

D – Materials Related to the Proposal to Establish a Zone Free of Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East

Section 1: Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction

Decision. Convening a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction

A/C.1/73/L.22/Rev.1
[17 October 2018]

The General Assembly decides:

(a) To entrust to the Secretary-General the convening, no later than 2019 for a duration of one week at United Nations Headquarters, of a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, to which all States of the Middle East, the three co-sponsors of the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in the light of their responsibility for the implementation of that resolution, the other two nuclear-weapon States and the relevant international organizations shall be invited, provided that:

(i) The conference shall take as its terms of reference the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference;

(ii) The conference shall aim at elaborating a legally binding treaty establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the States of the region;

(iii) All decisions emanating from the conference shall be taken by consensus by the States of the region;

(b) To affirm the special responsibility of the three co-sponsors of the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, as the depository States of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and to call upon them to fulfil their relevant obligations in accordance with the agreed outcomes of the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences;

(c) To request the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit to prepare the background documents necessary for the conference;

(d) To request the Secretary-General to convene annual sessions of the conference for a duration of one week at United Nations Headquarters until the conference concludes the elaboration of a legally binding treaty establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction;

(e) To also request the Secretary-General to report annually to the General Assembly on developments in this regard.

Report of the first session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction

A/CONF.236/6
[28 November 2019]

I. Introduction

1. In its decision 73/546, the General Assembly entrusted the Secretary-General with convening, no later than 2019 at Headquarters, a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. In the decision, the Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to convene annual sessions of the Conference, for a duration of one week, at Headquarters, until the Conference concluded the elaboration of a legally binding treaty establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

II. Organizational matters and proceedings of the Conference

A. Opening and duration of the Conference

2. The first session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction was held from 18 to 22 November 2019 at Headquarters. Twenty-three participating States from the region, four observer States and three relevant international organizations or entities participated in the session. The list of participants is contained in document [A/CONF.236/INF/3](#).

3. The Conference was opened on 18 November 2019 by the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu. The Conference elected by acclamation Jordan as President of the Conference and invited the Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations, Sima Sami I. Bahous, to preside over the Conference. The Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly for the seventy-fourth session, Tijani Muhammad-Bande (Nigeria), made statements at the opening of the session. Other Member States, relevant international organizations, United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations were invited to attend the opening meeting. Nineteen of the participating States made remarks at the opening meeting.

B. Agenda and programme of work

4. At its 2nd meeting, on 18 November, the Conference adopted the agenda for the first session, as contained in document [A/CONF.236/1](#), as follows:

1. Opening of the Conference.
2. Election of the President of the Conference.
3. Address by the President of the Conference.
4. Address by the Secretary-General.
5. Address by the President of the General Assembly.
6. Adoption of the agenda.
7. Adoption of the programme of work.
8. Adoption of the rules of procedure.
9. Credentials of representatives.
10. General debate.
11. Thematic debate.
12. Adoption of the report and political declaration.
13. Any other business.
14. Closure of the session.

5. At the same meeting, the Conference adopted the programme of work for the session ([A/CONF.236/5](#)). The Conference also agreed to structure the thematic debate on the basis of the indicative topics proposed in a concept note by the President.

C. Rules of procedure

6. At its 4th meeting, on 19 November, the Conference agreed

to proceed on the basis of the following statement made by the President, pending a final agreement on the rules of procedure:

In order to prepare for the Conference being held pursuant to General Assembly decision 73/546, the presidency has conducted consultations with participating States on the preparations for the Conference, including its rules of procedure. I highly appreciate the spirit of cooperation and compromise demonstrated in the process.

While participating States agree to consider the draft rules of procedure of the Conference, and agree thereon by consensus, I declare that the participating States hereby agree that, pending the final agreement on the text of the rules of procedure of the Conference, consensus will be the only method of decision-making on procedural and substantive issues, except for rulings by the President on procedural motions related to points of order, and suspension or adjournment of meetings.

7. At its 10th meeting, on 22 November, the Conference agreed to continue its consideration of the draft rules of procedure during the intersessional period.

D. Attendance of relevant international organizations, United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations

8. At its 2nd meeting, the Conference decided to invite several relevant international organizations, United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations to attend public meetings of the first session as observers (see [A/CONF.236/DEC.1](#) and [A/CONF.236/DEC.2](#)).

E. Documentation

9. The documentation before the Conference is available on the website of the Conference (www.un.org/disarmament/topics/conference-on-a-mezf-of-nwindowomd).

III. Credentials

10. The credentials of representatives and the names of alternate representatives and advisers, to be issued either by the Head of State or Government or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, were submitted to the Secretary-General of the Conference, who, having examined the credentials received, noted that, as at 22 November 2019:

(a) Formal credentials in due form had been received for the representatives of the following three participating States: Algeria, Kuwait and Qatar;

(b) Provisional credentials for the representatives of the following 17 participating States had been communicated by means of a facsimile communication from the Head of State or Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs or by means of a note verbale or letter from the permanent mission in New York: Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, State of Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen;

(c) Credentials or other information concerning their representatives had not been received from the following three participating States: Comoros, Mauritania and Somalia.

11. On the proposal of the Secretary-General of the Conference, the Conference agreed to accept the credentials of all the States referred to in paragraph 10 (a) and (b) above, on the understanding that the originals of the credentials of the representatives of those States referred to in paragraph 10 (b), as well as for the representatives of those States referred to in paragraph 10 (c), where applicable, would be submitted as soon as possible.

IV. General debate

12. At its 3rd and 4th meetings, on 19 November, the Conference held its general debate. At its 3rd meeting, the Conference heard statements by representatives of Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Tunisia, Yemen, Lebanon, Algeria, Iraq, the Sudan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Syrian Arab Republic, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. At its 4th meeting, the Conference heard statements by the representatives of the State

of Palestine, Morocco, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, France, China and the Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit.

V. Thematic debate

13. At its 5th and 6th meetings, on 20 November, the Conference held a thematic debate. Representatives of participating States exchanged views on a range of related issues, including principles and objectives, general obligations regarding nuclear weapons, general obligations regarding other weapons of mass destruction, peaceful uses and international cooperation, institutional arrangements and other aspects. The Conference agreed that representatives of existing nuclear-weapon-free zones organizations should be invited to share good practices and lessons learned with respect to the implementation of treaties establishing such zones prior to the second session of the Conference.

VI. Political declaration

14. At its 9th meeting, on 22 November, the Conference adopted a political declaration, which is contained in the annex to the present report.

VII. Preparations for the second session

15. At its 10th meeting, on 22 November, the Conference adopted decisions on the preparations for its second session (see [A/CONF.236/DEC.3](#) and [A/CONF.236/DEC.4](#)).

16. At the same meeting, the Conference decided that its second session would be held from 16 to 20 November 2020 at Headquarters.

17. The Conference agreed that the President, in consultation with participating States, should undertake efforts to prepare for the second session.

Political Declaration. The First Session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction

A/CONF.236/6
[28 November 2019]

We, the representatives of participating States at the first session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, having met at Headquarters from 18 to 22 November 2019, pursuant to General Assembly decision 73/546:

(a) Welcome all initiatives, resolutions, decisions and recommendations on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction;

(b) Believe that the establishment of a verifiable Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction would greatly enhance regional and international peace and security;

(c) Declare our intent and solemn commitment to pursue, in accordance with relevant international resolutions, and in an open and inclusive manner with all invited States, the elaboration of a legally binding treaty to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by consensus by the States of the region;

(d) Call upon all States of the Middle East and all other States to refrain from taking any measures that preclude the achievement of the objectives of the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction;

(e) Convinced that the realization of this long-standing goal would be facilitated by the participation of all States of the Middle East, extend an open-ended invitation to all States of the region to lend their support to the present declaration and to join the process;

(f) In that spirit, believe that the Conference, through the elaboration of a legally binding treaty establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, could contribute to building regional and international confidence therein;

(g) Commit to undertaking efforts to follow up on the declaration and on the outcomes of the Conference and to engaging in preparations for the second session of the Conference, commend the efforts of the Secretary-General in convening the first session of the Conference, and request his continued efforts and those of relevant international organizations and the strong support of the international community towards the success of the Conference in establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

Excerpt from the Report of the Second Session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction

A/CONF.236/2021/4
[3 December 2021]

[Eds . . .].

V. Thematic debate

13. At its third, fourth and fifth meetings, the Conference held a thematic debate. Representatives of Members to the Conference exchanged preliminary views on topics noted as follows.

14. The structured thematic debate represented an important opportunity for the Members to the Conference to engage formally in a conference setting to exchange preliminary views in a systematic way on core issues related to the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in accordance with General Assembly decision 73/546.

15. The thematic debate was undertaken on the basis of an informal paper by the President, which contained a non-exhaustive list of issues, including Principles and objectives; Core obligations related to nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, including verification; Transparency and security through implementation of the treaty; Definitions, clarifications, consultations and cooperation; Peaceful uses and international cooperation; Institutional arrangements, entry into force and dispute settlement; Protocols including security assurances; and other relevant issues. The deliberations proceeded with the understanding that any Member of the Conference may raise any additional topics for the thematic debate, and they may also supplement and consolidate their views on those issues at any time.

Principles and objectives of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction

16. Primary objectives of the treaty should include enhancing regional and international peace and security through the complete elimination and prohibition of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the region of the Middle East.

17. The Middle East zone treaty should be established based on article VII of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Resolution on the Middle East, which was adopted as an integral part of the outcomes of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference; the relevant paragraphs from the final document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference; and on the basis on the guidelines adopted by the Disarmament Commission in its report of 30 April 1999 on establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones.

