Comments by the delegation of Egypt
Cluster 3: Implementation of the provisions relating to the inalienable right to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.
NPT Prepcom 3, Friday 8 May

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1. Egypt remains a strong proponent of Article IV of the NPT, with one of its primary objectives during the present review cycle being to defend and uphold the integrity of Article IV a main elements upon which the NPT's balance and continued relevance depend. Egypt also shares the view expressed by Brazil on Friday that Article IV does not create a right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. This right exists with or without a treaty, as does the right to use fossil fuels or solar energy even though no treaty has granted either of them.

2. We have much agreed and unambiguous language in the Treaty and from previous review conference outcomes on the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Nonetheless, what we have repeatedly heard from some delegation throughout this review cycle, and again on Friday, reflects the extent to which the reality surrounding the NPT today is removed from the texts that we are all presumably committed to.

3. By looking at the way certain States chose to interpret the provisions of any legal instrument, we can evaluate fairly accurately the extent of their commitment to the implementation of the instrument as a whole, as opposed to a selective implementation of parts thereof. Clearly, for some of its members, the NPT falls under the category of selective implementation.

4. There are NPT State Parties that continue to promote a restrictive and rather creative interpretation of Article IV of the Treaty in order to make its implementation dependent upon a series of pre-conditions that are neither part of the letter of the NPT nor of the spirit in which it was drafted.
5. As such, we often hear about the necessity for nuclear power programs to be carried out in a "responsible" way. Given the magnitude of such an undertaking, it is of course safe to assume that any State that decides to benefit from nuclear power will do so in a responsible manner. Yet, several statements heard on Friday considered it undesirable that certain "sensitive" technologies be disseminated, while one statement mentioned light-water reactors as a responsible technology in account of their proliferation resistant nature. But to those who consider "responsible" to mean that emerging nuclear programs should only give birth to proliferation-resistant reactors without front or back ends, would not those States who continue to run front and back-ended heavy water reactors be, by definition, irresponsible? Or must we consider that what is irresponsible for one is responsible for another?

6. In this context, it is interesting to note that the strongest proponents of a restrictive interpretation of Article IV are often those who, in practice, reserve for themselves the right to continue engaging in the very activities that seem so objectionable to them when carried out by others. Such an approach is discriminatory and not only contradicts itself, but also the engagements we have collectively undertaken by joining the NPT and in the context of its review cycles.

7. On a more practical level, it is particularly troubling that efforts to curtail article IV implementation coincide with a time of unprecedented economic hardship, particularly in developing countries. What we need to do is to view the so-called nuclear renaissance as an opportunity to enable developing countries to gain access to technologies that they are in dire need of. What we must not do is to concentrate our attention exclusively on a hypothetical proliferation threat that has no real basis.

8. With regard to fuel supply initiatives, one statement on Friday noted that greater supply assurances will allow states the peace of mind needed to dedicate finite resources to the infrastructure of nuclear power plants, while another considered that multilateral mechanisms would allay concerns regarding the security of supply. The reality of the present fuel supply market, however, is one that has, to this delegation's mind, neither troubled the peace of mind of recipient countries, nor caused concerns that require to be allayed. This is testified to by the fact that it is the supplier countries rather than the recipient countries that are at the origin of the recent proliferation of supply initiatives.
9. As far as Egypt is concerned, the present review cycle should focus its attention on ensuring that no hindrances that have no basis in the NPT are allowed to impede the full implementation of treaty provisions relating to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Collectively we must renew our commitment to the full and unconditional implementation of Article IV of the treaty, and individually we must refrain from any initiatives that run counter to this objective. The NPT is a treaty that is fundamentally lop-sided, and it is therefore not in anyone's interest to introduce further imbalances that will only weaken the treaty.

10. Finally, Mr. Chairman, the delegation of the United States on Friday quoted a passage from a speech delivered by President Eisenhower here in New York in 1953 in which, speaking of nuclear energy, he noted that "a special purpose would be to provide abundant electrical energy in the power-starved areas of the world." Fifty-nine years later, vast areas of the world remain power-starved.

Thank you.