



**Keynote Address**  
**For the**  
**First Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy**

**By**

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**Distinguished Members of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy  
Excellencies, Heads of Delegations and Ambassadors  
Invited Guests  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to Addis Ababa, and to this First Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (ACNE). At the outset, I would also like to congratulate you upon being nominated to represent your countries at the African Commission on Nuclear Energy, and in fact, to collectively constitute the A.U collegial body responsible for the continental endeavors in the area of nuclear energy.

You would recall that the Treaty of Pelindaba was adopted at the 62<sup>nd</sup> meeting of Council of Ministers of the Organization of the African Unity (OAU) in 1995, and was signed in Cairo in 1996. These efforts became a reality in July 2009 following the entry into force of the Treaty, and the First Conference of States Parties to the Treaty subsequently took place on the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2010.

The implementation of this Treaty is in line with the AU's focus to address not only conflict issues, but also on the long-term strategic issues that have a bearing on peace and security. Indeed the AU Commission is strengthening its efforts towards establishing a secure and stable environment in Member States, which is of paramount importance to the fulfillment of AU objectives. These efforts include combating terrorism, fighting the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, fighting against illicit trafficking of CBRN and implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention throughout, promoting continental maritime security strategy, and establishing in place a policy framework for security sector reform among others.

Today's meeting offers an opportunity for the Members of the newly established ACNE to discuss its operationalization, and therefore, the modalities of how to assist States Parties to ensure compliance with their undertakings under the Treaty. Key among the activities of ACNE include:

- a) Be an African mechanism to ensure compliance by all Parties with all their obligations of the non-proliferation requirements;
- b) It will ensure that Africa will be protected from nuclear testing and dumping of nuclear materials;
- c) It will promote the peaceful apply of nuclear science and technology;
- d) It will have outreach activities to states eligible to ratify the Treaty.

The above tasks indicate ACNE as a body will undertake both peace and security, and socio-economic development activities. It is therefore important that States Parties mobilize the necessary resources for the implementation of these activities.

It is in this vein that the AU is committed to contributing to achieving the universality of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Indeed, the AU works towards strengthening the nuclear weapons free zones regime, contributing to the nuclear disarmament and the effectiveness of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, with a view to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. This meeting is a concrete step towards the implementation of the commitments of the Member States of the African Union.

### **Ladies and gentlemen,**

Annex III, paragraph 2 to the Treaty, stipulates that the ACNE shall have a Bureau consisting of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson and the Executive Secretary. It is expected that you will elect the Chairperson and Vice-chairperson during this Session. As the AU Commission, we are looking forward to working with the persons you will entrust with this responsibility.

The Treaty also provides that you will adopt your the Rules of Procedure, and format of reporting by States. You will also propose and discuss your programme of work. In this regard, I am glad that the African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, development and Training related to Nuclear Science and Technology (AFRA), the Forum of Nuclear Regulatory Bodies (FNBRA), and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) are all represented here and follow the discussions and provide technical assistance where necessary.

Once again, I thank you for being here today, and I wish you fruitful deliberations.