Egypt's Statement

before the General Debate

of the First Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference

Vienna, 30 April – 11 May 2012

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your election as Chair of the first session of the Preparatory Committee of the 2015 NPT Review Conference, and to express our trust in your leadership of its work and our continued support towards making it a success.

My delegation would like to associate itself with the statements made by the Non-Aligned Movement, the New Agenda Coalition and the African and Arab Groups.

Egypt also associates itself with the working papers presented by the Arab Group, Non-Aligned Movement and New Agenda Coalition to this session.

This first session of the 2015 Review Cycle comes after a successful Review Conference in 2010, and needs to promote the full and balanced implementation of the Treaty, its universality, and the four action plans adopted in 2010, which addressed the Treaty's three pillars, namely nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as well as the Middle East, particularly the implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East. The success of the current Review Cycle is dependant on an active continuation of what has been achieved.

This first session, which marks the beginning of the 2015 Review Cycle, provides a timely opportunity to take stock of progress achieved, identify the tasks that remain ahead, and plan our work accordingly.

Mr Chairman,

Egypt stresses its concern at the threat to humanity posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons, and reaffirms that the total elimination of nuclear weapons, which represents the primary objective of the Treaty, is the only guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. This objective is dependent upon the implementation by the nuclear-weapon States of their obligations under Article VI and the achievement of universal adherence to the Treaty.

The continued possession by nuclear weapon states of nuclear arsenals for deterrence purposes, the development of new generations of such weapons and the provision of assistance to states not party to the Treaty thus perpetuating their non-adherence, as well as the continued deployment of nuclear weapons in territories of non-nuclear weapon
States through nuclear sharing arrangements of military alliances, undermines the objectives of the Treaty, and the presumed equality, irrespective of membership in military alliances, among the non-nuclear weapon States.

Egypt expresses deep concern at the continued lack of meaningful progress in the field of nuclear disarmament, which could undermine the object and purpose of the NPT. Egypt reiterates its strong call for a full implementation of the unequivocal undertaking given by the nuclear-weapon States at the 2000 Review Conference, and reaffirmed at the 2010 Review Conference, to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament. That undertaking should be demonstrated without further delay through the full implementation of article VI of the Treaty and the outcomes of the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences, to advance systematically and progressively towards a nuclear-weapon-free world as agreed in 2000 and 2010.

Indeed, the 2010 Review Conference agreed on an action plan on nuclear disarmament which includes concrete steps for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Accordingly, Egypt strongly calls for prompt and full implementation of that action plan.

The negotiations of a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified time frame ending in 2025, including a nuclear weapons convention, is necessary and should commence without any further delay.

Egypt recalls that the 2010 Review Conference reaffirmed and recognized the legitimate interest of all non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty in receiving unequivocal and legally binding security assurances from the nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Receiving such security assurances is a legitimate right as well as the security interest of all non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty. Accordingly, Egypt is of the view that pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, as the only absolute guarantee against the threat or use of nuclear weapons, nuclear-weapon States should refrain from the threat or use of nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty. Egypt reiterates that efforts to conclude a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty against the threat or use of nuclear weapons by the nuclear-weapon States should be pursued as a matter of priority and should be materialized without further delay.

Mr Chairman,

Egypt emphasizes that promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for the realization of “the inalienable right of all parties to the Treaty to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes” as stipulated in its Article IV, constitutes one of the fundamental objectives of the Treaty.

Indeed, Egypt attributes utmost importance to the promotion of the use by non-nuclear-weapon States party to the Treaty of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, thus enabling them to overcome increasing developmental, including increasing energy and food costs. This requires States party to fulfill their obligations under the Treaty to facilitate access by non-nuclear-weapon states to nuclear technology and materials in the context of implementing their national development strategies and programs for the peaceful use of nuclear energy. In this regard, Egypt stresses particularly the obligation of developed countries to promote the legitimate need of the developing countries to nuclear energy,
by fully respecting this right with a view to achieving the widest benefits and applying pertinent elements of sustainable development in their activities.

The full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article IV of the Treaty plays a crucial role in achieving the object and purpose of the Treaty. Egypt notes with growing concern attempts by some to reinterpret Article IV of the Treaty in a manner that aims to restrict the ability of non-nuclear-weapon states to benefit from their rights. Any measure aiming at hampering, fully or partly, the fullest exercise of these inalienable rights, would seriously jeopardize the delicate balance between rights and obligations of States parties in contravention with the Treaty’s objective and purpose and widens the gap between developed and developing countries in this field.

In this regard, Egypt views with concern efforts by certain discriminatory arrangements to impose additional restrictions on some but not on others, in a manner that is clearly politicized and does not contribute to the implementation of the NPT's objectives, in particular its universality, as well as interference in the internal affairs of states by attempting to influence the determination of their nuclear energy requirements or to restrict their choice to achieve self-sufficiency in the area of fuel supply.

