



NATIONAL STATEMENT OF NIGERIA

AT THE

**INTERNATIONAL MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON NUCLEAR POWER IN THE
21ST CENTURY**

WASHINGTON DC, 26TH TO 28TH OCTOBER, 2022

DELIVERED BY

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HONOURABLE MINISTER, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Mr. President, Distinguished ladies and Gentlemen, I, on behalf of the Nigerian delegation, congratulate you on your well-deserved election as the President of this very important Conference and I assure you of Nigeria's full support and cooperation towards the attainment of the goals and objectives of this Conference. Nigeria has great confidence in your leadership skills and experience to pilot the affairs of this conference successfully.

2. Nigeria expresses her appreciation to DG Grossi and the entire staff of the IAEA as well as the leadership of the Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) and other partners for the successful planning and excellent arrangements put in place for this Conference. Our delegation is grateful to the Government of the United States of America for hosting this Conference.

3. We welcome the convening of this International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century and believe that an international engagement of this nature is needed to engender an effective collaboration and partnership that are critical for the overall success of nuclear programmes in a sustainable manner. It is essential that different layers of partnerships and cooperation through multilateral and bilateral arrangements are created and strengthened.

4. There are over 400 nuclear power plants operational today across the world, but sadly, Africa, except for one country, is yet to have a feel of the immense benefits of nuclear power in the energy basket of the continent. This is regardless of the fact of the glaring energy deficit confronting the continent. This situation only re-echoes the well-known axiom that the injection of nuclear power in the overall energy mix of the continent will significantly pave the way for huge socio-economic development.

5. Mr. President, several countries in Africa have genuine aspirations for industrialization and growth but the lack of reliable and sustainable base-load energy constitutes serious impediment. Despite all the good policies formulated by African countries, the attainment of real growth and development has remained a mirage due to energy inadequacy. The possibility of nuclear power is now providing African countries with a better alternative for energy generation.

6. Like most other nations in the continent, Nigeria, with a population of over 200 million people, has a serious energy supply deficit, making it compelling for the government to critically look towards other energy options that are affordable, more environmentally friendly and sustainable.

7. Consequently, Nigeria has taken a decision to fully explore and harness nuclear energy resources for the generation of electricity which will contribute to the country's energy security through an appropriate energy mix. In this regard, Nigeria is currently engaged in discussions with some countries and vendors for our nuclear power project. Two potential sites for Nigeria's Nuclear Power Plant have been identified and necessary processes are being undertaken under the Integrated Nuclear Power Programme of Nigeria with the IAEA.

8. In furtherance to this unwavering commitment to energy mix through acquisition of nuclear power, the Federal Government of Nigeria has activated the Nigeria Atomic Energy Commission (NAEC) as the National focal Agency charged with the responsibility of developing the framework and technical pathway to explore, exploit and harness atomic energy for peaceful applications for the socio-economic development of our country.

9. In like manner, Nigeria has also established the Nigerian Nuclear Regulatory Authority as an independent agency of government to ensure the safety of humans and the protection of the environment in the process of development, deployment and use of nuclear power.

10. With the Small Modular Reactor (SMR) technology evolving, Nigeria sees this as a future game-changer in the nuclear industry and looks forward to a greater engagement with the IAEA and other global partners in the coming months and years to discuss the possibility of deploying SMRs in the country.

12. In conclusion Mr. President, distinguished participants, Nigeria looks forward not only to a robust and exciting conference but one whose outcomes will help accelerate the socio-economic development of the human race as well as making our planet a safer place for our continued existence.

13. Mr. President and esteemed audience, I thank you for your kind attention