



African Commission on Nuclear Energy

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Statement to the

***65th GENERAL CONFERENCE
OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY
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Delivered by

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Executive Secretary*

**AFRICAN COMMISSION ON NUCLEAR ENERGY
(AFCONe)**

**Your Excellency the President of the General Conference,
Mr. Rafael Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency,
Excellencies ,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I join the previous speakers to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to the presidency of this 65th Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference.

I thank HE Ambassador Grossi, the IAEA Director General and the IAEA Secretariat for the efforts developed to serve the member states, in particular in Africa.

Mister President,

The African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Pelindaba Treaty) has celebrated last April, the 25th Anniversary of its opening for signature.

The AFCONE wishes to inform this august assembly about the actions aiming to fully integrate safe and secure peaceful uses of nuclear energy in the African Union Commission (AUC) programmes in particular through the AU Specialised Technical Committees (STCs) and AU Organs.

✓ **In Nuclear Power:** more than 12 african countries are considering the inclusion of nuclear power to their energy mix strategy.

The AFCONE organised several events in this field, mainly with the IAEA Nuclear Energy Department:

- Safe and Secure Development of Nuclear Power Programs in Africa: Development of Clean Energy, Mitigation of Climate Change Impact and Set Up of Appropriate Regulatory Framework (*10 December 2020*)
- Promoting Effective Interaction among Stakeholders in African Countries Introducing or Expanding a Nuclear Power Programme (*20-30 June 2021*)
- A third event is planned next November focusing on the national leadership requirements for a smooth implementation of NPP programmes

✓ **In Human Health:**

The AFCONE organised this 8 September 2021, an important meeting on Fighting Cancer, inviting the African Decision Makers, to allocate the appropriate priority to fight this particular disease within the AU Health Strategy 2030 and to implement the urgent programme recommended considering the critical situation observed in Africa by all the regional and international specialised organisations.

This meeting was held in close cooperation with the IAEA, World Health Organisation (WHO-AFRO), the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC), the African Organisation for Research and Training in Fighting Cancer (AORTIC) and several experts representing the 5 Africa regions and the African Diaspora.



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✓ **In Nuclear Safety and Security:**

The AFCONe underlined through several actions the required conditions in which peaceful uses of nuclear energy (PUNE) need to be implemented:

- “Fostering the African Environmental Legislation and Regulations integrating the Provisions of the Pelindaba Treaty related to the Appropriate Management of Radioactive Wastes” (31 May 2021)
- “Nuclear Security in Africa” organised in close cooperation the IAEA, the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Institute (UNICRI), the European Commission, the CBRN Centres of Excellence and other Partners (24 June 2021)

In Addition, two AFCONe Regional Collaborating Centres (Technical Support Organisations/TSOs) have been selected and designated in particular in the nuclear safety field.

✓ **Regarding the Non-Proliferation and Verification Regime through Nuclear Safeguards,** the AFCONe organised, in particular with the NSG IAEA Department and Other AFCONe Partners, two main meetings in the field:

- Nuclear Safeguards in Africa: Status and Way Forward (23 November 2020)
- AFCONe – INSEP/NNSA/ USA Webinar on Women’s Contributions to Building Strong State Systems of Accounting for and Control of Nuclear Material in Africa (08 March 2021)

The AFCONe selected and designated also in this sensitive field two AFCONe Regional Collaborating Centres (TSOs).

✓ **Capacity Building in Nuclear Science and Technology** represents one of the most important cross cutting issues for the African Member States: the AFCONe organised last March 2021 a meeting involving all the stakeholders, including the IAEA, AFRA, AFRA-NEST, FNRBA and African Experts in the Field.

The meeting recommended, for ownership consideration and resources optimization, the creation of a Nuclear Science and Technology (NST) Pan African University (PAU) Institute and/or a Continental NST specialized institute

Mr President,

The AFCONE has continued its efforts in developing and formalizing its cooperation framework with several partners, in order to reinforce its capacity related to the Verification Regime as well as to enhance its contribution to the global efforts towards nuclear disarmament & non proliferation in coordination with the other Nuclear Weapon Free Zones:

I am pleased to inform you about:

- ✓ the signature, last July 2021 of a Practical Arrangements (PAs) with the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) Organisation,
- ✓ the preparation for the signature this year of an already agreed Cooperation Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with OPANAL, the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean,
- ✓ the On-going consultations with the Central Asia NWFZ for the signature as soon as possible of a cooperation MoU.

Mr President

The AFCONE reaffirms its full support to the United Nations Efforts for the establishment of a zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, as agreed at the 1995 NPT Review Conference.

The Signatories to the Pelindaba Treaty, recognize that the establishment of other NWFZs, *especially in the Middle East*, would enhance the security of States Parties to the African NWFZ.

In Conclusion Mister President,

In preparation to the NPT Review Conference planned early next year, the AFCONE fully supports the “Inalienable Right” to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty.

The AFCONE calls upon the NPT State Parties to encourage the recent initiatives considering and recommending more international support to peaceful uses of nuclear energy, *in particular for the benefit of the Africa Region*, to address through nuclear applications, urgent needs including fighting cancer which is recognised as the more pressing necessity, highly relying on radiation technology with demonstrated cost effective impact.

The review of the progress achieved, the adoption of the AFCONE midterm strategic plan 2021-2025 and AFCONE Flagship Programmes are planned during the upcoming 5th Conference of State Parties organized on 21 & 22 October 2021 at the Pan African Parliament (PAP) Premises in Johannesburg (South Africa).

I Thank You Mister President.

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