Statement of

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before

Main Committee II

Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the
Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Mr. Chairman,

IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards constitute the NPT's only verifications mechanism. This system was created to ensure a balance between the third pillar of the treaty (peaceful uses of nuclear energy) and the need to counter the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Egypt believes that international efforts which aim to implement treaty commitments with regards to nuclear non-proliferation parallel to those efforts directed to fulfilling commitments in the field of nuclear disarmament. Those efforts must of course be implemented through the Agency's verification activities, given that it is the sole international agency with the mandate to pursue this role.

While the IAEA's role in verification has been successful in ensuring the non-diversion of nuclear activities or material to military nuclear programs, it has so far had a limited role in preventing vertical proliferation, or in verifying nuclear disarmament. Furthermore, the Agency's hands are virtually tied with regard to verification in states not party to the NPT who have not yet entered into Comprehensive Safeguards agreements. Israel's unsafeguarded nuclear facilities and activities, which continue to have a destabilizing impact on regional peace and security, as well as undermining international non-proliferation efforts, is a glaring example of this unfortunate fact.

Mr. Chairman,

Despite this, Egypt remains firmly committed to honoring its obligations under its comprehensive safeguards agreement, and has remained so consistently ever since entering into those obligations. Therefore, we are extremely surprised when we are asked to enter into additional verification obligations, especially in the light of the continued existence of completely unsafeguarded facilities in the Middle East.

In addition, we are also witnessing efforts to redefine existing obligations, under Article IV of the Treaty, with an aim to limiting national options within the
framework of the exercise of the inalienable right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

These efforts both exacerbate the challenges the safeguards and verification system established by the NPT currently faces and undermine efforts to achieve the universality of IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards, thereby detracting from the credibility of the Treaty in the eyes of many states parties.

Mr. Chairman,

Egypt fervently hopes that this Review Conference will succeed in addressing the aforementioned challenges in order to strengthen the NPT and ensure its continued ability to deal with them effectively.

Thank you.