

to violence and others have tried to resolve them through peace and diplomacy. There is a need for a new global practical theory based on common aspirations to create a global platform for peaceful cooperation.

It is good that the Schiller Institute organized this conference, because as a political organization working on the issues, the PNF is also working tirelessly for the peace of Afghanistan and we have established a larger network in the USA, Europe, and in Afghanistan.

We have also written useful scientific research materials and held various conferences in the USA, Frankfurt am Main, Kabul, and submitted our proposals to the Islamic Emirates of Afghanistan through our members Prof. Abdul Satar Sirat and Mr. Zarghoon Shah Shinwari.

Dear participants, we would like to draw your attention to two themes of this conference: First, today's Afghanistan and its new geographical and political situation; and second, the urgent economic and political needs of Afghanistan today.

Afghanistan has become a battleground of regional rivalry after the withdrawal of NATO forces. The war in Afghanistan has paved the way for foreign rivalries in Afghanistan's multi-ethnic traditional religious community. Ethnic, religious, and xenophobic conflicts have left the country torn and covered in blood. Afghanistan is described by some as a haven for terrorists. There is a clash of foreign conflicts and the lack of an appropriate practical common policy to protect them from the conflict.

Under no circumstances should the experience of bloodshed be repeated. Conferences like this one should focus on the changed political situation of Afghanistan and work on the policy of peace and friendship instead of war and competition. On this complex issue, the Peace National Front of Afghanistan is working to maintain neutrality and consolidate peace. This conflict has brought people to the brink of hunger and malnutrition. It is true that some international charities are helping these people. These donations are useful, but not enough. Sustainable projects need to be supported.

If the Schiller Institute or any prestigious international organization wants to hold a big conference to support the recovery of Afghanistan, the Peace National Front of Afghanistan can help the process with useful experience and ideas from economic experts.

The first great political need of the Afghan people is the formation of a government in Afghanistan that corresponds to their forced geographical location, multi-ethnic structure, national characteristics, religious and cultural values, and to preserve national independence and neutrality. I am personally of the opinion that the current political and economic situation in Afghanistan should be further supported in order to achieve a long-term peace.

Finally, I would like to thank the Schiller Institute for making it possible for us, the Central Council of the Peace National Front of Afghanistan, to participate in this conference and hope for further cooperation in the future.

Princy Mthombeni

## Nuclear Technology for Africa's Agenda for Sustainable Development

*This is an edited transcript of the remarks by Princy Mthombeni to the Development Panel of the Schiller Institute's April 9, 2022 conference, "To Establish a New Security and Development Architecture for All Nations." Ms. Mthombeni is a Nuclear Communications Specialist and founder of Africa4Nuclear, in South Africa.*



Schiller Institute

Princy Mthombeni

Ladies and gentlemen,  
Greetings to you all! My name is Princy Mthombeni, and I am coming

to you live from a beautiful country called South Africa.

I am a Nuclear Communications Specialist and founder of Africa4Nuclear, an advocacy campaign that promotes nuclear as a key contributor to achieving the African Union Agenda 2063, which is a blueprint and masterplan to transform Africa into a global powerhouse of the future. Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Schiller Institute Africa Desk for inviting me to deliver this

talk. It really is an honor.

Just before I start with my presentation, I'd like to share a quote by South Africa's first democratically elected President, Tata Nelson Mandela. He said, and I quote:

Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the action of human beings. As long as poverty, injustice, and gross inequality exist in our world, none of us can truly rest.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Today my talk is titled "Nuclear Technology for Africa's Agenda for Sustainable Development."

I was born in one of the villages in KwaZulu-Natal, which is one of the provinces here in South Africa. The area had no electricity, so we used things such as paraffin [similar to kerosene], burning woods, charcoal, candles and even cow dung to address our energy needs such as cooking, and heating our houses in winter.

At the age of 9, I travelled 3 kilometers to get clean water, waking up at 4 a.m., as we had to get water from the fountain while it is still dark outside. I did my primary school years in the same village, where I travelled 4 kilometers to get to school, crossing the river. I was forced to do homework just before the sunset, because at home we had limited candles.