18. Members of the Conference reaffirmed the importance of Israel's accession to the Treaty and the placement of all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards, as reflected in the final document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference and stressed that the Resolution on the Middle East is an integral part of the package that led to the indefinite extension of the NPT during the 1995 NPT. They urged all Members to the Conference and the three co-sponsors of the

resolution to ensure its early implementation. They also called on all Members to the Conference and observers to take part in future sessions of the Conference on the establishment of the Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction and to contribute to the realization of its objective.

19. The obligations of all the Members to the treaty should be clearly defined and legally binding, and the Members to the treaty should fully comply with such obligations.

20. Nothing in the treaty shall be interpreted as affecting the inalienable right of all Members to the treaty to develop, research, produce, and use nuclear, chemical and biological materials, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes, in conformity with article IV of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, article XI of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), and article X of the Biological and Weapons Convention (BWC). All Members to the treaty shall have the right to participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials, and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear, chemical, and biological materials, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes. Each Member's choices and decisions in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear, chemical, and biological materials, equipment and technology should be respected.

21. The treaty should recognize the catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences that would result from any use of nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons and the need to prevent such horrors from occurring again. It should also affirm that any use or threat of use by any state is unacceptable.

22. The preamble of the treaty could reaffirm support for the primary international treaties addressing weapons of mass destruction, such as the NPT, CWC, BWC.

23. A point was raised that that treaty should not be linked to the Middle East peace process.

Core obligations related to nuclear chemical and biological weapons, including verification

24. The treaty should include obligations for its Member not to research, develop, manufacture, test, stockpile, acquire, possess or have any control over nuclear weapons or any other nuclear explosive device, as well as any chemical or biological weapons; not seek or receive assistance in any of the above; nor to assist in or encourage such actions by any other party.

25. The treaty should include prohibitions on the development, production, stockpiling, testing, transfer, transit, receipt, storage, installation or any other form of possession of any nuclear weapon or nuclear explosive device, as well as other weapons of mass destruction on the territory of Members to the treaty or any territories under their jurisdiction. It was suggested that these prohibitions should also extend to the territorial sea or archipelagic waters of Members to the treaty.

26. It should also prohibit any transit of nuclear materials or other waste removed from nuclear weapons through the territory of Members to the treaty or any territories under their jurisdiction.

27. The treaty should also require Members to the treaty to prohibit and prevent in their respective the diversion of nuclear, chemical, and biological materials for prohibited military purposes.

28. It should also prohibit any transit through the territory of Members to the treaty or any territories under their jurisdiction of nuclear materials or other waste removed from nuclear weapons.

29. The treaty's provisions should be non-discriminatory and provide the same rights and obligations to each of its Members.

30. With respect to verification, the treaty should avoid duplicating other existing international arrangements and could rely on existing instruments, including the comprehensive safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the verification regime of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

31. It was also suggested that the Members to the treaty could consider a regional verification mechanism to supplement existing multilateral verification regimes.

32. The voluntary nature of the adherence to the Additional

Protocol of the IAEA and that it cannot be considered as a condition for the supply of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, was emphasized.

Definitions, clarifications, consultations and cooperation

33. The inclusion of clear definitions of key terms employed in the treaty and its protocols contributes to the effective implementation of a treaty.

34. The non-prohibited purposes should be clearly defined to include industrial, agricultural, research, medical, pharmaceutical, or any measures linked to the prevention of nuclear, chemical, or biological incidents.

35. With regard to the definition of the territory covered by the treaty, it was suggested that it cover all land holdings, internal waters, territorial seas, and archipelagic waters.

36. Clarification, consultation, and cooperation serve as effective tools that contribute to effective implementation.

Peaceful uses and international cooperation

37. It was emphasized that the treaty should uphold the right to develop and use nuclear, chemical, and biological materials, equipment, and technologies for peaceful purposes. This included the reaffirmation of the inalienable right of Members to the treaty to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy, as well chemical, biological materials, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes without discrimination.

38. The treaty should facilitate and provide for the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific as well as technological information for peaceful uses. The point was made in this regard, that the treaty should actively promote the peaceful uses or nuclear energy, especially given the environmentally friendly nature of nuclear power.

39. It was emphasized that the application of comprehensive safeguard would not, in any way, hamper the legitimate peaceful uses or their developmental benefits or infringe on the sovereign decisions of Members to the treaty in this regard.

40. The treaty should promote the exchange of information and cooperation to ensure that nuclear, chemical, and biological materials and technologies do not fall into the hands of criminal organizations.

41. The treaty should emphasize the importance of peaceful uses of nuclear, chemical, and biological materials and technologies in fields such as industrial, agricultural, research, medical, pharmaceutical, or any measures linked to the prevention of nuclear, chemical or biological incidents, or any other peaceful uses that are proven to be essential.

42. The treaty could call on developed countries to play a key role in sharing their knowledge and exchange equipment, materials and scientific, as well as technological information for peaceful uses.

43. The view was expressed that any measures imposed that would hinder civil cooperation projects with developing countries should be avoided, and that the treaty should ensure that, under no circumstances, would international cooperation on the peaceful use of nuclear energy and other related technologies be hindered, in accordance with art. IV of the NPT.

Institutional arrangements, entry into force, and dispute settlement

44. There were several proposals on the establishment and the functions of various bodies for the treaty, such as a Meeting of Members to the treaty, a Secretariat and Review Conference of the treaty. These bodies could oversee the implementation of the treaty, address cases of non-compliance, coordinate exchanges of information among Members to the treaty, and convene periodical sessions, as well as any other matters pursuant to and consistent with the provisions of the treaty.

45. The treaty should include the designation of a national authority that will act as a national focal point, which will be responsible for both national implementation as well as liaising with the treaty implementation body and other national focal points.

Protocols including negative security assurances

46. The treaty should be respected by and get the full cooperation of nuclear-weapon states. It should also include protocols containing legally binding obligations for nuclear-weapon states not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against Members to the treaty; not to deploy nor station nuclear weapons within the zone; and not to provide any assistance to any countries in any acts prohibited by the treaty.

Any other relevant issues

47. Treaty provisions should include peaceful settlement of disputes, amendments, duration, withdrawal, annexes, signature, ratification, accession, entry into force, reservations, depositary, and authentic texts.

48. It was suggested that the treaty should remain in force indefinitely.

49. Based on lessons learned from other nuclear weapon-free zone treaties, it should establish a minimum period of notification of withdrawal of 12 months.

50. It was proposed that the Secretary-General of the United Nations should be designated as the depositary of the treaty.

51. In addition to the deliberations reflected in the paragraphs above, the Conference agreed to continue its discussion on, but not limited to, the following issues:

- a. Accession by Members to the Conference to relevant multilateral legal instruments related to weapons of mass destruction.
- b. Conditions for entry into force of the treaty.
- c. Verification mechanism for biological weapons.
- d. Other verification measures and the Model Protocol Additional to the Agreement(s) Between State(s) and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Application of Safeguards.
- e. Unilateral Coercive Measures.
- f. Secretariat of the treaty.
- g. Depositary of the treaty.

[Eds . . .]

Excerpt from the Report of Third Session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction

A/CONF.236/2022/3
[21 November 2022]

[Eds . . .]

Thematic debate

15. At its 3rd to 7th meetings, the Conference held a thematic debate. Members to the Conference exchanged views on the following topics: (a) core obligations; (b) issues identified in paragraph 51 of the report of the second session of the Conference; and (c) glossary of terminologies and other related issues.

16. The thematic debate was organized on the basis of four agreed topics, with one meeting allocated to each topic. Discussion papers on core obligations and the glossary of terminologies were circulated by the President. The deliberations proceeded with the understanding that any Members to the Conference may raise any additional topics for the thematic debate and they may also supplement or consolidate their views on those issues at any time. Members to the Conference expressed their respective positions on the thematic topics and engaged in interactive discussions.

17. Without prejudice to the future work and positions of the Members to the Conference, the Members conducted the thematic debate with a general understanding on the following.

Core obligations

18. The Members to the Conference reconfirmed the outcomes of the previous sessions of the Conference.

19. Views were expressed that the existing weapons of mass destruction treaties and conventions, namely the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention, should form the basis for the future treaty.

20. The core obligations of the Middle East zone treaty should ensure the total absence of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction from the region of the Middle East.

21. The zone treaty should include obligations for State parties not to carry out research on, develop, manufacture, produce, stockpile, test, possess, acquire, station, transfer, transit, or use or threaten to use nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, other weapons of mass destruction or any fissionable source material nor to assist, encourage, induce or authorize, directly or indirectly, others to undertake any of these activities anywhere.

22. The treaty should include an obligation for its members not to seek, receive, acquire or have any control, directly or indirectly, over nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or other weapons of mass destruction.

23. The members of the treaty should undertake to prohibit, within their territory or any territories under their jurisdiction or control, research on or development, manufacture, production, stockpiling, testing, storage, possession, stationing, deployment, transit, or use or threat of use of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or other weapons of mass destruction.

24. Members to the Conference reconfirm their commitment to ensure the absence of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and the principle of attaining the ultimate goal of their total irreversible and verifiable elimination.

25. The treaty should include an obligation for its members to maintain the physical protection of nuclear material, facilities and equipment, without prejudice to the inalienable right to peaceful uses and taking into consideration that nuclear safety and security is the responsibility of the respective Member to the Conference.

26. The view was expressed that the obligations relating to different classes of weapons may vary, given the unique characteristics of each class of weapon.

Issues identified in paragraph 51 of the report of the second session of the Conference

27. With regard to the accession by Members to the Conference to relevant multilateral legal instruments related to weapons of mass destruction, the members to the Conference considered that all States parties to the treaty establishing the Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction should also be members of the relevant multilateral legal instruments related to weapons of mass destruction, namely the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention, as well as conclude safeguards agreements with IAEA.

