

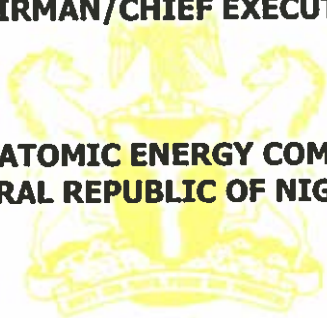


NIGERIA'S COUNTRY STATEMENT

DELIVERED BY

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CHAIRMAN/CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**NIGERIA ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**



FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

**61ST REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE
INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA) IN VIENNA, AUSTRIA,
18TH TO 22ND SEPTEMBER, 2017**

Madam President,

On behalf of the Nigerian delegation, I join other delegations in congratulating you on your election as the President of the 61st Regular Session of IAEA General Conference. Under your able leadership, my delegation looks forward to constructive and fruitful deliberations. We are convinced that your experience and leadership qualities will come to bear towards ensuring that discussions during the Session are fruitful and productive. We also join other Member States to welcome the newest member of the Agency, Grenada into our midst and we look forward to working with the country to advance the common goals of the Agency.

2. My delegation appreciates the presentation made by the Director-General of the IAEA during the opening of this Conference and we congratulate him on his re-appointment by acclamation for another term of 4 years. We are certain that under the watch of DG Amano, the Agency will continue in its usual manner, remain focused and committed to meet the yearnings and aspirations of the member states in the peaceful application of nuclear science and technology for their sustainable development.

3. Madam President, Nigeria has continued to reap the benefits associated with the applications of nuclear science and technology for national development particularly through collaborations and activities in

the areas of agriculture, human health, water resources, training & capacity development, and in other spheres of human endeavor. I wish to use this medium to thank the IAEA for this assistance. In the same vein, I want to assure the international community that in the pursuit of our national nuclear programme, Nigeria will continue to ensure compliance with international best practices and the highest consideration to applicable national and international treaties and conventions.

4. Madam President, I wish to state that in July 2017, the Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) team concluded a 10-day mission in Nigeria. This was carried out to ensure that nuclear science and technology deployment is done in the most transparent manner. I am happy to report that in its preliminary assessment, the IRRS team recognized the strong commitment of Nigeria to improving nuclear and radiation safety. The Government of Nigeria is awaiting the final report and will ensure the implementation of its recommendations and suggestions.

5. Madam President, regarding nuclear research and development programme, I wish to report that progress has been recorded in Nigeria's quest to acquire a Multi-purpose Research Reactor. To this end, relevant documents have been developed and forwarded to the IAEA for review and comments. This is to ensure that the operation of the reactor is done with the highest considerations for safety and security.

6. In the area of human capacity development to support Nigeria's Nuclear Power Programme and other nuclear application programmes, specific attention has been focused on Postgraduate programmes with significant achievement already recorded. This achievement has been made possible with the support of the IAEA and other nations. I wish to also express our appreciation for the continued support of the IAEA in providing placements for Nigerians to undergo various Fellowships, Training Meetings, Workshops, Conferences and other relevant activities.

7. Similarly, with respect to the expansion and equipping of our National Cancer Control Centers, my delegation is pleased with the support we are receiving from the Agency. In particular, we look forward to the Expert Mission that will be going to Nigeria to assess the state of our facilities and carry out a needs assessment. Since the commencement of the beneficial relations with the Agency in nuclear medicine and radiotherapy in cancer management, significant progress has been recorded; we look forward to the continuity of this programme.

Madam President

8. While acknowledging the tremendous support Nigeria has been receiving from the Agency in various fields, I would like to specifically express our satisfaction and gratitude with the progress recorded in the implementation of the Sahel Project. Under this regional TC project, the Agency's deployment of the isotope hydrology methodology in the

shared aquifer zones of the region has produced tangible results and data which Nigeria and other affected states find very useful. We thank the states that provided the resources and we look forward to the commencement of the 2nd phase of the project.

9. In demonstration of our continued commitment to the nuclear non-proliferation regime and fulfillment of our national obligations to a better global nuclear security architecture, the 30kw Miniature Neutron Source Reactor (MNSR) currently operational at the Centre for Energy Research and Training (CERT), Zaria is undergoing core conversion from a High Enriched Uranium (HEU) fuel to a Low Enriched Uranium (LEU) fuel. Nigeria acknowledges the support of IAEA and other development partners in this regard.

10. You will recall, Madam President, that last year, the IAEA granted approval for Nigeria to host the first Edition of Regional Nuclear Security School scheduled to commence in November of this year. This school is expected to be attended by several African Member States of the IAEA. I am glad to report that arrangements towards the successful conduct of the school are being finalized. We are optimistic that the programme will significantly enhance the capacity of the participants on matters concerning nuclear security and safe operation of nuclear facilities within the region.

11. Despite the limited resources at the disposal of the IAEA occasioned by the global economic challenges, the continued prudent and judicious management of both human and financial resources of the Agency has made it compelling for my delegation to express appreciation to the Agency for its continued support to Member States upon request. My delegation would also like to express Nigeria's appreciation to the Director-General and the staff of the Secretariat for their tireless effort which has ensured a successful start of the 61st Session of the General Conference.

12. In conclusion Madam President, permit me to commend the IAEA on the role it has continued to play to ensure that member states have unfettered access to nuclear science and technology information for their socio-economic development within the ambit of the three cardinal objectives of safety, security and safeguards

13. I thank you, Madam President.