

## **Delegation from The Republic of South Africa Position Paper for the UN General Assembly**

The issues before the General Assembly of the United Nations are: Nuclear Disarmament and International Security, Ensuring Access to Affordable, Reliable, Sustainable, and Modern Energy for All, Combating Human Trafficking. Bearing in mind the words of Nelson Mandela “[...] if you say, ‘We want peace, we want stability’, we can then do a lot of things that will contribute towards the progress of our society”, South Africa looks forward to constructive discussions in the General Assembly.

### **I. Nuclear Disarmament and International Security**

South Africa is deeply worried at the increasing intensity of nuclear threats, especially in the Korean Peninsula, and the flawed implementation of non-proliferation treaties. Ever since the end of the Cold War, the world has not experienced a direct threat of nuclear war. However, increasing strategic uncertainty and a reluctance of nuclear weapon states (NWS) to completely disarm themselves have halted the process. Information asymmetries and the lack of communication can easily cause this issue to escalate into a full-blown global conflict. As the only nation to have ever opted for voluntary disarmament, South Africa is aware of the political and economic costs of nuclear disarmament. While keeping in mind these obstacles, it is important to emphasize the opportunities disarmament can bring about, such as the transition of nuclear facilities to peaceful purposes.

South Africa shares the UN’s concerns regarding nuclear weapons, first expressed in the General Assembly resolution 1(I) (1946). While the creation of further Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zones (NWFZ) by General Assembly resolution 72/38 (2018) is a welcome improvement, it falls short of addressing a coherent incentive structure of universal disarmament. Furthermore, while the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (2017) aims to establish comprehensive enforcement measures, it lacks a necessary emphasis on the benefits of disarmament for a particular state. South Africa recognizes enormous political implications this issue has at stake, however a more realistic framing would be desirable to ensure the success of future negotiations. South Africa is more than willing to offer insight into its national best practices regarding nuclear disarmament, thus supporting the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA).

South Africa proposes the Subsequent Affordable International Nuclear Transition (SAINT), an economic framework that provides incentives for NWS to disarm themselves. Its two main pillars would be a strong embeddedness in a global energy market and a research and development forum (R&D). Under SAINT, states could sell electricity produced in reactors previously used for non-peaceful purposes for a substantially higher price on the market. To avoid market abuse, this price mechanism would be combined with a certificate program that allocates these rights to only states that 1) verify the source of the electricity, 2) comply with the standards International Atomic Energy Agency. The R&D forum would play a supplementary role, in that its body of regional and international researchers constantly improves the methods that help this transition in taking place.

### **II. Ensuring Access to Affordable, Reliable, Sustainable, and Modern Energy for All**

The Republic of South Africa has long been committed to the prosperity of all nations and to a minimum level of decent life. An essential prerequisite of all this is access to energy. However, even today 1.06 billion people lack access to electricity. Global inequalities in this regard are even more troubling. South Africa has long been an advocate of a stronger focus on Sub-Saharan Africa, because of its political and economic importance. Currently, in a manner of public-private-partnerships (PPP) South African policymakers and transnational companies are working towards extending electricity supplies throughout the continent. There are, however, two key issues that hamper development in this field. First, there is a lack of infrastructure and knowledge that is necessary to establish sustainable solutions. Second, environmental concerns are not properly addressed. Recognizing the intertwined nature of these issues, South Africa deeply believes that modern energy ought to be not only affordable, thus globally inclusive, but should also come from sustainable sources.

South Africa endorses the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of the UN, especially SDG 7) that aims to provide everyone with clean and affordable energy. In line with General Assembly resolution 71/243 (2016), it advocates a new approach to financing, focusing on renewable energy sources. However, South Africa shares the concerns outlined in the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All - Report of the Secretary-General 72/156, especially regarding the insufficiency of efforts towards achieving these goals until 2030. While General Assembly resolution 72/224 (2018) addresses this issue, it fails to recognize the particularities of local energy markets and to lend authority to regional actors such as the African Energy Commission, which could improve upon the situation. To complement this regional approach, South Africa would like to point out that it fully supports the policy and business models outlined in the World Bank's State of Electricity Access Report (2017), as they provide effective measures to mitigate investment risk, while also endorse market-based mechanisms for financing clean energy.

South Africa proposes a policy framework called Connected Local Energy Affiliations and Networks (CLEAN). CLEAN would improve upon the current situation by converting existing infrastructural centers to innovation and distributional hubs. While maintaining a strong global embeddedness, it would establish research centers on a local level, thereby addressing regional needs of electricity markets and promoting knowledge spillovers with respect to renewable energies. This element could be organized in affiliation with the United Nations University. Furthermore, in recognition with the fixed costs attached to the establishment of new electric power plants, CLEAN would focus on already existing power stations and would connect them to transnational electric grids. Thereby, PPPs would play an essential role in reaching the future of sustainable and inclusive energy systems.

### **III. Combating Human Trafficking**

The Republic of South Africa has long been deeply concerned about the fight against human trafficking. Even today, more than 40 million people are subject to modern slavery, living under inhuman conditions. Many of them are women, who are especially vulnerable in this regard and also do not have effective means to break out of slavery. South Africa looks at this problem from two different perspectives. First, this problem represents a serious violation of the political and normative principles our world society is built on. Second, this also translates itself into a security and economic problem, as whole regions can be destabilized by the presence of human trafficking. Furthermore, human trafficking generates almost 200 billion US dollars per year globally, this curtails states of much of their workforce and productivity, which results in more poverty. Poverty is often deemed as a cause of human trafficking, wherefore South Africa is concerned about the self-reinforcing nature of this vicious cycle.

South Africa deems human trafficking in first line as a serious violation of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Until human trafficking is not eradicated completely, the people of this world cannot be considered free. More specifically, it violates the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The problem of human trafficking affects several fields of our lives, beginning with a lack of basic security for many people. Therefore, South Africa would like to highlight the fact that it endangers the realization of the UN SDGs as outlined in A General Assembly resolution 70/1 (2015). South Africa supports the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and Economic and Social Council resolution 2017/18, however South Africa would advocate a more granular, regional approach as a more effective solution to this problem. South Africa supports the aim of raising awareness of the issue as laid down in A/RES/72/195.

The Republic of South Africa is deeply convinced, that regional problems require regional solutions. While maintaining a global awareness of the problem, South Africa recommends the UN breaking down the big picture into singular regions and establishing separate task forces to combat to problem on a local level. This transition would take place in three phases. First, the elimination of informational frictions among regional border control agencies would ensure that persons susceptible of human trafficking are identified swiftly and correctly. In furtherance, a coordination of border patrolling activities would take place. This means that affected regions would establish a joint border area, where both countries' authorities would be allowed to control and punish human trafficking activity. In the final phase, countries could establish joint anti-human-trafficking forces, which would be approved by the UN and be controlled on a yearly basis. Countries that are in the third phase and implement the above mentioned frameworks effectively would be eligible for additional financing for their other developmental pursuits.