



PRESS STATEMENT

5 March 2024

**Back-end agreement positions Africa center-stage on nuclear energy**



*DeepGEO's president Link Murray (left) shakes hand with AFCONE Executive Secretary Enobot Agboraw (right) at the Africa Energy Indaba conference (Cape Town South Africa) – celebrating the launch of the ANEFI agreement.*

The African Commission On Nuclear Energy (AFCONE) and DeepGEO have today (5 March 2024) held a signing ceremony to launch a groundbreaking partnership agreement that sets out a path for expanding nuclear energy in Africa and establishing a fully autonomous African nuclear supply chain. The African Nuclear Energy Funding Initiative (ANEFI) agreement supports the development of multinational repositories for high level nuclear waste in Africa as a way to promote regional governance and secure financing for vital infrastructure development. This enhances the sustainability of nuclear energy

*Peace, Power, Prosperity*

worldwide, and boosts sustainable development in a continent that is expected to become home to 25% of the global population by the year 2050.

Recognising the importance of the 'International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness', DeepGEO and AFCONE's collaboration is marked by a shared commitment to the vision of the Pelindaba Treaty. This treaty seeks to keep Africa a nuclear-weapons free zone while promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and socio-economic development. It is based on the philosophy of Ubuntu (regional cooperation), and aims to extend the principles of peace, power and prosperity throughout the world.

AFCONE Executive Secretary Enobot Agboraw said *"ANEFI offers the chance for African nations to leapfrog the established nuclear status quo, to collaborate as equal partners, and to take the development of nuclear power in Africa into their own hands."*

DeepGEO President, Link Murray noted, *"We are incredibly grateful and humbled to be able to support AFCONE in its historic mission to bring affordable, clean nuclear energy to Africa. We are honoured to be invited to participate in AFCONE's vision of peace, power, prosperity."*

Worldwide, countries and intergovernmental bodies are increasingly aware of the importance of nuclear energy for reaching sustainable development goals, and especially for achieving decarbonisation. This is reflected in the pledge to triple nuclear energy by 2050 that was launched at COP 28, and which has now been signed by 25 countries. However, the lack of deep geological repositories for the disposal of high-level radioactive waste has long cast a shadow over the sustainability of nuclear energy and proven a stumbling point for launching nuclear energy programmes in newcomer countries. The establishment of shared and multinational repositories is a long-discussed solution to this problem, but until now few countries have been willing to host these facilities and previous initiatives have failed to gain the necessary public acceptance.

DeepGEO is working with several African governments that have expressed potential willingness to host such facilities. As part of ANEFI, DeepGEO will be introduced to African financial institutions and will gain enhanced access to African decision-makers. In return, AFCONE will benefit from a portion of the future proceeds and will immediately start work on establishing a template for regional nuclear governance that will facilitate nuclear energy deployment and the use of shared fuel-cycle facilities across the continent.

ANEFI will also support the development of African financial institutions and enhance their capability to invest in nuclear energy projects. These institutions will seek to partner with international institutions to bring investment into the African nuclear sector. The goal is to eventually achieve nuclear autonomy for Africa, supporting regional nuclear fuel-cycle facilities, research and medical facilities, and a domestic supply chain.

The signing of ANEFI, which formally took place on 10 February, marks a significant milestone for both AFCONE and DeepGEO. It demonstrates that African partners are informed and committed allies in the endeavor to develop multinational repositories, and that they intend to work cooperatively towards overcoming the challenges of the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle.

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The African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE) is the autonomous Pan-African organization that is uniquely mandated under the African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty (The Treaty of Pelindaba) to serve as the Secretariat of the Treaty, and to engender industrial and socio-economic development in Africa through the coordination and promotion of safe and secure peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology, as well as regional and inter-regional cooperation for that purpose.

DeepGEO, a US-based company with regional teams in Africa and Canada, is developing multinational repositories for the disposal of high level nuclear waste. With a focus on a clean energy future and sustainable development, DeepGEO works with its partners to provide a solution for spent nuclear fuel while promoting economic healing for under-served communities.