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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, P.O. Box: 3243 Tel.: (251-11) 5513 822 Fax: (251-11) 5519 321

Email: situationroom@africa-union.org, situationroom@ausitroom-psd.org

PRESS RELEASE

THE AFRICAN COMMISSION ON NUCLEAR ENERGY CONCLUDES ITS FIFTH ORDINARY SESSION

Addis Ababa, 19 May 2015: The African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE) concluded, today, its Fifth Ordinary Session at the African Union (AU) Headquarters, in Addis Ababa. The Session started yesterday, 18 May 2015, and was opened by AU Peace and Security Commissioner Smail Chergui. In his statement, the Commission underlined the critical role of AFCONE in the implementation of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, also known as the Treaty of Pelindaba, in particular the peaceful use of nuclear science and technology for socio-economic development on the continent. He stressed the urgency of fully operationalizing the AFCONE Secretariat and pledged the commitment of the AU Commission to continue to support this process.

The Session marked the beginning of the three-year term, till 2018, of the members of AFCONE who were elected by the 3rd Conference of State parties to the Treaty of Pelindaba, which took place in Addis Ababa, from 29 to 30 May 2014. The following eight out of the twelve Commissioners of AFCONE were in attendance: Mr. Messaoud Baalouamer of Algeria, Honorable George Ochilo Ayacko Mbogo of Kenya, Mr. Tezana Coulibaly of Mali, Mr. Rajcoomar Bikoo of Mauritius, Professor Christian Sina Diatta of Senegal, Advocate Doctor Mashabane of South Africa, Colonel Pidalatan Manzi of Togo, and Dr. Gatsha Mazithulela of Zimbabwe. In accordance with the Treaty provisions, the Session elected Honorable George Ochilo Ayacko Mbogo of Kenya and Dr. Gatsha Mazithulela of Zimbabwe as Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of AFCONE, respectively.

The Session discussed the implementation of AFCONE's programme of work, which revolves around four pillars: monitoring States parties' compliance with their Treaty obligations; nuclear and radiation safety and security; peaceful applications of nuclear sciences and technology; and partnerships and technical cooperation. The Session further discussed administrative and operational matters and agreed on practical steps to expedite the operationalization of the AFCONE Secretariat. It also provided a platform for consultations with the Africa Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training related to Nuclear Science and Technology (AFRA), currently chaired by the Kingdom of Lesotho.

It should be recalled that AFCONE was established by the Treaty of Pelindaba, which was adopted in April 1996 and entered into force in July 2009. AFCONE is mandated to monitor and support States Parties comply with their non-proliferation obligations, as well as promote cooperation in the peaceful, safe and secure applications of nuclear sciences and technology.

NOTE TO THE EDITORS

About the Treaty of Pelindaba

The African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, also known as the Treaty of Pelindaba, was signed in Cairo, Egypt, on 11 April 1996 and entered into force on 15 July 2009. The Treaty, for which the Chair of the African Union Commission is the depositary, prohibits the development, manufacture, stockpiling, acquisition, testing, possession, control or stationing of nuclear explosive devices in the Zone territory of 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.

The Treaty has three 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, as well as not to undertake, assist or encourage the testing of any nuclear explosive device anywhere within the Zone. These two Protocols are open for signature by the five recognized nuclear-weapon States. 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, 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 Conference of States Parties

The Conference of States Parties (CSP) is the highest decision-making body for the implementation of the Treaty of Pelindaba. The CSP convenes at least once every two years in accordance with Article 14 of the Treaty to review the implementation of the Treaty and adopt the necessary decisions to ensure the smooth operations of AFCONE. Since the Treaty entered into force on 15 July 2009, the CSP convened three times in 2010, 2012 and 2014.

About AFCONE

The African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE) was established by Article 12 of the Treaty of Pelindaba as the body responsible for, *inter alia*, ensuring States Parties compliance with their obligations under the Treaty and its Protocols and promoting regional and sub-regional programmes for cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology. In 2012 AFCONE adopted its programme of work which consists of four pillars focusing on: a) monitoring States parties' compliance with their Treaty obligations; b) nuclear and radiation safety and security; c) nuclear sciences and applications; and d) partnerships and technical cooperation with the relevant regional and international bodies.

The Secretariat of AFCONE will be located in Pretoria, South Africa, and will be headed by an Executive Secretary. AFCONE is financed by States Parties assessed contributions, as well as grants from international partners.