28. With regard to the entry into force of the treaty, the following views were expressed:

(a) Ratification by all Members to the Conference is a condition for the entry into force of the treaty;

(b) Other relevant treaties and conventions should be ratified prior to the adoption of the treaty;

(c) The entry into force of the treaty should be discussed and agreed upon at a later stage following agreement on the substantial aspects of the treaty.

29. With regard to verification, Members to the Conference considered that the treaty should take advantage of and not duplicate the existing verification mechanisms, such as those of IAEA and OPCW. It was proposed that the treaty should require all its members to conclude and implement comprehensive safeguards agreements with IAEA to ensure that the peaceful nature of all nuclear programmes is verified. A view was expressed that a verification mechanism for biological weapons could be negotiated as needed, as well as complementary

regional verification measures.

30. The Members to the Conference stressed the inalienable right of States parties to receive and use nuclear, chemical and biological technology and materials solely for peaceful purposes.

31. Members to the Conference recognized the illegality of imposing unilateral coercive measures, which have a negative impact on Members to the Conference. The Members to the Conference also recognized the necessity to ensure the inalienable right to peaceful uses of nuclear, chemical and biological technologies without any undue restrictions. Views were expressed regarding the reflection of issues regarding unilateral coercive measures in the future treaty. Other views were expressed that the Conference might not be the right forum to discuss this issue. In the end, it was stated that, when the negotiation on the treaty reaches the drafting stage, the Conference will look into specific language.

32. A view was expressed that the Secretary-General of the United Nations be the depositary of the treaty, since the Conference is convened at the invitation of the Secretary-General. It was agreed that this could be discussed at a later stage of negotiations.

Glossary of terminologies

33. Members to the Conference expressed their appreciation to the President for providing a discussion paper on the glossary of terminologies and support for the consideration of the glossary. It was suggested that the Conference could consider terms as appropriate for the zone context, without duplicating existing terminology. Owing to the comprehensive and technical nature of the glossary, the Members agreed to assign it to the working committee to continue the consideration of the issue.

Other related issues

34. Members to the Conference expressed deep concern about the two consecutive failures of the Review Conferences held in 2015 and 2022 as well as the failure of the Fourth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, in 2018, and expressed the hope that the next review conferences of the related treaties and conventions extend adequate support to establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

35. Members to the Conference also stressed that the resolution on the Middle East, adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as well as other relevant decisions on the matter adopted within the context of the Review Conferences, remained valid until the objective of the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East is fully achieved and that the implementation of decision 73/546 is without prejudice to the validity of the aforementioned resolution and decisions and shall not be construed as their replacement.

36. Members to the Conference stressed the importance of the universality of the related treaties and conventions and called on the international community as well as the Secretary-General of the United Nations to further promote the goal of achieving the universality of such treaties and conventions.

37. The Members to the Conference stressed the importance of all parties of the region undertaking, in accordance with article III (1) of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, to accept safeguards on all source or special fissionable material in all peaceful nuclear activities within the territory of the State, under its jurisdiction or carried out under its control anywhere, for the exclusive purpose of verifying that such material is not diverted to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

38. Members to the Conference urged all invited Members to the Conference, observer States and the three international organizations to give priority to participation in the Conference.

39. The Conference invited the Secretary-General of the United Nations to exert his utmost endeavours with regard to the participation of all invited Members to the Conference, observer States and international organizations. In that regard, it was noted that ensuring the participation of representatives of the

Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit can be facilitated by requesting the President of the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention or of the Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention to relay the need for the participation of the Unit in the Conference.

40. Members to the Conference looked forward to the participation of all invited Members to the Conference, observer States and the three international organizations and to their meaningful support for the Conference at its fourth session, in fulfilment of their obligation to attend in accordance with the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and General Assembly decision 73/546 and to accept the invitation of the Secretary-General accordingly.

41. A view was expressed that the Conference may need to set a timetable in due course for completing the draft of the treaty.

42. It was stressed that views, thoughts and discussions expressed or raised in either the general debate or the thematic debate are without prejudice to the positions of Members to the Conference at an advanced stage of negotiations and are not necessarily considered the final decision or position of any of the members to the Conference, or an exhaustion of discussion.

[Eds . . .]

**Excerpt from the Report of Fourth Session of
the Conference on the Establishment of a
Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons
and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction**

A/CONF.236/2023/4
[20 November 2023]

[Eds . . .]

VII. Thematic debate

23. At its 3rd, 4th and 5th meetings, the Conference held a thematic debate. Members to the Conference exchanged views on the following topics: (a) peaceful uses and technical cooperation; (b) nuclear verification; and (c) topics identified in previous sessions of the Conference requiring further discussion.

24. The thematic debate was organized on the basis of the three agreed topics, with one meeting allocated to each topic. The deliberations proceeded with the understanding that any Member to the Conference could raise any additional topics for the thematic debate and they could also supplement or consolidate their views on those issues at any time. Members to the Conference expressed their respective positions on the thematic topics and engaged in interactive discussions.

25. The Members to the Conference recalled paragraph 18 of the report of the third session under the section entitled “core obligations”, which stated that the Members to the Conference reconfirmed the outcomes of the previous sessions of the Conference.

Peaceful uses and technical cooperation

26. Members to the Conference emphasized that the future treaty should reaffirm the inalienable right of its members to peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as well as peaceful uses of biological and chemical materials and technology, and ensure that its Members can fully enjoy that right without restriction or politicization. It was emphasized that nothing in the treaty should be interpreted in a manner that restricted that right, even if it exceeded or was contradictory to the States’ respective obligations under international treaties and conventions.

27. Members to the Conference reiterated that the treaty should facilitate and provide for the fullest possible exchange on peaceful uses of nuclear, biological and chemical materials, technologies and scientific and technical information.

28. Several proposals were made in that regard, including on the

establishment of a regional mechanism that would promote and facilitate interregional cooperation and exchange of materials, equipment, technologies and expertise, as well as on the establishment of a regional consortium for the production of nuclear fuel. A view was expressed that the establishment of such mechanisms and bodies was premature before agreeing to free the Middle East of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and ensuring that all relevant facilities were subject to international control and supervision.

29. Members to the Conference recognized that adherence to IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements underpinned the ability of States to take full advantage of peaceful nuclear applications. In that regard, the Conference recognized the efforts of IAEA in promoting peaceful nuclear applications and its support of its members to that end through various initiatives. A number of States also stressed the positive impact of peaceful nuclear applications in addressing social and economic developmental needs.

30. It was pointed out that the lessons learned from the five nuclear-weapon-free zones around the world provided a valuable contribution to the deliberations and enriched the discussions of the Conference, under the common goal of the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction; however, it was imperative to recognize the distinct aspects of the region, including the existing state of imbalance vis-à-vis the principal relevant treaties and conventions related to weapons of mass destruction.

31. It was emphasized that the conclusion of comprehensive safeguards agreements with IAEA should not in any way hamper peaceful uses or their developmental benefits for States. Members of the Conference also underlined that nuclear safety and nuclear security within a State rested entirely with that State and should not be used as a pretext to impede access to nuclear energy.

32. The issue of unilateral coercive measures was also raised. Various views remained the same and the positions expressed by Members to the Conference on this topic at the third session remained valid ([A/CONF.236/2022/3](#), para. 31).

Nuclear verification

33. Concerning the scope of nuclear verification under the future treaty, it was agreed that the issue required further consideration.

34. Members to the Conference underscored that acceding to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a non-nuclear-weapon party and fully complying with its obligations would represent a necessary prerequisite for any State in the region to become a party to the future treaty.

35. Members to the Conference discussed whether the future treaty should rely on the safeguards regime of IAEA. A view was expressed that there were some outstanding issues related to the safeguards regime, such as the discriminatory approach, discrepancies in practice, the confidentiality regime and authorized sources of data, that needed to be discussed between the experts of IAEA and Members to the Conference in the working committee. They recalled that the implementation of comprehensive safeguards agreements should be designed to provide for verification by IAEA of the correctness and completeness of a State’s declarations.

36. A view was expressed that verification of the future treaty should not go beyond comprehensive safeguards agreements as those were the standard and universal verification benchmark as prescribed under the Non-Proliferation Treaty and that the additional protocol was voluntary in nature and accession to it was a sovereign decision. Another view was expressed that the future treaty should consider requiring its parties to conclude the additional protocol, as it would enhance the effectiveness of the verification of the treaty.

37. Members to the Conference called on all parties in the region to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon party and subject all their nuclear facilities to comprehensive safeguards.

**Topics identified in previous sessions of the Conference
requiring further discussion**

38. On principles and core obligations, Members to the Conference reiterated that the future treaty should contain comprehensive prohibitions, including on the use or threat to use nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, as well as all other weapons of mass destruction. The core obligations of the future treaty should ensure the total absence of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction from the region of the Middle East. A view was expressed that the treaty should prohibit physical attacks or cyberattacks against peaceful nuclear installations in the region.

39. Members to the Conference reiterated the necessity of accession by all Members to the Conference, before the conclusion of the future treaty, to relevant multilateral legal instruments related to weapons of mass destruction, namely the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention.

40. On entry into force, a proposal was made that the future treaty should enter into force 90 days following the deposit of instruments of ratification of the related treaties as specified in paragraph 39, as well as the treaty establishing the zone, by all Members to the Conference. Another view was expressed that the issue of entry into force should be discussed and agreed upon at a later stage following agreement on the substantive aspects of the treaty.

41. On definitions, a view was expressed that the future treaty should include definitions of the geographic scope and zone of application of the treaty, as well as of technical and scientific terms.

42. The Conference agreed to deliberate further on these topics in due course after elaborating the elements on the obligations and measures related to the prohibition of the three categories of weapons of mass destruction.

43. The deliberations of the Conference are without prejudice to the positions of the Members to the Conference at a later stage of negotiations nor do they prejudge the outcome of the work of the Conference on any issue.

[Eds . . .]

