

**STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA  
DELIVERED BY THE  
DEPUTY MINISTER OF MINERAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY,  
DR NP NKABANE AT THE  
66<sup>th</sup> REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA)**

Mr President  
Director General Grossi  
Honourable Ministers and Heads of Delegation  
Distinguished Delegates

Mr President, South Africa warmly congratulates you in leading the 66<sup>th</sup> Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference and assures you of its cooperation and support.

The 2022 General Conference takes place following the 10<sup>th</sup> Non – Proliferation Treaty Review Conference which is the second Review Conference (RevCon) which was concluded without adopting an outcome document. South Africa remains deeply concerned by the lack of commitment by Nuclear Weapon States to disarm, while we, the Non- Nuclear Weapons States continue to honour our non – proliferation obligations.

Despite its regrettable failure to produce an outcome document, the 10<sup>th</sup> NPT RevCon raised a number of issues of relevance to this General Conference. We express our intense hope that, unlike the NPT RevCon, this General Conference will take positive steps in enhancing the contribution of Nuclear Technology to development.

South Africa as a Contracting Member of the Convention on Nuclear Safety places great importance to nuclear safety and the central role of the Agency in coordinating international efforts to strengthen nuclear safety. We also participated in the 7<sup>th</sup> Review Meeting of the Joint Convention and have met the obligations of the Convention.

Eskom, has submitted a License Application and a Safety Case for Long Term Operation (LTO) to the National Nuclear Regulator in July 2022, to extend its operations for another 20 years. To support the Safety Case compilation Eskom invited the IAEA to complete the Safety Aspects of Long-Term Operation (SALTO) Peer Review Mission, in March 2022.

South Africa is implementing the Integrated Resource Plan 2019 which, provides for the procurement of a 2 500MW New Generation Capacity from Nuclear Energy and the Department is finalising the Procurement Framework.

South Africa's Cabinet has approved setting up a Multi-Purpose Reactor (MPR) Project to replace the SAFARI-1 Reactor, Necsa has completed the Prefeasibility study and issued a Request for Information in February 2022.

South Africa welcome this year's Scientific Forum under the theme: "Rays of Hope: Cancer Care for All". The implementation of this initiative will assist and strengthen Member States' capacity in addressing the gaps in cancer care and explore the

importance of radiation medicine, innovation and collaboration in supporting equitable access to life-saving diagnosis and treatment. As a lead on cancer-related issues on the Continent, South Africa pledges its facilities and expertise towards realising the goals of this initiative.

The current South Africa nuclear regulatory regime allows flexibility for SAFARI-1 to be a sustainable operational irradiation facility well beyond 2030, supported by well-executed ageing management programme. An engineering assessment and In-Service Inspections were performed with the recommendations justifying further safe operation until a new MPR is operational. It is therefore envisaged that SAFARI-1 will continue operating, which will ensure continued production of medical radioisotopes and other nuclear-related research and development technologies. The overlap between the operation of SAFARI-1 and coming on line of the MPR will therefore guarantee that South Africa remains a global player within the Nuclear Technology Research and Development Sphere.

The iThemba Laboratory for Accelerator Based Science, our first and newly designated IAEA Collaborating Centre, has successfully installed an Accelerator based radioisotope production facilities for medical, research and industrial applications.

South Africa has embarked on the establishment of Centralised Interim Storage Facility for the safe, secure and sustainable management of spent nuclear and high-level waste.

Mr President,

The South African Young Nuclear Professional Society and the Women in Nuclear South Africa Chapters continues to encourage the youth and women to be actively involved in nuclear activities. A number of young women have benefitted from the Marie Curie Fellowship and we thank the Agency for this initiative that has inspired women and youth to further their nuclear studies.

Turning to IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme, South Africa is pleased to pledge an amount of €217 610 towards the Technical Cooperation Fund for 2023.

Building human and institutional capacity for the sustainable application of Nuclear Technology for development and strengthening regional cooperation across all thematic areas is vital for my country. In this regard, we have contributed € 186 605 (Euros) for the 2022/23 biennium towards AFRA.

In closing, Mr President, I wish to reiterate South Africa's unwavering and continued support for the Agency's fundamental role in ensuring that Nuclear Science and Technology is used for peaceful purposes, and development in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union's Agenda 2063.