

Pakistan's National Statement
at the Plenary Session of the 67th General Conference of the International Atomic
Energy Agency

(25 September 2023)

Madam President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good afternoon

At the outset, I wish to congratulate Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi on your re-appointment as DG IAEA and Madam President & other officers of the Committee, on your election at the 67th Session of the IAEA General Conference. I would like to assure all of you, Pakistan's full support and cooperation.

Madam President,

Pakistan strongly supports the Agency's continued assistance to the Member States in their efforts to meet the multifarious development challenges through safe, secure and sustainable uses of nuclear science and technology. This indeed is a true reflection of the Agency's slogan: "Atoms for peace and development".

Pakistan has been a significant beneficiary of the Agency's assistance and is effectively utilizing nuclear science and technology in diverse areas, including human health, food and agriculture, power generation, industry, and environment protection. Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi's visit to Pakistan earlier this year provided an impetus to our efforts for further strengthening the mutually beneficial and decades-long collaboration between Pakistan and the Agency.

Madam President,

The use of nuclear technology in the human health sector is a national priority for Pakistan. A total of 19 cancer hospitals, run by the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission, are playing a vital role in providing quality treatment to over 80% of the country's cancer

patients. During his visit to Pakistan, Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi inaugurated the first ever Cyber Knife Facility at the Nuclear Medicine, Oncology and Radiotherapy Institute (NORI) in Islamabad. We are proud to share that this Institute has been designated as an Anchor Centre under the Agency's initiative "Rays of Hope": Cancer Care for All.

Pakistan is successfully employing nuclear technologies to enhance food security and agricultural productivity. We have four agriculture and biotechnology centers which are playing a pivotal role in this regard. One of these Centres – Nuclear Institute for Agriculture and Biology (NIAB) – has the distinction of being designated an IAEA collaborating Center. It is also a part of the Agency's Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action (ZODIAC) laboratories network.

Pakistan appreciates and looks forward to contributing to the successful implementation of the Agency's initiatives "*Rays of Hope; Cancer Care for All*", *ZODIAC*, and *NUTEC Plastics*.

Madam President,

Despite being an energy deficient country, which accounts for less than one percent of the global Green House Gases emissions, Pakistan is one of the most Climate Change vulnerable countries. We believe that nuclear power has an indispensable role to play in mitigating and adapting to Climate Change and the transition to a low-carbon energy future. Pakistan fully shares the view that nuclear power is an affordable, reliable and clean source of energy and a part of the solution to the climate crisis.

Pakistan has decades' long experience of operating safe, secure and fully safeguarded nuclear power programme. Currently, we have 6 operational nuclear power plants with an aggregate capacity of 3,530 MW. It remains our ambition to further increase the share of nuclear power in the national energy mix. In this regard, work has begun on the construction of another nuclear power plant - Chashma Unit 5 – with 1200 MW capacity.

Madam President,

International cooperation and dialogue are of central importance in fostering an enabling environment to unlock the full potential of nuclear power. We underscore that removal of barriers for gaining equitable and non-discriminatory access to civil nuclear cooperation is of fundamental importance in this regard.

Madam President,

Pakistan has been one of the leading partners of the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme and has significantly benefitted from it. Pakistan has aligned its Technical Cooperation Programme with the Agency's Mid-Term Strategy in designing and implementing comprehensive projects to achieve substantial results. Pakistan remains ready to share its experience of designing and implementing comprehensive TC projects with other fellow developing Member States. The Practical Arrangement signed between Pakistan and the Agency's TC Department is a manifestation of this commitment.

Madam President,

Pakistan accords the highest priority to nuclear safety and security as a national responsibility. We are a party to several leading international instruments relevant to nuclear safety and security. We have put in place a comprehensive, robust and rigorously enforced nuclear safety and security regime in accordance with the highest international standards. Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA) is an independent national regulator which ensures compliance with the applicable standards by nuclear installations and radiation facilities throughout the country. It also benefits from international experience through bilateral agreements and MoUs with its counterparts in other IAEA Member States.

It is a reflection of Pakistan's expertise in this vital area that its National Institute of Safety and Security (NISAS) has become an IAEA Collaborating Centre for Nuclear Security Education, Training and Technical Support. Pakistan's Centre of Excellence of Nuclear Security (PCENS) is another premier national institution which has grown into a

regional and international hub for imparting high quality nuclear security training. We look forward to close cooperation between the PCENS and the IAEA's Nuclear Security Training and Demonstration Centre (NSTDC) in Seibersdorf which will be inaugurated next month.

Madam President,

Pakistan supports the Agency's Marie Sklodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme which is aimed at enhancing women's participation in the field of nuclear science and technology. Under this program, several fellows are pursuing the degree programs at the Pakistan Institute of Engineering and Applied Sciences (PIEAS) which is also an IAEA Collaborating Center.

Pakistan would like to emphasize the importance of achieving equitable geographical representation in the work force of the Agency through recruitment of suitable and qualified personnel from the developing countries.

Madam President,

Pakistan remains committed to further enhancing its mutually beneficial cooperation with the IAEA. We will continue to support and uphold the Agency's role in the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear technology in accordance with its mandate as enshrined in its Statute.

I thank you, Madam. President.