

EGYPT



مصر

The Permanent Mission of Egypt
to the United Nations
New York

بعثة مصر الدائمة
لدى الامم المتحدة
نيويورك

Statement of

H.E. Ambassador/ Maged Abdelaziz

**Permanent Representative to the United Nations
in New York**

before

**The First Committee
(General Debate)**

Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to extend to you our sincere congratulations on your election as Chair of the First Committee and to reiterate our full confidence in your experience and that of other members of the Bureau, which will lead the deliberations of the Committee towards achieving the desired success. The delegation of Egypt associates itself with the Statements delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, the African Group and the New Agenda Coalition.

Mr. Chairman,

The First Committee is held this year amid consecutive positive developments in the field of disarmament, nonproliferation and arms control, most importantly; the signing of the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) by the United States and the Russian Federation, the success of the eighth Review Conference of the Treaty on Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in adopting integrated action plans towards the implementation of commitments on nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful use of nuclear energy, and towards the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East. Other signs also emerged demonstrating a renewed determination of the international community to realize a Nuclear-Weapon-Free world, including additional efforts to revitalize the work of the Conference on Disarmament, through the adoption of a program of work by consensus in 2009, then the High-Level meeting on “Revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations”, convened by the Secretary-General shortly before the commencement of this session. Egypt welcomed all these developments and emphasized the need to build-on them through collective and effective practical steps, based on the faithful implementation of commitments and on achieving the common interests of both Nuclear-Weapon States and Non-Nuclear-Weapon States alike.

There is no doubt that the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference has represented an additional achievement in the field of nuclear disarmament this year, following the drastic failure of the 2005 Conference of 2005, despite the fact that the Final Document did not adopt the Non-Aligned Movement’s demand for marking the year 2025 as the appropriate timeframe for the realization of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World, through launching negotiations on a Nuclear Weapons Convention to totally ban nuclear weapons. Moreover, the final document did not meet the Non-Aligned Movement’s demand to initiate negotiations on a

Treaty providing the Non-Nuclear-Weapon States with unconditional assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, pending the realization of nuclear disarmament. Furthermore, it did not push with sufficient vigor to accelerate the attainment of the objective of the NPT universality, through strong practical measures to guarantee the accession of the three states which remain outside the Treaty, as Non-Nuclear-Weapon States.

In the field of nuclear non-proliferation, the document did attain a similar achievement, through highlighting, as an example, the priority of achieving the universality of the comprehensive safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), as well as the national responsibility of States in the field of nuclear export controls, in accordance with the Treaty provisions and the prominence of the priority of full compliance with all provisions of the Treaty, without exception. The materialization of these elements requires a sincere collective effort, to implement them in a manner which negates all the motivations for nuclear proliferation, and achieves equal security for all parties without discrimination, and without permitting a role for nuclear weapons to exist in military doctrines in the next decade, as their role and legitimacy are diminished, either in Nuclear-Weapon States or in military alliances which still alleviate the role of nuclear weapons in their security policies, in a manner inconsistent with international disarmament and non-proliferation commitments.

Similarly, the document re-emphasized the importance of respecting choices of States Parties regarding the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and the importance of facilitating technology transfer and enhancing international cooperation, either directly or through an enhanced Technical Cooperation program by the IAEA, in consistence with the inalienable right of NPT States Parties in this regard.

With regard to the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, which did not witness over 15 years any real effort towards its partial or full implementation, despite being one of the main pillars of the Treaty's indefinite extension package, the plan of action adopted by the 2010 Review Conference included clear steps requiring full implementation, based on effective and serious international and regional efforts aiming at the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons, as well as other weapons of Mass destruction in the Middle East, to address the lack of universality of the Treaty in this region, within clear responsibilities of each of the three depository States, and the States of the region, as well as the Secretary-

General of the United Nations, in implementing that plan in a manner that facilitates the attainment of the desired objective.

While Egypt continues to firmly oppose the possession of nuclear weapons by any State in the Middle East, Israel persists in refraining to accede to the NPT and continues to enhance its ambiguous nuclear capabilities outside the comprehensive safeguards system of the IAEA, while putting forward false pretexts to evade international pressure aimed at freeing the region of the Middle East from nuclear weapons. Time has come for Israel to acknowledge that the international consensus which materialized in the Plan of Action for the implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, translated into a practical framework represented in the 2012 Conference, along with other previous and subsequent steps, requires implementation. Israel should realize that this Conference achieves its stability and security interests, as it lays the foundations for Israel to abandon its ambiguous nuclear program and assure us all that no other State in the region shall seek to acquire nuclear weapons in the future.

