Statement of

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before

Main Committee I

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

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Mr. Chairman,

Nuclear disarmament lies at the top of Egypt’s priorities during this Review conference, as one of the principle priorities of Egypt’s foreign policy objectives, as evidenced by our constant promotion of nuclear disarmament goals in several international fora. This is borne out of the conviction that due to the destructive potential of these weapons, international peace and security can never be fully attained as long as nuclear weapons exist.

In accordance with Article VI of the NPT, Egypt strongly believes that all necessary steps should be taken by the Nuclear Weapons States to undertake measures to attain the goal of the complete and total elimination of nuclear weapons. These measures should be irreversible and in accordance with a set time frame. In this regard, Egypt recalls the 13 practical steps outlined in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

Egypt welcomes the signing of the New START treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation, and looks forward to the ratification of the treaty by the respective parties and its subsequent implementation. This development will undoubtedly contribute to enhancing international security. Egypt believes that this positive development should be followed by further steps by both the US and Russian Federation, as well as by further steps by all other Nuclear Weapons States.

Unilateral and bilateral efforts, however, cannot replace collective measures by all five Nuclear Weapons states to achieve the full implementation of NPT obligations within the multilateral framework and not only outside the system, commensurate with article VI of the treaty, as is evident by the fact that even after bilateral and unilateral reductions take effect, thousands of nuclear weapons will remain deployed.

Furthermore, it is regrettable that nuclear deterrence remains a strong element in the strategic doctrines of the Nuclear Weapons states. Retaining this role for nuclear weapons remains one of the most counterproductive in achieving non-proliferation aims, as it increases the danger of other states attempting to
develop these weapons to protect their national security. What we also view as
discouraging is the continuation of the policy of nuclear sharing and basing nuclear
weapons in the territories of non- nuclear weapons states, since this contradicts
Article I of the NPT, an article which is at the very core of the commitments
enshrined in the Treaty.

In addition, Egypt views with alarm certain attempts to link nuclear
disarmament efforts to certain preconditions, such as the establishment of a certain
political situation, or the implementation of additional non-proliferation
undertakings by the Non Nuclear Weapons states. Those preconditions are neither
logical, since they place the onus of nuclear disarmament on states that do not
possess nuclear weapons, nor are they compatible with the legal obligations
inherent in the NPT. As such, Egypt calls once again on the Nuclear Weapons
states to comply fully with their legal obligations under the NPT and to collectively
initiate multilateral negotiations of a nuclear weapons convention, as stipulated in
Article VI, aimed at banning nuclear weapons and their total elimination in a given
timeframe.

Mr. Chairman,

The Final Document of 2000 NPT Review conference represented a vital
step on the road to complete nuclear disarmament. The 13 practical steps contained
therein represent a consensually and internationally endorsed plan to arrive at the
total elimination of nuclear weapons to which the Nuclear Weapons states have
unequivocally undertaken to achieve. The 2010 Review Conference should
reaffirm the importance of the immediate implementation of those steps.

In this regard, Egypt reiterates its calls to achieve the universality of the
NPT, which is vital to attaining the goal of the complete elimination of nuclear
weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

The only true effective guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear
weapons is their total elimination; a development which doubtlessly will improve
the international security situation tremendously, and eliminate other nuclear
threats as well, such as the danger of nuclear weapons falling into the hands of terrorists thus enforcing nuclear security.

In the interim, while the international community continues to strive towards the achievement of this noble goal, the Non Nuclear Weapons states find themselves in a position that requires them to seek negative security assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons from the Nuclear Weapons States. We believe that these assurances should be comprehensive, unequivocal, unconditional, and legally binding. In this regard, Egypt recalls the advisory opinion of the ICJ on the “Legality of the Threat or Use by a State of Nuclear Weapons in Armed Conflict” which state that there is in neither customary nor conventional international law acknowledging or even tolerating any specific authorization of the threat or use of nuclear weapons, and that a threat or use of force by means of nuclear weapons... is unlawful.” Egypt also recalls paragraph 8 of Decision 2 on Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament adopted by the 1995 Review Conference which reaffirmed that “further steps should be considered to assure non-nuclear weapons states party to the NPT against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and that these steps could take the from of an internationally legally binding instrument.”

Egypt believes that such assurances do not only serve the security interests of the non-nuclear weapons states, but also those of the nuclear weapons states themselves, as they provide further guarantees to the former group of states that will doubtlessly aid in furthering non-proliferation objectives. Clearly therefore, there is a need to initiate negotiations on an international instrument to provide these assurances as soon as possible in order to further international peace, security, and stability, and in order to add to the credibility of the NPT.

In addition, Egypt believes that pending the total eliminations of nuclear weapons, the Nuclear Weapons States should take further steps to de-alert their nuclear arsenals. Such a step would help in signaling willingness to take serious measures in altering strategic doctrines relevant to the use of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, the Nuclear Weapons States should undertake not to increase the yield to their nuclear warheads and should also undertake not to develop new types of nuclear weapons including tactical nuclear warheads.
Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to conclude by assuring you that the delegation of Egypt will spare no effort in supporting any serious efforts aimed at eliminating the threat posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons, and by expressing our sincere hope that the current Review Conference will take the necessary and courageous decisions that will rid our world of the threats these weapons pose.

Thank you.