Statement

of the Arab Group before the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Cluster two

Specific issues: implementation of The Middle East Resolution

Delivered by

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The President of the Arab Group in Disarmament issues

Palais des Nations

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Statement of the Arab Group within the time allocated to regional issues: the Middle East

Mr. President:

-The Arab Group would like, at the outset, to join the statement of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

-The States parties agreed, at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), to extend the Treaty indefinitely in a package deal consisting of three decisions and the resolution on the Middle East. Without this resolution, the Arab States would not have agreed on an indefinite extension. Therefore, the Conference undertook to strengthen the Treaty, to achieve its universality, to adopt principles and objectives that would address the implementation of the Treaty and to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

-The 2000 Review conference recognized that the 1995 Review and Extension conference resolution on the Middle East remained valid until its goals and objectives are achieved. The resolution was an essential element of the basis upon which the Treaty was indefinitely extended without a vote.

-Over the past decades, Arab states have shown the sincerity of their intentions and commitment to the goals of the international non-proliferation. The repeated Arab initiatives, collective and individual, to free the Middle East of nuclear weapons are an obvious proof of that. Dozens of resolutions on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East have been adopted in various relevant international fora. It is regrettable that these efforts have not only been met with Israeli intransigence, and lack of serious interest by some international powers, but also with a demonstrated
willingness of some powers to provide a political umbrella to the Israeli position in various international fora.

- Despite the aforementioned, Israel continues to challenge the international community by its non-accession to the NPT and refuses to place all its nuclear facilities under IAEA comprehensive safeguards, causing, thus, an increasing concern and making a negative impact upon regional and international peace and security.

6- In this context, Arab states would like to warn of the danger of continued silence, sometimes with the complicity of some states with the Israeli position, which encouraged it to move from the policy of nuclear ambiguity to a disclosure of its possession of nuclear weapons without eliciting any notable reaction from the international community. Its gravity on the regional reaction and its negative consequences on the peace and international security, should be recognized. Therefore Arab States call on States Parties to comply with all provisions of the treaty toward Israel without discrimination or double standards, which will only lead to undermining non-proliferation regime and its foundations and the credibility of the treaty.

Mr. President:

- The Israeli perspective, backed by some States Parties, that argues the necessity of reaching a comprehensive peace before considering the possibility of establishing a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East is a serious mistake. It calls into question the usefulness of the NPT as a system to achieve mutual security to the parties, and undermines the basic idea of the Treaty, because it supports the rationale that possessing nuclear weapons bring security. In this
context, we would like to recall that Arab States did not invoke the Arab-Israeli conflict to refrain from joining the treaty.

- In light of the foregoing, we would like to refer to the Arab working paper submitted to this Committee, which included a number of practical measures, aiming at implementing the resolution on the Middle East. The said paper includes some proposals of which are the following:

(A) To call upon Israel to accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear State without restriction or condition and to place all its nuclear facilities under international monitoring through the IAEA comprehensive safeguards system;

(B) That States parties to the Treaty, in particular the five nuclear weapons States, must assume their responsibilities and exert their utmost efforts in order to achieve the full implementation of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference resolution on the Middle East. The current Review session has to work on practical steps that will ensure the full implementation of the resolution and the realization of its objectives;

(C) In conformity with the provisions of the Treaty, all States Parties to the NPT, especially the five nuclear-weapon States, should implement their commitments not to transfer nuclear-weapon-related equipment, information, material, facilities, resources or devices or extend any assistance to Israel in the nuclear field, whether for peaceful or for military purposes;

(D) To call on the United Nations to convene an international conference pursuant to the General Assembly resolution entitled “Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East” as a
preparatory step towards making the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Mr. President:

- Israel is the only possessor of this nuclear capabilities in the region. This fact, combined with the silence of the international community, constitutes a threat to regional and international security and stability, and it undermines the credibility of the Treaty. This situation prompted the Riyadh Summit in 2007 and the Damascus Summit in 2008 to call on Arab Foreign Ministers to propose an appropriate practical mechanism, and to propose suitable alternatives to be pursued by the Arab States, should the international community fail to take any practical steps to implement the Arabic initiative to make the Middle East a nuclear weapon free zone. In expression of annoyance from the current situation, the Arab summit in Riyadh 2007 has taken a decision to suspend the work of the Arab Committee, charged with developing a draft treaty to make the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, till the Arab position, and the international situation be reviewed and to propose suitable alternatives. A number of practical measures to implement the decision of the summit have been also taken, pending the practical outcomes of the 2010 Review Conference in this area.

- From this perspective, the Arab States believe that taking practical steps towards achieving the objectives of freeing the Middle East of nuclear-weapons is a major condition for a positive outcome of this meeting.

Thank You