In this context, the international consensus on calling upon Israel in the 1995 resolution plan of action, to accede to the NPT and to place all its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive safeguards of the IAEA, should provide an additional incentive for Israel to respond positively to international efforts aiming at achieving its own security as well as that of other states of the region, and that this unanimous call should not serve as a justification to ease the pressures on Israel in other fora, particularly as Israel itself did not provide any guarantees or signals on its preparedness to engage in the negotiating process through the 2012 Conference.

It is undoubted that the depositary States of the Treaty, who drafted and pushed for the adoption of the 1995 resolution as part of the indefinite extension package, other NWS and other States of the region will do their utmost in the next phase to obtain the necessary guarantees for the engagement of Israel, Iran and all Arab States in this international effort, so that it goes side by side with efforts to bring about peace in the region, which remain hampered by Israel's refusal to renew the voluntary moratoria on building settlements, in a continuation of its policies to defy the international community in the nuclear and political fields.

Egypt enhances its active role in supporting the NPT regime through continuing to support international efforts to combat the proliferation of other weapons of mass destruction such as chemical, biological and radiological weapons, as has been evident through its leading role in the negotiations of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Yet Israel's persistence not to join the NPT as a Non-Nuclear-Weapon State remains a significant obstacle facing the accession of Egypt to the two conventions and to its ratification of the CTBT, despite Egypt's support for the objectives and principles of the three instruments, since that would further widens the existing gap between the commitments of States Parties to the NPT which implement all their Treaty obligations, and the sole State outside the NPT in our region which enjoys unmatched freedom under international unjustifiable support. There is no doubt that the link between Israel's disposal of its ambiguous nuclear capability on the one hand, and the achievement of parallel progress in dealing with other weapons of mass destruction on the other, as provided for in the NPT Plan of Action on the implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, confirms the conviction of the international community in this firm link which Egypt and the Arab countries always highlighted.

Mr. Chairman,

In the field of conventional weapons, last June witnessed the holding of the Biennial Meeting of States for considering the implementation of the UN Programme of Action to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and reaffirmed the centrality of the UN Programme of Action in this field and the importance of enhancing national capacities to live up to the comprehensive and optimal implementation of the PoA measures in addition to the international instrument on marking and tracing of small arms and light weapons. In this context, the delegation of Egypt highlights the priority of technical assistance, international cooperation, and exchange of national experiences to promote the full implementation of the program and the instrument, as politically binding for all of us, the consensual framework of which has achieved unprecedented success at the global level, inviting us to promote the achievement of pillars of the program and build on it within the same consensus-based constructive framework.

At the same time, the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations 2012 Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty convened its first Session last July. Egypt participated actively in its work, which focused on exploring the interlocking and complex political, economic, military and legal details associated with this issue. Egypt welcomes the confirmed commitment to the principle of consensus in the deliberations of the First Session and the issuance of the reports of the facilitators of the three main themes so as to reflect the scope of ideas, positions and trends expressed through the discussions so that the monitoring of these positions in the next phase could contribute to the convergence of views in a balanced, objective and fair manner offering all States equal rights, obligations and responsibilities.

In this context, Egypt invites all participating States in the work of the Preparatory Committee for the 2012 ATT Conference to focus on the goal of creating a consensual platform to ensure the universality of the Treaty in the framework of the United Nations. This should be the governing rule for the negotiations, rather than to have them governed by the ambitions of a group of benefiting States or another group of unaffected States, which could consequently result in a future treaty that lacks justice and thus not be joined by major producing and consuming countries in the field of conventional arms trade.

Also in the context of international cooperation, I wish to positively refer to one of the key areas of interest to Egypt as it is linked to our ambitious development plans, namely; landmine clearance. Egypt has continued active cooperation with various international partners to develop its capacities and strengthen its capabilities in the field of detection and clearance of landmines and explosive remnants of war, as some 17 million mines remain on the Egyptian territories, impeding development and reconstruction efforts, and threatening, every single day, civilian lives in affected areas. We hope that this cooperation will expand to become consistent with the magnitude of the mine problem in Egypt and to the losses it causes in humanitarian and development terms.

Mr. Chairman,

Egypt presents three draft resolutions at the current Session of the Committee, which are entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of Middle East", and "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East", and "Prevention of an arms race in outer space." We hope that the current Session will witness increasing support for those resolutions,

in a manner consistent with the priorities they address on the agenda of the international community.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, the delegation of Egypt once again stresses its eagerness to cooperate with you and all the participating delegations to achieve a truly serious breakthrough in the results of the First Committee, which would contribute to advancing forward the international agenda on general and complete disarmament, to reinforcing the security of all our peoples and to contribute to supporting international stability, peace and security for the achievement of the noble mission of the United Nations in this area.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman