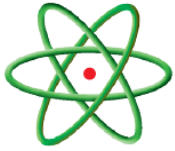


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REPORT OF THE AFRICAN COMMISSION OF NUCLEAR ENERGY
(AFCONE) ON

THE 2ND NPT REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR THE 11TH NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE IN 2026

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND
22 JULY - 2 AUGUST 2024



PEACE • POWER • PROSPERITY

INTRODUCTION

The African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE) participated in the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for the 11th NPT Review Conference that was held at the United Nations Office in Geneva, Switzerland, from July 22 to August 2, 2024. AFCONE delivered statements on behalf of the African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone during the General Debate, and during cluster 3 deliberations on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Africa faces several external threats that could undermine its security and development goals, including the proliferation and manufacturing of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, and the dumping of nuclear wastes. AFCONE plays a crucial role in aligning Africa's Common Defence and Security Policy (CDSP) with the goals and obligations of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This integration strengthens the continent's ability to address these common security threats. The CDSP, based on Articles 3 and 4 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, aims to safeguard Africa's security interests through the promotion of peace, security, and stability.

In this report, AFCONE summarizes and analyses the discussions and key outcomes of the PrepCom, in particular, as they pertain to Africa and African perspectives, as well as to peace, security and development in Africa.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. It entered into force on 5 March 1970. In accordance with Article VIII(3) of the Treaty, member states convene every five years (in Review Conferences) to review the implementation of the Treaty as well as the decisions of past review conferences, and to agree on the way forward.

This PrepCom was the second in a series of three PrepComs in anticipation of the 2026 NPT Review Conference (RevCon). As the name suggests, PrepComs are preparatory conferences that serve as platforms for NPT member states to promote the objectives of the NPT, as well as to flesh out pressing issues surrounding the three pillars of the NPT, namely, disarmament, non-proliferation, and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Proper stewardship of these pillars is key to advancing the goals of the NPT and ensuring its continued relevance in a complex international security environment.

The conference revealed both progress and challenges facing the NPT, and highlighted the necessity for continued dialogue, transparency, and cooperation to ensure the effective implementation of the treaty.

This conference promoted the need to ramp up efforts to bridge gaps between differing perspectives, particularly in view of emerging and disruptive technologies that could threaten or bolster the non-proliferation regime, as well as the fact that the previous two NPT Review Conferences in 2015 and 2022 failed to reach consensus on the outcome documents.

As has been the norm in the NPT review cycle, there were reiterated calls for countries that are currently outside the framework of the NPT to accede to the Treaty without delay; as well as repeated calls for both nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon member states to fulfil their obligations under the Treaty.

Sierra Leone, which currently chairs the African Group in Geneva read statements on behalf of the African Group during the General Debate, as well as during plenary sessions on Clusters 1 (nuclear disarmament), cluster 2 (non-proliferation), and cluster 2 Specific issue (regional issues). Some African States also presented statements in their national capacities.

In their statements, African countries variously aligned themselves with the statements delivered on behalf of the African Group, the Arab Group, the Non-Aligned Movement, the New Agenda Coalition, and the De-alerting Group. The following 16 African countries gave statements to the General Debate: Ghana, Uganda, Sierra Leone (on behalf of the African Group), South Africa, Egypt, Burkina Faso, Namibia, Ethiopia, Tunisia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Algeria, Senegal.

AFCONE co-hosted a side event on 30 July 2024, in collaboration with the Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority of Finland (STUK). The side-event described how AFCONE is cooperating with the European Union (EU) and Finland in strengthening nuclear material control systems in Africa, in navigating contemporary challenges for safeguards implementation in the region, and how AFCONE is supporting African States in effective implementation of IAEA safeguards.

On 25 July 2024, AFCONE participated in a breakfast meeting for African States, hosted by the Ambassador of South Africa, His Excellency, Mxolisi Nkosi, in collaboration with the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (ICRC). The purpose of the meeting was to follow up on the universalization of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) in Africa, and incidentally to encourage adherence to the African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty (The Treaty of Pelindaba).

The PrepCom faced continued procedural challenges that first appeared during PrepCom 1 in 2023. Despite engaging in two weeks of crucial discussions on significant global threats, the meeting ended in a contentious debate about which documents should be included in the official procedural report. Some delegations resisted including the Chair's summary and recommendations for the Third PrepCom session as official documents, though this opposition was less intense than in the previous year.

To finalize the procedural report and document the meeting, the Chair added a footnote to his summary, as suggested by one delegation, stating that it "solely reflects the views of the chairman, is not agreed upon by the delegations, and does not fully capture their positions. The document should not be considered a basis for future work in the NPT review process." The Chair recognized that there was no consensus to adopt his summary as an official outcome of the PrepCom. Nevertheless, he planned to submit it as a working paper under his authority, consistent with the practice in 2017, 2018, and 2019. The requirement to include the footnote for the summary to be listed as a working paper underscored the ongoing procedural challenges.

Many delegations stressed that it is standard practice in multilateral forums for Chairs to independently present documents and reflections, this appears to be changing. Historically, there have been efforts to weaken outcome documents, however, the dispute over including working papers in a procedural report represents a new level of contention within NPT standards. Notably, this PrepCom managed to partially restore the past

practice of issuing the Chair's paper, aligning more closely with the procedures followed in 2017, 2018, and 2019, rather than the disruptions experienced in 2023.

Looking ahead, Ghana will chair the third PrepCom next year, with Ambassador Harold Agyeman serving as Chair of its third session. This transition brings a renewed focus and leadership to the preparatory process, which is particularly significant for amplifying African positions and interests within the NPT framework.

CLUSTER (PILLAR) 1: DISARMAMENT

Cluster 1 addresses the obligations and commitments of nuclear-weapon states (NWS) related to nuclear disarmament under Article VI of the NPT, within the framework of complete and general disarmament. The NWS recognized by the NPT are China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

The emphasis is on the necessity for NWS to make progress on enhancing international security through reducing the salience of nuclear weapons, reducing the size of their nuclear weapon arsenals, and ultimately eliminating them.

While the debate reflected a commitment to dialogue, it also revealed significant and continuing divides between nuclear and non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS). NWS highlighted their progress on reducing the size of their nuclear weapon arsenals, while a good number of NNWS criticized the NWS for qualitatively improving their nuclear weapons, and engaging in modernization programmes that are inconsistent with disarmament.

The essential role of Nuclear Weapon Free Zones (NWFZ) in nuclear risk reduction, and in furthering disarmament was recognized, including the necessity of confidence building measures for strengthening the legitimacy of NWFZs. In this regard, the five NPT NWS (N5) were repeatedly encouraged to provide Negative Security Assurances (NSA) to the NWFZs through ratifications (without reservations) of the applicable protocols of all the NWFZ Treaties.

This was reflective of many states' concerns that the validity of NSAs have been recently brought into question by the actions of NWS and their allies.

This is of particular importance to AFCONE, as the African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (ANWFZ), established by the Treaty of Pelindaba, is crucial for the African continent as it enhances regional security, promotes peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and strengthens the global non-proliferation regime. The establishment of this zone not only prevents the presence of nuclear weapons in Africa but also reinforces the continent's commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, contributing significantly to global peace and security. However, the ratification of the protocols by some nuclear-armed states is still outstanding, which hampers the full realization of the security assurances that the treaty aims to provide. Non-ratification of Pelindaba protocols remains a lingering issue that is yet to be sufficiently raised by African States, in the context of this review cycle.

Additionally, the issue of Diego Garcia's sovereignty remained conspicuously absent from the discussions, marking a significant oversight by African states. Despite the island's recognition as part of African Nuclear Weapons free Zone area as per historical and legal claims, African representatives did not address this issue within the NPT framework. The

failure to leverage the NPT platform to advocate for Diego Garcia's sovereignty underscores a missed opportunity for African states to align their non-proliferation and disarmament agendas with broader geopolitical and decolonization objectives. This gap in advocacy could be interpreted as a reluctance to confront powerful stakeholders directly, thereby limiting the comprehensiveness of Africa's strategic approach at the PrepCom.

Many States decried the lack of tangible progress on the establishment of a weapons of mass destruction (WMD) free zone in the Middle East as tantamount to a betrayal of the package of decisions that facilitated the indefinite extension of the NPT during the 1995 Review Conference. [including the thirteen practical steps adopted at the 2000 Conference and the 64 point Action Plan adopted at the 2010 conference].

Notwithstanding, many States commended the activities of the UN Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, convened pursuant to UNGA Resolution 73/546 which represents the most tangible and practical effort on the implementation of the relevant 1995 RevCon resolutions to date.

The establishment of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East directly impacts the African Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (ANWFZ) by reinforcing regional security and stability. A WMD-free Middle East would diminish the likelihood of nuclear proliferation in adjacent regions, thereby enhancing the security environment in Africa. It would also serve as a complementary measure to the ANWFZ, promoting broader regional disarmament and non-proliferation objectives. Moreover, progress in the Middle East could invigorate international support and cooperation for the ANWFZ, further solidifying Africa's commitment to being a nuclear-weapon-free continent and strengthening global non-proliferation efforts.

Transparency, accountability, verification of disarmament, and irreversibility were emphasized as important trust building requirements among member states.

