

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT OF NAMIBIA, DELIVERED BY DR KALUMBI SHANGULA, MP,
MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES AT THE 66 TH SESSION OF
THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY
AGENCY**

26 SEPTEMBER 2022

VIENNA

**Check Against Delivery.*

Mr President!

1. I congratulate you and all members of the Bureau on your election. I am confident that under your able leadership our deliberations will be fruitful. I assure you of my delegation's full support.
2. My delegation expresses its appreciation to the Director General, Mr Grossi, for his opening remarks and to the Secretariat for the excellent arrangements for this meeting.
3. My delegation notes that the Annual Report of the the IAEA provides comprehensive information about the Agency's work undertaken in 2021. Namibia commends the Secretariat for its resilience, support and assistance to Member States in all programmatic activities, despite the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic during the period under review.
4. Namibia continues to pursue cooperation with the Agency. For a developing country such as Namibia, the Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) remains a vital tool for our interventions. It assists us to address specific and priority national policies as well as Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's). The successful cooperation with the Agency continues to immensely benefit some of our key sectors such as human health, agriculture and food security, water management and environmental protection. For this reason, we wish to see increased funding towards the Technical Cooperation Programme.
5. Namibia underscores the importance of adherence to international treaties, conventions, regulations and standards in radiation safety, security and safeguards. To this end, in July 2022 the Namibian Parliament gave approval for Namibia to amend her Small Quantities Protocol (SQP) status. This is a clear demonstration of our commitment to fulfil our obligations in the area of nuclear non-proliferation and provide assurance that all nuclear material and activities within our national borders are for peaceful purposes only. This is augmented by Namibia's commitment to advance the goal of non-proliferation and disarmament by supporting efforts for the successful implementation of a Nuclear-Weapon Free Zone in Africa in line with her obligations under the Pelindaba Treaty.
6. Namibia has made progress in improving its regulatory architecture for nuclear and radiation safety and security. We commend the Agency for developing innovative regulatory management tools such as the Radiation Safety Information Management System (RASIMS) and the new Regulatory Authority Information System (RAIS) amongst others. We are mindful that, in the last decade, security of nuclear material and radiation sources have become a major international concern and that the Agency has worked tirelessly to develop appropriate standards. In this respect, we encourage the Agency to adopt an integrated approach between safety and security, especially in

the development and deployment of the regulatory performance management and assessment tools.

Mr President

7. Cancer continues to be one of the major causes of morbidity and mortality amongst the non-communicable diseases. Logically, the fight against cancer remains high on our agenda of improving quality of life for all. Therefore, my delegation appreciates the continued Agency assistance and support provided through its Technical Programme of Action Against Cancer Therapy (PACT). We welcome the **Rays of Hope Initiative** that was launched by the Director General on 16 February 2022, on the margins of the Africa Union Summit to explore a comprehensive and coordinated strategy in the fight against cancer. We must acknowledge that the delivery systems in low, middle and developing countries remain ill-equipped for the provision of adequate cure and care.
8. Although Namibia is classified as a higher-middle-income country, inequalities remain high in our country. We have the second-highest [Gini coefficient](#) among all nations. The disparities are also evident in the health sector where 85% of the population share one radiotherapy facility. Hence, there is a need to enhance the National Cancer Control Programme to enhance accessibility and quality of cancer care countrywide. Having stated this, Namibia stands ready to engage and work with Agency's Technical Cooperation Department to discuss the modalities of further exploring the opportunities under the Rays of Hope Initiative of the Director General. We welcome this year's Scientific Forum under the theme: **Rays of Hope, Cancer Care for All**. It is our hope that the Initiative will provide timely interventions and strategies as we look forward to concrete and effective recommendations.

Mr President

9. The government of the Republic of Namibia regards gender equality as an important enabler for women's participation in all spheres of development. The requirement to empower women at all levels is enshrined in our Constitution. In this regard, we commend the Agency's Marie Sklodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme, which will increase the participation of Namibian women in nuclear science related fields.
10. Namibia has relied on the Technical Cooperation Programme of the International Atomic Energy Agency for social and economic development in various sectors. We believe that we have matured enough to consider large-scale, sector-wide nuclear related projects to further harness the economic and social values from the use of nuclear science and technology. We look forward to work with the Agency and partners for mutually beneficial undertakings in the area of nuclear science and technology.
11. Another principle we fully subscribe to, is the equitable geographical representation of all Member States, based on the principle of sovereign equality as outlined in the IAEA

Statute. We, therefore, support the draft resolution on restoration of sovereign equality of all IAEA Members submitted by Kazakhstan to the 66th General Conference to resolve this matter, most expeditiously.

12. Finally, I underscore Namibia's appreciation and support for the work of the Agency in executing its mandate, particularly in the area of peaceful uses of nuclear science, technology and applications delivered through the Technical Cooperation Programme.

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