

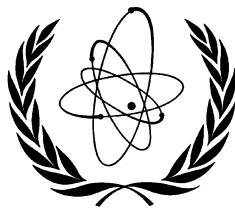
# **IAEA STATEMENT**

**High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development**

**Mobilizing and sharing science, technology and innovation  
for an SDG driven recovery**

**United Nations Headquarters, New York**

**5 July 2022**



**INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

***Mobilizing and sharing science, technology and innovation for an SDG driven recovery***

**Tuesday, 5 July 2022 – 16.30-17.30 hrs**

Mr Chairperson,

The COVID-19 pandemic showed that nuclear techniques are reliable tools, tried and verified, that can contribute to investigating, detecting, preventing, and containing outbreaks of zoonotic diseases.

This is for instance the case of the so called real-time reverse transcription–polymerase chain reaction or “real time RT-PCR” - a nuclear-derived method for specific detection of the presence of genetic material from humans or animals and their respective pathogens, including the RNA coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 that causes the COVID-19 disease. During the pandemic, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has delivered emergency assistance to more than 300 laboratories around the world, dispatching RT-PCR testing equipment, reagents, personnel protective equipment, and providing the necessary training.

The IAEA launched the Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action (ZODIAC) project last year. ZODIAC helps countries to prevent pandemics caused by zoonotic diseases by strengthening their preparedness and capabilities to detect and respond to outbreaks quickly. ZODIAC benefits from the expertise of the joint laboratories of the IAEA and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and from cooperation with partners such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) under the One Health approach. It will help tackle a plethora of zoonotic diseases, such as the ones caused by coronaviruses, the Zika virus, avian influenza viruses as well as other pathogens yet unknown. It’s a unique, holistic and global approach with associated laboratories and focal points on every continent.

It is exactly under the umbrella of ZODIAC that most recently the IAEA has held a workshop to explore how nuclear techniques can help to address outbreaks of monkeypox and Lassa fever, bringing together more than 250 participants from national laboratories with the aim of strengthening cooperation and understanding the epidemiological role of animal carriers and

reservoirs. This and other activities are conducted in synergy with the ongoing work of the FAO, the WOA, and the WHO.

The comprehensive response offered by science, technology and innovation shows us that it is possible to overcome even unprecedented crises working together for the benefit of all. STI can help us to address and alleviate inequalities and achieve, ultimately, sustainable development for all.

I thank you.