

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



NATIONAL STATEMENT
BY DR KALUMBI SHANGULA,
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ON THE OCCASION OF THE
64TH IAEA GENERAL CONFERENCE
21 TO 25 SEPTEMBER 2020.

Mr President,

I would like to join other delegations in congratulating you on your assumption of the presidency of the 64th Session of the General Conference. Please be assured of Namibia's full cooperation and support. I would also like to congratulate the Republic of Guinea and Samoa on their assumption of membership of the IAEA.

Mr President,

This session is held under extraordinary and unprecedented circumstances where the whole world is grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic. We express solidarity with all Member States affected and condole them for the loss of lives due to the COVID 19 pandemic. We already experience that the pandemic has far-reaching and long-lasting socio-economic impacts, resulting in the loss of livelihoods and income, and subsequent effect on people's physical and mental health. Therefore, to successfully tackle this global emergency and employing effective response measures, the international community needs to join hands and establish strong partnerships to enhance existing global cooperation. We extend our deep appreciation to the Director General's initiative to assist Member States in their efforts to fight the spread of corona virus by providing the relevant nuclear derived techniques and equipment. We equally thank Member States who provided funding for this initiative.

Namibia commends the dedication shown by the Director General and the Secretariat in keeping the Agency operational and ensuring that its fundamental activities in the area of Technical Cooperation, Nuclear and Radiation safety, Nuclear Security and Verification and Safeguards continue to be implemented despite the disruptions caused by the pandemic.

Mr. President,

Namibia values the Technical Cooperation Programme as the primary mechanism for transferring nuclear science and technology to Member States. It further assists in addressing key development priorities and strengthen technical capacities, particularly in the areas of human and animal health and nutrition, food and agriculture, water and the environment, industrial applications, and nuclear knowledge development. We underscore that the sustainability of the TC Programme is a shared responsibility, thus we continue to encourage Member States to fulfil their pledged commitments and pay their contributions to the TC Fund in full and on time, to ensure that resources for the TC Programme are sufficient, assured, and predictable.

Namibia's partnership with the IAEA and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) yielded a major boost to the seafood manufacturing industry, through capacitating the Namibian Standard Institution (NSI) in the area of food safety and quality assurance, thus enhancing domestic market food safety while food export capabilities and agro-products

monitoring are enhanced. This institution is now able to test and certify seafood products faster to meet the demand while preserving the safety and quality of our products.

Mr President

The theme of this year's scientific forum "*Nuclear Power and the Clean Energy Transition*" is timely, as many developing countries, including Namibia are exploring options of utilising nuclear power to ensure energy security for sustainable development. Additionally, using nuclear power and/or clean energy reduces the dependence on fossil fuels while contributing to the realisation of climate change objectives which are high on the Namibian development agenda. Namibia recognizes the work of the IAEA in supporting interested States, particularly embarking developing states, in the development of safe and secure civil nuclear power in line with the Milestone Approach. However, access to nuclear technology and the transfer thereof, remains a challenge. For this reason, extra effort should be made to assist developing states to meet the milestones for introduction of these technology in their energy mix

Mr. President,

As one of the world's largest uranium producers, Namibia reaffirms her commitment to nuclear and radiation safety, and continues to implement relevant international instruments that make provision for strengthening the protection and control of nuclear and radioactive materials and related facilities. I am pleased to announce that Namibia acceded to the *Convention on the Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident*, an international framework that will enable us to promptly facilitate the exchange of information and provide assistance in the event of a nuclear or radiological emergency.

We have also acceded to the *Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency*, which will further strengthen international co-operation and enable the provision of timely relevant information in the case of possible nuclear accident and minimise transboundary radiological emergencies.

Mr President,

We note the recently launched Director General's initiative, "*Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action*" (*ZODIAC*) project. It is our hope that the project will build on existing and on-going efforts. We trust that the capacity of the VETLAB Network to effectively handle and respond to possible future outbreak of zoonotic diseases, stand to be complemented and strengthened through this project.

Mr President,

Cancer remains one of the world's largest health problems and leading cause of death, and Namibia is no exception. Although some progress has been made in the fight against cancer through the development and enhancement of the national cancer control programme, there is

an enormous amount of work to be done. Our main challenge is limited access and timely diagnosis and treatment. The need to upgrade and expand radiotherapy services for Namibia is now very urgent, due to the growing numbers of cancer patients, aging and worn out equipments, shortage of health professionals and the need to capacitate staff working in radiotherapy. Therefore, we call on the Agency to intensify their efforts through the IAEA Technical Cooperation programme to increase support for the enhancement of radiotherapy services capacity as well as resource mobilisation to fund large scale cancer projects.

Mr. President

I appreciate the possibility to participate in the general debate through video statement, and I wish the General Conference success.

Thank you!