With regard to irreversibility of nuclear disarmament, it was regretted that little progress has been made to implement the actions agreed to at the 2000 and 2010 RevCons on the development of appropriate verification arrangements with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to ensure the irreversible removal of fissile material designated by nuclear-weapon States as no longer required for military purposes.

The significance of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) was a recurring topic in the deliberations. Many non-nuclear-weapon states voiced strong support for the TPNW, urging States that have not yet ratified the TPNW to do so.

African states have shown considerable leadership in this area. As of now, over 22% of TPNW Parties are African States. Approximately 63% of African countries have signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), while about 48% have ratified it. In particular, South Africa has also taken on a leadership role by co-chairing (with Malaysia) an informal working group on the universalization of the TPNW.

This strong support from African states aligns with their participation in the African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (ANWFZ) and underscores their dedication to global disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. By joining the TPNW, these countries not only reinforce their stance against nuclear weapons but also contribute to the strengthening of international

norms against the possession and use of such weapons, enhancing regional and global security.

The Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) was commended for its efforts to detect nuclear explosions around the world, through its International Monitoring System that includes monitoring stations in African countries.

The urgency for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) was highlighted through repeated calls for Nuclear-Weapon States and other States that are yet to accede to the CTBT, in particular those States listed in Annex II of the CTBT, to sign and ratify the Treaty without further delay.

Participants stressed the humanitarian and environmental consequences of the use of Nuclear Weapons, and called for more consideration of humanitarian concerns in the global disarmament framework.

Additional perspectives from statements by African countries

The following African entities contributed to Cluster 1 deliberations: African Group, Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria, and South Africa. South Africa was the only African state to deliver a statement on Cluster 1 Specific Issue, which was Nuclear Disarmament and Security Assurances.

African countries reiterated their strong commitment to nuclear disarmament, reflecting the continent's stance against nuclear weapons, emanating, inter alia, from historical experiences with testing of nuclear weapons in Algeria in the early 1960s; the 1964 Cairo Declaration on the denuclearization of Africa, and as stipulated in the African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba).

Statements urged the NWS to make tangible progress toward disarmament, including providing legally binding negative security assurances to NNWS as an interim measure pending the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons.

Statements described nuclear weapons as an existential threat to humanity, and called for a timetable for their total elimination without delay.

Statements expressed support for the TPNW, and called for its universalization, describing it as an effective nuclear disarmament instrument that complements and strengthens the NPT.

Nuclear risk reduction was highlighted as having a role in nuclear disarmament, but not as a replacement for effective nuclear disarmament measures in accordance with Article VI, nor should it serve to prolong the possession of nuclear weapons.

South Africa expressed concern about the increasing prominence of nuclear deterrence in the security doctrines of nuclear-weapon States, and [noted](#) that this is inconsistent with the spirit of Article VI of the NPT.

While N5 States maintained that security guarantees (nuclear umbrella) reduce nuclear proliferation proclivity among participating countries, South Africa argued that the recent growth in the number of States under extended nuclear security guarantees was

counterproductive to furthering disarmament, and amounts to a new form of proliferation that should be addressed by the 11th RevCon in 2026.

Egypt noted that a major weakness in NPT Review Conferences is the absence of any practical accountability mechanism to hold the nuclear states accountable for the fulfilment of their obligations; and in this regard proposed the introduction of a mechanism for periodic discussion of nuclear weapon states reports at meetings dedicated to the disarmament pillar.

Algeria recalled that as the only negotiating forum in the field of disarmament, it is important to revitalize the Conference on Disarmament (CD) to negotiate a multilateral non-proliferation treaty prohibiting the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, especially as this was one of the 13 steps adopted by the 2000 NPT Review Conference, which was chaired by Algeria.

CLUSTER (PILLAR) 2: NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

Cluster 2 focuses on preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, including the obligations of states to refrain from transferring nuclear weapons or related technology, and compliance with safeguards commitments to ensure that nuclear energy is used for peaceful purposes only.

States commended the unique role of the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in monitoring compliance and ensuring that nuclear material is not diverted from peaceful purposes. IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements (CSA), are the only component of the NPT for nuclear verification, and as such play a crucial role in creating an environment conducive to nuclear cooperation.

States noted that beyond CSA, the Additional Protocol (AP) is essential for strengthening international security through detecting undeclared nuclear material and activities. States therefore called for the universalization of the Additional Protocol as an essential aspect of compliance with the non-proliferation provisions of the NPT. However, they noted that the AP is a voluntary undertaking, and cautioned against turning it into a legal obligation.

Verification and monitoring challenges, such as with the JCPOA in Iran, and inspections in the Democratic Republic of Korea (DPRK) were highlighted.

