



DECLARATION

Adopted at the RCA 50th Anniversary Ceremony and RCA Ministerial Level Meeting

Vienna, Austria, 26 September 2022

We, the Representatives of the twenty-two State Parties to the Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (RCA), gathered at the Ministerial Level Meeting celebrating the 50th Anniversary of its establishment,

- a)* Recalling that it is a function of the International Atomic Energy Agency (hereinafter referred to as the Agency) to encourage and assist research on, and the development and practical application of, atomic energy for peaceful uses, the function of which can be fulfilled by furthering cooperation among its Member States and by assisting them in their national atomic energy programmes,
- b)* Recalling that the State Parties to the Agreement recognize that, within their national atomic energy programmes, there exist areas of common interest wherein mutual cooperation can promote the more efficient utilization of available resources, and desire to encourage such cooperation under the auspices of the Agency,
- c)* Recognizing the important role of science, technology and innovation in addressing current challenges and particularly their role in combating and recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic, meeting the common goals of achieving sustainable development, and addressing climate change,
- d)* Acknowledging the contribution of, and potential for, the applications of nuclear science and technology to meet a wide variety of basic socioeconomic and human development needs and to contribute to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),
- e)* Reaffirming that the use of nuclear technology must be accompanied, at all its stages, by commitments to, and ongoing implementation of, the highest standards of safety, security and safeguards, consistent with State Parties' national legislation and respective international obligations,

- f) Recognizing the achievements of the RCA in the Asia and the Pacific region during the past 50 years, especially in the fields of food and agriculture, human health, industry, the environment and others, and welcoming the publication of the socioeconomic impact assessment of the RCA projects initiated by the Agency on mutation breeding, non-destructive testing, and radiotherapy,
- g) Recognizing the importance of project outcomes in designing and implementing the RCA projects, which are key to enhancing its achievements,
- h) Mindful of regional needs, including those of the Least Developed Countries and the Small Island Developing States, so that every State Party is able to benefit from the RCA,
- i) Acknowledging that South-South cooperation is an essential tool in addressing the common challenges of developing countries efficiently and effectively, as well as in fostering the exchange of best practices and encouraging networking, and welcoming the Agency's participation and contribution with respect to it,
- j) Commending the RCA State Parties, National Representatives, Lead Country Coordinators, National Project Coordinators and other experts who have contributed to significant and notable achievements made in individual State Parties as well as in the region,
- k) Appreciating the work done by the Agency, the Programme Advisory Committee, relevant Working Groups and Task Forces in optimizing and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the RCA activities,
- l) Acknowledging the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the RCA Regional Office and recognizing its contribution in assisting the IAEA Secretariat, as well as in promoting and expanding the RCA, which includes the implementation of various cooperative activities for the region,
- m) Stressing the importance of the ownership of the State Parties for the continual success of the RCA,

Have decided to cooperate as follows:

1. Reaffirm the vital role of the RCA in facilitating the peaceful application of nuclear science and technology, contributing to addressing regional challenges and enhancing the socioeconomic wellbeing of the region, and assure its continued proactive role as an exemplary regional agreement under the auspices of the Agency in leading the application of the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies, enabling the sustainable development of the region and beyond;

2. Reaffirm the importance of the ownership of the RCA State Parties in strengthening regional cooperation and solidarity that accelerates technological development through effective and efficient implementation of the RCA programme;
3. Express our further commitment to regional cooperation to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the programme by encouraging activities and seeking complementarities between national projects and the RCA programme, and to finding innovative ways to meet regional needs, including those of the new State Parties, to make the RCA more sustainable;
4. Emphasize the valuable contribution of the Agency in fostering regional cooperation through the RCA and request that the Agency, within available resources, continue its strong technical and financial support, in close cooperation with RCA State Parties, to further expand regional activities and enhance the impact of the RCA in the peaceful, safe, and secure application of nuclear science and technology, including its contribution to the attainment of the SDGs;
5. Encourage the proactive engagement and contribution of the RCA State Parties in order to ensure the sustainability of the RCA programme in addressing regional priority needs,
6. Make every effort to explore strategic and innovative approaches for building strong regional coordination, cooperation and solidarity to effectively address new trends, including digital transformation, and to adapt to new challenges such as global pandemics and climate change, and to maximize the impact of the RCA programme;
7. Encourage various kinds of collaboration and cooperation under the RCA to ensure that all State Parties, especially the Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States, benefit from the RCA, and that inclusive development is in place;
8. Make every effort to strengthen partnerships, which are an effective instrument for efficiently implementing the RCA programme with financial accountability and transparency, and to build a firm network with various stakeholders for sharing knowledge and expertise and mobilizing human and financial resources on the basis of common interest and mutual benefit, facilitating the RCA programme to meet regional needs and to respond to regional challenges;
9. Stress the importance of a high-level forum on strategic solutions and initiatives that would contribute to achieving sustainable and resilient development in Asia and the Pacific through the RCA, and encourage the engagement of the relevant stakeholders through appropriate events.