

**Workshop on Promoting Effective Interaction among  
Stakeholders in African Countries Introducing or Expanding a  
Nuclear Power Programme**

**AFCONE-IAEA Workshop, 29-30 June 2021 (13:00-16:00)**

**Opening Remarks**

**Dohee HAHN**

**Director of the Nuclear Power Division**



**IAEA**

**International Atomic Energy Agency**

Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues

Good afternoon from Vienna and welcome to the workshop on Promoting Effective Interaction among Stakeholders in African Countries Introducing or Expanding a Nuclear Power Programme.

This workshop is very timely as it is part of a larger narrative: access to clean, reliable, and affordable energy. Today, almost 800 000 people have no access to electricity, two thirds of them in Africa. As energy fuels nearly every aspect of development, it is a precondition for raising living standards and improving human well-being. But how do we enable all countries to have access to clean, reliable and affordable energy, while ensuring that our planet does not suffer? Nuclear power is one solution.

Nuclear power is safe. It is economically viable. And it meets energy and environmental needs. It can help drive economic growth and mitigate climate change, in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Access to electricity goes beyond and ensures also clean air, access to clean water and modern medical and education services. It is these facts that must be clearly communicated to all stakeholders, from policy and decision makers to media and general public. But successful stakeholder involvement is more than that: it is about earning and maintaining trust, and having an open dialogue where concerns of interested parties are heard and risks and benefits of nuclear power discussed in a transparent manner.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Currently, 32 countries operate nuclear power reactors, with Belarus and the United Arab Emirates connecting their first nuclear reactors to the electrical grid just recently.

In Africa, nuclear power has already been in use for long time. South Africa has been operating a nuclear power plant since 1984. Several other African countries are considering, planning or actively working to include nuclear power in their energy mix. Egypt is now in the process of construction license review of the first nuclear power plant and preparing the site to begin the construction next year.

A successful nuclear power programme is a major undertaking that requires engagement with a variety of stakeholders and a commitment of at least 100 years. The planning and preparatory phases alone take a decade or more. Careful planning and coordination from the outset are vital to the success of any programme.

Stakeholder involvement is one of the infrastructure issues that needs to be managed from the earliest stages of the consideration for a new nuclear power programme. Stakeholder involvement has two major goals: first, to secure and effectively sustain the support of key stakeholders, including the public; and second, to ensure proper preparation of all stakeholders with regard to their role in the nuclear power programme. This workshop will cover both aspects.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Embarking on a nuclear power programme is the sovereign decision of each country. And the responsibility for ensuring the safety and security is always with the country. However, when a country decides to go that route, the Agency is ready to support in an integrated manner the development of the national infrastructure needed for a safe, secure and sustainable nuclear power programme.

We assist our Member States by developing international standards and disseminating proven technical approaches; providing guidance on policies and strategies; and fostering the exchange of scientific and technical information as well as experiences and lessons learned. We do this in Webinars like this one, through technical meetings, international conferences, expert missions, workshops and training courses.

The Agency has developed the Milestones Approach, a phased comprehensive method and a nuclear power programme governance guide to help countries plan and develop their national nuclear infrastructure. Through our Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review (INIR) service, we help countries assess the status of their nuclear infrastructure development and provide recommendations and suggestions to make further progress. Through our Integrated Work Plan process and based on the national action plan developed by countries to address the recommendations and suggestions of the INIR missions, we jointly identify the activities where the Agency can

provide further support. We support many African countries in different phases of implementation through this mechanism, including Egypt, Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, and many others.

The Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review (INIR) service remains a central part of our support to embarking countries. So far, the IAEA conducted 32 INIR missions to 22 Member States. Of those, 9 were in Africa. Just recently we conducted a follow-up mission to Kenya and plan to have the Phase 1 mission to Uganda later this year.

The Agency also provides support in this area through regional and interregional projects. For example, through a major interregional project, the Agency designed and delivered 78 training events for around 1250 participants from 50 Member States in last four years.

I will stop here as you will hear in more details about Agency's work from my colleagues. I thank our colleagues from AFCONE for organizing this workshop and inviting the Agency to participate. I am confident it will be of mutual benefit.

I wish you all productive discussions.

Thank you.