

No. 2198/13

The Embassy of the United States of America presents its compliments to the Department of International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa and has the honor to forward a letter from President Barack Obama to His Excellency President Jacob Zuma. The Embassy will subsequently forward a signed original of this letter.

The Embassy of the United States of America avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Department of International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa the assurances of its highest consideration.

Embassy of the United States of America,  
Pretoria, December 12, 2013.



Enclosure: As stated

**DIPLOMATIC NOTE**

The White House  
Washington, D.C.

December 12, 2013

Dear Mr. President:

I was pleased to receive the invitation from the Prime Minister Mark Rutte of the Netherlands to attend the third Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague in March 2014. I look forward to attending the Summit and to the interactive program our host has designed. I hope to see you there. Since the historic gatherings in Washington in 2010 and Seoul 2012, we have taken many encouraging steps to improve the security of nuclear materials around the world and to strengthen our individual and collective ability to prevent nuclear smuggling. At the same time, we are reminded almost daily of the ongoing threat of terrorism and the necessity to do all we can to avoid the global catastrophe of a terrorist nuclear attack.

I am working hard on the tasks we established in the Seoul Summit and I urge you to do the same. You have taken an important step by ratifying one important legal instrument in this regard, the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and I encourage you to ratify the Amended Convention on the Physical Protection

of Nuclear Material and Facilities as well. I also commend you for your leadership in converting the SAFARI-1 research reactor to operate with low enriched uranium (LEU) fuel and for taking significant steps to convert the production of medical isotopes in South Africa, such as molybdenum-99 (Mo-99), from utilizing high enriched uranium (HEU) targets to LEU targets. Our close cooperation on these activities has helped deepen the partnership and collaboration between our two countries. To help eliminate HEU used in this industry and to recognize leadership efforts like yours, I recently changed the way the United States Government reimburses treatments that use Mo-99 produced with LEU, in order to effectively compensate producers like South Africa that are leading the way to eliminate HEU use in medical isotope production.

As we prepare for The Hague Summit, it is my strong hope that you will be able to announce there that South Africa will dispose of all of its remaining spent HEU fuel. The spent HEU fuel could be delivered to the United States as part of our existing programs, where it would be downblended to LEU. We also will provide an equivalent amount of LEU back to you for use in your commercial reactor. This benefit would help promote South Africa's LEU-based isotope production and support reliable supplies of Mo-99 to the U.S. and European markets. This would also allow South Africa to avoid the purchase of over 350 kilograms of LEU. During my visit to South Africa in June, I raised the prospect of our nations working together on this critical issue in the lead up to the 2014 Summit. To this end, I have offered to send a small team to South Africa to discuss the details of such cooperation. The United States has worked with over 40 countries to remove HEU and plutonium. This HEU minimization goal has been endorsed at both previous Summits and in the International Atomic Energy Agency policy forums; it reflects no judgments on any nation's security capabilities, but rather, a global approach to improving nuclear security.

