

PRESS RELEASE

PROGRAMME FOR PROMOTING NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION  
WORKSHOP IN HARARE

AFRICA AND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

As part of its endeavours to deter the spread of nuclear weapons to additional countries, the Programme for Promoting Nuclear Non-Proliferation (PPNN) - an international networking group of present and former diplomats, civil servants and academics, associated with the University of Southampton, UK - held a workshop on "Africa and Nuclear Non-Proliferation" in Harare, Zimbabwe from 2 -4 April 1993 at the African Rehabilitation Institute, Batanai Gardens, Harare. The organization of this workshop was undertaken jointly by the Department of Political and Administrative Studies, University of Zimbabwe, and the Mountbatten Centre for International Studies, University of Southampton, United Kingdom.

The aim of the workshop was to consider how African security could be enhanced by strengthening regional and global measures to deter nuclear non-proliferation. The meeting was opened by Senior Deputy Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Amb Nicholas Goche, who delivered an important speech by his Excellency, the Hon. Nathan Shamuyarira. In the course of the discussions representatives from South Africa provided to those attending a detailed explanation and description of its nuclear weapon programme, its nuclear disarmament decision and its nuclear disarmament process. This expanded upon a statement made by State President F.W. de Klerk to the South African Parliament on 24 March 1993. The principal topics discussed were the creation of a nuclear weapon-free zone (NWFZ) in the African region; the role peaceful uses of nuclear energy can play in the economic development of Africa and the role Africa might play in the international conference that will be held in 1995 to decide on the extension of the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

The workshop was attended by senior diplomats and government officials from 23 countries of all parts of Africa, as well as officials of the United Nations, the Organisation of African Unity and the International Atomic Energy Agency. Valuable contributions were also made to the workshop by members of the Group of United Nations Experts who next week will discuss in Harare a treaty to make Africa into a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Representatives from the University of Zimbabwe, members of the Diplomatic Corps, members of the Department of Political and Administrative Studies of the University of Zimbabwe, and representatives from Non-governmental organisations in Harare, attended as observers.

The workshop presented an opportunity for an open and free-ranging exchange of views, which took place in an atmosphere of common interest in the total denuclearisation of Africa. Participants generally felt that the workshop had enabled them to share information on the vital problem of the spread of nuclear weapons and on ways in which Africa can help to prevent it.

For further information on the workshop contact John Simpson at the Holiday Inn, Harare on 6 April 1993 or Emily Bailey at the Holiday Inn from 7 - 8 April.