In accordance with the Treaty, twelve States Parties are elected, based on equitable geographical distribution as well as national advances in nuclear science and technology, to serve a three-year term in AFCONE. States Parties elected to be members of AFCONE. The current members of AFCONE were elected at the Third Conference of States Parties held in Addis Ababa, from 29 to 30 May 2014 and are as follows: Algeria, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Mali, Mauritius, Senegal, South Africa, Togo, Tunisia and Zimbabwe. They will serve from May 2015 to May 2018. To date, nine have designated their Commissioners.

The State parties elected to be members of AFCONE are represented by professionals with vast experience in the area of nuclear science and technology, security and diplomacy. The following Commissioners have been designated today:

Honorable George Ochilo Ayacko Mbogo, Kenya (Chairperson): Honorable Mbogo has served as Minister of Energy from 2003 to 2004 and Minister of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services from 2004 to 2005. He was Member of Parliament for Rongo Constituency from 1997 to 2007 during which he served as Chairman of the Public Investments Committee of the National Assembly from 1998 to 2001 and as Member of the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament from 2006 to 2007.

Honorable Mbogo is an advocate of the High Court of Kenya since 1994 and was the Legal Advisor and Team Leader to the Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs of the Government of South Sudan from 2008 to 2009. From 2010 to 2013, Honorable Mbogo was a Member of the Board of Directors of the Lake basin Authority and Executive Chairman of the Nuclear Electricity Project Committee from 2010 to 2012. He currently serves as Executive Chairman and CEO of Kenya Nuclear Electricity Board and Chairman of Kenya Water Institute.

Honorable Mbogo was awarded an LL.M. in Law, Governance and Democracy in 2009 and an LL.B. in 1992 by the University of Nairobi. He also holds a Diploma on Nuclear Law from the University of Montpellier.

Dr Gatsha Mazithulela, Zimbabwe (Vice-Chair): Dr Mazithulela is a senior business executive with over ten years of strategy and board-level experience in diverse high technology industrial research environments including large scale nuclear energy industries. He served as Vice-President of the National Research Foundation of South Africa; Board Member of Nuclear Technology Products (Pty) Limited, South Africa; and Corporate Development Consultant at the South African Nuclear Energy Corporation. He led the collaboration strategy in the production of radioactive isotopes from the National Research Foundation's electron accelerators and the Safari-1 nuclear reactor at Pelindaba, South Africa as well as the formulation of a strategy to commercialize the only hospital offering proton therapy in Africa, Cape Town.

Dr Mazithulela also served in the Steering Committee of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation on African Bio fortified Sorghum Project in 12 African countries and the Steering Committee of

Africa Square Kilometer Array radio-telescope. He also headed the host institution for the African Union's Southern African regional node for Biotechnology (SAN BIO).

In 1998 he was awarded a PhD in genetic engineering by the University of East Anglia and an MBA in 2002 by Middlesex University. He obtained his Bachelor of Applied Science with Honors in Biology and Biochemistry in 1994 at the National University of Science and Technology.

Mr. Messaoud Baaliouamer, Algeria: Mr. Baaliouamer has over thirty years in Research and development within the Algerian Nuclear Sector. He served as the Director for Prospective Studies and Nuclear Applications at the Algerian Atomic Energy Commission (COMENA) from 1998 to 2014. He has also been a member of the AFRA Field Management Committee since 2000 and the AFRA Programme Management Committee since 2009. From 1995 to 1998, he served as the Chair of the Scientific Committee at the *Centre de Développement des Systèmes Energétiques* and directed its Birine Nuclear Research Center in 1992.

From 1988 to 1998 he was the Head of the 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.

In 1980 he was awarded a Masters of Sciences in Nuclear Engineering, Nuclear Instrumentation and Control by the Centre of Nuclear Sciences and Technology of Algeria and the Center for Nuclear Studies in Grenoble, France. He also holds a BSc in Physics and Electronics from Algiers University.

Dr Augustin Simo, Cameroon: Dr Simo is currently the Director General of the National Radiation Protection Agency, a position he has held since 2010. Previously, he served at the Ministry for Scientific Research and Innovation in the position of Head of the Energy Research Laboratories at the Institute of Geological and Mining Research, from 1980 to 2007, and Permanent Secretary of the National Committee for Technology Development, from 2007 to 2010.

