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STATEMENT BY
THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE PROVISIONS OF THE TREATY
RELATING TO NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS,
SAFEGUARDS AND NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONES:
ARTICLE IV AND PREAMBULAR PARAGRAPHS 6 AND 7;
ARTICLES I AND II AND PREAMBULAR PARAGRAPHS 1 TO 3
IN THEIR RELATIONSHIPS TO ARTICLES III AND IV; ARTICLE VII
(NEW YORK, APRIL/MAY 2004)

(CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY)

Mr. Chairperson,

As we have heard from many speakers today, nuclear-weapon-free zones, as envisaged in Article VII of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), as well as the issue of safeguards, particularly as it relates to Article III and preambular paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Treaty, remain important aspects of the nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation process.

The 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in its Final Document, *inter alia*, reaffirmed the conviction that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones “enhances global and regional peace and security, strengthens the nuclear non-proliferation regime and contributes towards realizing the objectives of nuclear disarmament”.

In this regard, Chairperson, Libya’s decision, as announced on 19 December 2003, to eliminate materials, equipment and programmes for the production of weapons of mass destruction and to abandon any nuclear weapons related programmes and activities, was indeed a welcome development. It is our view that this decision by Libya will contribute to the creation of the conditions for Africa to achieve its vision of a continent free of weapons of mass destruction, in line with the policies of the African Union and, in particular, the objectives of the Pelindaba Treaty. In this context my delegation also wishes to emphasise, as stated in the Pelindaba Treaty, “that the establishment of other nuclear weapon free zones, especially in the Middle East, would enhance the security of States Parties to the African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone.”

Countries in Africa are rightfully proud of the Treaty of Pelindaba as an African success story. We would, therefore, call on those African States that have not yet done so, to sign and/or ratify the Pelindaba Treaty as soon as possible in order to ensure its entry into force. Given South Africa’s belief that nuclear-weapon-free zones play an important role within the context of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, my delegation welcomes all endeavours aimed at the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in other regions around the world.

Mr. Chairperson,

If the security of all countries on the African continent were increased by the elimination of nuclear weapon production plans in one country, then it would be increased exponentially by the elimination of all nuclear weapons. This is why South Africa continues to be concerned about the lack of progress by the Nuclear Weapon States to accomplish the elimination of their arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament and the threat to humanity derived from the continued existence of nuclear weapons and of their possible use or threat of use.

My delegation wishes to emphasize the urgent need to accomplish the total elimination of nuclear weapons, which would greatly enhance global security and peace.

Mr. Chairperson,

It has long been South Africa's view that disarmament and non-proliferation are inextricably linked, and that real and irreversible progress on nuclear disarmament would reinforce the irreversibility of nuclear non-proliferation. The principle of irreversibility on nuclear disarmament obligation should therefore also apply to non-proliferation.

Mr. Chairperson,

Turning to the question of safeguards, South Africa strongly supports universal adherence to IAEA Safeguards Agreements and to the Additional Protocol. South Africa was not only the first country to voluntarily and unilaterally destroy its nuclear explosive devices and to close down its dedicated facilities, but also to give the IAEA free access to information, materials, facilities and staff on the basis of "any time, any place", which is more than what is legally required in terms of the Additional Protocol. South Africa further participated in the scheme approved by the IAEA Board in 1993 for the voluntary reporting of the export and import of specified equipment and non-nuclear material, similar to that in Annex II of the Additional Protocol.

The Additional Protocol signed by South Africa on 13 September 2002 has indeed placed burden on South Africa in terms of comprehensive information to be submitted and kept up to date in terms of Articles 2 and 3 of the Additional Protocol. The Agency Inspectors also have greater ("complementary") access to sites, facilities and activities as foreseen in Articles 4 to 8. However, South Africa believes that this additional burden is by far outweighed by the advantages in terms of strengthening our goals of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation.

Mr. Chairperson,

In conclusion South Africa's legislative and regulatory framework stipulates that the transfer of nuclear material, equipment and technology can only occur for peaceful purposes. Any applications for such exports, where there is a suspicion that they may be used for the development of weapons of mass destruction, are consequently denied. The guarantees of access to technologies for peaceful purposes that are contained in the relevant treaty regimes are an important element of the implicit bargain contained in the treaties for States that have given-up the aspiration to these weapons. In South Africa's view, the challenge does not lie with access to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, but rather with ensuring the effective regulation of such technology and the denial of any transfers that are suspected to be for weapons purposes. South Africa therefore supports measures, such as the Additional Protocol, that would build confidence in the peaceful utilisation of such technologies.

In this context, Mr. Chairperson, my delegation strongly supports international efforts aimed at further strengthening the safeguards system. We therefore appeal to all States Parties to honour their obligations, as envisaged in Article III of the NPT.

I thank you.