Statement by
H.E. Ambassador Alaa YOUSSEF

Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt
to the United Nations Office, Geneva

The Second Session of the Preparatory Committee to the 2020
NPT Review Conference

General Debate

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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, allow me Ambassador Adam Bugajski to congratulate you on assuming the task of presiding over the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee to the 2020 NPT Review Conference. As we continue our review cycle, we have full confidence that your expertise will guide our meeting to a fruitful outcome.

Mr. Chairman,

There is a common belief among the NPT States Parties that the Treaty represents the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Since its entry into force, the Treaty has played a significant role in preserving international peace and security. Additionally, the Treaty's relevance has been vigorously asserted through the inclusion of most of the members of the international community. More, however, is still needed to achieve its universality. The objectives and purposes of the Treaty will never be fulfilled if a single State remains outside its framework.

This review cycle is clearly beset with many challenges; at the forefront of which is the evident willingness among some of its States Parties to either reinterpret their obligations and commitments in relation to nuclear disarmament, or by adopting policies and doctrines contrary to its letter and spirit.

Following the conclusion of the First Session of this review cycle in Vienna 2017, a Treaty on the Prohibition of
Nuclear Weapons was adopted on 7 July 2017. In our perception, the new Treaty is another testimony to the centrality of the NPT and its preamble clearly reflects this fact. By participating in the United Nations Conference that negotiated the new Treaty, non-nuclear weapon States have clearly brought into force their obligation to pursue on their part effective measures on nuclear disarmament as the drafters of the NPT originally envisioned. Implementation of Article VI of the NPT is a collective obligation on all NPT States Parties.

Mr. Chairman,

The three pillars of the NPT, non-proliferation; nuclear disarmament; and peaceful uses of nuclear energy; were all perceived by the drafters of the Treaty as mutually reinforcing that should be simultaneously pursued in a balanced manner. This, nevertheless, was not effectively achieved. There has been a growing focus during the work of previous review cycles on the pillar of non-proliferation, with less focus on the other two pillars, particularly nuclear disarmament.

Egypt perceives, with utmost concern, the limited progress relating to nuclear disarmament which still does not live up to expectations. Although limited measures are taken unilaterally and bilaterally in pursuit of nuclear disarmament, what we really lack is a concerted multi-lateral effort, with a clear time table for the full implementation of Article VI leading towards nuclear disarmament in a verifiable manner. It has to be noted that, we will not be able to maintain a strong and effective nuclear
nonproliferation and disarmament regime unless Article VI is fully implemented.

Mr. Chairman,

While noting that horizontal proliferation still remains a possibility, it is most obvious that vertical proliferation, by upgrading existing nuclear weapons and developing new ones, is a crucial challenge that requires the immediate attention of the NPT States Parties. In this vein, my delegation would like to emphasize that nuclear non-proliferation must be achieved in all its aspects simultaneously with parallel efforts, in good faith, aimed at achieving nuclear disarmament.

A rather disturbing reality is the cooperation between NPT States Parties and non-NPT States in the nuclear field. This comes contrary to the Treaty's provisions and the agreed commitments. The direct and immediate consequence of such cooperation will certainly undermine all efforts aimed at achieving the universality of the Treaty, which is the only means to further ensure strengthening and maintenance of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

Egypt views with serious concern this cooperation, and calls upon NPT States Parties currently engaged in such cooperation, or planning to do so, to reconsider their policies and bring them in line with the Treaty's provisions and their existing commitments and obligations. We call as well on all remaining non-NPT States to adhere to the Treaty without further delay, as non-nuclear weapon States, and take all the
required measures under the authority of the IAEA to put all their nuclear facilities under comprehensive safeguards agreements.

Mr. Chairman,

Almost twenty-five years after its adoption, the call for the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East remains unheeded. Not only does the resolution remain unimplemented, but efforts to pursue its implementation are also deliberately obstructed by some NPT States Parties; members of the very same community that should have been keen to see the resolution fully implemented.

To set the record straight, the 1995 resolution was adopted as part of a package which secured the indefinite extension of the Treaty. Nuclear weapon States, particularly the co-sponsors of the resolution, should exert their utmost effort seeing the resolution's implementation through its final phase.

While the 1995, 2000, and 2010 NPT Review Conferences reaffirmed the importance of Israel's accession to the NPT and the placement of all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards, regrettably, no progress has been achieved so far thereof. Israel remains the only country that refuses to adhere to the NPT in the Middle East while concurrently running un-safeguarded nuclear facilities.

As an outcome of this review cycle, NPT States Parties should agree on the necessary measures required to ensure the early adherence by Israel to the Treaty and the placement
of all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive safeguards agreements.

Mr. Chairman,

As one of the three pillars of the Treaty, the inalienable right of the NPT States Parties to peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be at the centre of each review cycle. States Parties to the NPT should promote international cooperation in the field of nuclear energy through the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technical knowledge. Enforcing this right, in line with the Treaty's provisions, and without discrimination or conditionality, should be actively pursued by all States Parties, so as to maximize mutual benefits. Nuclear energy could significantly contribute to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), provided that provision of technical assistance and cooperation is ensured. Egypt endeavors to fully exploit the full potential that peaceful uses of nuclear energy could provide for the achievement of its development agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

As we embark on our work in this Session, Egypt reiterates its support to you and promises its active and full participation in the discussion on all Clusters.

Thank you.