States discussed challenges posed by non-state actors and the importance of international cooperation to prevent nuclear terrorism.

Ongoing tensions in various regions, particularly in North East Asia, and the Middle East, as well as the war in Ukraine were cited as significant threats to non-proliferation efforts. Participants underscored the need for dialogue and cooperative security arrangements to mitigate these risks.

The conference addressed the dual-use nature of nuclear technology, highlighting the delicate balance between the right to acquire nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in accordance with Article IV(1) of the NPT, and ensuring that proliferation risks are adequately managed.

Additional perspectives from statements by African countries

The following African entities contributed to Cluster 2 deliberations: African Group, Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, South Africa. The following African entities delivered a statement on Cluster 2 Specific Issue, which was Regional issues: African group, Tunisia, and South Africa.

Statements by African states often underscored the balance between the right to develop peaceful nuclear energy and the non-proliferation obligations under the NPT:

In this Cluster discussion, the [African Group](#) reaffirmed the importance of nuclear-weapon-free zones (NWFZ) in strengthening the NPT, emphasizing that such zones prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and enhance global and regional security. They stressed the urgent need for a WMD Zone in the Middle East and reiterated their commitment to the Treaty of Pelindaba, highlighting Africa's status as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. The Group expressed concerns about nuclear weapon-sharing, urging states to cease such practices. They also condemned the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapon states and emphasized the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, calling for their total elimination.

Export control (and supply policy) is important in ensuring that commercial competition does not undermine nuclear non-proliferation, in line with NPT Article III(2), which, inter alia, requires State Parties to the NPT to impose safeguards obligations on all exports of nuclear material and specified equipment to non-nuclear weapon states. Because the text of the NPT does not specify how these export controls would be implemented in practice, groups of nuclear exporting states took the initiative in establishing the Zangger Committee and the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) for implementing the NPT Article III(2).

Considering the potential of nuclear energy to advance industrial and socioeconomic development in Africa, adequate African representation is necessary in the global forums making decisions on the supply of material and technology that Africa needs for its development. At the present time, South Africa is the only African representative in the NSG and Zangger Committee. AFCONE's statement in the General Debate mentioned the need for more African Representation in the NSG and Zangger Committee.

Based on the understanding that IAEA comprehensive safeguards are a prerequisite for any nuclear supply agreements, Egypt noted that instances of some states providing exemptions for nuclear cooperation with states that have not acceded to the NPT was setting a precedent that could undermine the NPT's relevance and credibility. Egypt strongly rejected any attempts to impose additional non-proliferation obligations beyond those stipulated in Article III of the Treaty on the NPT. Specifically, Egypt opposed efforts to link the voluntary Additional Protocol (AP) to the Treaty's mandatory obligations, viewing such proposals as a breach of the carefully negotiated balance that the NPT's grand bargain aimed to maintain. Egypt argued that the focus of the Conference and its Preparatory Committee should remain within the consensus understandings reached during the 2010 RevCon and the IAEA. According to these agreements, for a state with a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement (CSA) supplemented by a voluntary AP in force, the combination of these measures represented the enhanced verification standard for that state. Therefore, Egypt believed that revisiting or attempting to expand these agreements would be an inefficient use of the Conference's limited time and resources.

This stance underscored Egypt's commitment to maintaining the established framework of the NPT.

Egypt and South Africa noted that while non-proliferation and disarmament are mutually reinforcing, the commitment of nuclear weapon states to their disarmament obligations is currently lagging far behind the commitment of non-nuclear weapon states to non-proliferation, and this imbalance is counterproductive to fostering international security.

CLUSTER (PILLAR) 3: PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY

Cluster 3 deals with the promotion of the peaceful use of nuclear energy while ensuring that it does not contribute to proliferation. This cluster covers a range of issues related to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, including: capacity building, technical cooperation (NPT Article IV(2)), nuclear safety, and nuclear security of nuclear materials and facilities.

The IAEA technical cooperation programme plays a crucial role in providing support to Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS) in the development of nuclear infrastructure and capabilities for peaceful uses.

Discussions also covered the prevention of nuclear terrorism, state sponsored attacks on nuclear facilities, and the importance of compliance with non-proliferation and safety standards.

Additional perspectives from statements by African countries

South Africa, Nigeria, Algeria, Morocco, and Senegal presented their statements to the NPT Preparatory Committee, revealing both shared positions and differing concerns. South Africa delivered a statement on Cluster 3 Specific Issue, which was Improving the effectiveness of the strengthened review process.

All five countries supported the peaceful use of nuclear energy, emphasizing the significance of Article IV of the NPT, which allows for the development and application of nuclear technology for non-military purposes. This common stance highlighted their collective commitment to using nuclear technology to advance development and sustainability, particularly in health, agriculture, and energy.

