in human capacity building for the running of the facility.

5. The third Botswana Country Programme Framework(CPF) for the period 2018-2022 was signed during the Director General's visit. The priority areas under the CPF include food

and agriculture, human health, human nutrition, radiation safety and security, water resources management and energy planning. There are currently seven active projects under the Technical Cooperation Programme and preparation for the new projects for the 2020/ 21 cycle is ongoing.

6. Madam President, Botswana continues to strengthen its national regulatory framework for nuclear and radiation safety, and received the Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission in October 2017. We accept the findings of the mission which indicate that Botswana has made significant progress over the years in this area. We however take note that certain areas still need improvement and we remain committed to addressing those deficiencies.
7. Madam President, Botswana recognizes the importance of financial contributions by member states to the effective implementation of the Agency's mandate. We therefore continue to honour our financial obligations to the Agency. I am happy to confirm that Botswana has fully paid the annual contributions for the year 2018. We bear testimony to the impact made by the Technical Cooperation Programme of which its success is dependent on contributions towards the Technical Cooperation Fund(TCF) by member states. We therefore encourage member states to voluntarily contribute

to the TCF to ensure sustainability of the programme. We are aware of the financial limitations of the IAEA in implementing the programme and we will continue to share the costs when opportunities arise.

8. Madam President, we find this year's scientific forum on "Nuclear Technology for Climate: Mitigation, Monitoring and Adaptation" very relevant to Botswana as our country is prone to droughts which often affect food security and water availability. We will need assistance on water resources management to leverage on the use of nuclear technology in this area.

9. To enhance nuclear security, Botswana has concluded its national threat assessment and has determined its threat level. Priority areas were identified to improve and enhance nuclear security posture. These priority areas will be addressed within a comprehensive framework of a Nuclear Security Detection strategy. This therefore calls for the strengthening of capabilities in nuclear security, with emphasis on prevention, detection and response. My Government has made a commitment through the National Development Plan 11 to install radiation portal monitors at strategic locations in order to curb illicit trafficking of nuclear

and radioactive materials. The project is at an advanced stage and a team of IAEA experts is assisting in the implementation of this project.

10. Madam President, The Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan(INSSP) for Botswana was last reviewed and updated in 2016 and the action plan comes to an end in December 2018. We have requested an expert mission in 2019 to review and update the plan and to come up with a new action plan to address emerging issues.

11. Botswana continues to benefit from regional and interregional programmes to build capacity in different sectors where nuclear applications are utilized. In support of these programmes we have hosted meetings, training courses and fellowships. The country commits to paying its annual contributions to the African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (AFRA) fund to ensure sustainability and ownership of the programme. We encourage those member states who have not acceded to the fifth extension to do so for maximum benefits.

12. Madam President, let me conclude by expressing our sincere appreciation for the partnership, and support we continue to receive from the Agency. We reiterate our assurance in working with the Agency to ensure that indeed the Atoms are used for peace and development.

Thank you.