THE RISK OF NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. Chairman

The First Committee is again called upon to vote on draft resolution A/57/L.27 entitled "The Risk of Nuclear Proliferation in the Middle East", a resolution which is blatantly one-sided, contentious and divisive and undermines, rather than enhances confidence between the states of region.

Since this resolution was first introduced, many developments have occurred directly related to nuclear proliferation and to other WMD proliferation in the Middle East, not the least of them is the somber experience gained by UNSCOM and the IAEA Action Team. In addition, other efforts are underway to acquire WMD and missile capabilities in the region, as our delegation pointed out during the general debate.

The bias of this resolution stems from its neglect of the fact that the real risk of proliferation in the Middle East emanates from countries that, despite being parties to international treaties do not comply with their relevant international obligations. These countries are engaged in ongoing efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, efforts that have destabilizing effect, not only on the region but on a global scale as well. The resolution chooses to ignore the profound hostility to Israel of these countries, which continue to reject any form of peaceful reconciliation and coexistence in the region.

Adopting a resolution that does not reflect this reality will not serve the greater objective to curb proliferation in the Middle East. Resolutions regarding the complex Arms Control problems in the Middle East, should focus on objective ways to address them as they exist.
Mr. Chairman,

This resolution focuses entirely on one country that has never threatened its neighbors, nor abrogated its obligations under any disarmament treaty. Moreover, it singles out Israel in a manner that no other UN Member State is being singled out in the First Committee. Singling out Israel is counter-productive to confidence building and peace in the region and does not lend this body any credibility.

Israel’s supreme objective is to achieve peace and security. Its non-proliferation and arms control policy is aimed at supporting this objective. The constructive approach adopted by Israel over the years towards arms control and non-proliferation efforts, was described in our statement at the general debate. It is best demonstrated by our attitude to the resolution on the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East, despite substantive reservation regarding its modalities, and it is strongly undermined by the introduction of this biased resolution.

Two years ago a new language was introduced to this resolution. This language is an unbalanced and a selective representation of the NPT Review Conference Final Document, using that treaty for yet another political assault against Israel.

The unbalanced approach remains true despite the reference made to the need for compliance of countries with their international obligations, which refers to Iraq.

The fact that for some countries the language of this resolution is considered “balanced” is a source of deep disappointment for us.

Mr. Chairman,

The First Committee should not become a venue for political discrimination. We would like to call upon the distinguished delegates to vote against this resolution.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman

Mr. Chairman

Our delegation is disappointed that this resolution has been adopted by the First Committee. For those delegations that have lent their support to this resolution and may have missed the General Debate we would like to repeat words made by our head of delegation:

"If anyone supports this resolution believing that it in anyway alleviates the acute and pressing security demands of the region, they are doing themselves and the peoples of the region a grave disservice"