



**United Nations Office
for Disarmament Affairs**

**High Representative Nakamitsu's video message to the
African Conference on the Universalisation and Implementation of the
Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons**

6 September 2024, Addis Ababa

As delivered

Addis Ababa
6 September 2024

It is my great pleasure to send this message to the African Conference on the Universalization and Implementation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. This seminar will be an opportunity to consider the role of African States in galvanizing efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons, including through the bolstering of the TPNW.

African States took the essential step of denuclearizing the continent through the Pelindaba Treaty. However, the work cannot end there. South Africa, as the only State to have renounced its nuclear arsenal, has played a major role in the TPNW, including as the co-chair of the informal working group on universalization and the co-convenor for this Conference. Today, 15 African States have ratified the TPNW and 17 more have signed the TPNW. There is room to go further.

Signing and ratifying the TPNW sends an important signal. It obliges a State to not develop, test, produce, manufacture, otherwise acquire, possess or stockpile nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices – obligations that African States have already committed to as Parties to the Pelindaba Treaty.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations is the depositary of the TPNW. To assist States, the Secretariat has prepared a [step-by-step guide](#) to becoming a party to the TPNW that is freely available on the website of the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs.

In the interim, I encourage all non-States Parties to consider participating in the Meetings of States Parties as observers. Thirteen African States participated as observers at the second Meeting of States Parties in November last year. I encourage you to do so at the third Meeting of States Parties, scheduled to take place from the 3rd to 7th of March 2025.

The devastating humanitarian consequences associated with the use of nuclear weapons, and the fact that nuclear weapons know no national borders, mean that

the elimination of nuclear weapons is a global responsibility. A strengthened TPNW is one step forward towards that goal.

I wish you successful deliberations over the next two days and thank you very much for your attention.