

EGYPT



مصر

The Permanent Mission of Egypt
to the United Nations
New York

بعثة مصر الدائمة
لدى الأمم المتحدة
نيويورك

Statement of
The Arab Republic of Egypt

First Committee
62nd Session of the General Assembly

Delivered by
H.E. Ambassador/ Maged Abdel Aziz
Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt

New York, 8 October 2007

Check Against Delivery

Mr Chairman,

The delegation of Egypt is pleased to congratulate you for the Chairmanship of this session of the First Committee, which we look forward to seeing your wisdom and experience lead it into realizing its anticipated objectives. This delegation assures you of its keen preparedness to cooperate with you, the bureau and all delegations, in order to achieve success hoped for this year.

Mr Chairman,

The international community continues to witness a difficult historical era in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, marked by ever increasing challenges confronting regional and international security today, even threatening the credibility of the Treaties and conventions previously concluded by the international community in the hope of seeing the compliance of States with their commitments, eventually bringing about general and complete disarmament, as one of the most lofty objectives of the United Nations.

Last year witnessed, in particular, a retreat with regard to both objectives of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. With regards to disarmament, nuclear-weapon-States continued to evade undertaking significant positive steps in this area, except for one State. At least one other State continued to develop new categories of nuclear weapons while another continued to increase the number of nuclear weapons under its control.

As for non-proliferation, we witnessed efforts aiming at attaching the priority for non-proliferation while ignoring nuclear disarmament, as we also witnessed efforts aimed at preventing the non-nuclear-weapon-States from their inalienable right in the peaceful applications of nuclear technology. Furthermore, we witnessed damaging, more dangerous efforts dedicated to avoiding pressure on States non-members to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) expected to secure their accession as non-nuclear-weapon-States in order to realize the universality of the Treaty. Some even went -in outright defiance to their commitments under the NPT- as far as expanding cooperation with such States in the military area, which in effect significantly undermines the objectives of the NPT and its very feasibility.

The situation is indeed seriously dangerous, Mr Chairman, when some developed States openly challenge one of the key pillars of the NPT, namely the inalienable right to nuclear applications and technology. How can that be given that such inalienable right represents the return for which non-nuclear-weapon-States have accepted to permanently give-up the military nuclear option, in the context of a balanced Treaty, which never stipulated in any way, any right for nuclear-weapon-States to maintain their nuclear weapons indefinitely. Neither has the Treaty ever foreseen to allow States non-members of the NPT to acquire more and more nuclear weapons with the support of NPT members.

In light of all that Mr Chairman, Egypt views with great concern the currently prevailing international environment in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, on both regional and international levels, particularly with regard to the respect of the international community of the priority of its traditional reference marks represented by international instruments, United Nations resolutions and decisions of relevant international fora. On that background, and intending to address the double standards and the politicization now looming in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, the Non-Aligned Movement continues to work for convening the fourth special session of the General Assembly dedicated to disarmament, with the aim of restoring the lost confidence in the credibility of the nuclear disarmament regime, and consequently the credibility of the non-proliferation regime.

Mr Chairman,

The indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995, took place in the context of a package deal which included the adoption of the Resolution on the Middle East, objectively linking between the indefinite extension of the Treaty, on the one hand, and the establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (NWFZ) in the Middle East through Israel's accession to the NPT and its submission of all its nuclear facilities to the comprehensive safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), on the other. Despite that, we have not seen to date, twelve years after the adoption of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, any significant progress in implementing this resolution.

It is indeed regrettable that the lack of implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, emerges along with a series of relapses witnessed in the field of disarmament, including the failure of the Millennium Summit in 2005 in agreeing to language on disarmament, followed by the failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference, then the unsuccessful conclusion of the Review Conference of the UN Program of Action against illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in 2006 and the continued failure to date to agree on convening the fourth special session of the General Assembly dedicated to disarmament, as well as the failure of the Conference on Disarmament to begin substantive discussions on main disarmament issues.

Yet the greatest danger threatening the purpose and objectives of the NPT is the threat of amending the guidelines of the Nuclear-Suppliers-Group (NSG) to allow its members to cooperate with non-NPT States in the nuclear field. This would be an outright contradiction to the letter of the NPT and the Decision on "Principles and Objectives of non-proliferation and disarmament" adopted as part of the indefinite extension package, especially what it stipulates in its 12th and 13th operative paragraphs. In this regard, Egypt urges the members of the NSG to continue to respect their commitments under the Treaty and the mentioned Decision, and not to contribute to the collapse of the nuclear non-proliferation regime through totally eliminating the chances to realize the universality of the Treaty.

