

AFRICAN UNION

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PRESS RELEASE

THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION WORKING TOWARDS THE EARLY OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE AFRICAN COMMISSION ON NUCLEAR ENERGY (AFCONE)

Addis Ababa, 26 May 2011: The Commission of the African Union (AU) will intensify its efforts in the coming weeks towards the early operationalization of the AFCONE, including by finalizing its Rules of Procedure, programme of work for 2011-2013, structure, as well as advertising the position of the AFCONE Executive Secretary.

It should be recalled that the First Ordinary Session of the AFCONE was held at the AU Headquarters, in Addis Ababa, on 4 May 2011. This Session is a follow up to the First Conference of States Parties to the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, also known as the Treaty of Pelindaba, which took place in Addis Ababa, in November 2010. This Conference elected the following twelve States Parties for a three-year membership to the AFCONE. These are: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Mali, Mauritius, Senegal, South Africa, Togo and Tunisia.

At the Session, the members of AFCONE exchanged views and discussed various issues essential to its effective operation, including AFCONE rules of procedure, programme of work, structure and scale of assessment for its budget. The Session agreed to continue, with the support of the AU Commission, its deliberations in the coming weeks to finalize the relevant documents and ensure the prompt commencement of the activities of AFCONE.

In pursuance to the provisions of the Treaty, the meeting elected Mr. Abdul Samad Minty of South Africa and Mr. Mourad Telmini of Tunisia as Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of AFCONE, respectively.

The First Ordinary Session of AFCONE is a significant step in the efforts to fully operationalize the Treaty of Pelindaba, and establishes AFCONE with the mandate to assist States Parties comply with their non-proliferation obligations, as well as promote cooperation in the peaceful, safe and secure uses of nuclear science and technology. The Treaty entered into force in 2009.

The twelve members of AFCONE are represented by high caliber professionals with vast experience in the areas of nuclear science and technology, diplomacy and security.

Note to the Editors

About the Treaty of Pelindaba

The African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, also known as the Treaty of Pelindaba, was adopted by the 31st Ordinary Session of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), held in Addis Ababa in June 1995, and signed at Cairo, on 11 April 1996. The Treaty, which entered into force on 15 July 2009, prohibits the development, manufacture, stockpiling, acquisition, testing, possession, control or stationing of nuclear explosive devices in the territory of the States parties and the dumping of radioactive waste in the African zone. It also prohibits any attack against nuclear installations in the zone by the parties and requires them to maintain the highest standards of physical protection of nuclear material, facilities and equipment, which are to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes towards a sustainable development of the African continent.

The Treaty includes three Additional Protocols. The first two commit States Parties not to use or threaten to use a nuclear device against any territory within the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, to undertake, assist or encourage the testing of any nuclear explosive device anywhere within the Zone, as well as not to contribute to any act that constitutes a violation of the Treaty or the Protocols. These two Protocols are open for signature by China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

The third Protocol, 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.

About the AFCONE

Pursuant to Article 12 of the Treaty, the States Parties agreed to establish the AFCONE as the body responsible for, *inter alia*, ensuring compliance with States' obligations under the Treaty and the Protocols. More specifically, Article 12 of the Treaty states that AFCONE shall be responsible for:

- collating the reports and the exchange of information;

- arranging consultations relating to complaints procedure and settlement of dispute, as well as convening conferences of Parties on matters arising from the implementation of the Treaty;
- reviewing the application to peaceful nuclear activities of safeguards by IAEA;
- bringing into effect the complaints procedure;
- encouraging regional and sub-regional programmes for cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology; and
- promoting international cooperation with extra-zonal States for the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology.

The Headquarters of AFCONE is in the Republic of South Africa.

About the Commissioners

The twelve members of AFCONE are:

Mr. Messaoud Baaliouamer, Algeria: Mr. Baaliouamer has been serving as the Director for Foresight Studies and Nuclear Applications at the Algerian Atomic Energy Commission (COMENA) since 1999. He has also been a member of the African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training related to Nuclear Science and Technology (AFRA) Field Management Committee since 2000 and the AFRA Programme Management Committee since 2009. He coordinated the AFRA National Programme from 1999 to 2006.

From 1995 to 1998, he served as the Chair of the Scientific Committee at Birine Nuclear Research Centre as well as directed the Center from 1991 to 1992. From 1988 to 1998 he was the Head of the Nuclear Instrumentation and Control Department. He actively contributed to the commissioning of the AURES 1 Subcritical Assembly in 1986, the 1 MW NUR Nuclear Research Reactor in 1988 and the 15 MW Multi Purpose Heavy Water (MPHW) Reactor Es Salam and associated Laboratories (1992-1996). In 2000, Mr. Baaliouamer was awarded the scientific grade “Maitre de Recherche (MR)” or Senior Fellow. He was awarded a Master of Sciences in Nuclear Engineering in 1980 and has thirty years of experience in the field of nuclear research and development.

