

EGYPT



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The Permanent Mission of Egypt
to the United Nations
New York

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Statement by

H.E. Ambassador Mootaz Ahmadein Khalil

**Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt
to the United Nations**

on Behalf of the Arab Group

**before
the General Debate of the First Committee**

New York, 8 October 2012,

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Mr. Chairman,

The delegation of Egypt delivers this statement on behalf of the Group of States members of the League of Arab States. The Arab Group aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

At the outset I would like to extend to you my sincere congratulations for your election as Chairman of the sixty-seventh session of the First Committee of the General Assembly. We are confident that you will ensure, through your distinguished capabilities and expertise, the success of its work. I also congratulate the other members of the Bureau.

Mr. Chairman,

The First Committee meets this year while the Arab Group anticipates tangible progress in a number of issues, in particular the convening of a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, pursuant to the outcome of the last Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The Arab Group welcomes the initial steps taken to prepare for the 2012 Conference such as the designation of Finland as a host government for the conference, and the nomination of Ambassador "Jaakko Laajava" as facilitator. The Group also stresses the importance of the participation of all concerned countries in the Middle East at the conference to determine the follow up steps regarding the establishment of the zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, with the help of the facilitator, in accordance to the Action Plan of the final document of the 2010 Review Conference.

The Arab Group stresses the importance that all parties responsible for convening the 2012 Conference commit to hold it the Conference in the date set by the Action Plan, including through taking practical steps associated with the preparation of the agenda, conveying the invitations in a timely manner, and encouraging all countries of the region to participate in the conference.

We call on the international community to support efforts aimed at convening a successful 2012 conference, enabling it to result in a practical outcome coupled with clear implementation mechanisms, set in accordance to a specific timetable which realizes the objective of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

The Arab Group stresses the importance of maintaining parallel progress in the process leading to achieving total and complete elimination of all weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, biological, and chemical) in the Middle East in accordance with paragraph 8 of the Action Plan. The Group also affirms the need for the Conference to agree on concrete results in order to achieve this aim,

and not to be limited to mere theoretical discussions. The group looks forward the 2012 Conference contributing to achieving this objective by the 2015 Review Conference.

Mr. Chairman

The Arab Group stresses that the current situation in the Middle East does not adversely affect the unified Arab position concerning the convening of the conference on the date set for it before the end of this year, as the convening Conference will by itself contribute to the region's stability thus addressing relevant aspects of the current developments in the region.

The Arab Group takes this opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to achieve a successful outcome of the 2012 conference, and calls on the Conveners of the Conference, and the other countries of the region, which are expected to participate in the Conference, to demonstrate similar commitment and a commensurate political will. The Arab countries decided for the second consecutive year not to table the resolution entitled "Israeli nuclear capabilities" at the last General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in response to efforts to create favorable conditions for the success of the Conference. We expect a reciprocal and appropriate response from all other parties.

Mr. Chairman,

The Arab Group believes that the attempt to link the peace process in the Middle East with the establishment of the nuclear weapons free zone, does not conform with sound logic in this regard. The establishment of the nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East is an essential prerequisite for the achievement of security, stability and peace. It is also considered an important basis for confidence-building. The establishment of a zone free from nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction free in the Middle East fulfills the implementation of the several decisions adopted by General Assembly in this regard, and also conforms with Security Council Resolutions 487(1981) and 687(1991) which affirmed the objective of establishing such a zone, and placing Israeli nuclear facilities under comprehensive safeguards system of the IAEA.

Mr. Chairman.

The Arab Group reiterates that any delay in the implementation of the commitment to hold the 2012 conference as decided by the 2010 Review Conference will be a setback to the efforts of nuclear disarmament, and impede progress in efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation, especially in the Middle East, which may lead the Arab League members states to review their policies in this regard.