**Excerpt from the Report of the Fifth Session of
the Conference on the Establishment of a
Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons
and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction**

A/CONF.236/2024/3
[26 November 2024]

[Eds . . .]

VI. Thematic debate

24. At its 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th meetings, the Conference held a thematic debate. Members to the Conference exchanged views on the following topics: (a) reflection and thoughts on previous and future sessions of the Conference and its working committee; and (b) continuation of the discussion on the topics from the fourth session and its working committee, namely nuclear verification and peaceful uses and technical cooperation.

25. The thematic debate was organized on the basis of agreed topics proposed by the President, with topics being addressed on a rolling basis. The deliberations proceeded with the understanding that any Members to the Conference could raise any additional topics for the thematic debate and could also supplement or consolidate their views on those issues at any time. Members to the Conference expressed their respective positions on the thematic topics, put forward proposals and engaged in interactive discussions.

26. Members to the Conference recalled the outcomes of the previous sessions of the Conference.

**Reflection and thoughts on previous and future sessions of
the Conference and its working committee**

27. Members to the Conference expressed their appreciation to the Secretary-General, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, the Office for Disarmament Affairs (secretariat of the

Conference) and the successive Presidents of the General Assembly for the continued and reliable support for the work of the Conference and encouraged increased financial and technical resources to be made available to the Conference and its activities.

28. Members to the Conference also expressed their appreciation to the observer States and international organizations that have consistently participated in and supported the work of the Conference.

29. Members to the Conference expressed their appreciation to Qatar for having organized an informal regional meeting in Doha on 4 and 5 June 2024 on perspectives on the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, held on the margins of Third Arab Forum on Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, which allowed for open and in-depth discussions on the Conference process, including stocktaking, with the participation of senior representatives from New York and capital cities.

30. Members to the Conference acknowledged the progress and achievements made by the Conference and its working committee both procedurally and substantively, which had resulted in a robust, sustainable and credible process that delivered incremental, steady, systematic and meaningful progress towards the elaboration of a draft legal binding instrument establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, freely arrived at by the countries of the region despite the complexity of its mandate.

31. Members to the Conference expressed their commitment to further deepening and enriching the discussions, addressing the challenges and harnessing the opportunities, as well as to preserving the character of the Conference as an open, inclusive, non-selective and constructive forum of its Members, and they recalled the provisions of General Assembly decision 73/546, including the responsibility of the three co-sponsors of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference.

32. Members to the Conference identified as a key challenge the continued absence of Israel from the sessions. They noted with regret that the United States of America was the only invited observer State that had not yet attended. To address that challenge, Members to the Conference request successive Presidents, in accordance with the authority conferred on them, or through their designees, to undertake the following:

(a) To convene meetings with the Secretary-General of the United Nations to provide updates on recent Conference developments and encourage their continued support, including efforts in support of the full and active participation of the absent Member and observer in the Conference;

(b) To report periodically to the Conference on their efforts.

33. Members to the Conference invited the Secretary-General to include in his annual reports on the annual sessions of the Conference the efforts mentioned in paragraph 32 (a).

34. Several delegations recalled the conclusions of the meeting of the Senior Officials Committee of the League of Arab States held in Cairo in January 2024, which included the formation of an open-ended contact group tasked with communicating with the absent Member to the Conference and observer States.

35. To strengthen the work of the Conference, incoming Presidents of the Conference may ask, when deemed necessary, the advice of the most recent five former Presidents of the Conference in order to provide support to incoming Presidents through the benefit of institutional memory.

36. A proposal was made that the successive Presidents of the Conference may deliver agreed statements and/or engage on behalf of the Members to the Conference in relevant meetings and conferences, such as of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the First Committee of the General Assembly and the Disarmament Commission, to provide updates on the recent developments in the work of Conference,

and request the reflection of matters of interest agreed upon by the Members to the Conference in the outcome documents of the review conferences and preparatory commissions.

37. Members to the Conference welcomed the initiative announced by Mauritania, in its national capacity, to create a United Nations group of friends of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction as a platform to promote the goals of the Conference and secure the support of the wider membership of the United Nations.

38. With a view to strengthening the work of the Conference, a proposal was made to discuss an agreed sequencing of topics to be discussed by the successive sessions of the Conference under each of the categories of weapons of mass destruction. The Conference can rely on the index of the list of topics as a resource for future thematic debates, with a view to promoting predictability and progress, without prejudice to topics that will be proposed by the President of the Conference.

39. The view was expressed that the reports of the working committee should be accorded the same significance as the final reports of each session of the Conference. It was emphasized that such a practice would enhance the institutional memory of the Conference and contribute to enhancing the depth and continuity of substantive discussions. A delegation recalled that the working committee was established on an informal basis in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Conference.

40. Members to the Conference underlined their intention to continue to identify and document areas of convergence in the outcomes of the Conference and the working committee, which served as building blocks for continued discussion and further consensus, including on areas of divergence, without prejudice to the positions of the Members to the Conference at a later stage. The view was also expressed that such documentation could serve as *travaux préparatoires* to aid in clarifying the intentions and rationale of treaty texts elaborated in the future.

41. The relevance and usefulness of non-papers and guiding questions submitted under the responsibility of the President of the Conference was considered as a supporting factor for focused and continued discussions in the Conference and the working committee.

42. Members to the Conference underscored the added value of further enhancing the visibility of the Conference by its successive Presidents during and on the sidelines of major relevant international meetings, engagement with regional and political groups at the United Nations and, as appropriate, substantive press releases that are based on the agreed outcomes of the Conference.

43. A proposal was made on the establishment of a sponsorship programme, as well as encouraging any other voluntary contributions aimed at promoting the participation in the work of the Conference and its working committee of experts from capital cities and relevant sectors of participating States.

44. Members to the Conference recognized the positive contribution of regional events to furthering the deliberation and objectives of the Conference. Several delegations expressed that such events could include activities on their margins, involving representatives from regional civil society organizations, academics or other relevant stakeholders. Other views were expressed that, given the sensitive nature of the Conference's work, which pertain to the national security of Member States, the Conference should maintain its intergovernmental structure.

45. With regard to the substantive discussions of the Conference, the view was expressed that the elaboration of common understandings on obligations, prohibitions and the general framework of the treaty should be prioritized. Another view was expressed that obligations, prohibitions and the general framework of the treaty should be taken into account at all thematic discussions.

46. The view was expressed that the treaty establishing a Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction was a non-proliferation treaty and that the working committee of the Conference should discuss, together with technical experts from IAEA and States with experience in the matter, the question of a mechanism for the monitoring of the

complete, effective and irreversible disarmament of nuclear weapons in the zone before the treaty entered into force. A view was expressed concerning the scope of nuclear verification under the future treaty, and it was agreed that the issue required further consideration.

47. A proposal was made that, pending an agreement on obligations and prohibitions within the framework of the future treaty establishing the zone, and subjecting all related facilities to comprehensive IAEA safeguards, the Conference should explore the option to establish a mechanism for regional cooperation and the exchange of materiel, technology and knowledge on peaceful nuclear applications. Another proposal was made on the creation of a consortium fuel production in the region. The view was expressed that such an exploration would be premature at that stage and should take into consideration the balance between rights and obligations when the zone was established and provide its anticipated instrumental contribution to confidence building and new or enhanced forms of cooperation.

48. A proposal was made that the scope of discussions in the Conference and its working committee continue to be focused on nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.

49. Many Members to the Conference supported engagement with secretariats and States Members of the United Nations from regional nuclear-weapon-free zones, both within the Conference of other forums organized by secretariats from nuclear-weapon-free zones and States Members of the United Nations. In that connection, Members to the Conference supported the proposal to provide input to the comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects, for example by officially transmitting outcomes of the Conference and those of the working committee to the group of experts undertaking the study.

50. The issue of unilateral coercive measures was raised. Various views remained the same as those expressed at the third session, and the positions expressed by Members to the Conference on the topic at that session remained valid ([A/CONF.236/2022/3](#), para. 31).

51. With regard to outreach and external engagement, a proposal was made that the Members to the Conference and its Presidents engage with civil society and other relevant stakeholders, in particular those from the Middle East region, including through informal dialogues on the sidelines of the annual sessions, as well as through virtual meetings. Some views were expressed that, given the sensitive nature of the Conference's work, which pertains to the national security of Members to the Conference, the Conference should maintain its intergovernmental structure.

52. A proposal was made that, given the proven effectiveness of both the Conference and its working committee, the Conference should avoid creating any new structures at that stage. Other speakers emphasized that, in line with rule 30 of the Conference's rules of procedure, the Conference could establish any committee that it deemed necessary for the performance of its functions and that committees should be open to all Members to the Conference.

Continuation of the discussion on the topics from the fourth session and its working committee, namely nuclear verification and peaceful uses and technical cooperation

53. Members to the Conference reaffirmed their inalienable right to peaceful uses in nuclear, biological and chemical materials and technology without discrimination, and emphasized that the future treaty should ensure that its Members could fully enjoy that right within their respective legal obligations and without any restrictions or obstacles, or politicization.

54. Several Members to the Conference recognized the role of the IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements in enhancing trust and transparency in the continued peaceful nature of nuclear programmes, as the universal standard for verification of peaceful uses.

55. The view was expressed that the IAEA additional protocol was a critical measure to strengthen the safeguards systems and provide a higher level of confidence that all nuclear materials and facilities remained peaceful in nature. Many delegations

underlined the voluntary nature of the instrument and the fact that accession thereto was within the sovereign discretion of States.

56. It was noted that the responsibility of ensuring safety and security belonged to each State concerned and should not be used to restrict access to the right to peaceful uses or involved in matters related to obligations to safeguards and the verification of peaceful uses.

57. The view was expressed that a number of issues relating to the safeguards regime, such as the discriminatory approach, discrepancies in practice, the confidentiality regime and authorized sources of data, needed to be discussed among the experts of IAEA and Members to the Conference in its working committee. Other speakers underlined the fundamental importance of the role of IAEA and welcomed its indispensable efforts in the area of nuclear verification and the promotion of peaceful uses.

