

1750 OGC

**CORR: 00-0041**

**CORR: 00-0041**

# COMMISSION CORRESPONDENCE

## Correspondence Response Sheet

**Date:** March 10, 2000

**To:** OGC ✓

**From:** Annette Vietti-Cook, Secretary

**Subject:** Letter to Madam Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuke, Minister of Minerals and Energy, South Africa, concerns expert team's finding regarding the Eskom's Pebble Bed Modular Reactor project

**ACTION:** For Review and Comment. Your response must be received by the Office of the Secretary by:

**Time:** C.O.B.

**Day:** Tuesday

**Date:** March 14, 2000

**Comment:**

**Contact:** Howard Faulkner, OIP  
415-2762

*Suggested edit to keep NRC out of the promotional arena.  
P. 3.  
Kley  
3/13/00*

LL/1

*The Dept of Energy*

-3-

Our team believes that the Pebble Bed Modular Reactor (PBMR) technology has the potential to provide a new energy production alternative for the United States in the long-term future. We believe that our nations can, in some areas, work together on this technology. We believe that such cooperation would be another manifestation of the growing political and economic relationship between the United States and the Republic of South Africa.

In addition to cooperation associated with the PBMR project, the team learned a great deal about South Africa's interest in enhancing the nuclear technology education opportunities for young South Africans. The Department of Energy is very interested in working with you to develop a program of activities that could include items such as:

- ▶ joint funding for scholarships to U.S. universities;
- ▶ facilitating student exchanges and school-to-school relationships between South African and U.S. universities (in particular, much might be gained by partnering South African and U.S. institutions that historically serve black students);
- ▶ support for U.S. nuclear engineering experts to visit South African schools and South African professors and students to visit DOE laboratories; and
- ▶ sponsoring applications for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Fellows Program to train South African engineering professionals at U.S. laboratories and universities.

Finally, the U.S. team also visited South Africa's National Accelerator Center. The team was very impressed with the Center and its focus on education and research. We appreciated the excellent efforts made by the Center to encourage young black South Africans to enter fields