



**Opening Remarks by the Honourable Acting President and  
Minister of Energy,  
Mr Jeff Radebe  
2nd National Nuclear Regulator Information Conference  
16-18 May 2018**

Programme Director

Chairperson of the National Nuclear Regulator, Dr Thapelo  
Motshudi

Chief Executive officer of the National Nuclear Regulator, Dr  
Mzubanzi Tyobeka

Deputy Director General of the International Atomic Energy  
Agency (IAEA) and Head of the Department of Nuclear Safety  
and Security, Mr Juan Carlos Lentijo

Government Officials present

Honourable Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning to you all!

Nuclear safety and all its aspects remain important to South Africa. This fact is demonstrated by the country's continued participation in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) obligations as one of the contracting parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention, and Convention on Early Notification and Assistance in Case of an Emergency. In a week's time South Africa will be participating in the Joint Convention on the safety of Spent Fuel and the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management.

I would like to take this opportunity to also congratulate Dr Mzubanzi Tyobeka, NNR CEO, who will be presiding as the President of the Review Meeting of the Joint Convention.

Ladies and Gentlemen

We welcome this initiative of the Regulatory Information sharing conference as it will shed some light as to what we need to consider to ensure the safety of people and the environment in the advancement of nuclear technology. We view this as an opportunity to bring together all stakeholders from nuclear industry experts, Technical Support Organizations (TSOs), nuclear policy-makers as well as the environmental specialists

and activists in one room - so as to discuss the issues related to the safe use of nuclear and radiation technologies. It is also an opportunity to take stock of a number of new and emerging issues such as those pertaining to radiation technology in industry as well as in the medical and health sectors. Issues related to the siting of new nuclear installations. Issues related to the ageing of existing nuclear installations, as well as emerging issues in the Naturally Occurring Radioactive Materials (NORM) industries. Nuclear is one of the pivotal technologies that has positive spin offs associated with high technological skills especially through it's many applications. It's contribution to the cleaner environment cannot be over emphasized.

We have made commitments in our policies to reduce carbon emissions, and this includes our participation in multi-laterals that would incorporate the Paris Agreement which was negotiated under the framework of the 1992 United Nations Framework Cooperation on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The UNFCCC was aimed at limiting global warming to “well below 2°C” and the pursuance of efforts to limit temperature increases to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. Soon after 2050, countries are expected to have net-zero emissions due to deployment of amongst others, carbon sinks (eg. forests) to offset any emissions produced.

Unlike the previous approach centred only on mitigation, the legal text within the Paris Agreement promotes a holistic approach as it recognizes a connection between mitigation, adaptation and support as pillars to achieve the global goal to phase out Green House Gases (GHGs) to net-zero and build resilience. Nuclear Energy can play a pivotal role in achieving this goal.

Ladies and Gentlemen

We as South Africans reaffirm our commitment to participating at all levels of all the multi-lateral fora, especially the IAEA and its structures. It is important that as a Member State we continue to work towards improving safety in line with the IAEA Nuclear Safety Action Plan. We have already taken the initiative to assess our nuclear programme. The recent Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS Mission) has highlighted the issues of importance we need focus on to ensure the effective functioning of the regulator. This includes the need to harmonise the nuclear and radiological regulatory framework. Addressing these issues will ensure the lessons learned from the Fukushima nuclear accident are taken into account. *I am assured that* our regulator is seized with the task of addressing those issues through implementation

of an Action Plan. I am further informed that the IRRS follow-up mission will be requested by the NNR in the year 2020.

Chairperson

Global Nuclear safety is still paramount within today's nuclear industry. The Peer Review under the Conventions and the various Missions such as the IRRS should be done on a regular basis. This will ensure a common approach of global nuclear safety. Such improvements should be seen as an opportunity to improve and to move towards the sustainable development of a nuclear industry, whilst ensuring that nuclear energy is used for peaceful purposes.

I am looking forward to the most robust discussion coming out of this conference to improve the country's regulatory safety culture.

I thank you.