58. Some Members highlighted the importance and relevance of existing mechanisms and tools for peaceful uses, such as the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme. However, it was expressed that discussions on stable, robust and dedicated regional institutional arrangements should be preceded by meaningful progress on the establishment of the zone.

59. The deliberations of the Conference are without prejudice to the positions of Members to the Conference at a later stage, nor do they prejudice the outcome of the work of the Conference on any issue.

[Eds . . .]

Excerpt from the Report of the Sixth Session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction

A/CONF.236/2025
[21 November 2025]

[Eds . . .]

Thematic debate

33. At its 2nd and 3rd meetings, the Conference held a thematic debate. Members to the Conference exchanged views on the following topics: (a) negative security assurances; (b) cooperation, consultation and clarification and dispute settlement; and (c) promotion of cooperation between nuclear-weapon-free zones and the Middle East Conference.

34. The thematic debate was organized on the basis of agreed topics proposed by the President, with topics being addressed on a rolling basis. The deliberations proceeded with the understanding that any Members to the Conference could raise any additional topics for the thematic debate and could also supplement or consolidate their views on those issues at any time. Members to the Conference expressed their respective positions on the thematic topics, put forward proposals and engaged in interactive discussions.

35. Members to the Conference recalled the outcomes of the previous sessions of the Conference.

Negative security assurances

36. Members to the Conference emphasized that effective, irrevocable, universal, legally binding, non-discriminatory and unconditional negative security assurances provided by nuclear-weapon States are indispensable elements for ensuring the credibility and the integrity of the future Middle East zone and should be elaborated in a dedicated protocol to the future treaty. Through the protocol, nuclear-weapon States would commit to respecting the denuclearized status of the zone and undertake not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against any member of the future zone. Members to the Conference underscored that Nuclear Weapon States are required to refrain from preconditions, reservations or interpretative declarations with regard to their accession to these protocols.

37. Members to the Conference noted the discussions in 2024 and 2025 in subsidiary body 4 of the Conference on

Disarmament, coordinated by Egypt, on effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

38. Members to the Conference stressed the importance of learning from the experiences and best practices of the existing five nuclear-weapon-free zones with regard to the negotiation and implementation of negative security assurance protocols, including the current negotiations with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on the Protocol to the Bangkok Treaty. Many Members to the Conference also considered that the United Nations, specialized agencies and regional organizations can play an important role in supporting dialogue and providing technical and legal expertise for the negotiation of negative security assurances.

39. Members to the Conference considered that negative security assurances are not a substitute for nuclear disarmament but only an interim measure pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

40. A number of Members to the Conference expressed the view that unique characteristics of the Middle East region may require the Conference to take into consideration the engagement with States that are not party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty from outside the region.

41. A number of Members to the Conference expressed the view that the negative security assurance protocol should apply to the entire zone of application of the future treaty. A view was expressed that the future treaty must reaffirm the obligations contained in Article I and II of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

42. Members to the Conference noted that nuclear-weapon-State may provide, in writing, their views on the matter of a negative security assurance protocol to the future treaty establishing the Middle East zone.

43. A view was expressed that the treaty should include a mechanism for regular monitoring and verification of the compliance of nuclear-weapon States with their commitments under a negative security assurance protocol.

44. A view was expressed that Security Council resolutions [255 \(1968\)](#) and [984 \(1995\)](#), General Assembly resolution [3472 \(XXX\) B](#), the 1999 Disarmament Commission principles and guidelines for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, noting that they could provide as a good basis for discussions on negative security assurances within the Conference.

Cooperation, consultation and clarification, and dispute settlement

45. Members to the Conference recognized the importance of cooperation, consultation and clarification mechanisms in resolving disputes related to the interpretation of and compliance with the future treaty, as well as procedural concerns, and emerging regional developments that may affect its implementation. They also emphasized the role of these mechanisms in building trust and enhancing transparency among Parties to the future treaty by promoting cooperative means to address potential compliance concerns and preventing the recourse to further measures under the treaty.

46. Members to the Conference emphasized the need for clear timelines and the sequencing of actions and measures under the future treaty's cooperation, consultation and clarification mechanism.

47. Some Members to the Conference expressed the view that the future treaty could establish a designated body for oversight and coordination of the cooperation, consultation and clarification mechanism. This designated body could be responsible for receiving and relaying requests for clarification, facilitate bilateral or multilateral consultation and establish, where required, fact-finding missions in coordination with the competent specialized agencies. A view was expressed that the design of a cooperation, consultation and clarification mechanism will depend on the verification measures agreed in the future treaty.

48. Some Members to the Conference expressed the view that the future treaty could establish a designated body for oversight and coordination of the cooperation, consultation and clarification

mechanism. This designated body could be responsible for receiving and relaying requests for clarification and facilitate bilateral or multilateral consultation.

49. Some Members to the Conference expressed the view that the designated body could consider establishing, where required, a fact-finding mission in coordination with the competent specialized agencies. They indicated that the fact-finding mission would have to operate with full respect for national sovereignty, follow a clearly defined mandate and include technical experts from the region alongside international experts from specialized agencies. Other Members expressed the view that this proposal would require further consideration and detailed study.

50. A number of Members to the Conference stressed that measures such as referrals of disputes to the International Court of Justice or another mutually agreed arbitration mechanism should be taken only once all other cooperation, consultation and clarification measures had been exhausted.

51. Some Members to the Conference underlined their intention to continue to identify and document areas of convergence in the outcomes of the Conference and the working committee, which served as building blocks for continued discussion and further consensus, including on areas of divergence, without prejudice to the positions of the Members to the Conference at a later stage. The view was also expressed that such documentation could serve as travaux préparatoires to aid in clarifying the intentions and rationale of treaty texts elaborated in the future.

52. Members to the Conference also recognized the importance of learning from the experiences and best practices of the existing nuclear-weapon-free zones in developing cooperation, consultation and clarification and dispute settlement mechanisms for the future treaty. Another view noted was that the future treaty might require additional confidence-building measures, transparency and verification, as well as regional cooperation provisions tailored to the Middle East context, provided that such measures supported the shared objective of establishing a credible, durable and effectively verifiable zone. Several Members to the Conference recognized the role of the IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements in enhancing trust and transparency in the continued peaceful nature of nuclear programmes, as the universal standard for verification of peaceful uses. Some views were expressed that the IAEA additional protocol was a critical measure to strengthen the safeguards systems and provide a higher level of confidence that all nuclear materials and facilities remained peaceful in nature. Many delegations underlined the voluntary nature of the instrument and the fact that accession thereto was within the sovereign discretion of States.

Promotion of cooperation between nuclear-weapon-free zones and the Middle East Conference

53. Members to the Conference recognized the value in learning from the experiences of existing nuclear-weapon-free zones, their negotiation processes and implementation.

54. With a view to enhancing cooperation between existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and the Conference, many Members to the Conference put forward proposals on possible avenues for such cooperation. These included the establishment of regular exchanges and briefings, the organization of capacity-building workshops and technical study visits with the existing States Members of nuclear-weapon-free zones and their secretariats, establishing an annual United Nations-mandated platform in the form of a one-day symposium or workshop for dialogue and cooperation among existing and prospect zones and a fellowship programme for representatives of States Member of existing and prospective nuclear-weapon-free zones.

55. Members to the Conference also recognized the potential benefits of diplomatic coordination, as appropriate, among existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and Members to the Conference in increasing international support for the Conference and strengthening their common positions on issues of mutual interest, through joint statements at relevant disarmament forums and joint advocacy efforts to encourage nuclear-weapon States to adhere to nuclear-weapon-free zone protocols and withdraw interpretative declarations and reservations. In this regard, Members to the Conference

welcomed the joint statement, delivered by Morocco, on behalf of Members to the Conference, at the third meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In this vein, a view was expressed that the Conference was contributing to disarmament and non-proliferation efforts at a time when other efforts were in decline.

56. Members to the Conference also welcomed the joint submission by Members to the Conference, coordinated by Morocco, entitled "Comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects" and called for further engagement with the work of the qualified group of experts to prepare a comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones.

57. A number of Members to the Conference called for the early convening of the fourth Conference of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia, which was originally planned to be held on 24 April 2020.

58. A proposal was also made on Members to the Conference engaging with civil society organizations from nuclear-weapon-free zones.

59. Some Members to the Conference agreed that, in line with rule 34 (4) of the rules of procedure of the Conference and bearing in mind the applicable practices and modalities, the accredited non-governmental organizations to the Conference may deliver general statements after the conclusion of the general debate and in an informal session.

60. The deliberations of the Conference are without prejudice to the positions of Members to the Conference at a later stage, nor do they prejudge the outcome of the work of the Conference on any issue.

[Eds . . .]

