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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
763RD MEETING

10 APRIL 2018
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/BR.(DCCLXXIII)

PRESS STATEMENT

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), held its 763rd meeting on 10 April 2018, on Nuclear Energy, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament: International Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Africa and the Status of the African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty (Pelindaba Treaty).

Council took note of the statement delivered by Dr. Admore Kambudzi, the Ag. Director of the Peace and Security Department, on behalf of the Commissioner for Peace and security, and the presentations made by the representative of the Executive Secretary of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONe) as well as by the representative of the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC). Council also took note of the statements made by Cote d'Ivoire and Ethiopia, in their capacity as African Members (A3) of the United Nations (UN) Security Council, and the United Nations Office to the African union (UNOAU), as well as by the permanent Members of the UNSC namely, France, Russia, United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Council reaffirmed AU principles on disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful use of nuclear energy, as enshrined in the AU Constitutive Act and the Protocol relating to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council. Council recalled all its previous decisions and pronouncements on nuclear energy, non-proliferation, disarmament and the status of the Pelindaba Treaty, in particular its communique [PSC/PR/COMM. (DLXXXIV)] adopted at its 584th meeting, held on 29 March 2016.

Council expressed deep concern over the illegal use of nuclear weapons and energy, which could cause catastrophic short and long term consequences for humankind and the environment and constitute a serious threat to global security and stability. In this regard, Council encouraged Member States and partners to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy in science and technology for development.

Council further expressed deep concern over the raised serious concern on the developments regarding nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as over the international community ability to deal with them within the framework of a global multilateral order. Council stressed that these developments have had wide reaching consequences and threatened regional stability and friendly relations among nations. Council further stressed that the slow pace of nuclear disarmament and the rising tensions among nuclear-weapon possessor states is undermining confidence in the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and increasingly diminishing prospects in further reduction of nuclear arsenals.

Council stressed that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Convention for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and that on Biological Weapons remain the key pillars of the global regime against Weapon of Mass Destruction (WMD). In this regard, Council called on Member States and the larger international community to continue working within these frameworks to further strengthen their authority and the non-proliferation assurances they are meant to provide. Council further reaffirmed the inalienable right of all Parties to apply chemical, biological and nuclear science and technology for peaceful civilian purposes, including spearheading socio-economic development and

improving welfare of the population, without discrimination and in conformity with the relevant instruments.

Council underscored the need for the implementation of UNSC resolution 1540 (2004), which seeks to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and related material to non-state actors, and to submit timely report on their efforts in line with the provisions of the resolution. Furthermore, Council emphasized that the Pelindaba Treaty has greatly contributed to disarmament and non-proliferation regimes which are essential to maintaining international peace and security in the continent, as well as providing an international standard for limiting the risks of nuclear war.

Council welcomed the 4th Ordinary Session of the Conference of States Parties to the Treaty of Pelindaba, held in Addis Ababa, from 14 to 15 March 2018 to review the status of its implementation and the operationalization of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE), established by Article 12 of the Treaty.

Council, while noting key milestones realized paving the way for the AFCONE Secretariat to effectively function, underlined the need for its speedy operationalization, which is critical for the Treaty of Pelindaba to achieve its objective. In this regard, Council encouraged States Parties to the Treaty to fulfil their financial obligations and timely implement the decisions made by the 4th Ordinary Session of the Conference of States Parties to the Treaty of Pelindaba, to enable AFCONE discharge its mandate with the required efficiency and effectiveness and bring to the continent much needed benefits of nuclear science and technology.

Council commended the 41 countries of the AU that have ratified the Pelindaba Treaty and called upon those who have not yet done so, to speedily sign and ratify, with a view to enhance Africa Commitment to NPT, as well as the peaceful use of Nuclear energy. Council further commended the Republic of South Africa for the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding to host the Secretariat of AFCONE.

Council requested the AU Commission and the AFCONE to provide annual briefing to the PSC on the status of the implementation of the Pelindaba Treaty and the activities of AFCONE.

Council agreed to remain actively seized with the matter.