At the regional and international levels, Dr Simo has been serving as the Chairperson of the Forum for Nuclear Regulatory Bodies in Africa (FNRBA) since 2012. He is also the National Liaison Officer for the IAEA and was the National Coordinator for AFRA from 1998 to 2013. 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.

In 1982, Dr Simo was awarded a Doctorate in Energy from the University of Aix Marseille III in France. He also holds a Master 2 degree in Physics from the University of Perpignan and a Bachelor and master 1 degree from the University of Yaoundé. He also taught at Center of Atomic Physics, Molecular and Quantum Optics at the University of Douala and at the Department of Physics at the University of Yaoundé.

Mr. Tezana Coulibaly, Mali: Mr. Coulibaly is currently serves as a Technical Advisor at the Ministry of Energy. From 1980 to 1995 he held several technical and senior positions at the Dioro rice. Subsequently, he served from 1995 to 2000 as Deputy Director of the Regulatory Office of Traffic and Transportation of the Bamako District. Mr Coulibaly also worked at the National Directorate of Energy of Mali from 2001 to 2012 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.

Mr Coulibaly has a degree in Engineering from the Ecole Nationale d'Ingénieurs de Bamako and a Diploma of Specialized Higher Studies.

Mr Rajcoomar Bikoo, Mauritius: Mr Bikoo is the Director General of the Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities. He served at the Ministry since 1984 in several technical, policy and managerial positions, including Director of Technical Services, Head of Project Coordination, Monitoring and Implementation, Project Coordinator and Power Systems Planner. He is also the representative of Mauritius as co-Chair of the Africa – EU Energy Partnership.

Mr Bikoo currently serves as Director of the Petroleum Pricing Committee Board, the Wastewater Management Authority Board and the Board of the State Land Development Company Limited. Mr Bikoo also served as Chair of various Technical Committees including for the negotiations of Private Partnership Agreements with the Independent Power Producers for supply of power from bagasse/coal plants and the extension of heavy fuel oil power station.

Mr Bikoo also chaired the Steering Committee to monitor and follow-up with development partners technical assistance programmes in the areas of power and energy sectors reform, integrated management of water resources and renewable energy and energy efficiency. He also chaired the committee monitoring all IAEA projects and preparation of the Country Programme Framework for 2006-12 and 2014-18. Throughout his career, Mr Bikoo contributed to the drafting of several national legislation including on radiation protection, water and energy.

Professor Christian Sina Diatta, Senegal: Mr. 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 at the ministries 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 the Teaching of Mathematics in Physical Sciences and Technology from 1985 to 1993.

Dr Diatta has extended experience in the field of scientific research. From 1984 to 1986 he was visiting researcher at the Joint Institute for Laboratory Astrophysics in Colarado, 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, in 1977, a Doctorate degree in Science by the University of Orleans, France.

Advocate Doctor Mashabane, South Africa: Advocate Mashabane was appointed Chief-Director: United Nations (Politics, Peace and Security) in October 2014. He served as South Africa's Deputy Permanent Representative/Plenipotentiary to the UN from 2010 to 2014. He also served as South Africa's Deputy representative to the UN Security Council from the term 2011 to 2012.

Advocate Mashabane hold a B.Proc, LLB, LLM (International Human Rights Law), Certificates in International Criminal Law, Legal Writing and Legislative Drafting. He was admitted as an Advocate of the High Court of South Africa in April 002. He worked for the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development as a Senior State Law Adviser focusing on Constitutional and Human Rights Law.

Before his appointment as Deputy Permanent Representative of South Africa to the UN, he served from 2002 as Director for Humanitarian Affairs in the Branch Multilateral (UN), which included International Humanitarian Law at the Department of International Relations and Cooperation. During this period, he chaired a National Committee on International Humanitarian Law. Since joining the Department he has been part of South African delegations to the UN General Assembly and its Committees, in particular the Third Committee.

Colonel Pidalatan Manzi, Togo: 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 at the Togolese Armed Forces and the National Liaison Officer to the IAEA.

Colonel Manzi also received several honors including Officer of the National Order of Togo, Knight of the Central African Order, French Medal of National Defense, Medal of the African Union and the Comoros and Commemorative Medal of the United Nations Mission in Cote d'Ivoire. Colonel Manzi graduated in 1979 from Ecole Nationale Supérieure D'Ingénieurs, Université De Lomé.

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