Section 2: Resolutions related to the Middle East Zone

First Committee Resolution, 'Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East'

A/C.1/80/L.1
[8 October 2025]

Vote in General Assembly: Yes 173, No 3, Abstain 3

1. *Urges* all parties directly concerned to seriously consider taking the practical and urgent steps required for the implementation of the proposal to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, and, as a means of promoting this objective, invites the countries concerned to adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;

2. *Calls upon* all countries of the region that have not yet done so, pending the establishment of the zone, to agree to place all their nuclear activities under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards;

3. *Takes note* of resolution GC(69)/RES/15, adopted on 18 September 2025 by the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency at its sixty-ninth regular session, concerning the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East;

4. *Notes* the importance of the ongoing bilateral Middle East peace negotiations and the activities of the multilateral Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security in promoting mutual confidence and security in the Middle East, including the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone;

5. *Invites* all countries of the region, pending the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East, to declare their support for establishing such a zone, consistent with

paragraph 63 (d) of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, and to deposit those declarations with the Security Council;

6. *Also invites* those countries, pending the establishment of the zone, not to develop, produce, test or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or permit the stationing on their territories, or territories under their control, of nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices;

7. *Invites* the nuclear-weapon States and all other States to render their assistance in the establishment of the zone and at the same time to refrain from any action that runs counter to both the letter and the spirit of the present resolution;

8. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution [79/16](#);

9. *Invites* all parties to consider the appropriate means that may contribute towards the goal of general and complete disarmament and the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the region of the Middle East;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to pursue consultations with the States of the region and other concerned States, in accordance with paragraph 7 of resolution [46/30](#) and taking into account the evolving situation in the region, and to seek from those States their views on the measures outlined in chapters III and IV of the study annexed to the report of the Secretary-General of 10 October 1990 or other relevant measures, in order to move towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East;

11. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its eighty-first session a report on the implementation of the present resolution;

12. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its eighty-first session the item entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East".

First Committee Resolution, 'The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East'

A/C.1/80/L.2
[8 October 2025]

Vote: Yes 145, No 6, Abstain 30

1. *Recalls* the conclusions on the Middle East of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and calls for the speedy and full implementation of the commitments contained therein;

2. *Stresses* that the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty is an essential element of the outcome of the 1995 Conference and of the basis on which the Treaty was indefinitely extended without a vote in 1995;

3. *Reiterates* that the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty remains valid until its goals and objectives are achieved;

4. *Calls for* immediate steps towards the full implementation of that resolution;

5. *Reaffirms* the importance of Israel's accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and placement of all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards, in realizing the goal of universal adherence to the Treaty in the Middle East;

6. *Calls upon* that State to accede to the Treaty without further delay, not to develop, produce, test or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons, to renounce possession of nuclear weapons and to place all its unsafeguarded nuclear facilities under full-scope Agency safeguards as an important confidence-building measure among all States of the region and as a step towards enhancing peace and security;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its eighty-first session on the implementation of the present resolution;

8. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its eighty-first session the item entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East".

69th General Conference of IAEA Resolution, Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East

GC(69)/RES/15

September 2025

[Eds...]

1. Takes note of the Director General's report in document GC(69)/9;

2. Calls upon all States in the region to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT);

3. Calls upon all States in the region, to accede to and implement, all relevant nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation conventions, to fulfil in good faith international obligations and commitments relating to safeguards, and to cooperate fully with the IAEA within the framework of their respective obligations;

4. Affirms the urgent need for all States in the Middle East to forthwith accept the application of full-scope Agency safeguards to all their nuclear activities as an important confidence-building measure among all States in the region and as a step in enhancing peace and security in the context of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone (NWFZ);

5. Calls upon all parties directly concerned to consider seriously taking the practical and appropriate steps required for the implementation of the proposal to establish a mutually and effectively verifiable NWFZ in the region, and invites the countries concerned which have not yet done so to adhere to international non-proliferation regimes, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as a means of complementing participation in a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East and of strengthening peace and security in the region;

6. Further calls upon all States of the region, pending the establishment of the zone, not to pursue actions that would undermine the goal of establishing the zone, including developing, producing, testing or otherwise acquiring nuclear weapons;

7. Further calls upon all States in the region to take measures, including confidence-building and verification measures, aimed at establishing a NWFZ in the Middle East;

8. Urges all States to render assistance in the establishment of the zone and at the same time to refrain from any action that would hinder efforts aiming at its establishment;

9. Mindful of the importance of establishing the Middle East as a nuclear weapons free zone, and in this context, emphasizing importance of establishing peace therein;

10. Requests the Director General to pursue further consultations with the States of the Middle East to facilitate the early application of full-scope Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities in the region as relevant to the preparation of model agreements, as a necessary step towards the establishment of a NWFZ in the region, referred to in resolution GC(XXXVII)/RES/627;

11. Calls upon all States in the region to extend their fullest cooperation to the Director General in the fulfilment of the tasks entrusted to him in the preceding paragraph; 12. Calls upon all other States, especially those with a special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, to render all assistance to the Director General by facilitating the implementation of this resolution; and 13. Requests the Director

General to submit to the Board of Governors and the General Conference at its seventieth (2026) regular session a report on the implementation of this resolution and to include in the provisional agenda for that session an item entitled "Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East".

Section 3: Implementation of NPT 2010 Action Plan on the Middle East & regional positions

Postponement of 2012 Conference on Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and all other Weapons of Mass-Destruction

[23 November 2012]

Press statements:

I. Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

"We regret that the conference will not be convened this year. However, the conveners have reaffirmed their commitment to convene the conference and Finland as the host Government remains prepared to organise it once convened. We will continue our efforts to prepare the ground together with the conveners and the States of the region for the earliest possible convening of a successful conference, to be attended by all states of the region. To that end, I propose multilateral consultations to be held as soon as possible", says Ambassador Jaakko Laajava from the Finnish Foreign Ministry, who is in charge of undertaking preparations for the conference as the facilitator.

II. UN Secretary-General

I reaffirm my firm resolve and commitment together with the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States, in consultation with the States of the region, to convene a conference, to be attended by all States of the Middle East, on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the States of the region.

I have worked closely with the co-conveners to support the facilitator, Mr. Jaakko Laajava. He has conducted intensive consultations with the States of the region to prepare the convening of the conference in 2012. I have also personally engaged with the States of the region at the highest level to underline the importance of the Conference in promoting long-term regional stability, peace and security on the basis of equality.

I have taken note of the national statements issued by the co-conveners. I wish to reaffirm the collective responsibility of the conveners to make every effort to convene the conference, as mandated. I will continue to work with them on that basis. I fully support the proposal by the facilitator to conduct multilateral consultations in the shortest possible time which will allow the conference to be convened at the earliest opportunity in 2013. I reaffirm my strong support for the facilitator and for Finland as the host Government for the Conference and express my deep appreciation for their continuing efforts.

I encourage all States of the region to continue their constructive engagement with the facilitator. I also appeal to them to seize this rare opportunity to initiate a process that entails direct engagement on security issues – a critical shortcoming at the moment – and follow-on steps leading to achieving the complete elimination of all weapons of mass destruction in the region, nuclear, chemical and biological and their delivery systems.

III. Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

The decisions of the 2010 NPT Review Conference entrusted Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States, as the depositaries of the Treaty and the co-sponsors of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, as well as the UN Secretary-General to convene in 2012 a Conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other

weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery (MEWMDZF).

Since 2010 the "co-conveners" of the Conference have been making significant efforts for the preparation of the event. Finland was selected as the "host country" of the Conference. The Facilitator responsible for the preparation and organization of the Conference – Under Secretary of the MFA of Finland J. Laajava – was appointed and has started active work since taking office in October 2011. The "co-conveners" and the Facilitator held numerous joint and individual consultations with representatives of the States of the region. Considerations on organizational modalities and substance of upcoming Conference are at an advanced stage.

Unfortunately, not all of the States in the Middle East have so far agreed to participate in the Conference. In this regard, there are voices in favor of postponing the Conference for 2013.

The Russian Federation, being strictly committed to its commitments and the "conveners" mandate, believes that in the given conditions a decision to postpone the Conference can be justified only if there is a clearly expressed consent of the countries of the Middle East and the dates for the Conference are fixed.

Moscow presumes that in case of the expressed consent of the regional States to the postponement of the Conference, the new dates should be fixed right now in order to convene the Conference at the earliest possibility, but no later than April next year. We are convinced that these several extra months would be enough for proper preparation and success of the Helsinki Conference on the establishment of MEWMDZF.

Russia intends to make all the necessary efforts to this end and to continue to work closely with the other "co-conveners" and the Facilitator.

IV. UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The British Government supports the objective of a Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone in the Middle East. We regret that it will not be possible to convene a successful conference to be attended by all states of the region as planned in 2012. More preparation and direct engagement between states of the region will be necessary to secure arrangements that are satisfactory to all.

We support the convening of a conference as soon as possible. We endorse fully the work of the Conference Facilitator, Finnish Under-Secretary of State Jaakko Laajava, to build consensus on next steps. We welcome his commitment to conduct further multilateral consultations with the countries of the region to agree arrangements for a conference in 2013.

We will continue to work with our fellow conveners (the US, Russia, and the UN), with the Facilitator, and with countries of the region, to meet our undertakings to convene a conference on this important issue, as soon as possible.

V. US State Department

As a co-sponsor of the proposed conference on a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction (MEWMDZF), envisioned in the 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference Final Document, the United States regrets to announce that the conference cannot be convened because of present conditions in the Middle East and the fact that states in the region have not reached agreement on acceptable conditions for a conference.

The United States will continue to work seriously with our partners to create conditions for a meaningful conference. We are particularly grateful for the tireless efforts of Ambassador Jaakko Laajava, the appointed facilitator, supported by the United States, the United Kingdom, the Russian Federation and the UN Secretary General, to lay the groundwork for a successful conference against the backdrop of turmoil and dramatic political change taking place in the Middle East and Iran's continuing defiance of its international non-proliferation obligations.

The United States believes that a deep conceptual gap persists in the region on approaches toward regional security and arms control arrangements. These differences can only be bridged through direct engagement and agreement among the states in

the region. Outside states cannot impose a process on the region any more than they can dictate an outcome. The mandate for a MEWMDFZ must come from the region itself. That principle must underlie any serious undertaking on this issue.

Looking ahead, we encourage states in the region to take a fresh look at the obstacles standing in the way of convening a conference and to begin to explore terms for a successful meeting. This will require that all parties agree on the purpose and scope of a conference and on an agenda and process that takes into account the legitimate security interests of all states in the region. We believe that this conference should discuss a broad agenda that covers regional security and all WMD issues, and that it must operate solely on the basis of consensus among regional parties.