There was a strong consensus on the essential role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in supporting peaceful nuclear applications. Each country advocated for enhanced technical cooperation, capacity building, and support from the IAEA to aid developing nations in utilizing nuclear technology effectively for purposes such as cancer treatment, food security, and environmental management. Additionally, they all called for increased international cooperation, stressing the need for equitable access to nuclear technology and the removal of barriers that obstruct development. This reflected a unified view on the importance of global partnerships in addressing developmental challenges and achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

However, there were discernible divergences in their statements. South Africa and Algeria both addressed nuclear safety and security but with different emphases. South Africa

cautioned against using security concerns to restrict peaceful nuclear activities, highlighting the need to balance security with technological rights. In contrast, Algeria focused on broader aspects of nuclear safety systems and the fight against nuclear terrorism.

When it came to the elimination of nuclear weapons, Nigeria and Senegal were particularly vocal. Nigeria described nuclear weapons as a major threat to global security and stressed their elimination as crucial for maintaining peace. Senegal supported a world free of nuclear weapons and aligned with the objectives of the Pelindaba Treaty, emphasizing non-proliferation and disarmament. Algeria also supported disarmament but viewed it within the context of maintaining the balance among the NPT's pillars.

Regarding regional cooperation, Senegal and Algeria specifically highlighted initiatives such as the African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development, and Training related to Nuclear Science and Technology (AFRA). Senegal emphasized investments and capacity-building efforts in Africa, while Algeria endorsed broader regional cooperation. South Africa focused on its own initiatives, like the Nuclear Medicine Research Infrastructure (NuMeRI), and expressed general support for regional cooperation without focusing on specific programmes. Nigeria supported regional cooperation but did not emphasize regional initiatives as much.

On the topic of climate change, Nigeria explicitly linked nuclear energy with climate change mitigation and advocated for integrating nuclear power into the energy mix in line with the Paris Agreement. South Africa also supported nuclear energy for climate goals but was more focused on its role in sustainable development and broader nuclear applications. Senegal mentioned nuclear energy in the context of SDGs and development but did not explicitly connect it to climate change. Algeria did not address climate change specifically, concentrating instead on the role of nuclear energy in sustainable development and regional cooperation.

Attacks on nuclear facilities have long been a critical concern within the international non-proliferation and disarmament community, given the potentially catastrophic consequences of such actions. These attacks can lead to severe environmental damage, significant loss of life, and widespread contamination, making the protection of nuclear installations a high priority for global security. Despite the gravity of this issue, the Pelindaba Treaty, which establishes an African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, remains the only multilateral agreement explicitly prohibiting armed attacks on nuclear facilities by countries. The Pelindaba Treaty includes a specific provision that bans armed attacks on nuclear installations within the African continent, by states. According to the treaty, each party undertakes not to take, assist, or encourage any action aimed at an armed attack, whether by conventional or other means, against nuclear installations in the African nuclear-weapon-free zone. This comprehensive prohibition ensures robust protection for nuclear facilities, significantly enhancing regional security. Despite the critical importance of protecting nuclear facilities from attacks in NPT discussions, and the unique provisions of the Pelindaba Treaty, African states did not raise this issue at the PrepCom.

In summary, while South Africa, Nigeria, Algeria, and Senegal shared a commitment to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the role of the IAEA, and the need for international cooperation, their statements differed in emphasis on nuclear safety, security,

disarmament, regional initiatives, and climate change. Their unique concerns and priorities reflected their distinct national contexts and strategic interests.

Procedural Turmoil

The PrepCom continued to grapple with procedural difficulties that emerged during PrepCom 1 in 2023. Despite two weeks of essential discussions on global existential threats, the meeting concluded with a contentious debate over which documents should be included in the official procedural report. Some delegations opposed listing the Chair's summary and recommendations for the Third PrepCom session as official documents, a stance that saw less opposition compared to the previous year.

To ensure the procedural report's adoption and document the meeting, the Chair added a footnote to his summary, suggesting that it "solely reflects the views of the chairman, is not agreed upon by the delegations, and does not fully capture their positions. The document should not be considered a basis for future work in the NPT review process." The Chair acknowledged there was no consensus to adopt his summary as an official outcome of the PrepCom but intended to submit it as a working paper under his authority, as was the practice in 2017, 2018, and 2019. The insistence on including the footnote for the summary to be listed as a working paper highlighted ongoing procedural challenges.

