



**THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT**

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCE DEOGRATIUS JOHN NDEJEMBI,
VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA ON
BEHALF OF H.E. DR. SAMIA SULUHU HASSAN, PRESIDENT OF
THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA AT THE OPENING
CEREMONY OF THE IAEA SCIENTIFIC FORUM 2026**

**THEME "RAYS OF HOPE: DELIVERING ON THE PROMISE OF
CANCER CARE" WITH REFERENCE TO PROGRESS MADE IN
TANZANIA**

**UNITED NATIONS BUILDING
INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY HEADQUARTERS
VIENNA, AUSTRIA
15 SEPTEMBER 2026**

- ***Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency;***
- ***Excellencies Heads of State and Government;***
- ***Honourable Ministers and Ambassadors here present;***
- ***Distinguished Scientists and All Delegates;***
- ***Ladies and Gentlemen.***

It is a great honour and privilege to join you at this important event representing **Her Excellence Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan**, President of the United Republic of Tanzania in the Scientific Forum of the International Atomic Energy Agency convened under the theme **"Rays of Hope: Delivering on the Promise of Cancer Care"** which is both compelling and deeply human. Under the visionary leadership and strong political commitment of the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, health has remained a national priority as demonstrated by progress made in Cancer prevention, diagnosis and treatment from primary to tertiary levels of health care.

Excellencies;

As we all know, every year, cancer claims millions of lives worldwide. In Tanzania, the estimates indicate that, each year approximately 30,000 people lose their lives because of cancer, mainly cervical and breast cancer. As an effort to prevent death caused by cancer, Tanzania has transformed the cancer care landscape in the country and across sub-Saharan Africa. Furthermore, the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania has made health its top agenda with cancer care services being among key medical conditions that are prioritized, as illustrated through the following key areas:

From 2018 to 2026, Tanzania has increased the coverage of single-dose HPV vaccine among girls aged 9 to 14 years from 58% to 98% as an integral part of primary prevention of cervical cancer.

Furthermore, Recognizing the importance of early detection and treatment of cancer, Tanzania has decentralized radiotherapy services from three sites in 2020 to six sites in 2026. As a result, access to radiotherapy has improved from 14 percent to 26 percent benefitting a total of 6,500 patients. Our objective is to reach nine comprehensive cancer treatment sites across six strategic health zones in Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar by 2030.

Excellencies;

Tanzania has successfully deployed a new PET-Scan with cyclotron, being among the first 10 African countries to offer such services. Additionally, from the year 2021 to 2026, Tanzania has increased the number of **MRIs from 7 to 28, LINAC machines from 2 to 8; CT scans from 12 to 97, mammography from 4 to 20** and digital **x-ray machines from 147 to 770** and thereby enhancing access to medical radiation services within Tanzania and neighboring countries. To achieve this level of investment in five years, Tanzania has committed 85.8 million Euros on construction, installation of diagnostic and treatment equipment. One of the notable achievements following this investment, is the **increase in childhood cancer survival rate** from less than **20% to 50% between 2000 and 2025**.

Excellencies;

In 2022 the Government established Dr. Samia Scholarship Program to address the critical shortage of skilled health human resources in the country. As of 2026, the program has sponsored a total of **1,483** healthcare specialists including oncologists, radiologists and other health professionals. Furthermore, through the Rays of Hope, new degree programs in medical physics and radiation oncology were introduced at University of Dar es Salaam and Ocean Road cancer Institute as a way of building a self-sustaining workforce capable of operating advanced clinical infrastructure in Tanzania and across Sub-Saharan Africa.

In addition, to reduce catastrophic health expenditure, increase accessibility and affordability of quality health services, Tanzania enacted **the Universal Health Insurance Act in 2024**. Through the Health Equity Fund, 71.98 million USD was raised in 2026, with an expected 87.92 million USD in 2027 to ensure over 931,693 vulnerable households have access to essential health services including cancer care.

Tanzania developed a **Bankable Document for cancer care** as a blueprint to structure our strategies on expansion of comprehensive cancer services in the country in five strategic health zones. This was done in collaboration with the International Atomic Energy Agency, under the Rays of Hope Initiative. The successful implementation of this initiative is expected to bring screening, diagnostic and treatment services

closer to communities thereby, reducing morbidity and mortality related to late presentation.

Excellencies,

While our framework is robust and our political will is unwavering, the disparity in global cancer care persists significantly and this cannot be reversed in isolation. In this regard, Tanzania urges the IAEA, member states and other International Communities including partners to support and directly finance the fully budgeted clinical projects detailed **in our national bankable documents**, aiming at accelerating the expansion of comprehensive cancer centers in the country.

Again, I am calling upon the IAEA to designate the Ocean Road Cancer Institute as the IAEA's Anchor Centre, aimed at supporting peers in the Global South, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, in providing training within contexts that mirror their own and address the needs of patients with comparable disease patterns. Tanzania believes that, stagnation in advanced nuclear and radiation services results from inadequate infrastructure to support human resource development and research capabilities. Establishing an anchor center at the Ocean Road Cancer Institute will further facilitate the rapid expansion of these services in the region.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;

The Rays of Hope Initiative offers practical meaning to our shared commitment to ensuring that advances in nuclear science and technology benefit people everywhere, particularly those in countries without advanced health systems. We need to convert cancer from a silent demographic crisis into a success story of equitable, modern medicine.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;

In addition to the positive outcomes achieved through the application of nuclear technology in the health sector, Tanzania has also benefited from this technology in various areas;

In agriculture, Tanzania uses mutation breeding to develop resilient, high-yielding crops. The SUPA BC rice variety yields over 60 per cent more than traditional varieties and has contributed to Zanzibar's increased production approaching 50,000 tonnes, earning international recognition through a 2021 IAEA-FAO award.

In energy, Tanzania is preparing to integrate 1,500 MW of nuclear power into its long-term energy mix. Having established Nuclear Energy Programme Implementation Organisation and a national roadmap, the country seeks the IAEA cooperation for an early Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review Mission, capacity building, financing and technology assessment to advance reliable, low-carbon energy and industrialization.

In concluding, I would like to reiterate our profound gratitude and sincere appreciation to the International Atomic Energy Agency, particularly to Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi, for the steadfast support extended to Tanzania through the Rays of Hope Initiative.

I thank you for your kind attention.