These are appropriate guidelines for official dialogue on security issues in the Middle East where none currently exists. They provide the necessary assurance that states can attend a conference on an equal footing. We would not support a conference in which any regional state would be subject to pressure or isolation.

The United States will continue to work with our partners to support an outcome in which states in the region approach this issue on the basis of mutual respect and understanding and with acknowledgement of the challenges inherent in advancing regional security and arms control. A conference handled this way, with direct engagement of the regional states, will enjoy the greatest prospects for success.

The United States fully supports the goal of a Middle East free of all weapons of mass destruction and we stand by our commitments. We further note our view that a comprehensive and durable peace in the region and full compliance by all regional states with their arms control and non-proliferation obligations are essential precursors for the establishment of such a zone.

Submission by Israel. Towards a regional dialogue in the Middle East: an Israeli perspective

NPT/CONF.2015/36
[30 April 2015]

1. Israel's long-held vision of a more secure and peaceful Middle East requires that all regional States engage in a process of direct and sustained dialogue to address the broad range of regional security challenges in the Middle East. Such a dialogue, based on the widely accepted principle of consensus, can only emanate from within the region and address in an inclusive manner the threat perceptions of all regional parties with a view to enhancing and improving their security. Direct contact, combined with trust and confidence-building, is an essential basis for the creation of a new security paradigm in a region that is increasingly fraught with wars, conflicts, disintegration of national territories and human suffering.

2. Accordingly, Israel agreed in 2011 to the request of the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Security Policy of Finland, Jaakko Laajava, to engage in consultations to advance a regional dialogue. Subsequently, Israel was the first country in the region to respond positively to Mr. Laajava's proposal in February 2013 to participate in multilateral consultations in Switzerland to discuss the arrangements and conditions necessary for convening a conference on establishing the Middle East as a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction and means of delivery. It took the Arab Group an additional eight months to agree to participate in the consultations.

3. Between October 2013 and June 2014, five rounds of multilateral consultations were held in Switzerland between Israel and several of its Arab neighbours. The central purpose of the meetings was to seek regional consensus on all the essential aspects of a conference in Helsinki, including the agenda, the concluding document and the necessary modalities. The consultations were conducted in a business-like manner and were the first direct engagement between Israel and its

neighbours on this issue in more than 20 years, since the arms control and regional security process in the 1990s.

4. While not all regional States attended, the consultations presented an important opportunity for direct regional engagement. Indeed, Israel's participation at a senior and authoritative level in all the five meetings attested to the importance that Israel ascribed to the need to redefine a new regional security paradigm for the Middle East. During the consultations, Israel submitted, including in writing, some creative ideas and formulations that could advance consensus, as well as understandings and trust, between the regional parties. Indeed, Israel stated unequivocally, also in public, that, if agreement were reached on the agenda, the concluding document and terms of reference of a conference in Helsinki, the regional States could proceed to set a date for such an event.

5. In June 2014, the Arab representatives at the fifth round of consultations in Geneva felt that they required new instructions and in effect discontinued the talks. Since June 2014, Mr. Laajava has been attempting to convene a sixth round of consultations in Geneva. Israel responded positively on 20 October 2014 and 7 January 2015 to formal invitations in that regard. Despite Israel's positive attitude towards continued engagement, the sixth round of consultations in Geneva was postponed several times and was not held, preventing necessary progress towards a consensual agreement on a conference in Helsinki.

6. Regrettably, in recent years the Arab countries have preferred to focus their efforts on promoting contentious resolutions in the International Atomic Energy Agency General Conference and the First Committee of the General Assembly. That negative approach has reinforced the lack of trust and confidence and prevented a meaningful dialogue between the States of the Middle East.

7. Ultimately, it is difficult to understand how any disarmament, arms control and regional security issues can be addressed without any direct dialogue between the regional States, as the Group of Arab States suggests. Such strident opposition to conducting a direct dialogue with Israel, coupled with the demand that a conference be convened by a deadline on the basis of terms of reference conceived by one side only, underlines and reinforces the mistrust and suspicion between the States in the region. If a serious regional effort has not emerged in the Middle East during the past five years it is not because of Israel.

8. It should be emphasized that notions of direct engagement and consensus are fundamental norms in international diplomacy and have been accepted in other regions. In that context, the Group of Seven recently declared that: "The regional parties must engage actively with each other in order to reach consensus on a date and an agenda for the Helsinki Conference as soon as possible. We emphasize that the Conference can only lead to a meaningful process if the interests of all participants are taken into account."

9. To promote any significant regional security architecture in the Middle East, it is imperative that the regional States do not adopt positions that prevent the other side from participating in what should be an inclusive regional process between all relevant stakeholders. Decisions that seek to circumvent and substitute direct engagement or the building of trust and agreement among regional parties will neither assist a regional process nor hasten a successful outcome.

10. A meaningful process will require:

(a) That regional States assume responsibility for the promotion of a direct regional dialogue, without external auspices that do not emanate from the region;

(b) That regional States address the broad range of security challenges facing the region;

(c) That all decisions be reached by consensus between the regional parties.

11. Israel, for its part, will continue to adopt a positive and constructive approach towards a meaningful regional discussion that could lead to a more peaceful and secure Middle East free from wars, conflicts and all weapons of mass destruction.

**Working Paper by Group of Arab States.
Specific regional issues and implementation of
the 1995 resolution on the Middle East.**

NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/WP.20
[26 April 2019]

1. The international community has acknowledged the importance of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones throughout the world. Such zones serve many purposes, the most important of which are strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and achieving nuclear disarmament, and would bring us closer to the ultimate objective of achieving and maintaining international peace and security. The Group of Arab States is concerned at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would result from any use of nuclear weapons. That concern was expressed in the outcomes of the conferences concerning this matter that were held in Norway, Mexico and Austria, and in the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.
2. The nuclear-weapon-free zones that have been established in several regions of the world have furthered the objectives of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The Group reaffirms that tangible steps and immediate measures must be taken towards the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, so that the positive effects of such zones can be felt in that region.
3. The Group of Arab States calls on the three States that sponsored the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to assume their responsibilities in respect of the implementation of that resolution, which was one of the key outcomes of that Conference and the basis on which the Parties decided, by consensus, to extend the Treaty indefinitely. The Group reaffirms its resolve to make every effort to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East region, with a view to enhancing the potential for achieving peace, security and stability.
4. Neither the 1995 resolution on the Middle East nor the practical steps that were endorsed by the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons have been implemented. At the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Group of Arab States proposed an initiative to break the deadlock that received the unreserved support of the vast majority of the States Parties to the Treaty. However, three States, two of which are sponsors and depositaries of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, prevented the 2015 Review Conference from adopting a final document in order to serve the interests of Israel, a State that is not a party to the Treaty. That course of action has adversely affected the credibility and sustainability of the regime established by the Treaty.
5. The Group reaffirms its commitment to the outcomes and outputs concerning the elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East region that were adopted at the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences. It hopes that the international community will support the implementation of those outcomes and outputs.
6. Saying that nuclear-weapon-free zones should be established freely by the States concerned cannot justify disregarding or failing to implement the relevant international resolutions. The Group calls on the international community to fulfil its responsibilities in that regard. It is disappointed that no pressure of any kind has been placed on Israel, which is the only State in the Middle East that has not acceded to the Treaty and that refuses to place its nuclear installations under the comprehensive safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Moreover, Israel refuses to implement the relevant international resolutions, ignores the resolutions adopted at the Review Conferences and impedes all serious efforts to conduct preparatory negotiations concerning the convening of a conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.
7. The international community's failure to fulfil its commitments concerning the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East has had repercussions, perpetuated a policy of ambiguity regarding the nuclear safety and security standards that Israel has put in place at its nuclear facilities, and increased tension and instability in the Middle East. The international community's failure to fulfil its commitments in that regard has also impeded efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction around the world, and that, in turn, has an adverse effect on the international non-proliferation regime.
8. The Group looks forward to seeing the States Parties to the Treaty, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, and even more particularly the sponsors of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, translate their commitments into tangible steps and immediate measures to implement that resolution. The Group also calls for the implementation of Security Council resolution [487 \(1981\)](#), pursuant to which Israel must place all its nuclear facilities under the IAEA comprehensive safeguards regime, without any precondition and any negotiations, and calls upon Israel to accede to the Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon State.
9. In view of the foregoing, the Group calls on the third session of the Preparatory Committee, in its recommendations to the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to do the following:
 - (a) Affirm that responsibility for ridding the Middle East of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is a collective international responsibility; that the 1995 resolution on the Middle East is an integral part of the package of decisions that led to the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1995; and that the 1995 resolution on the Middle East shall remain in force until it is fully implemented and its objectives are realized;
 - (b) Welcome the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly at its seventy-third session of General Assembly decision 73/546 authorizing the Secretary-General of the United Nations to convene a conference for the negotiation of a binding treaty on the creation of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, and to provide support for such a conference to be held in the context of implementation of 1995 decision on the Middle East; urge all parties invited, and in particular, Israel, to take part; and ask the Secretary-General of the United Nations to submit a periodic report on the implementation of the above-mentioned decision to the Review Conference and its Preparatory Committee meetings;
 - (c) Stress the need to implement Security Council resolution [487 \(1981\)](#) and draw attention to the importance of achieving the universality of the Treaty, as stated in the Final Documents of the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences, and in particular the call made therein upon States that have not acceded to the Treaty to do so as non-nuclear-weapon States and to place all of their nuclear facilities under the IAEA comprehensive safeguards regime;
 - (d) Affirm that nuclear-weapon-States must fulfil their responsibility to provide the assistance required and make every effort to bring about the early establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, in accordance with resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and Review Conferences, as well as other relevant resolutions, and point out that the Security Council, in view of its obligation to maintain international peace and security, bears responsibility for establishing that zone.
 - (e) Urge Israel to accede to the Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon State, place all its facilities under the IAEA comprehensive safeguards regime, eliminate its entire stockpile of nuclear weapons and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty;
 - (f) Call upon all States Parties to put pressure on Israel

and compel it to comply with internationally binding resolutions and accede to the Treaty; reiterate the call that IAEA made upon Israel in 1991 to comply with Security Council resolution [487 \(1981\)](#), which provides that all Israeli nuclear facilities must be placed under the IAEA comprehensive safeguards regime; and call for the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, with a view to achieving the objective set out in paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution [687 \(1991\)](#), which was adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, and in keeping with the relevant General Assembly resolutions;

(g) Call upon the international community to fulfil its responsibilities with regard to the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East concerning the establishment a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction by convening a conference on the establishment of such a zone, in accordance with the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and in implementation of the outcomes of the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences;

(h) Emphasize the role of the international community and its responsibility to make it easier to take practical measures in the relevant forums, with a view to making progress towards the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, and that the international community must take appropriate action in response to any measures that preclude achieving that objective.

