

**Preparatory Committee for the 2010
Review Conference of the Parties to
the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation
of Nuclear Weapons**

NPT/CONF.2010/PC.II/WP.19
29 April 2008

ENGLISH
Original: ARABIC

Second session
Geneva, 28 April-9 May 2008

WORKING PAPER SUBMITTED BY THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

**Substantive issues on the implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation
of Nuclear Weapons**

Compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

1. The Syrian Arab Republic was among the first States to accede to the NPT, which it signed in 1968 in keeping with its conviction that for nuclear weapons to be in the possession of any State in the Middle East or to fall into the hands of some States in the world and not others or of non-governmental or terrorist entities would be a source of major anxiety and pose a major threat not only to the security and peace of the States and peoples of the Middle East region but also of the States and peoples of the entire world.
2. The Syrian Arab Republic affirms its continued compliance with its international obligations under the NPT, and is firmly convinced that this international instrument remains the cornerstone of the international regime for the prevention of vertical and horizontal nuclear proliferation, the linchpin of nuclear disarmament and the international reference text on the right of States parties to access to peaceful applications of nuclear technologies.
3. The Syrian Arab Republic expresses its concern over the failure to implement the Treaty, due, firstly, to the unbalanced manner in which the two main focuses of the Treaty, namely, non-proliferation and disarmament, are addressed - in its view, the two focuses are of equal importance and complement one another - and, secondly, the use of double standards in regard to the third focus, i.e. right of States to benefit from peaceful uses of nuclear technology.

Universalization of the Treaty

4. The Syrian Arab Republic considers that, although all Arab States have become parties to the NPT, the failure to achieve universal adherence to the Treaty in the Middle East until now, as a result of the fact that Israel has not acceded or declared its accession to the NPT and placed its nuclear facilities under comprehensive International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards, is an extremely grave matter for which the States which sit on the Security Council, in particular the United States of America, bear responsibility, as they have not addressed this issue seriously and have thus jeopardized universalization of this international instrument and cast doubt on its capacity to achieve security and peace not only in the States of the region but also at the regional and international levels.

5. The Syrian Arab Republic expresses its concern over international indifference vis-à-vis the request to put pressure on Israel to implement international resolutions.

6. The Syrian Arab Republic stresses the dangerousness of a situation whereby Israel alone has military nuclear capabilities that are not subject to any international supervision, capabilities which have been mentioned in many international resolutions, the first being Security Council resolution 487 (1981), which explicitly calls on Israel to accede to the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards and calls on IAEA to cease providing scientific assistance to Israel. The latest such resolution is General Assembly resolution 62/556 of 15 January 2008, which reaffirms the importance of Israel's accession to the NPT and placement of all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards in realizing the goal of universal adherence to the Treaty. Thus, the international community is called upon to act in a serious manner and apply pressure on Israel to accede, without conditions, reservations or further delay, to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State and to subject all its nuclear facilities to monitoring pursuant to an IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreement.

Nuclear disarmament

7. The Syrian Arab Republic takes the view that the principles set out in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in particular the "13 Practical Steps", set an important standard for nuclear

disarmament which nuclear-weapon States are expected to meet in a serious, systematic and progressive manner, based on a phased timetable, with a view to the complete elimination of their holdings of nuclear weapons under strict and effective international monitoring.

8. The Syrian Arab Republic considers it important to conduct negotiations on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally verifiable and effective treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, as this would be a significant step towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Pending such a treaty, all States should voluntarily declare and abide by a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

Peaceful uses of nuclear energy

9. The Syrian Arab Republic is of the view that one of the main goals of the NPT and of the Statute of IAEA is to encourage the use of peaceful applications of nuclear technology and facilitate exchanges of scientific and technical knowledge, equipment, materials and services for peaceful uses of nuclear energy, which is an inalienable right of all States parties to the Treaty.

10. The Syrian Arab Republic stresses that it is necessary for article 4 of the Treaty to be implemented in a balanced manner, without any discrimination, by all States parties, in particular nuclear-weapon States, and stresses the need for serious and effective measures to realize the objectives of the Treaty and to avoid their being exploited and turned into a discriminatory regime that imposes restrictions on certain States to the advantage of others.

11. The Syrian Arab Republic attaches great importance to the need to strengthen the essential role played by IAEA in promoting and facilitating the transfer of nuclear science and technology to member States in accordance with the Agency's Statute, striking a balance between the Agency's monitoring activities and its activities related to the dissemination of nuclear technology and applications.

Comprehensive IAEA safeguards

12. The Syrian Arab Republic affirms its full compliance with the comprehensive safeguards agreement that it signed with IAEA in 1992 and ratified pursuant to Act No. 5 of 1992,

establishing a national system for accounting and control of nuclear materials and the necessary conditions to allow international IAEA inspectors to carry out their duties effectively in pursuance of the agreement.