In addition, Egypt strongly calls for the enforcement, without exception and further delay, of the total and complete prohibition, as stipulated in the Treaty, of the transfer of all nuclear-related equipment, information, material and facilities, resources or devices and the extension of assistance in the nuclear, scientific or technological fields to States non-parties to the Treaty.

Egypt believes that IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements constitutes the legal and practical framework that ensures the peaceful nature of the uses by States Party of nuclear energy, and prevents their spread to non-state actors. It is therefore imperative to ensure that the exercise by States Party of their rights under the Treaty and the international support provided to them in this context is not subjected to additional restrictions and obligations.

Egypt emphasizes that the verification system which was accepted in the Treaty, to be implemented under the IAEA supervision, is structured on material evidence as a basis for assessment, without politicization, selectivity or double standards, and is also based on non-interference in internal affairs of States, particularly in evaluating their developmental objectives and needs.

Mr Chairman,

The Middle East has and will continue to have a special status within the NPT framework and its Review Process. Indeed, the indefinite extension of the Treaty at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference was only possible in the context of the overall package arrived at, comprising three decisions and one crucial resolution; namely, the Resolution on the Middle East.

The Resolution called upon all States in the Middle East that had not yet done so, without exception, to accede to the Treaty as soon as possible and place their nuclear facilities under full-scope IAEA safeguards. Today, seventeen years later, Israel remains the only State in the Middle East that has not acceded to the Treaty or placed its nuclear facilities under full-scope IAEA safeguards, and no tangible results on the ground have
been achieved in terms of the Resolution's implementation and the early establishment of the envisaged Zone.

This is despite the fact that the 1995 Resolution called upon all States party to the NPT, and in particular the nuclear-weapon States, "to extend their cooperation and to exert their utmost efforts" in this regard. The 2010 Review Conference's action plan on the Middle East also emphasized the special responsibility in this regard of the five nuclear-weapon States, and especially the three Depositary States which co-sponsored the 1995 Resolution.

The vital importance of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East within the NPT framework was emphasized by the fact that it constituted the subject of one of the four action plans adopted by the 2010 Review Conference, alongside the other action plans dealing with the three pillars of the Treaty.

The 2010 Review Conference's fourth action plan emphasized the importance of a process leading to full implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, and to that end - the Conference endorsed a number of practical steps. Among these steps was the convening – by the Secretary General of the United Nations and the co-sponsors of the 1995 Resolution, in consultation with the States of the region – of a conference in 2012, to be attended by all States of the Middle East, on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

Egypt welcomes the designation of Finland as host Government for the 2012 Conference and the appointment of H.E. Jaakko Laajava as facilitator, whom we look forward to continuing to work with in this regard in accordance with his mandate as stipulated under the 2010 Action Plan, and following up on our meetings with him in this context, the latest of which were in New York and Cairo.

The 2012 Conference is of course not an end in itself, but must launch a sustained and serious process towards the full implementation of the 1995 resolution, leading to the establishment of the Zone, and involving concrete steps and measures to be taken in this regard within specific time-frames, and linked to the successive sessions of the Preparatory Committee of the 2015 Review Process of the Treaty.

The convening of a successful conference in 2012 on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East is integral to the implementation of the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference. Any delay in convening the conference in the year of 2012 – as clearly stipulated in the 2010 action plan which was reached by consensus – could jeopardize its overall implementation and represent a major setback in this regard.

Egypt has submitted a working paper in this regard to this current Preparatory Committee session, entitled "Implementation of the 1995 Resolution and the 2000 and 2010 outcomes on the Middle East" [NPT/CONF.2015/PC.I/WP.13], which elaborates further Egypt's position and views on this issue.

Egypt welcomes the fact that the recent talks in Istanbul on the Iranian nuclear issue promote a diplomatic solution in this regard. We also reaffirm in this respect the
importance of a regional approach whereby nuclear issues across the Middle East are addressed without selectivity or double standards, including with regards to Israeli nuclear capabilities, with a view to establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East in accordance with the NPT outcomes and a multitude of UN General Assembly, Security Council and IAEA Resolutions. Indeed, the 2012 Conference in Finland is an opportunity that should be capitalized on in this regard.

The success of the 2012 Conference will be crucial to the success of the current NPT Review Cycle and its outcome will have a significant bearing on future developments in the Middle East. Indeed, the revolutionary developments in the Arab world have given even greater urgency to addressing the nuclear situation in the Middle East.

It is long overdue that concrete progress is made towards the implementation of the 1995 Resolution. Its implementation is not only a legal obligation on all those responsible, but also presents – including through the 2012 Conference - an opportunity that is key to resolving the prevailing tensions surrounding the current nuclear situation in the region, through a balanced and comprehensive approach encompassing the main parties concerned.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.