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**COMMUNICATION FROM THE RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF SOUTH AFRICA**

The attached letter and its Annex are being distributed at the request of the Resident Representative of South Africa.

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LETTER FROM THE RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF SOUTH AFRICA

Dear Director General,

I have the honour to enclose for your information a document setting out the official position of the South African Government with regard to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and to its negotiations on accession to the said treaty.

I would appreciate it if this letter with annexure could be circulated as a General Conference document.

(signed) Naude Steyn
Resident Representative

**POSITION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT WITH REGARD TO
THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY (NPT) : NEGOTIATIONS
ON ACCESSION TO THE TREATY**

1. On 21 September 1987 State President P.W. Botha stated that:

"The Republic of South Africa is prepared to commence negotiations with each of the nuclear weapon States on the possibility of signing the Non-Proliferation Treaty. At the same time the Republic of South Africa will consider including in these negotiations safeguards on its installations subject to the NPT conditions. The nature of these negotiations will depend on the outcome of the 31st General Conference of the IAEA to be held in Vienna as from 21 September 1987.

South Africa hopes that it will soon be able to sign the NPT and has decided to open discussions with others to this end. Any safeguards agreement which might subsequently be negotiated with the IAEA would naturally be along the same lines as, and in conformity with, agreements with other NPT signatories."

2. South Africa has since been actively engaged in studying and seeking clarification on the obligations, rights and conditions attaching to and flowing from a possible accession to the NPT.
3. South Africa is an important uranium exporting country, and has also a well developed nuclear programme and capability. For these and other reasons consideration of accession to the NPT is a complex matter requiring in-depth study and consultation.

4. During the course of the investigation into this matter a number of aspects of particular concern to South Africa have emerged. These include:

- 4.1 Rights and privileges in terms of Article IV of the Treaty, particularly as they relate to the exchange of equipment, materials and technology;
- 4.2 The ability of South Africa, should it accede to the NPT, to market its nuclear source materials (uranium) commercially like all other producers subject only to Agency or equivalent safeguards;
- 4.3 Discriminatory domestic legislation currently existing in a number of NPT signatory countries that is contrary to the principles and spirit embodied in several Articles of the NPT;
- 4.4 Existing United Nations resolutions which call for a complete ban on nuclear co-operation with South Africa;
- 4.5 Challenges to South Africa's credentials at International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conferences and NPT Review Conferences;
- 4.6 The discriminatory nature of the NPT insofar as it distinguishes between nuclear weapon States and non-nuclear weapon States.

5. In an effort to clarify these concerns a South African delegation which included the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Economic Affairs and Technology held talks in Vienna with representatives of the three depositary Governments of the NPT, i.e. the Soviet Union, the United States of America and the United Kingdom, on 11 and 12 August 1988. Clarity on a number of matters of concern to South Africa was obtained. However, on a number of key issues there was no conformity of view amongst the depositary representatives.

6. Accordingly, from the period commencing 5 September 1988 South Africa has held wide-ranging discussions with representatives of some thirty countries.

7. South Africa wants to contribute to peace and regional security in Southern Africa. The South African Government trusts, however, that the international community will appreciate that South Africa cannot afford to exercise its sovereign right of accession to such an important treaty before having completed a thorough examination of all surrounding issues. South Africa remains firmly committed to the spirit, principles and goals of the NPT. It is South Africa's objective and desire to accede to the NPT if South Africa could be satisfied that its concerns would be met.

