The Risk of Nuclear Proliferation in the ME – UNGA 59

Explanation of vote for the

Delegation of Israel to the First Committee

Given by

Mr. Alon Bar, Director for Arms Control Department

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Chairman,

The First Committee is called upon to vote on draft resolution A/C.1/58/L37 entitled “the Risk of Nuclear Proliferation in the Middle East”, a resolution which is blatantly one-sided, contentious and divisive and undermines, rather then enhances confidence between the states of the region.

Since this resolution was first introduced, many alarming developments have occurred directly related to nuclear and other WMD proliferation in the Middle East. Some of them became apparent to the international community only recently, especially after the September meetings of the IAEA Board of Governors. 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 nuclear 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 on-going efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile, efforts that have destabilizing effect, not only the region but on global scale as well. This resolution chooses to ignore the internationally acknowledged evidence regarding states in the Middle East that join international arrangements, but do not feel genuinely bound by them. The same states abuse the benefits of these arrangements in order to obtain nuclear technology for military purposes under false pretext. This resolution also overlooks the profound hostility of states in the region towards Israel, and their refusal to maintain any form of peaceful reconciliation and coexistence with Israel.
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 problem 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 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.

The fact that countries continue to land their hand to such an abuse of reality and misuse of the UN 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.
After the vote

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, we would like to once again stress our position.

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.