



**Statement by the Kingdom of Morocco, delivered by Mrs. Leila BENALI,
Minister of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development,
at the 66th session of the General Conference of the IAEA**

Vienna, 26 September 2022

Mr. President

I extend my warmest congratulations to you, **Mr. Ambassador Alessandro Cortese, Permanent Representative of Italy, on behalf of the Kingdom of Morocco**, on your election as President of the 66th session of the IAEA General Conference.

Mr. President,

The 66th session of the General Conference is taking place in a **particular international security context** marked by the **growing need** for the optimal use of nuclear applications for peaceful purposes and **the major concern** to guarantee international standards of nuclear and radiological security and safety.

This is an important moment for all Member States **to renew their political commitment to the safe and secure** use of nuclear technology applications, within the framework of the vision of the founders of the IAEA so well summarized by the phrase "**Atoms for Peace and Development**".

Morocco takes this opportunity to reiterate its full support to the efforts made by the Agency **particularly the Technical Cooperation Program (TCP)**.

In this regard, Morocco, which chaired the 64th session of the IAEA General Conference two years ago, has worked to introduce the importance of the use of nuclear applications and the development of radiotherapy in the fight against cancer.

We need, to strengthen **the synergy, dynamics and complementarity between all actors in the fight against cancer, particularly in Africa**.

This is why Morocco actively supports the "**Rays of Hope**" initiative, launched in Addis Ababa by the Director General of the IAEA on the sidelines of the 35th African Union Summit, **with a view to guaranteeing cancer care for all, and to alleviate the lack of radiotherapy in developing countries, especially in Africa**.

I am pleased that during the Director General's visit to Morocco, from 22 to 24 June 2022, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Moroccan Ministry of Health and Social Protection and the IAEA. This agreement, which established new areas of cooperation between the IAEA and Morocco, will further strengthen cooperation in the fight, in Africa, against cancer and zoonoses, such as COVID-19, Zika or Ebola.

Similarly, this memorandum of understanding will allow, within the framework of the IAEA's Rays of Hope initiative, the strengthening of Morocco's contributions to establish regional centers to address the lack of cancer care, particularly in Africa, where more than 70% of the population does not have access to radiotherapy, an essential tool in the cure of cancer.

Mr. President,

Morocco has developed, thanks to the support of the IAEA, a domestic expertise in the fields of health, nuclear medicine and medical physics, nutrition, water, agriculture, industry, environment, energy, education and training and also safety and security, as well as nuclear safeguards and, in general, in the promotion of the peaceful use of applications and technologies in a safe, secure and sustainable manner.

The CNESTEN ensures, each year, the training of about one hundred professionals, the organization of scientific and technical events, as well as the deployment of expertise missions or laboratory analyses.

Indeed, the CNESTEN has launched with the University Hassan I of Settat and the University Mohammed V of Rabat, **an academic and clinical master in medical physics, and an academic**

master in radiopharmaceutical sciences, which has seen, this year, the graduation of the second class of laureates from French-speaking Africa.

To date, almost 300 professionals have benefited from this important training and hold positions of responsibility, particularly in the regulatory bodies of their respective countries, thus reinforcing respect and compliance with the Agency's safety standards, as well as the establishment of appropriate national legal frameworks.

On the regulatory level, the Forum of Nuclear Regulatory Bodies in Africa (FNRBA), whose chairmanship has been held since 2019 by the Moroccan Agency for Nuclear and Radiological Safety and Security (AMSSNuR), has worked to strengthen the role of African nuclear regulators in the field of nuclear security and safety. In this regard, AMSSNuR has provided training to 2000 trainees, 38% from African countries and 10% of whom are representatives of other regions.

In addition, AMSSNuR will host in October 2022 the meeting of the IAEA Steering Committee on Capacity Building and Knowledge Management in Nuclear Safety and Security. The purpose of this meeting is to prepare for the Steering Committee meeting, scheduled for December 2022 in Vienna, which will be devoted to finalizing the draft 2023-2030 strategic approach for developing the building blocks of capacity, namely human resources programs, training, education, knowledge management, and partnership networks.

Mr. President

In this dynamic of bilateral and triangular partnership with the IAEA, Morocco welcomes the **double recognition** of CNESTEN in 2021, as the first IAEA Collaborating Centre on the African continent for the Use of Nuclear Techniques in the fields of water resources management, environmental protection and industrial applications, for the period from 2021 to 2025 **and the designation** of the Moroccan Agency for Nuclear and Radiological Safety and Security (AMSSNuR), as the First African Collaborating Centre for Capacity Building in Nuclear Security.

Mr. President,

2.6 billion people suffer from zoonotic diseases each year, causing 2.7 million deaths.

The Kingdom of Morocco welcomes the significant progress made since the implementation of the **ZODIAC initiative, "Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action Project"**, adopted by consensus by resolution, **under the presidency of Morocco at the 64th session of the General Conference of the IAEA**. This initiative aims to strengthen national and regional capacities for diagnosis and detection and the establishment of a coordinated response team led by the Agency for zoonoses.

Furthermore, my country, which has supported morally and financially the establishment of the **ZODIAC project and the Rays of Hope initiative**, appeals the Member States to continue to support the Agency's structuring actions, such as the **ReNuAL project, "Renovation of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories"**, to provide the IAEA with the necessary capacity to meet national needs, thus contributing to the achievement of sustainable development objectives.

Morocco, which has also contributed to the financing of the Renewal Project, also reiterates its support for the Renovation of the Seibersdorf Nuclear Science and Applications Laboratories (Renual and Renual+), which is essential for strengthening the training of developing countries in nuclear science and applications

On nuclear energy, Morocco welcomes and expresses its support for the Nuclear Harmonization and Standardization Initiative (NHSI), launched in April 2022 by the IAEA DG, aimed at facilitating the safe and secure deployment of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) in order to maximize their contribution to the achievement of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement, including carbon neutrality by 2050.

Mr. President,

Morocco will work to resolutely pursue its commitment to support the central role of the IAEA in the technical assistance provided to Member States, as well as triangular cooperation, knowing that Africa and action in the service of the African Continent remains a strategic priority for Morocco, in accordance with the High Guidelines of His Majesty the King, in favor of the development of a solidary and active South-South and triangular cooperation.

I thank you for your kind attention and wish every success to the work of our General Conference.