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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **THE AFRICAN UNION WELCOMES THE AWARDING OF THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE TO ICAN**

**Addis Ababa, 7 October 2017:** The Chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, welcomes the awarding of the 2017 Nobel Prize for Peace to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). He congratulates ICAN, and expresses AU's profound appreciation for its decade-long advocacy for the total elimination of nuclear arms. This award is a timely encouragement to all those who toil to achieve the aspiration for the elimination, from national armaments, of atomic weapons and all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction.

The Chairperson recalls that Africa has consistently advocated for global denuclearization. Indeed, the First Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), held in July 1964 in Cairo, Egypt, adopted a "Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa," solemnly declaring the continent's "readiness to undertake, through an international agreement to be concluded under the auspices of the United Nations, not to manufacture or acquire control of nuclear weapons." In the same vein, the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone - the Treaty of Pelindaba, which was signed in Cairo in April 1996 and entered into force on July 2009, expressed the conviction of the state parties about the need to take all steps in achieving the ultimate goal of a world entirely free of nuclear weapons, as well as the obligations of all states to contribute to this end.

The choice of the Nobel Committee will add impetus to the global efforts for the expeditious signing and ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which was adopted on 7 July 2017 and has been open for signature since 20 September 2017.

The Chairperson reaffirms the AU's commitment continue actively working towards the achievement of the objective of a nuclear free world.

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