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

Cluster I:
Nuclear Disarmament & Security Assurances

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Mr. Chairman,

In 2020, States Parties to the NPT will observe the 50th anniversary of the Treaty’s entry into force. Throughout the past decades, non-nuclear weapon States have consistently called for the full implementation of Article VI of the Treaty to ensure the realization of the total and irreversible elimination of nuclear weapons in a transparent and verifiable manner. Unfortunately, to this date, nuclear weapons continue to exist in staggering numbers, with an increasing role in military and security doctrines of nuclear weapon States. This not only reflects the unwillingness to faithfully implement agreed obligations and commitments, but also reflects a determination to reinforce the concept of nuclear deterrence above the purpose and objective of the Treaty.

Nuclear disarmament has remained a key priority for Egypt on its disarmament agenda. For decades, Egypt has played a constructive role in the advancement of global efforts towards nuclear disarmament within the NPT framework and other foras. We have placed the highest priority to attaining universal, non-discriminatory, and verifiable nuclear disarmament. It is Egypt’s longstanding belief that effective measures towards achieving this goal should be pursued multilaterally and in good faith.

Mr. Chairman,

Egypt is gravely concerned that, 48 years after the entry into force of the NPT, progress in nuclear disarmament, in accordance with Article VI of the Treaty remains limited contrary to the agreed commitments, particularly the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament. Currently, thousands of nuclear weapons continue to exist and feature in military and security doctrines; hundreds of nuclear weapons are deployed in the territories of certain non-nuclear weapon States Parties to the Treaty; new generations of such weapons continue to be developed; and nuclear deterrence remains a defining characteristic of certain military alliances. These actions undermine the NPT and erode its credibility.

Mr. Chairman,

The NPT Review and Extension Conference in 1995 affirmed the need to continue to move with determination towards the full realization and effective implementation of the provisions of the Treaty, “as well as the determined pursuit by the nuclear weapon States of systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate goals of eliminating those weapons.”
The NPT Review Conferences in 2000 and 2010 agreed respectively on mutually reinforcing 13 practical steps for systematic and progressive efforts to implement Article VI of the NPT and on a detailed and comprehensive action plan across all pillars of the Treaty, including specific actions on nuclear disarmament. Pursuant to these actions, all States Parties commit to pursue policies that are fully compatible with the Treaty and the objective of achieving a world without nuclear weapons, and particularly calling upon nuclear weapon States to diminish the role and significance of nuclear weapons in all military and security concepts, doctrines and policies.

Despite all these commitments, the continued lack of serious progress in implementation of nuclear disarmament obligations under Article VI remains disturbing. Efforts to modernize nuclear arsenals is yet another indication that reflects long-term reliance on this doctrine.

We reiterate our strong call to the nuclear weapon States to shoulder their responsibility to accomplish, without further delay, the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, in compliance with their obligation and commitments, in an irreversible, transparent and verifiable manner.

Mr. Chairman,

Egypt calls upon all States non-party to the NPT to accede immediately and without preconditions to the Treaty as non-nuclear weapon States and to place all their nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards. By achieving the universality of the NPT, we will make a significant leap forward towards achieving the objectives and principles of the Treaty. Sustained and systematic efforts should be made by all States Parties to achieve the universality of the Treaty, which remains an urgent priority. In the Middle East, Egypt along with every other Arab country have done their share in strengthening the nuclear nonproliferation regime by acceding to the NPT as States Parties.

Furthermore, we have collectively, in the Arab World, continued to pursue our shared aspiration of creating a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. It is regrettable therefore, that Israel, remains the only state in the Middle East that has refused to accede to the NPT, and continues to operate nuclear facilities not subject to the comprehensive IAEA safeguards, despite an explicit and urgent call for Israel to do so pursuant to Security Council Resolution 487 (1981). The lack of universalization of the NPT in the Middle East remains a significant obstacle towards achieving a zone free of nuclear weapons.
Mr. Chairman,

We support the immediate commencement of negotiations on a universal, non-discriminatory and internationally and effectively verifiable multilateral treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices on the basis of document CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein. A fissile material treaty however, must ensure that both nuclear disarmament and nuclear nonproliferation objectives are met. It is Egypt’s view that a future treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices should include within its scope the stockpiles of weapons usable fissile materials in order to ensure that this future treaty would achieve nuclear disarmament.

In this regard, we look forward to the conclusion of the work of the Second Session of the High Level Expert Preparatory Group due to finalize its work in Geneva June 2018.

Mr. Chairman,

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was a milestone in multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. The adopted Treaty fulfills a gap in international law in relation to the prohibition of nuclear weapons. This Treaty should be pursued by other legal effective measures leading towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

It is unfortunate that the nuclear weapon States, and some non-nuclear weapon States as well, boycotted the UN Conference in 2017 and exhibited fierce opposition to the objectives of the Treaty. If this suggests anything, it is indicative of the questionable commitment of the nuclear weapon States towards nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

Nuclear disarmament is a fundamental pillar of the NPT. It is unfortunate, however, that it remains a serious shortcoming in the fulfillment of the objective and purpose of the NPT. As long as nuclear disarmament is not vigorously pursued, the credibility of the NPT regime will erode. As we approach the 2020 Review Conference, Egypt stands ready to engage constructively and support all efforts leading towards nuclear disarmament.

Thank you.