**Rosatom initiatives in South Africa**

The regional office of ROSATOM has been present on the continent since 2010. The company's office is situated in Cape Town. The representative office is actively cooperating with South Africa and participating in the works for strengthening of partnership on the long-term horizon. In September, 2020 ROSATOM signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE) in order to develop and strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation in the area of peaceful atomic energy use. Apart from cooperation in the area of nuclear power engineering, some negotiations with regard to wind power engineering and energy storage systems are in progress.

ROSATOM has implemented a set of social initiatives during the years of its presence in the region. The key focus was on the projects aimed at support of the youth, young girls and development of education as well as conservation of biodiversity and protection of the environment.

Training of the skilled human resources among the African population is one of the areas where ROSATOM focuses its special efforts. ROSATOM has been providing scholarship programs for the African students wishing to master engineering disciplines since 2013. Works for cooperation with the African universities are carried out in parallel. In 2021 the Russian atomic energy corporation signed an agreement with the University of Zululand (UNIZULU) in South Africa on support of foreign students. Joint educational, research and cultural programs, training arrangements and seminars in South Africa and abroad, grant programs as well as practical activities and training of students, post-graduates and PhD candidates in the Russian higher educational institutions associated with ROSATOM are planned within the framework of cooperation.

ROSATOM has been implementing arrangements in the area of period poverty combating for the second consecutive year in order to draw attention to the unique problems faced by girls all around the world. Within the framework of this initiative ROSATOM arranges lectures on feminine health with experts holding comprehensive discussions about the reproductive health, provides safe solutions in the area of feminine health together with the local company that is directly related to reduction of the drop rate among the schoolgirls in South Africa, thus increasing their contribution into sustainability of the local communities.

Arrangement of the stable food supply system for schools and communities in South Africa is one more humanitarian project of ROSATOM in South Africa. The project is implemented due to construction of aquaponic greenhouses. ROSATOM facilitated construction of three greenhouses in the province of Gauteng and the Eastern Cape province, thus providing the sustainable food supply system for 4000 schoolchildren, school employees and the community members and improving the food security situation. The project also included training of the community members on the aquaponic agriculture skills. One of the main advantages of aquaponics is that this method enables to produce clean, fresh and healthy foodstuff in strict compliance with the sustainable development principle. Besides, water consumption is minimal in comparison with other agricultural systems.

In 2021 ROSATOM became a part of Rhisotope International Innovative Project aimed to combat extermination of rhinos. The project provides for marking with the use of isotopic marks applied onto the horns of rhinos. It is expected that this will enable to reduce the demand for them and also to increase the probability of any smuggling detection.