Many delegations underscored that it is standard practice in multilateral forums for Chairs to present documents and reflections independently. This appears to be changing. Historically, there have been efforts to weaken outcome documents, however, the dispute over including working papers in a procedural report represents a new level of contention within NPT standards. However, the dispute over including working papers in a procedural report represents a new level of contention within NPT standards. Notably, this PrepCom managed to somewhat restore the past practice of issuing the Chair's paper, aligning more closely with the procedures followed in 2017, 2018, and 2019, rather than the disruptions experienced in 2023.

Looking Ahead to African Leadership of PrepCom 3

Looking ahead, Ghana will chair the third PrepCom next year, with Ambassador Harold Agyeman serving as Chair of its third session. This transition brings a renewed focus and leadership to the preparatory process, which is particularly significant for amplifying African positions and interests within the NPT framework.

AFCONE is committed to working closely with Ghana and other African Group countries to ensure that African perspectives are prominently represented at the next PrepCom and the 2026 Review Conference (RevCon). AFCONE's collaboration will focus on several key areas:

1. Strengthening African Voices:

AFCONE will coordinate with Ghana to amplify the collective voice of African nations, ensuring their unique security concerns and developmental needs are addressed within the NPT discussions. This includes advocating for the peaceful use of nuclear energy and pushing for disarmament and non-proliferation measures that reflect the continent's priorities.

2. Policy Advocacy and Support:

AFCONE will provide technical and policy support to African delegations, helping them craft compelling statements and proposals that align with the overarching goals of the NPT. This effort will involve detailed briefings, policy papers, and strategic advice aimed at enhancing the impact of African contributions during the PrepCom and RevCon.

3. Capacity Building:

Recognizing the importance of well-informed and prepared delegations, AFCONE will organize workshops and training sessions for African diplomats and representatives. These sessions will cover the intricacies of the NPT processes, negotiation strategies, and key issues likely to dominate the agenda, thereby equipping African delegates with the skills and knowledge needed for effective participation.

4. Fostering Unity and Consensus:

AFCONE will work to build consensus among African nations on critical issues, promoting a unified stance that strengthens their negotiating power. Regular consultations and meetings will be held to align positions and develop a cohesive strategy for the upcoming sessions.

5. Leveraging Partnerships:

AFCONE will continue to collaborate with international partners, including the European Union (EU), Finland, and other supportive states and organizations, to bolster Africa's position within the NPT framework. This includes leveraging technical expertise, financial resources, and diplomatic support to advance African interests.

By working together, AFCONE and Ghana aim to ensure that the African Group plays a pivotal role in shaping the discussions and outcomes of the next PrepCom and RevCon. This collaboration underscores AFCONE's commitment to fostering peace, security, and development in Africa through active and influential participation in the global nuclear non-proliferation regime.

In summary, Ghana's leadership in the third PrepCom, supported by AFCONE and other African nations, will be crucial in driving forward the continent's agenda, ensuring that African positions are not only heard but also significantly shape the future direction of the NPT.

Aligning Africa's Common Defence and Security Policy (CDSP) with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

The African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE) plays a crucial role in aligning Africa's Common Defence and Security Policy (CDSP) with the goals and obligations of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This integration strengthens the continent's ability to address common security threats, particularly those related to nuclear proliferation and other weapons of mass destruction.

The CDSP is based on a collective African vision to safeguard the continent's security interests against common threats. Articles 3 and 4 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union outline the principles guiding these efforts, including the promotion of peace, security, and stability on the continent.

Africa faces several external threats that could undermine its security and development goals. These threats include the accumulation, stockpiling, proliferation, and manufacturing of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, and the dumping of nuclear wastes, which pose significant health and environmental risks to African nations.

To address these threats, the CDSP covers various areas such as the promotion of collective defence and a culture of peace, management of small arms and light weapons, peace-building, peacekeeping, and post-conflict rehabilitation. It also includes demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration, and nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Africa has established several inter-governmental defence and security instruments to guide the CDSP. Among these, the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (the Treaty of Pelindaba) is paramount. Adopted in 1998, the Treaty of Pelindaba prohibits the testing, manufacturing, researching, stockpiling, acquisition, or possession of nuclear explosives in Africa. It also provides for the establishment of AFCONE, tasked with collating reports and exchanging information on nuclear weapon-related issues.

AFCONE's leadership in the NPT PrepCom aligns closely with the objectives of the CDSP by enhancing continental security. By participating in NPT processes, AFCONE ensures that African interests are represented and that global nuclear policies reflect the continent's security concerns. AFCONE's activities support the CDSP's goal of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and related materials on the continent. Furthermore, AFCONE facilitates the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, contributing to sustainable development in Africa. By engaging in international forums like the NPT PrepCom, AFCONE helps address external threats such as the dumping of nuclear waste and the risk of nuclear proliferation.