Since 2007, he has been leading the team in charge of the creation and implementation of the Algerian Institute of Education and Training in Nuclear Engineering (IAGN/COMENA). In January 2007, he chaired the Scientific Committee of the African Regional Conference on Nuclear Energy (Contribution to Peace and Sustainable Development), held in Algiers, whose declaration and plan of action have been adopted by the African Union Head of States Summit in January 2007, in Addis Ababa.

Dr. Baidori Outtara, Burkina Faso: Dr. Outtara, holder of a Masters Degree in Agri Pedology, and has been serving as the Permanent Secretary of the Technical Secretariat for Atomic Energy and National Liaison Officer for Technical Cooperation with the IAEA and National Coordinator of AFRA since 2007. He previously served as Director General for the Improvement of Life Setting at the Ministry of Environment and Life Setting from 2005 to 2007, and Chief of Environmental Research at the Center for Environmental research, Agriculture and Training (CREAF) from 1995 to 2003.

At the regional and sub-regional levels, Dr. Outtara served as Chairman of the Steering Committee of the West and Central Africa Sorghum Research from 1995 to 2000, national coordinator of the sub regional research project on the survey of the aggregation mechanism of tropical poorly swelling clays soils from 1990 to 1994, and national coordinator of the research project on the optimization of rainfall resources at the international network for research on drought tolerance in western and central Africa from 1985 to 1989.

Dr Augustin Simo, Cameroon: Dr Simo is currently the Director General of the National Radiation Protection Agency, and has served as the Head of the Energy Research Laboratories at the Institute of Geological and Mining Research since 1980. He is also currently the National Liaison Officer for the IAEA and National Coordinator for AFRA as well as a Member of the AFRA Programme Management Committee. He served as the AFRA Chairperson from 2009 to 2010, as well as Member of Cameroon's delegation to the IAEA's Board of Governors from 2009 to 2011. From 2007 to 2010, he served as the Permanent Secretary of the National Committee for Technology Development.

In 1982, Dr Simo was awarded a Doctorate in Energy from the University of Aix Marseille III in France. He taught at the Center of Atomic Physics, Molecular and Quantum Optics at the University of Douala and at the Department of Physics at the University of Yaoundé. He was a Research Fellow at the Energy Research Laboratories of the Institute for Geological and Mining Research from 1980 to 2009.

Mr. Atnatiwos Zeleke Meshesha, Ethiopia: Mr. Meshesha has been serving as Director of the Inspection & Enforcement Directorate and Head of the Regulatory Control Department at the Ethiopian Radiation Protection Authority (ERPA) since 2007. From 2004 to 2006, he was Acting General Manager of the Ethiopian Radiation Protection Authority and prior to that he served for over four years as Senior Expert and Head of the Regulatory Control Coordination Unit of the Authority. He is currently serving as the Acting Director General of ERPA and the Deputy Secretary of the Forum of Nuclear Regulatory Body in African (FNRBA).

In 2000, Mr. Meshesha was awarded a Post Graduate Diploma in Radiation Protection from the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa and an MSc in Radiation and Environmental Protection by Surrey University, UK.

Professor Shaukat Abdurazak, Kenya: Since 2008, Professor Abdurazak has been serving as the Executive Secretary of the National Council for Science and Technology at the Ministry of Higher Education Science and Technology. He is also currently the National Liaison Officer for the IAEA and National Coordinator for AFRA as well as the Chairman of its Programme Management Committee.

Professor Abdurazak is a Board Member of various national institutes, including: the Radiation protection Board, Kenya Agricultural Research Institute, Kenya Institute of Research and Development, Kenya Medical Research Institute, Kenya Marine and Fisheries Institute and Kenya Forestry Research Institute. He is also a Board Member of the Inter-University Council of East Africa.

Professor Abdurazak was awarded a PhD in 1995 by the University of Aberdeen, UK, and a Post Doctorate certificate in 2001 by Shimane University, Japan. He has been a Professor at the Egerton University since 2005 and served as Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research and Extension at Egerton University from 2002 to 2007.

Dr. Bulgasem Hammouda Ali El-Fawaris, Libya: Dr El-Fawaris has been a member of the Central Steering Committee of the Libyan Atomic Energy Establishment since 2008 and a member of the Network Operation Center Environmental Surveillance Committee related to oil and gas NORM contamination since 2007. In 2007 he was appointed national representative in the IAEA Radioactive Waste Management technical Committee for a three-year term. In 1982, he joined the Libyan Atomic Energy Establishment as Head of Radiation Control and Health Physics at which he served for eight years.

Dr El-Fawaris was awarded a Master of Science degree in Ecology and another one in Nuclear Science and Radiation Protection from Louisiana State University, USA, in 1980 and 1981, respectively. In 1990 he joined the Department of Radioecology at Uppsala University, in Sweden, for a doctorate programme which he was awarded in 1995. He served as Associate Professor at Tajoura Nuclear Research Center from 1995 to 2004, and has been serving as Full Professor at the Renewable Energy and Water Desalination Research Center from 2005 to date.

