

**66<sup>th</sup> IAEA General Conference  
Vienna, Austria 26-30 September 2022**

**Agenda Item 7 - General debate and Annual Report for  
2021**

**Statement by Sri Lanka**

**Speaker**

Professor S.R.D. Rosa  
Chairman, Sri Lanka Atomic Energy Board

Mr. President  
Excellencies  
Director General of the Agency  
Distinguished Delegates

On behalf of the delegation of Sri Lanka, I congratulate you Mr. President on assumption of the Presidency of the 66th General Conference of the IAEA. My delegation assures you of our fullest support to steer the deliberations of the Conference to achieve a tangible outcome.

Mr President,

We are witnessing the ongoing effects of a pandemic, increase in nuclear related activities, and facing an alarming deterioration of the international security sphere. We express our sincere

appreciation to the Director General and the Agency for their tireless efforts made to ensure the delivery of its Programmes to Member States, which has continued this year despite the global crises.

As reflected in the Annual Report, we note with appreciation the significant adaptations in the Agency's methods of work to ensure the uninterrupted delivery of its mandate in peaceful uses of nuclear technology, enhancing nuclear safety and security as well as nuclear verification and safeguards. The Technical Cooperation activities of the Agency, are more than ever, vital for a developing country such as Sri Lanka. We appreciate that a high implementation rate has been maintained by the TC Dept in 2022 despite challenging circumstances.

Sri Lanka appreciates the Nuclear and Radiation Safety Report of the Director General (GC(66)/10) and underscores the important role that the Agency plays for nuclear safety, as a key element in any nuclear programme. We also reiterate our faith in the verification and safeguards regime of the Agency to ensure that nuclear energy is used for peaceful purposes, and call upon all states to respect this framework and avoid arbitrary, ad-hoc measures that prevent the transfer of nuclear technology even for purposes consistent with the treaty.

Mr President,

Respecting the right of all state parties to peaceful use of nuclear energy, we believe, is very much in keeping with the letter and

spirit of the realizing the Sustainable Development Goals. We emphasize the importance of building and strengthening capacities in all Member States, especially the developing states and appreciate the assistance provided by the Agency to developing countries operating, expanding or embarking on nuclear power and radiation technology programmes in establishing or enhancing their national safety infrastructure.

In this regard, my delegation would like to highlight the progress made in 2022 by Sri Lanka in its efforts to increase and diversify its power production capacity through nuclear power, as a reliable and low carbon option for its energy mix. The IAEA Assisted Phase – I, INIR Mission was conducted successfully in April 2022 in Sri Lanka with 10 IAEA / External experts. The Sri Lanka Atomic Energy Board (SLAEB) organised the event with participation of relevant Stakeholder Institutions like Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB), Sri Lanka Atomic Energy Regulatory Council (SLAERC) etc.

The INIR team reviewed the status of nuclear infrastructure development using the Phase 1 criteria from the IAEA 's Milestones Approach. The INIR team concluded that Sri Lanka has engaged the appropriate stakeholders in considering the introduction of nuclear power and initiated studies to enable the government to make a future decision on the nuclear power programme. It is noteworthy that the INIR team identified 2 good practices that may benefit other countries considering the introduction of nuclear power.

Let us assure you Mr President, of Sri Lanka's commitment to its nuclear power programme by implementing the said recommendations and suggestions to be able to move forward to the second Phase 2 of the INIR Mission. Noting the crucial need to diversify the energy sources of Sri Lanka, we are confident that our steady progress so far will continue in the same fruitful manner, and encourage the Agency to continue providing the necessary support crucially needed.

Sri-Lanka is receiving technical assistance under its TC Program in 2022-2023 cycle in the fields of NDT, Nuclear Power Agriculture and Human Health.

First ever cyclotron facility for production of FDG is in the pipeline with the support of IAEA through a TC Project. This will no doubt be a blessing for cancer patients who are waiting to get a PET scan.

Non-Destructive Testing Centre is one of the most successful programmes under RCA/IAEA activities and establishment of National Centre for Non-Destructive Testing (NCNDT) is one of the key milestones as well. Recently NDT Centre started welder qualification facility to certify experienced welders. These certified welders could seek job opportunities in other countries and thus provide hard currencies to the country badly needs at this hour.

SLEAB has done a feasibility study with the help of Texas A&M University and RCARO to build a E-beam / X-ray Facility for food irradiation. The first meeting in this regard will be held in South Korea in coming November.

Sri Lanka's commitment for the international Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radiation Sources is in process of being codified domestically. In order to further strengthen the regulatory regime, the Sri Lanka Atomic Energy Regulatory Council (SLAERC) has drafted "Regulations for the security of radioactive sources during manufacture, use, and storage".

With regard to strengthening preparedness and management of nuclear or radiological emergencies in the country, the SLAERC has submitted a project proposal to the IAEA for the 2022 – 2023 project cycle on "Strengthening the National Capabilities for Responding to Nuclear or Radiological Emergencies – SRL2020002. We appreciate the approval of the IAEA for the National nuclear or radiological emergency management plan for the preparedness and management of possible emergencies. SLAERC is also glad to participate in the project on "Strengthening the National Capabilities for Responding to Nuclear or Radiological Emergencies- SRL2020002-" for 2022-2023.

Mr President,

As we progress on the implementation of the current phase of the technical cooperation programme in the country, Sri Lanka is keen to focus on strengthening of the regulatory infrastructure for radiation safety & source security and will continue to work closely with the Agency and other bilateral partners to this effect.

Sri Lanka also welcomes the establishment of the IAEA Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action project (ZODIAC), with a global network of national diagnostic laboratories for the monitoring, surveillance, early detection, and control of zoonotic diseases, using nuclear or nuclear-derived techniques. Please assure our fullest support to the NUTEC plastics project, which aims at combatting marine plastic pollution with the help of nuclear-derived techniques. My delegation similarly wishes to underscore the importance of programmes such as the Programme of action for cancer therapy (PACT) and the Ray of Hope initiative which is beneficial to all Member States where cancer is a leading cause of mortality.

In conclusion, Mr President, Sri Lanka firmly believes in the unlimited positive potential of the IAEA by effectively sharing the benefits of safe and secure applications of nuclear technology. Sri Lanka looks forward to continued meaningful cooperation in the coming year with the IAEA.

Thank you.

**(ENDS)**