AFCONE's participation in international discussions and agreements, such as the NPT, strengthens Africa's existing continental mechanisms and instruments. This includes improved coordination between African states and international bodies, enhancing the continent's collective response to nuclear threats. By working with international partners, AFCONE helps build capacity for effective nuclear material control and safeguards implementation. Additionally, AFCONE's insights from global forums contribute to the development and refinement of Africa's defence and security policies, ensuring they remain relevant and effective.

In conclusion, AFCONE's leadership in the NPT framework is integral to the Common Defence and Security Policy for Africa. Through active participation in global nuclear non-proliferation efforts, AFCONE ensures that Africa's security interests are safeguarded. This alignment between AFCONE's activities and the CDSP enhances the continent's ability to address common security threats, promotes the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and contributes to regional and global peace and security.

SIDE EVENTS

AFCONE participated in the following side-events:

- 22 July 2024: Untapping the potential of Nuclear Weapons Free Zones: the Importance of expanding NWFZs and the Role of Single States in a Shifting World Order, organised by the International Peace Bureau (IPB), based in Berlin, Germany.
- 24 July 2024: Nuclear disarmament verification, organised by the United States
- 25 July 2024: Enhancing Transparency and Accountability in the Implementation of NPT Obligations and Commitments, organised by France
- 25 July 2024: The NPT in Action: Showcasing Progress on Expanding Peaceful Uses. Organised by United States, United Kingdom and CRDF Global
- 29 July 2024: Nuclear Risk Reduction: From Ideas to Action. Organised by Switzerland and UNIDIR
- 30 July 2024: Sustainable safeguards implementation in Africa - Experience of AFCONE, EU and Finland working together in navigating systemic challenges, organised by Finland, STUK and AFCONE

CONCLUSIONS

Emphasis on Disarmament

African states have consistently underscored the importance of nuclear disarmament, reflecting their historical stance against the proliferation of nuclear weapons. This position aligns with a broader global sentiment favoring disarmament, which African nations have passionately supported. The reiteration of strong support for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) was a notable highlight, with African states calling for its universal adoption and ratification. Furthermore, the African Group emphasized the significance of Nuclear Weapon-Free Zones (NWFZs) in bolstering the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). These zones play a crucial role in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, thereby enhancing both global and regional security.

Emphasis on Non-Proliferation

In terms of non-proliferation, African states expressed robust support for the establishment of new NWFZs, with a particular focus on creating a Weapons of Mass

Destruction (WMD) free zone in the Middle East. This proposal underscores their commitment to a balanced approach that respects the right to develop peaceful nuclear energy while adhering to non-proliferation obligations under the NPT. Moreover, there was a strong call for the universalization of the Additional Protocol (AP), deemed essential for strengthening international security by detecting undeclared nuclear materials and activities.

Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy

African states have emphasized the balance between the right to develop peaceful nuclear energy and fulfilling non-proliferation obligations under the NPT. There was a consensus on the crucial role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in supporting peaceful nuclear applications and enhancing technical cooperation. Furthermore, African nations collectively acknowledged the importance of global partnerships in addressing developmental challenges and achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They particularly highlighted the significant potential of nuclear energy to advance industrial and socioeconomic development across the continent. Despite this, there was an observed shortfall in addressing the protection of nuclear facilities from attacks, an issue of critical importance that was not sufficiently raised.

Strengthening Regional Security

The African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (ANWFZ), established by the Treaty of Pelindaba, was spotlighted as a cornerstone for enhancing regional security and promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy. African states stressed the necessity for nuclear weapon states to provide legally binding negative security assurances to non-nuclear weapon states. Concerns were also raised regarding the sovereignty of Diego

Garcia, highlighting its omission from discussions as a significant oversight by African nations. This issue underlines the importance of addressing all regional security concerns comprehensively.

Addressing Verification and Accountability

Transparency, accountability, and verification in disarmament processes were emphasized as crucial trust-building measures among member states. African states expressed concern over the lack of tangible progress in developing disarmament verification measures and appropriate verification arrangements with the IAEA. This lack of progress poses a challenge to the credibility and effectiveness of disarmament efforts globally.