Mr. Tezana Coulibaly, Mali: Mr. Coulibaly has served at the National Directorate of Energy of Mali since 2000 as Chief of the Energy Saving Section and later as Chief of the Energy Management Division. He has also been serving as the National Coordinator for AFRA since 2008. Prior to that, Mr. Coulibaly served for five years as Deputy General Manager of the Regulation Office of Traffic and urban Transport of the district of Bamako.

H.E Mr. Anund P. Neewoor, Mauritius: Mr. Neewoor, a career diplomat, has been serving as Secretary for Foreign Affairs since 2005. From 1999 to 2001, he served as the Permanent Representative and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Mauritius to the United Nations. From 1993 to 1996, he served as Ambassador to the United States and High Commissioner to Canada and Guyana and, from 1983 to 1993, as Ambassador to Russia, Thailand, Myanmar and Nepal, and High Commissioner to India, Bangladesh, Malaysia and Sri Lanka. He concurrently served as Dean of the Diplomatic Corps in India, from 1990 to 1993, and Dean of the African Ambassadors Corps in New Delhi, from 1988 to 1993.

Mr. Neewoor also served for varying periods in other high level diplomatic positions including Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Ambassador at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in charge of Multilateral Affairs. He was decorated by the Government of Mauritius as Commander of the Star and Key of the Ocean in 2003 and Grand Officer of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean in 2008.

Dr. Christian Sina Diatta, Senegal: Dr. Diatta is a member of the AFRA High-Level Steering Committee on Human resource Development and Nuclear Knowledge Management. He served as Minister for eight years in charge of Bio-fuels and Renewable Energy Scientific Research.

In 1988, he founded and directed the Laboratory of Plasma Physics and Interdisciplinary Research at the University of Cheikh Anta Diop, in Dakar, as well as directed, from 1988 to 2001, the Institute of Applied Nuclear Technology and the Research Institute on Teaching Mathematics in Physical Sciences and Technology from 1985 to 1993.

Dr Diatta has extensive experience in the field of scientific research. From 1984 to 1986, he was visiting researcher at the Joint Institute for Laboratory Astrophysics in Colorado, US; visiting researcher at the Laboratory of Organic Chemistry of Wroclaw, Poland, in 1975; and researcher at the National Centre of Scientific Research in France, from 1969 to 1977. Dr Diatta was awarded a Doctorate degree in Science by the University of Orleans, France, in 1977.

Mr. Abdul Samad Minty, South Africa: Mr. Minty currently serves at the South African Department of International Relations and Cooperation as Ambassador and Special Representative for Disarmament and NEPAD, as well as the Personal Representative of the President on the NEPAD Steering Committee. Mr. Minty served as Deputy Director-General for Multilateral Affairs in the South African Department of Foreign Affairs, from 1995 to 2004, and acting Director General of the Department for over two years. He is currently the Convener of the Council of the South Centre.

Mr. Minty has been serving as the chairperson of the South African Council for Non-Proliferation of WMD since 1995 and the representative of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation on the South African National Conventional Arms Control Committee, as well as a member of the Board of the South African Nuclear Energy Corporation. He has been South Africa's Governor in the IAEA Board of Governors since 1995 and was President of the IAEA Conference in 2006. Mr. Minty was also a member of the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters for two years.

Mr. Minty served as an Honorary Secretary of the British Anti-Apartheid Movement from 1962 to 1995 and Director of the World Campaign Against Military and Nuclear Collaboration with South Africa from 1979 to 1994. He was awarded a Masters degree in International Relations by the University College of London in 1969, and was Senior Research Fellow at the International Peace Research Institute at Oslo from 1994 to 1995.

Lieutenant-Colonel Manzi Pidalatan, Togo: Lt. Colonel Pidalatan is a member of the National Authority on Weapons of Mass Destruction and is responsible for matters of

nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. He is also Head of Office for the Training of General Staff.

Lt. Colonel Pidalatan also received several decorations, including Knight of the National Mono, Officer of the Order in Central Africa, Medal of the African Union, Medal of Peace of the United Nations and Medal of the French National Defense.

Dr. Mourad Telmini, Tunisia: Dr Telmini is presently the Director General of the National Centre for the Nuclear Science and Technology, full Professor of Physics at the Faculty of Science of Tunis, Head of the Research Group in Atomic and Molecular Physics at the Faculty of Science of Tunis, Vice-President of the Tunisian Physical Society, Fellow of the Institute of Physics, Liaison Committee representative of Tunisia in the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics (IUPAP), member of C13 IUPAP commission on Physics for Development and member of the Tunisian delegation in the IAEA Board of Governors.

Dr Telmini served as Senior Scientific Advisor at the National Centre for Nuclear Science and Technology from 2008 to 2010, Associate Professor of Physics at the Faculty of Science of Tunis, from 2004 to 2009, and President of the Tunisian Physics Society from 2005 to 2007. Dr Telmini was awarded a Doctorate degree in Atomic Physics in 1993 by Universite Paris Sud 11, France.