COMMUNIQUÉ

THE THIRD CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES TO THE AFRICAN
NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE TREATY OPENS TODAY IN ADDIS
ABABA


The Conference is being attended by the States Parties to the Treaty of Pelindaba and to its Protocols, as well as by relevant regional and international organizations, including the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) and the Forum for Nuclear Regulatory Bodies in Africa (FNRBA).

The Conference will review the activities of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE), including the implementation of its programme of work and budget. The Conference will also discuss the status of the operationalization of the AFCONE Secretariat and other related issues.

The Conference was opened by the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Smâl Chergui. The opening ceremony also featured statements by the Chairperson of AFCONE, Ambassador Abdul Samad Minty; as well as by the FNRBA Chair, Mr Augustin Simo, the Director for Africa at the IAEA Department for Technical Cooperation, Mr Dazhu Yang, and the Director of External Relation and Legal Division at the CTBTO Preparatory Commission, Mr Genxin Li.
NOTE TO THE EDITORS


The Treaty of Pelindaba came as a result of efforts extending over three decades, following the adoption of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, by the 1st Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the OAU, held in Cairo, from 17 to 21 July 1964.

The Treaty of Pelindaba requires States Parties to renounce nuclear explosive devices, particularly to refrain from conducting research, developing, manufacturing, stockpiling or otherwise acquiring, possessing or having control over any nuclear explosive device, as well as from encouraging, receiving, providing or seeking any assistance to these ends. The Treaty also prohibits stationing and testing of nuclear explosive devices on the Zone, as well as dumping of radioactive wastes. The Treaty further requires States Parties to declare, dismantle, destroy or convert nuclear explosive devices and facilities for their manufacture; and to use nuclear science and technology for exclusively verifiable peaceful purposes, while maintaining physical protection of nuclear materials and facilities. The Treaty also prohibits armed attacks on nuclear installations.

The Treaty of Pelindaba is an important pillar of the global efforts to completely eliminate existing nuclear weapons and prevent their proliferation, as enshrined in the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

There are currently 38 States Parties to the Treaty of Pelindaba. These are: Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, Comoros, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Kenya, Libya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mali, Malawi, Mozambique, Mauritania, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, Senegal, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The following States have signed but are yet to ratify the Treaty: Angola, Central African Republic, Cape Verde, Djibouti, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Liberia, Morocco, Niger, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sao Tome & Principe, Sudan and Uganda.

About the Protocols to the Treaty of Pelindaba: The Treaty of Pelindaba has three Protocols. Protocols I and II commit States Parties not to use or threaten to use a nuclear explosive device against any territory within the Zone, as well as not to undertake, assist or encourage the testing of any nuclear explosive device anywhere within the Zone. Protocols I and II are open for signature by the following five nuclear-
weapon states: China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States. China, France, the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland have signed and ratified Protocols I and II, while the United States, which has signed these Protocols, is yet to ratify them.

Protocol III, which is open for signature by France and Spain, concerns the territories for which they are *de jure* or *de facto* internationally responsible for, and which are situated within the Zone. The Protocol commits them not to contribute to any act that constitutes a violation of the Treaty. France has signed and ratified Protocol III, while Spain has neither signed nor ratified it.

**About the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE):** The Treaty of Pelindaba establishes the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE) for the purpose of ensuring States Parties’ compliance with their undertakings. The Treaty mandates AFCONE, *inter alia*, to collate States Parties annual reports, review the application of peaceful nuclear activities and safeguards by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), bring into effect the complaints procedure, encourage regional and sub-regional cooperation, as well as promote international cooperation with extra-zonal States for the peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology. The AFCONE Secretariat is based in Pretoria, South Africa.

AFCONE plays a key role in advancing the peaceful application of nuclear science and technology in Africa and in bringing much-needed support to States Parties to fully benefit from nuclear sciences and technology applications in the areas of health, agriculture and energy. AFCONE is also actively engaged in global and regional efforts towards disarmament and non-proliferation.

AFCONE consists of 12 States Parties that serve for a three-year term. States Parties that are members of AFCONE are elected by the Conference of States Parties with due regard to equitable regional representation and national development in nuclear science and technology. The 1st Conference of States Parties (CSP) held in Addis Ababa, on 4 November 2010, elected the following countries to the membership of AFCONE for a three-year term: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Mali, Mauritius, Senegal, South Africa Togo, and Tunisia.

Members of AFCONE are represented through Commissioners, who are high caliber professionals with experience in the area of nuclear science and technology, diplomacy and security. Current AFCONE Commissioners are: Mr. Messaoud Baaliouamer (Algeria), Dr. Badiori Outtara (Burkina Faso), Dr Augustin Simo (Cameroon), Mr. Atnatiwos Zeleke Meshesha (Ethiopia), Professor Shaukat Abdurazak (Kenya), Dr. Bulgasem Hammouda Ali El-Fawaris (Libya), Mr. Tezana Coulibaly (Mali), Ambassador Anund P. Neewor (Mauritius), Professor Christian Sina Diatta (Senegal), Ambassador Abdul Samad Minty
(South Africa), Lieutenant-Colonel Manzi Pidalatan (Togo) and Dr Mourad Telmini (Tunisia). AFCONE is chaired by Amb. Minty.

AFCONE Commissioners meet in annual Ordinary Sessions to discuss all aspects relating to the implementation of the AFCONE programme of work. The 1st Ordinary Session was held in Addis Ababa on 4 May 2011, the 2nd in Addis Ababa on 26 July 2012, the 3rd in Pretoria on 11-12 November 2013, and the 4th in Addis Ababa on 27 May 2014.

*About the 3rd Conference of States Parties:* The CSP is the highest decision making body in the implementation of the Treaty of Pelindaba. The CSP convenes at least one every two years to review the implementation of the Treaty, and adopt the necessary decisions to ensure the smooth operations of AFCONE.

The 3rd CSP is expected to review the status of the operationalization of AFCONE Secretariat; the status of States Parties’ contributions to the 2013-2015 budget; and address other issues relating to the implementation of the Treaty of Pelindaba. The 3rd CSP will also mark the end of the three-year term of members of AFCONE and is thus expected to elect twelve new States Parties to the membership of AFCONE.