Why I'm sharing this story with you, is so that you get to understand the life of a typical African. Even though for many of us in South Africa, the situation has changed, but for many Africans it remains unchanged. Energy poverty is still very high in all 55 African countries, with an estimation of over 640 million people in Africa who still have no access to electricity and therefore live in the dark. That's according to the African Development Bank. I am talking about the continent that is home to almost a fifth of the world's population, but accounts for less than 4% of global electricity use.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to give you a simple scenario in terms of the reality that some Africans face:

- A kettle boiled twice a day by a family in Britain uses five times as much electricity as a person in Mali uses per year.
- An Ethiopian takes 87 times longer to consume 150 kWh of electricity than someone in the United Kingdom.
- A Tanzanian takes 8 years to consume as much

electricity as an American consumes in one month.

- A freezer in the United States consumes 10 times more electricity than a Liberian uses in one year.

This is really the true reality of Africa.

So, access to energy is crucial, and not only for health and education improvement but also for unlocking economic potential of Africa and therefore lifting many people out of poverty.

Another field that as Africans I think we should seriously consider exploring, is the field of nuclear medicine. Currently, South Africa is the only country on the continent which has its own means of production of radioisotopes and commercialization of radiopharmaceuticals. All other African countries still import their radiopharmaceuticals, mainly from Europe.

So, there is inadequacy of nuclear medicine in Africa. In some countries, patients have to travel considerable distances in order to access care. Therefore, I would like to see efforts being made by our governments to increase the number of these facilities across the continent in the near future. And this would enable citizens to benefit more readily from this very important diagnostic and therapeutic modality of care.

Now, I'd like to take you through the recent nuclear energy developments here in Africa:

Starting with Ghana, which has issued a Request for Information to assess the nuclear power plant technologies available on the market, which happened in June last year, which saw 15 vendors from China, France, Canada, Korea, Russia, USA, etc. responding to the RFI.

Recently it was reported that Kenya has chosen two sites that are best suited for their nuclear build program.

The government of Nigeria approved and passed into law five nuclear regulations, and recently opened a bid for the construction of a 4 GW nuclear power plant.

South Africa has affirmed its plans for a new 2,500 MW nuclear power plant, with an intention to end the procurement process by 2024.

Zambia's Radiation Protection Authority announced in October last year that it is ready to regulate the use of nuclear technology in Zambia.

Rwanda is planning to sign a contract for feasibility studies in the near term.

And lastly, Niger confirmed that it is resolutely committed to carrying out a nuclear power program included in all its political development programs. Which is a step in the right direction.

Now what are the key things that I'd like us to take into consideration today?

Recently I attended the Nuclear Technology Imbizo which was organized by the Nuclear Industry Association of South Africa (NIASA) in collaboration with Women in Nuclear South Africa (WiNSA) and the South African Young Nuclear Professionals Society (SAYNPS), which took place here in Cape Town in South Africa.

The theme of this event was, “Promoting Global Partnership to support South Africa’s Nuclear Build Program.” The event was attended by government officials and nuclear industry experts, both national and international. The Deputy Minister in the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy, here in South Africa, gave the keynote address.

In her talk, the Deputy Minister highlighted the need to harness all communication platforms at our disposal to inspire and energize South Africans and assert a narrative of hope that nuclear energy can be used to improve our socio-economic lives, rather than hopelessness. This should apply to all African nations. Because, indeed, the socio-economic challenges that are facing the continent dictate that we should pursue an electricity mix that includes nuclear.

Countries like Mozambique have gas, which is really positive from a carbon budget perspective. However, it is not fully harnessed and also, it will require some countries to develop infrastructure, which is currently not sufficiently developed, in order to deliver gas via pipeline resources to power plants in countries that do not have gas.

In South Africa, more than 10 to 24 GW of energy capacity is expected to be decommissioned post-2030. This is mainly due to aging coal power plants, which is a concern for the country, as this will mean that these will have to be replaced with another baseload power source. In a country where water scarcity is a major challenge, this makes the option of hydro-power almost impossible. And that leaves the country with nuclear power as one of the options.

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is really interesting to see many African nations recognizing nuclear power as a key player to achieving Africa’s Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Because, in all honesty, one cannot talk about sustainable development or even civilization while millions of people are still living in poverty and are still

without access to electricity and clean water. Therefore, nuclear is well positioned to help address these challenges.

It is important to highlight Africa’s capabilities in terms of nuclear technology advancement. I’ve heard people saying nuclear projects take forever to finish which make them unattractive for investors. And they usually base these analyses on “lack of skills” especially in the African continent.

If you look at the United Arab Emirates’ new Barakah Nuclear Power Plant: This is a nation with no prior nuclear experience, no prior licensing experience, no siting experience, and absolutely no operation of nuclear infrastructure before. The plant construction started July 2012 and was completed in December 2018. It took only 78 months for a country with no prior nuclear experience. Which is really, really amazing.

