STATEMENT

BY

Mr. Sami Zeidan
First Secretary

At

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2005 Review Conference of the States Parties
To the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations
866 United Nations Plaza, Suite 531, New York, New York 10017
Mr. Chairman,

My delegation is pleased to see you preside over the work of this committee, and we are confident that your able leadership will foster a successful and productive outcome. This is of particular importance as this meeting is convened at a time of serious conflicts and threats of the use of conventional and non-conventional weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

We believe that until there is a total elimination of nuclear weapons, all efforts should be made to ensure that non-nuclear-weapon states have their security assurances guaranteed by a legally binding instrument that is both universal and unconditional. The previous NPT conferences listed 13 practical steps for the implementation of article VI of the NPT, leading to complete nuclear disarmament. And nuclear weapon states expressed their commitment to an unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. What has become of this unequivocal undertaking so far?

We are pleased that the NPT review process continues to emphasize the usefulness of nuclear energy in medicine, technology and development, as well as the conversion of nuclear materials to peaceful uses, all under the complete control and verification of the IAEA.

On the other hand, we are concerned that the refusal of nuclear-weapon states to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) is still preventing its entry into force. Such a lack of progress could allow a potential deployment of missile defense systems and space weapons leading to an arms race.

And of even more concern to Lebanon is the Middle East, where Israel is in possession of nuclear weapon arsenal. In the last NPT conference, it was emphasized that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing especially in regions of conflict like ours. In fact, it is in this spirit that the 1995 Conference adopted a decision calling for the establishment of an effectively verifiable Middle
East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery vehicles. This idea was supported in the 2000 Conference, and Israel was urged to accede to the NPT and yield to the IAEA safeguards.

Mr. Chairman,

Lebanon was among the first countries to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). And this was in the belief that the vital importance of the treaty, as a fundamental component of international peace and security, lays in the fact that it ought to be effectively universal. It was also in the belief that enhancing the NPT would be done by investing in the momentum created by the commitments of the States Parties to achieve this universality. And it is out of concern for the future of our volatile region that we cannot accept the blessing of Israeli “dominion” in our region by allowing it to maintain its nuclear arsenal. This undermines the treaty’s credibility and universality. We cannot accept that while the non-nuclear-weapon states have lived up to their commitments, the nuclear-weapon-states have not fully done so - just as Israel cannot accept that other states of the region might be encouraged to seek weapons of mass destruction so as to counter the deadly threats of those held by Israel in the first place.

Mr. Chairman,

The final word is that the steps are there, the resolutions are there, including the one on the Middle East. There is nothing left for us but to observe that the policies of nuclear weapon states be in compliance with the already widely discussed – and approved – resolutions. After all, the very point of renewing the NPT in the first place is tied to the extent to which it is truly universal in its application.