Participation and Representation

The issue of adequate African representation in global forums that decide on the supply of nuclear material and technology was highlighted. Presently, South Africa is the sole African representative in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and the Zangger Committee. The African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE) stressed the need for increased African representation in these groups to further the continent's industrial and socioeconomic development. This increased participation is essential to ensure that African perspectives and interests are adequately represented in critical international nuclear discussions and decisions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) AFCONE could explore the establishment of a consultative committee or task force, open to all African member States of the NPT, and develop a roadmap to assist African States in preparing and coordinating (where possible) their contribution to the Third NPT PrepCom in 2025 and the NPT Review Conference in 2026. The consultative committee/task force would brief the AU PSC, as appropriate, and would make recommendations to inform a common African position for each cluster under discussion within the NPT review process. Furthermore, the committee, through the AFCONE Secretariat, would liaise with the relevant Chair of the African Group (in the countries where PrepCom and NPT RevCon will take place) to provide substantive inputs to the group statements.
- 2) In 2025, Ghana will chair the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 11th NPT Review Conference. AFCONE could work closely with the government of Ghana through the proposed Consultative Committee or Task Force to support a successful NPT PrepCom under African leadership.
- 3) Advocate for Nuclear Disarmament: Continue to emphasize the importance of nuclear disarmament, reinforcing Africa's historical stance against nuclear weapons. Highlight the need for nuclear weapon states to implement confidence-building measures such as transparency, accountability, and verification of disarmament.
- 4) Support TPNW: Strongly support the universalization and ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Advocate for its inclusion in international disarmament discussions and push for broader adoption among states.
- 5) Promote NWFZs: Reaffirm the significance of Nuclear Weapon Free Zones (NWFZs), emphasizing their role in preventing nuclear proliferation and enhancing both global and regional security.
- 6) Establish New NWFZs: Support the establishment of additional NWFZs, particularly in the Middle East, to enhance regional security and compliance with the NPT.
- 7) Representation in Non-Proliferation Bodies: Advocate for increased African representation in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and Zangger Committee to ensure more African states to have a voice in these critical non-proliferation frameworks.
- 8) Balance Rights and Obligations: Emphasize the balance between the right to develop peaceful nuclear energy and the non-proliferation obligations under the NPT. Highlight this balance in international forums to ensure fair treatment of African states.



- 9) Global Partnerships for Development: Promote the importance of global partnerships in addressing developmental challenges and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Highlight the significant potential of nuclear energy in advancing industrial and socioeconomic development in Africa.
- 10) Protecting Nuclear Facilities: Raise the issue of protecting nuclear facilities from attacks, emphasizing the critical importance of ensuring the safety and security of these facilities.
- 11) Treaty of Pelindaba: Highlight the African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (ANWFZ) established by the Treaty of Pelindaba as crucial for enhancing regional security and promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
- 12) Negative Security Assurances: Stress the need for nuclear weapon states to provide legally binding negative security assurances to non-nuclear weapon states, ensuring that these states are protected against the threat or use of nuclear weapons.
- 13) Sovereignty of Diego Garcia: Address the issue of Diego Garcia's sovereignty and its omission in discussions, advocating for its inclusion in future NPT and disarmament dialogues to ensure comprehensive regional security discussions.
- 14) AFCONE's Role: Support AFCONE's call for more African representation in global nuclear forums to advance industrial and socioeconomic development in Africa. Work towards building a coalition of African states to collectively push for greater representation and participation in these critical international bodies.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: List of Participating African Member States

1. Algeria
2. Burkina Faso
3. Cabo Verde
4. Cameroon
5. Egypt
6. Ethiopia
7. Gambia
8. Ghana
9. Côte d'Ivoire
10. Malawi
11. Mozambique
12. Namibia
13. Niger
14. Nigeria
15. Rwanda
16. Senegal
17. Sierra Leone
18. South Africa
19. South Sudan
20. Zambia
21. Zimbabwe

Annex 2: List of participating Non-governmental organizations

Of the 72 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) present at the PrepCom, 3 were from Africa. These were:

1. Action pour le développement des jeunes au Congo
2. African Centre for Science and International Security
3. Women Concern

Annex 3: List of participating Inter-governmental organizations

1. Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL)
2. African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE)
3. Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC)
4. European Union
5. International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
6. North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)
7. Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)
8. Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO)

GLOSSARY

AFCONE: African Commission on Nuclear Energy

AFRA: African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development, and Training related to Nuclear Science and Technology

ANWFZ: African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone

AU: African Union

AU PSC: Peace and Security Council of the African Union

CD: Conference on Disarmament

CTBT: Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)

CTBTO: Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

EU: European Union

IAEA: International Atomic Energy Agency

ICAN: International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons

JCPOA: Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) to ensure that Iran's nuclear program is exclusively peaceful.

NPT: Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

NSA: Negative Security Assurance

NWFZ: Nuclear Weapon Free Zone

NWS: Nuclear Weapon State

NNWS: Non-Nuclear Weapon State

NuMeRI: Nuclear Medicine Research Infrastructure

N5: China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, United States

PrepCom: NPT Preparatory Committee meeting

RevCon: NPT Review Conference

SDG: United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals

STUK: Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority of Finland

TPNW: Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

UNGA: United Nations General Assembly

WMD: Weapons of Mass Destruction