

Country Statement of The Bahamas

by

H. E. Ron O. Pinder

Ambassador-at-Large for Environmental & Educational Matters

at

The 66th Session of the IAEA General Conference

Vienna, Austria

From the outset, Mr. President, let me convey heartfelt congratulations to you on your election as President of the 66th Session of the IAEA General Conference. In the words of the American Theologian Theodore Hesburgh, “The very essence of leadership is that one has to have vision. Therefore, one cannot blow an uncertain trumpet.” The Bahamas, therefore, is confident that Your Excellency will lead with vision and blow a certain trumpet in these sessions for Member-States to follow.

Mr. President, Excellencies, it is important for me to state that The Bahamas endorses the joint statement by Argentina on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Mr. President, Excellencies, it is also important for me to reiterate The Bahamas support for “Atoms for Peace and Development”! In this regard, The Bahamas also supports the initiatives of Member-States in identifying and meeting future energy needs as well as the active efforts of the IAEA in assisting with improved radiation safety and nuclear security worldwide.

While The Bahamas is not a producer or importer of nuclear weapons, or a subscriber to electricity generated by nuclear means, we have, nonetheless, participated in a major way, on a regional level, in the development of establishing national legal and regulatory frameworks and in the building of human capacity in radiation medicine, control of radioactive sources, and vector control using the sterile insect techniques. In this regard, The Bahamas’ Country Programme Framework process is being spearheaded by our Ministry of Foreign Affairs with support from key public-private sector partners.

Notably, The Bahamas also seeks to establish a partnership with the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP). Our aim is to broaden our national mechanisms to facilitate the transfer of nuclear technology that would assist us in addressing key development priorities in areas such as human health (and in particular the cancer treatment via radiation therapy). The Bahamas, therefore, enthusiastically supports and will seek to partner with the Director General’s Rays of Hope Cancer Treatment initiative to provide greater access to cancer care and treatment.

To be clear, cancer is one of the leading causes of death in The Bahamas, and we renew our commitment to funding and supporting early detection, treatment and care.

The Bahamas also supports industrial application of nuclear knowledge, development and management in relation to food safety and nutrition, agriculture, water and the environment.

In this regard, in July of this year, The Bahamas was very pleased to have welcomed to our beautiful shores Mr James Sasanya, the IAEA’s Technical Officer for Nuclear Applications for Food and Agriculture. The Bahamas, therefore, is seeking to finalise a Revised Supplementary Agreement (RSA) with the IAEA as a prerequisite for the provision of technical assistance in relation to a number of Food Safety Projects in particular.

Mr. President, in borrowing the sentiments of the English Philosopher, John Stuart Mill, The only thing necessary for the triumph of injustice and unprovoked aggression, is for countries of good will and peace to do nothing.

It should also be clear then that The Bahamas does not support the decision of Russia with respect to its actions of unprovoked aggression against Ukraine. Russia's action is in violation of the United Nations' Charter and international law.

Furthermore, The Bahamas supports the efforts of the IAEA in establishing a security and protection zone around Ukraine's Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant given what has been witnessed with respect to Russia's disregard for certain basic nuclear safeguards.

Mr. President, there are other matters before this General Conference that The Bahamas, as a first-time participant, has not yet given full consideration. Given the opportunity, The Bahamas will revert on them accordingly, either during this session or subsequently in another format.

Mr. President, Excellencies, and Distinguished Delegates, in closing I wish to end as I begun, in reiterating The Bahamas' support of the IAEA's mandate of Atoms for Peace and Development. Therefore, we join Member-States in exploring, identifying and meeting future energy needs, and we gladly welcome the efforts of the IAEA in assisting Member-States with improved radiation safety and nuclear security measures worldwide.

Thank You.