



STATEMENT

BY

JAMAICA

ON

**THE OCCASION OF THE 66th REGULAR SESSION OF
THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC
ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA)**

VIENNA, AUSTRIA – 26th to 30th SEPTEMBER 2022

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Government of Jamaica, I wish to extend congratulations on your election as Chair of the 66th Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference and thank the members of the Bureau for judiciously guiding the work of the Conference.

Jamaica joins other Member States in welcoming St. Kitts and Nevis and Tonga to the IAEA family.

Jamaica commends the IAEA, under the leadership of Director General Rafael Grossi, for its commitment to supporting Member States. Since the last General Conference, the Agency has not only delivered on planned programmatic activities but has also embarked on a range of innovative initiatives to assist Member States in tackling some of the pressing global challenges including response to the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and plastic pollution. The IAEA Annual Report 2021 succinctly captures the Organization's achievements in its pursuit of its vision and resolve to ensure that nuclear science and technology are used for peaceful purposes and development.

My delegation also commends the IAEA for its continued support to Member States in combating the Covid -19 pandemic through the delivery of RT-PCR testing equipment and diagnostics kits. The rapid response of the IAEA to Member States' requests is a testament of the Organization's agility as well as its commitment to serve its members.

Mr. Chairman,

The Government of Jamaica values its collaboration with the IAEA which continues to be a key partner in the country's thrust towards economic and social development. We have long recognized the potential of innovation, science, and technology to empower our citizens, transform our societies and create a path for a better quality of life. The IAEA shares a similar perspective, and we are pleased with the diverse portfolio of technical cooperation

covering issues related to the environment and more recently cancer care. We earnestly believe that the technical assistance received from the Agency plays a pivotal role towards the achievement of our national development plan, Vision 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr. Chairman,

The recent visit to Jamaica by the IAEA's Deputy Director General for Technical Cooperation, Mr Hua Liu, in June underscores the longstanding relations between Jamaica and the Agency. During his visit, the DDG met with key Government stakeholders including the Prime Minister, The Most Honourable Andrew Michael Holness ON, MP as well as conducted several site visits.

One of the major highlights of his visit was the inauguration of the Nuclear Medicine Centre at the University Hospital of the West Indies. The IAEA supported the Centre with the procurement of a gamma camera (SPECT/CT), radio pharmacy and quality control equipment, as well as long-term training of essential staff. This new state of the art facility will provide diagnosis and treatment of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) such as cancer, diabetes, as well as cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases. These are the leading causes of deaths in Jamaica.

In this connection, Jamaica also appreciates the support of the IAEA in delivering two (2) mammography units with tomosynthesis to strengthen the country's capacity for breast cancer screening and diagnosis. We look forward to the installation of the equipment at the Kingston Public and Cornwall Regional Hospitals planned for October 2022, and welcome the requisite technical support for the effective use and operation of both machines. The focus of the IAEA on cancer through the Ray of Hope Initiative is timely and demonstrates how countries can positively utilize nuclear energy.

As a Small Island Developing State, Jamaica recognizes the importance of capacity building and training especially in areas such as physics, nuclear

technology and nuclear energy generation. It is through capacity building that states can properly engage in this field with a view to leveraging the many opportunities for development. Jamaica continues to benefit from the suite of technical workshops and trainings offered by the IAEA. The support of the Agency complements the efforts of the Government in ensuring that the country has a cadre of highly skilled professionals in the various areas of nuclear science. We are pleased that Jamaicans have been able to participate in the two-year clinical training of medical physicists at the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) in Trieste, Italy. Both participants who participated in last year's programme are now employed as medical physicists at the Cornwall Regional Hospital and are making significant contributions to our health sector.

Mr Chairman,

As the world continues to grapple with global food shortages and matters relating to food security within the context of conflicts and climate change, we must explore how to make our food systems more sustainable and resilient. The IAEA has acknowledged it can play a role in addressing these problems and Jamaica is actively working with the Agency to use mutagenesis for improved crop production. The donation of a self-contained gamma irradiation facility will complement previous results achieved in 2021 in relation to the mutation breeding of yam, ginger, and coffee at the Scientific Research Council. These initiatives will be critical to our food security agenda and is a step in the right direction as we seek to infuse more scientific research and innovation into the agricultural sector.

Jamaica looks forward to the continued collaboration with the IAEA for the 2022-2023 programme cycle and is keen on further engaging on new initiatives such as The Nuclear Technology for Controlling Plastic Pollution (NUTEC Plastics) and The Zoonotic Diseases Integrated Action (ZODIAC). In this regard, we wish to mention the efforts of the IAEA Geneva Office in facilitating engagement with the Organization for those of us who are not

based in Vienna. My delegation would also like to recognize the hard work and dedication of the Division of Latin America and the Caribbean within the Department of Technical Cooperation that continues to ensure the successful implementation of all projects.

In closing Mr. Chair, as Jamaica celebrates its 60th year of Independence we thank the IAEA for being an invaluable partner in our nation building and we remain committed to supporting the Organization in its efforts to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy for sustainable development.

I thank you.