Mr Chairman,

Egypt firmly believes in the goals and objectives of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and sees that the failure of efforts to achieve progress in the implementation of international instruments and resolutions, should not in any way allow the undermining of the already present assets and achievements in this field, and should not lead, through the reinterpretation of those Treaties, to serving a political agenda of a few, with which the international community does not agree.

Bearing that in mind, Egypt annually presents a resolution on “Establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East” and presents, along with member States of the League of Arab State, another resolution on “The Risk of Nuclear Proliferation in the Middle East”. As Egypt values the consensus built around the first resolution, it looks forward to the consensus of wills to implement it and establish the zone at the earliest opportunity. Egypt will work towards increasing the support enjoyed by the resolution on the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East, as it roots objective, non-discriminatory basis, considered essential if the international community intends to seriously and effectively deal with that risk, especially after press reports of statements of leading Israeli officials concerning Israeli nuclear weapons, which did not receive due attention of nuclear disarmament or non-proliferation fora.

Mr Chairman,

With the conclusion of the First Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review conference, and in hope of securing the success of the Second Preparatory Committee to be held in Geneva in 2008, it is necessary that the work of the Preparatory Committee takes stock to push towards the implementation of the decisions and resolution of the 1995 conference on the indefinite extension of the NPT, along with the 13 practical steps adopted in 2000 to serve as a plan of action enhancing the credibility of the Treaty and the review process itself. In this context, the New Agenda Coalition continues to work on stressing the priority of preserving the NPT through calling upon the international community to implement it respectfully and responsibly. The delegation of Egypt will present with its partners of the coalition a new draft resolution titled “Towards a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World: Accelerating the Implementation of Disarmament Commitments”. We look forward to the international community’s renewed commitment to preserve the credibility of the NPT through supporting the resolution and implementing it together with earlier resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in past years.

At the same time, in light of keen efforts exerted in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva this year, aimed at resuming its negotiation activity, in particular concerning a fissile material cut-off Treaty (FMCT) based on the proposal of the six presidents, Egypt supports these efforts as a basis for discussion on ways and means to realize progress on this issue, and reaffirms its upholding of Shannon mandate, as endorsed by the final document of the NPT

Review Conference in 2000. We believe the mandate to serve the global interest as a consensus mandate which secures the true contribution of the proposed FMCT to nuclear disarmament.

Mr Chairman,

Egypt considers combating and preventing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons as an important goal of the international community, which all States need to collectively address, and we see no better basis to build on in this regard than the UN Program of Action Against Illicit Trade in Small arms and Light Weapons, as a politically binding consensus framework we remain keen on its implementation and present regular reporting in accordance with it. In this context, we welcome the conclusion of the work of the Governmental Expert Group on the Illicit Brokering in small arms and light weapons in June 2007, and the arrival at a consensus report supporting future constructive work on this issue. We also look forward to further efforts to deal with this dangerous phenomenon which negatively affects international peace and security, especially in the African continent where such weapons are widely used.

In addition to that, Egypt closely monitors developments relating to a number of initiatives presented in the First Committee or elsewhere, including the proposed Arms Trade Treaty concerning which the General Assembly adopted a resolution last year. Egypt looks forward to actively engage in all stages of the consideration of the feasibility of this Treaty and others, such as that proposed on Cluster Munitions, which we believe will not enjoy enough support if not formulated throughout all its phases with full transparency and in the multilateral context of the United Nations.

Mr Chairman,

The Secretary General has attached particular importance to activating the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda. Accordingly, the Department for Disarmament Affairs (DDA) has been restructured and a Special Representative has been appointed to take up this task. We welcome this development and support it. However, the restructuring of the DDA has to lead to enhancing the ability of the department to present substantive proposals to the member States aimed at activating the effective dealing of the international community with the disarmament agenda, in particular, nuclear disarmament. We look forward to receiving the concrete proposals of the Secretary General on strengthening the role of Special Representative in fulfillment of that goal.

Finally, the delegation of Egypt hopes that the work of the First Committee, under your leadership, will be guided by a new constructive spirit reflecting the responsibility of our Governments towards the security and stability of their peoples, and effectively contributing to strengthening the role of the United Nations in achieving progress in all fields.

Thank you, Mr Chairman