

STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF THE PAKISTAN
DELEGATION

IAEA MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON NUCLEAR SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY: ADDRESSING CURRENT AND EMERGING
DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

(28-30 NOVEMBER, 2018)

Mr. Chair,

It was sixty years ago that Pakistan realized the enormous potential of nuclear science & technology for sustainable socio-economic development. Our first small step towards actualizing this potential was the establishment of a nuclear medical centre in 1962. From these humble beginnings and in close collaboration with the International Atomic Energy Agency, Pakistan has gone on to harness nuclear science and technology in areas as diverse as food production, cash crops, animal husbandry, electricity generation, industry, research & development, water resources management and environmental protection. Going forward, we envisage an ever-growing potential of nuclear technologies to contribute to our socio-economic development, including the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in accordance with our national priorities.

Mr. Chair,

In Pakistan nuclear power is contributing about 7-8% in electricity generation at competitive rates and in a reliable manner, while also helping control emissions of particulates, acidic precursors and greenhouse gases. Development of nuclear power has also resulted in the requirement and promotion of basic sciences like Physics, Mathematics and Chemistry in the country. Besides nuclear power, nuclear technology is improving the quality of the life at the national level. Across the country, 18 radiation oncology hospitals are providing vital

diagnostic services and treatment to cancer patients. We have plans to further expand these services by setting up more nuclear medical centers. The radiopharmaceuticals required by these and other private hospitals are being produced locally by our research reactors.

We have established four agriculture and biotechnology centers which are making valuable contribution to the agriculture and livestock sectors. Over 100 varieties of high-yield and disease-resistance crops have been developed by these research centers. Sterile insect techniques and integrated pest management services are also developed by these centers and provided to farmers.

Mr. Chair,

All of this has been made possible through our extensive and mutually beneficial cooperation with the IAEA. We hope that the present Conference will not only raise awareness about the benefits to be derived from nuclear science and technology but also lead to the strengthening of the IAEA's role in delivering these benefits to the Member States through a robust Technical Cooperation Programme with sufficient, assured and predictable resources.

Mr. Chair,

The IAEA's mandate to "accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world" is enshrined in its Statute. The Statute takes primacy over any other instrument in terms of guaranteeing free and non-discriminatory access to nuclear technology for all countries under appropriate safeguards.

Mr. Chair,

Though a smaller emitter of greenhouse gases, Pakistan is among countries most adversely affected by climate change. Being a predominantly agricultural economy, effects of climate change in terms

of increased risk of floods and droughts will further compound our challenges in the coming years. The expected increase in cyclonic activity in the Arabian Sea is also a serious concern for Pakistan. Nuclear technology can be of immense value to better cope with and mitigate the depredations of climate change. By relying on nuclear technologies, we can not only reduce the emission of greenhouse gases but also better conserve and manage our natural resources including soil and water. We believe that these areas deserve to be made a priority in the Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme.

Pakistan is signatory to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Our nuclear power vision 2050, envisaging more than 40,000 MW nuclear power capacity, will contribute to the global efforts on mitigation of greenhouse emissions. World community should cooperate with Pakistan to achieve this target through access to latest technologies under appropriate safeguards.

Mr. Chair,

The challenges of the future cannot be addressed without the appropriately trained manpower. Therefore, human resource development through IAEA-Pakistan Technical Cooperation has been central to all our achievements at the national level. Pakistan Institute of Engineering & Applied Sciences (PIEAS), the leading engineering university of Pakistan, is also providing higher education in Nuclear Medicine and Radiation Physics. It will soon be in a position to offer certified medical practitioners degree with two years MS and two years medical physics residency programme in a hospital. National Centre for Non Destructive Testing is also contributing in human resource development as a regional collaborating centre of the IAEA.

Mr. Chair,

The importance of appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks cannot be overemphasized for the use and further expansion of nuclear

technologies in a safe, secure and sustainable manner. With more than four decades worth of experience in utilizing nuclear technologies for peaceful purposes, Pakistan stands ready to share its expertise with other embarking countries through the IAEA's platform in harnessing nuclear technologies for their socio-economic development.

Thank you.