Now, the case of Africa. South Africa has a majority, if not all of the above. They have operated the nuclear research reactor, SAFARI-1 for over 50 years. And this has placed the country amongst top producers of nuclear medicine, worldwide. Also, the Koeberg power plant has been operating since 1984. This gives the country and the continent a competitive advantage in terms of capabilities.

The world is talking “Net Zero Carbon Emissions by 2050,” and that’s according to the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

What is concerning, is that many developed nations have placed the burden of “addressing pollution challenges” to African states. And these nations are persuading our leaders to phase out fossil fuels, especially coal in our countries. And yet they have not done so in their own countries. What is even worse, is them dictating on the type of renewable energy sources that we should implement, and they do that through funding terms and conditions. The usually recommended sources are wind and solar.

I have absolutely no problem with wind and solar. However, these technologies alone will not solve Africa’s problem of lack of infrastructure and development. I am also of the view that issues of climate change need to be addressed, but not at the expense of the poor Africans. It is unfair to put restrictions on the energy choices of poor countries who are continuously trapped in a state of poverty, socioeconomic challenges, and underdevelopment.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As I conclude, I would like to state that the time will come when Africa will use a lot more energy. In the meantime, especially in South Africa, coal is our current, while nuclear is the future.

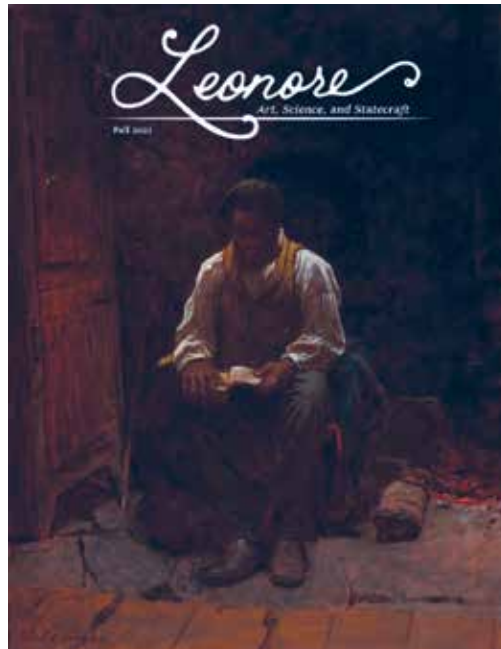
And therefore, I would like to call upon the world to help us build nuclear power plants, which are essential for energy security and economic benefits as well as addressing issues of climate change. Africa is simply tired of being in the dark. It is time for our leaders to take decisive actions and turn around this narrative to power up Africa, and accelerate the pace of economic transformation and drive much needed industrialization to create jobs.

African Union Agenda 2063 is about transforming

Africa into the global powerhouse of the future. Therefore, without solving the energy deficit, neither economic growth nor sustainable development and improvement of citizens' welfare will be possible. I believe that the effective way to solve the energy shortage will be the introduction of nuclear power plants in many parts of Africa. That is the only way this continent will meet its aspiration of "a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development," the Africa that we want.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you so much for your time and once again, it's been an absolute honor to give this address. I wish you a great day!



The Schiller Institute has just released the second issue of its new quarterly journal dedicated to the creation of a classical culture. The 95-page issue, described below, is yours as a monthly contributing member. Memberships start at \$5/month. Give more if you can. This beautiful journal, written for audiences from 12 to 102, is a map to winning a beautiful future. Failure is not an option.

In this special issue, we take on the question of "What is an Aesthetical Education?" This is an incredibly important and challenging question, but one that must be taken up. We want to examine different people and nations who have either attempted or successfully created this type of educational system.

We have a very wonderful composition for you to work through. Here are a few highlights:

Preview the fall issue [here](#)

**Restore Classical Education to the Secondary Classroom**

by Lyndon LaRouche

**The Cult of Ugliness, Or Beauty As A Necessary**

**Condition of Mankind**

by Helga Zepp-LaRouche

**Foundation for the Future**

by Leni Rubenstein

**The Current Transformation of Education in China:**

**Shaping a More Beautiful Mind**

by Richard A. Black

**A Taste of the Sublime Comes from the Most**

**Unexpected of Places**

An Interview with Heartbeat Opera's Ethan Heard

Subscribe [here](#)!

Have fun! *Anastasia Battle*, Editor-in-Chief, *Leonore*