The Arab Group stresses the necessity for placing all nuclear facilities in the Middle East region under the comprehensive safeguards regime of the IAEA. The Group also emphasizes the need to achieve the universality of the NPT. In this regard, the Group stresses the need for Israel to join the

Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon State. The Group urges the placement of all Israeli nuclear facilities under comprehensive safeguards regime of the IAEA, thus contributing to peace and security in the region and catalyzing its economic and social development, and preventing entering into an arms race that would hinder developmental programs and would dispel confidence-building efforts.

Mr. Chairman,

The call by the Arab Group to achieve the universality on the NPT treaty is part and parcel of its principled commitment towards nuclear disarmament, which remains the priority as set forward by the First Special Session of the General Assembly on Disarmament. The Arab Group recalls that the reference and mandate of the of the United Nations disarmament machinery emanates only from these special sessions. Any modifications can only be effectuated by a new special session of the General Assembly on disarmament. In this regard, the Group supports the position of the Non-Aligned Movement calling for the convening of a Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament issues.

Mr. Chairman,

The Arab Group reaffirms the need to enable the Conference on Disarmament, the sole negotiating forum for disarmament within the framework of the United Nations, to fulfill its role. The Group stresses that the current stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament is not due to any failure of the conference itself, but due to lack of political will of the relevant members. We therefore, need to preserve the key role of the Conference on Disarmament and not to disperse efforts through the establishment of other parallel mechanisms. The four issues before the conference agenda: nuclear disarmament, the fissile material treaty, prevention of an arms race in outer space, and negative security assurances, are interrelated. They are part of an integrated agenda for nuclear disarmament. It is improper to deal with one of them ahead of the remaining ones, nor to deal with a number of these issues from the perspective of non-proliferation at the expense of nuclear disarmament process. This applies to the proposed fissile material treaty, which we believe must address the accumulated stockpiles within the countries which possess nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

The Arab Group would like to express its sincere appreciation to Ambassador Joy Ogwu the Permanent representative of Nigeria and President of the second Conference UN conference to review the progress made in implementing the UN Programme of Action to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects on her efforts and the efforts exerted by the four facilitators to reach the final document of the Conference. The Arab Group participated actively with the objective of achieving the successful outcome. The Group reiterates its continued

adherence to the commitments contained in the Programme of Action, and the International Tracing Instrument; and that any additional issues and concepts, are just proposals subject to further consensus.

The Arab Group would also like to refer to the tireless efforts exerted by Ambassador Roberto Garcia Moritan President of the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty in conjunction with all the countries that participated in the conference. The Arab Group had also welcomed the adoption of the Rules of Procedure, which stated that all substantive decisions of the conference have to be reached by consensus. The Group was keen on participating actively in the work of the conference and contributing to the creation of all conditions needed for its success. We reiterate that the success of the negotiations on the treaty depends on reaching a balanced treaty reflecting the interests of all the states participating in the negotiations, including the State of Palestine.

In view of the Arab Group, an acceptable outcome on all elements of the treaty can only be reached through the multilateral framework of the United Nations, and that the draft treaty has to be consistent with the content and principles of the Charter, especially the legitimate right of States to self-defense and to preserve territorial integrity, the right of self-determination, the inadmissibility of foreign occupation, and the rights to produce, export, import, and transfer conventional arms. The draft treaty must also take into account the balance of responsibilities between the arms exporting and importing states. Any criteria developed by the treaty to regulate arms exports must also be based on clear legal instruments, including relevant instruments of international humanitarian law, and decisions of the relevant United Nations organs. The Treaty should also provided for recourse to arbitration in cases of refusal to export on subjective basis of or in case a state exploits the treaty for political purposes.

Mr. Chairman

The Arab Group has shared its top priorities regarding the work of the First Committee of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly, cognizant that the agenda before us imposes a daunting task. This should not curb our ambition; on the contrary it should only further drive us to commit to exert every effort and to uphold every principle of justice, and non selectivity, as these principles are essential to generate the necessary political will for the success of the work of the Committee. Allow me to reassure you that the Arab Group is already committed to implementing these principles, and to working with you and the members of the First Committee towards achieving progress in all issues related to disarmament and international security

Thank You