

**SOUTH AFRICAN STATEMENT FOR THE MEETING OF THE IAEA TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION COMMITTEE (TACC), 14 NOVEMBER 2011, TO BE DELIVERED BY AMBASSADOR ABDUL MINTY, GOVERNOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

Chairperson,

At the outset allow me to congratulate you upon your election as the Chairman of the Board of Governors and be assured of our support and cooperation.

My delegation fully associates itself with the statements made on behalf of the Africa Group and the Group of 77 and China respectively, and would like to thank Deputy Director General Aning for introducing this item, as well as the staff of the TC Department for the relevant technical briefing provided to Member States on 24 October 2011, on the documents under our consideration.

My delegation also appreciates the excellent work of the Secretariat and the TC Department in implementing the TC programme.

Chairperson,

In light of the prevailing global economic challenges that continue to affect economies, coupled with fear that it may spread to others, including emerging economies, these developments attest to the fact that the work of the IAEA's TC programme is even more relevant than ever. This valuable work of the Agency continues to be important in view of the growing need for sustainable development and accelerated economic growth needed by many developing countries.

Whilst developing countries attach great importance to the Agency's mandate of promoting the peaceful applications of nuclear technology, it is in the interest of humanity as a whole to honour commitments made under the Millennium Declaration adopted in 2000 to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. South Africa likewise attaches great importance to the Agency's technical cooperation programme and recognises its vital contribution to sustainable development. In our view, the Agency's TC projects are more than just political commitments, they constitute important building blocks for the achievement of the MDGs and the alleviation of poverty.

Chairperson,

As we all recognise and value the importance of the Agency's TC programme, we should decisively address some of the impediments facing its implementation, which includes among others the need for funding that is sufficient, assured and predictable. While my delegation has stressed the need to decisively correct mistakes of the past by incorporating the TC programme, being a core statutory function of the Agency, into its regular budget, we are aware that there are tendencies to perpetrate these mistakes to the detriment of TC programme. What is needed is a change in the mind-set which can contribute to correcting this situation and mitigate the need for developing countries to continuously struggle to secure funding for the Agency's TC programme.

Chairperson,

As in the past, South Africa has always honoured its financial obligations for the TCF and the Regular Budget, and has recently at the General Conference again, pledged in full its share of the 2011 TCF. South Africa calls on Member States to make their payments to the TCF in full and on time to ensure the full implementation of the TC programme and projects.

Chairperson,

South Africa takes note of the proposed TC programme for the period 2012-2013 and hopes that it continues to reflect evolving needs and priorities of Member States. My delegation notes that safety and security continue to be a major focus of the TC programme as a whole, followed by nuclear applications in areas such as health and nutrition and food and agriculture. Other important Agency activities for my delegation, which continue to be core programmatic focus for the TC programme, include nuclear knowledge, nuclear power, industrial applications, water and environment.

Chairperson,

In terms of regional focus, my delegation is pleased to note that the African region will continue to receive the largest allocation of TC resources for the next cycle. In our view this is not a mistake, given Africa's unique position as the most marginalised continent with 42 Member States in the Agency, thus the Continent by all objective criteria will have to continue receiving the largest share of TC budget allocations.

Chairperson,

South Africa welcomes ongoing Agency support for the objectives of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), mainly through regional TC mechanisms such as the African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training related to Nuclear Science and Technology (AFRA), and partnership activities with the African Union, and we believe that these efforts will go a long way in supporting endeavours towards achieving the MDGs in the region.

Chairperson,

It will be recalled that the Pelindaba Treaty entered into force in 2009 to establish a nuclear weapon free zone in the region. This Treaty is unique in the sense that it is the only nuclear weapon free zone having a strong developmental focus. This will offer many opportunities for cooperation with AFRA and the IAEA to enhance ongoing efforts to address development needs and challenges in the region. We encourage the Agency to consider ways of collaborating with the African Commission of Nuclear Energy (AFCONE), to complement its support activities for the Region.

Chairperson,

South Africa has benefitted from active participation through its experts and relevant institutions, in a wide spectrum of Agency TC programme and projects in the region, largely in areas such as human health, food and agriculture, industrial applications and radioactive safety and nuclear safety, and encourages more of Agency support activities in these areas to the Region.

Chairperson,

We have previously drawn the Agency's attention to the need to focus on malaria, which remains one of the major killer diseases in Africa. During the June Board, my delegation requested the Agency to provide a scientific report that can inform us of the prospect of applying sterile insect techniques and other measures to address this challenge. We are encouraged that the Agency is in the process of studying the application of the sterile insect technology to be used in the prevention of Malaria. We encourage the Agency to prioritise this study and we look forward to receive a progress report at the next meeting of the Board of Governors.

Moreover Chairperson, my delegation notes with interest the review of projects for the cycle 2012-2013 by the Department of Safety and Security that involve transport of radiation sources to Member States, with an aim of addressing weaknesses identified in previous evaluations of TC projects. My delegation hopes that these efforts will not only remedy the situation, but also ensure coordinated efforts within the Secretariat to enhance safety and security infrastructure in Member States, thus ensuring compliance with safety and security requirements in the provision of radioactive sources to Member States.

Chairperson,

Turning to the evaluation of technical cooperation, my delegation welcomes the three evaluations undertaken in 2011 and looks forward to consider in the next year, the results of outstanding evaluations that were planned for 2011.

South Africa continues to value the work of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), which continues to provide information to assist the Secretariat and Member States to draw lessons from findings and the subsequent recommendations to ensure continuous improvements in the wide spectrum of Agency's technical assistance and support to Member States. The almost full implementation of the recommendations clearly demonstrates the value of such an internal oversight of the Agency's TC related activities.

My delegation is pleased to note results of evaluation of the Agency's support to Member States in the area of uranium exploration and production. In particular, we welcome continuous support provided through training related activities, as well as the usefulness of Uranium Production Site Appraisal Team (UPSAT) missions' assessment and findings for future TC projects on the area of uranium exploration and production. My delegation encourages the Agency to continue supporting Member States in strengthening their national capabilities to address challenges associated with uranium mining and milling, including legacy sites and safety and security considerations for the public and the environment.

Furthermore, my delegation concurs with the findings and recommendations resulting from evaluations of the Agency's support activities in areas such as the provision of TC equipment and the sustainable management and control of insect pests in Member States, and would like to encourage the Agency to implement these useful lessons, aiming at improving efficiency and effectiveness of TC projects to assist Member States in these important areas.

Chairperson,

During the September Board, my delegation announced South Africa's pledge of 15 million Rands (approximately €1.5 million Euro) to support the IAEA/ FAO efforts to improve the veterinary laboratory capacities in Sub-Saharan countries. In this regard, my delegation wishes to report that the Agreement between the Government and the IAEA has been finalised in order to facilitate the disbursement of the funding to the IAEA. My delegation will keep the Board informed of progress made in the implementation of this project.

With these remarks, my delegation concurs with the recommended actions in document GOV/2011/58 to approve the Agency's TC programme for 2012-2013 and also takes note of the results of the TC evaluations completed in 2011, contained in documents GOV/ 2011/62.

I thank you,