**Working Paper by Iran.
Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone
in the Middle East**

NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/WP.9
[20 March 2019]

1. The Islamic Republic of Iran, pursuant to article VII of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, supports efforts to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones and believes that such zones are not an end in themselves but rather a means to an end, i.e. contributing to the nuclear non-proliferation objective and enhancing global and regional peace and security.

2. The Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to, and strongly supports, the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, an initiative which was originally presented by Iran in 1974.

3. Consistent with this principled position, Iran has already taken various practical steps aimed at making progress towards, inter alia, the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, in particular by becoming a party to all international legally binding instruments on weapons of mass destruction. Such a high record of accession testifies to the strong commitment of the Islamic Republic of Iran to achieving the objective of the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling, use or threat of use of weapons of mass destruction, in the Middle East in particular and at the global level in general.

4. The adoption, by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, of the resolution on the Middle East, as an essential and integral element of the outcome of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and of the basis on which the Treaty was indefinitely extended without a vote in 1995 marks a turning point in advancing the proposal for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The Islamic Republic of Iran has always supported and called for the speedy implementation of this resolution and the full realization of its objective in establishing such a zone.

5. Iran also supported the adoption of the 2010 plan of action on the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, which called for the convening of a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. On 6 November 2012, Iran officially declared its decision to participate in that conference, which had been scheduled to be held in December 2012 in Helsinki.

6. However, not only was the 2010 plan of action on the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East not implemented and, consequently, the 2012 conference not convened, but in addition, the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty was unable to reach an agreement on its outcome document as a result of the objection of only the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Canada to a decision contained therein on the implementation of the 2010 plan of action on the Middle East.

7. Now, 24 years after the adoption of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and 9 years after the adoption of the 2010 action plan for the implementation of that resolution, and despite the strong support of the overwhelming majority of the States parties, as well as the efforts by Iran and all Arab countries in the region for their implementation, there are valid questions: why were they not implemented, and why have all efforts under the 2005 and 2015 Review Conferences for their implementation failed? The answer is clear: the Israeli regime, which is the only non-party to the Treaty and also the only possessor of nuclear weapons in the region, is the main obstacle to the establishment of such a zone. In addition, in practice, certain parties to the Treaty, by representing the Israeli regime in the Treaty's Review Conferences, object to decisions on the actual realization of this zone. One day after the conclusion of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Israeli regime, in its statement dated 29 May 2010, rejected outright the Final Document of that Conference as "deeply flawed" and stated that "Israel will not be able to take part in its implementation."

8. The Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference called on all States to refrain from undertaking any measures that preclude the achievement of the objective of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East. However, the United States, as one of the co-sponsors of the 1995 resolution and as one of the co-conveners of the 2012 conference, by supporting the obstructive positions of the Israeli regime and setting preconditions for the implementation of the 2010 action plan, acted as a stumbling block in the way of convening the 2012 conference and, on 23 November 2012, unilaterally announced that the conference could not be convened and that it would not support a conference in which Israel would be subject to pressure or isolation. This unilateral decision of the United States was wholly inconsistent with its declaratory commitment to the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East.

9. Subsequently, during the 2015 Review Conference, Israeli officials expressed concern over taking any decision by the Conference "to force Israel to come clean on its nuclear capabilities" as an essential step towards establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. In order to avoid that, Israel placed the United States under pressure to block such a decision. When the United States, along with the United Kingdom and Canada, objected to the adoption of the draft outcome document of the Conference, which contained a decision on the implementation of the 1995 resolution and the 2010 action plan on the Middle East, the Prime Minister of Israel thanked the United States President for such action.

10. But why was the Israeli regime not willing to support the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and why is it still not willing to do so? First and foremost, it is because this regime possesses nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East requires the prompt and unconditional accession of Israel, as a non-nuclear weapon party, to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, renouncing possession of nuclear weapons and placing all of its clandestine nuclear activities and facilities under the comprehensive safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

11. Moreover, a short look at the practices of the Israeli regime in the Middle East and its record in the fields of disarmament and international security provides a clear picture of the seriousness of the security threat posed by this regime against the peace and security of the States parties to the Treaty in the Middle East. It also proves, once again, how essential and urgent the

establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction is for the maintenance of peace and security in the region and beyond. That record includes, but is not limited to, the following: since its inception, the Israeli regime has waged 17 wars, which means one war almost every four years; committed aggression against all of its neighbours, without exception; even attacked several other non-neighbouring countries in the region and beyond; attacked, in 1981, the peaceful nuclear installations of a State party to the Treaty in the Middle East (in this case, the Security Council strongly condemned the military attack by Israel as a clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international conduct); threatened to attack the peaceful nuclear facilities of States parties to the Treaty in the region that are under the IAEA safeguards; has recently threatened a party to the Treaty in the region with nuclear annihilation; still has under occupation the territories of several neighbouring countries, as it is called, in United Nations resolutions, the "occupying Power"; is not party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty or any other international instrument banning weapons of mass destruction, in defiance of repeated calls, including by the Security Council, the General Assembly, the General Conference of the IAEA, the Review Conferences of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the summits and ministerial conferences of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation; and is the only possessor of all types of weapons of mass destruction, including hundreds of nuclear warheads, in the Middle East.

12. In addition, such realities make it completely clear that the only way to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East is for the international community to exert and maintain sustained pressure on the Israeli regime to compel it to accede, promptly and unconditionally, as a non-nuclear-weapon party, to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and to place all of its nuclear activities and installations under the full-scope IAEA safeguards. This approach was acknowledged by the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences, which reaffirmed "the importance of Israel's accession to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the placement of all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards, in realizing the goal of universal adherence to the Treaty in the Middle East".

13. The Islamic Republic of Iran expresses its deep concern over the persistent and long delay in the implementation of the 1995 resolution and the lack of any progress in the implementation of the respective plan of action of the 2010 Review Conference. Iran stresses that, as reaffirmed by the successive Review Conferences of the Treaty since 1995, the resolution remains valid until its goals and objectives are achieved. This, without doubt, is the individual and collective responsibility of all States parties to the Treaty, in particular the nuclear-weapon States, especially the three depositary States of the Treaty that co-sponsored the 1995 resolution on the Middle East. It should be recalled that the conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions of the 2010 Review Conference had clearly stipulated that "the States parties renew their resolve to undertake, individually and collectively, all necessary measures aimed at its prompt implementation."

14. In this context and given the above-mentioned considerations, the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference should recommend:

(a) Establishing a subsidiary body under Main Committee II of the 2020 Review Conference to consider the urgent implementation of the 1995 resolution and the 2010 plan of action on the Middle East and, building upon past experience, agree on concrete steps for their speedy implementation;

(b) Noting the consensus reached by the General Assembly since its thirty-fifth session that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East would greatly enhance international peace and security;

(c) Expressing concern about the lack of progress towards the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, as well as the action plan on the Middle East adopted at the 2010 Review Conference;

(d) Reaffirming the urgent need for the prompt and full implementation of the 1995 resolution and the 2010 plan of

action on the Middle East;

(e) Reiterating the firm commitment of all States parties to the Treaty, and in particular the nuclear-weapon States, to undertake all necessary measures aimed at the prompt and full implementation of the 1995 resolution and the 2010 plan of action on the Middle East and to extend their cooperation in this regard;

(f) Emphasizing the essential role of the United Nations in the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East;

(g) Expressing serious concern about the continued existence in the Middle East of unsafeguarded nuclear facilities, as well as the threat posed by the proliferation of nuclear weapons to the security and stability of the Middle East;

(h) Expressing deepest concern over the fact that the refusal of Israel is the main obstacle to the implementation of the 1995 resolution and the 2010 plan of action on the Middle East;

(i) Reaffirming the importance of the accession of Israel to the Non-Proliferation Treaty without precondition and further delay and the placement of all of its nuclear activities and facilities under the comprehensive IAEA safeguards, in realizing the goal of universal adherence to the Treaty in the Middle East;

(j) Urging Israel to renounce possession of nuclear weapons and to place all of its unsafeguarded nuclear facilities under the full-scope IAEA safeguards as an important confidence-building measure among all States of the region and as a step towards enhancing peace and security;

(k) Reaffirming the commitment of all States parties to the effective prohibition of the transfer of all nuclear-related equipment, information, materials and facilities, resources or devices and the extension of know-how or any kind of assistance in the nuclear, scientific or technological fields to Israel so long as it remains a non-party to the Treaty and has not placed all of its nuclear activities and facilities under the full-scope IAEA safeguards;

(l) Deciding to establish a standing committee, comprising the members of its Bureau, to follow up on the implementation of the recommendations of the Review Conference concerning the prompt accession of Israel to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the placement of all of its nuclear activities and facilities under the full-scope IAEA safeguards, and to report to the 2025 Review Conference and its Preparatory Committee meetings.