13. The Syrian Arab Republic appreciates the important role played by IAEA as the only authority with competence for following up on verification and compliance with its comprehensive safeguards regime, which is a cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime. The Syrian Arab Republic demands that IAEA take action to apply that regime to all States without exception or discrimination and that it assist developing States which have adhered to this agreement to develop nuclear energy and research on peaceful applications of nuclear energy.

14. The Syrian Arab Republic urges all States parties, in particular nuclear-weapon States, to make every effort to achieve universal acceptance of comprehensive safeguards and to avoid the imposition of additional measures and restrictions on non-nuclear-weapon States that actually comply with non-proliferation standards and have rejected the nuclear-weapon option. It furthermore calls on the States parties to refrain from imposing any restrictions on the transfer of nuclear equipment and technology for peaceful purposes to States parties that have signed comprehensive safeguards agreements with IAEA and from imposing further restrictions on the use of this nuclear technology in a manner that is contrary to the spirit of the NPT.

15. The Syrian Arab Republic stresses the importance of distinguishing between legal obligations and voluntary measures taken for the sake of transparency and confidence-building, since failure to observe the technical nature of the Statute of IAEA could undermine the Statute's credibility.

16. The Syrian Arab Republic considers that the full implementation of the resolutions and decisions of the IAEA General Conference on safeguards and verification is vital to improving the safeguards regime as whole. It affirms the necessity of maintaining the confidentiality of information on safeguards in accordance with the IAEA Statute.

Withdrawal from the Treaty

17. The Syrian Arab Republic affirms that States parties have a legitimate and sovereign right to withdraw from the Treaty should they consider that exceptional events will damage their higher national interests.

National legislation to prevent illegal trafficking in radioactive and nuclear materials

18. The competent authorities in the Syrian Arab Republic maintain strict control of land borders and sea and air ports in accordance with national legislation and the regulations in force, with the goal of combating illegal trafficking in radioactive and nuclear materials.

19. The Syrian Arab Republic scrupulously abides with all its relevant international commitments, participating actively in the review of many relevant international treaties and instruments and making constant endeavours to improve domestic legislative frameworks in this regard. The Syrian Arab Republic also abides by the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and has played an active part in many meetings on the establishment of guidelines on the import and export of radioactive sources.

A nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East

20. The Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in the world is an important step towards nuclear disarmament and that it strengthens regional and international peace and security and reinforces the non-proliferation regime.

21. The Syrian Arab Republic has worked since 1987 to turn the Middle East into a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons. In April 2003, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, the Syrian Arab Republic presented an initiative to the Security Council in New York on ridding the Middle East region of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons. At the time, the Syrian Arab Republic declared to the international community that, along with its Arab brothers and the peace-loving States of the world, it would contribute actively to turning the Middle East into a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction. However, the positions of certain influential States in the Security Council at the time did not favour the success of that initiative, which the Syrian Arab Republic resubmitted to the Security Council in December 2003 and which continues to await international conditions more favourable to its adoption.

22. The Syrian Arab Republic again expresses its grave concern over Israel's manifest indifference and intransigence and its refusal to accede, or even to express its intention to accede,

to the NPT and to place all its nuclear facilities under IAEA comprehensive safeguards, a situation which poses a grave threat to regional and international peace and security and could bring about a dangerous and destructive nuclear arms race in the region.

23. The Syrian Arab Republic takes the view that until a nuclear-weapon-free zone has been established in the Middle East all countries must desist from developing, producing, testing or possessing any kinds of nuclear weapon and must not allow them to be present in their territory or territory under their control. The Syrian Arab Republic also takes the view that all States in the region must refrain from taking any action that is contrary to the spirit of the Treaty and all the international resolutions and documents on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

The resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review Conference

24. The Syrian Arab Republic stresses the need for full compliance by all States parties, in particular the States that adopted the 1995 resolution on the Middle East as an integral part of a comprehensive package, with the set of decisions issued by the 1995 Review Conference and entitled “Strengthening the review process of the Treaty”, “Principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament”, “Extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons”, and “Resolution on the Middle East” which has played such a positive role in encouraging all the Arab States to accede to the NPT.

25. The Syrian Arab Republic takes the view that, in addition to the foregoing, all States parties must adhere to the terms of the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, which declared that the 1995 resolution on the Middle East would remain valid until its goals and objectives had been achieved and recognized the resolution as being an essential part of the outcomes of the 1995 Conference.

26. The Syrian Arab Republic calls on the international community, in particular the nuclear-weapon States, to shoulder their responsibilities and do their utmost to identify practical steps to guarantee the full implementation of the resolution on the Middle East and the realization of its objectives. Twelve years have gone by since the adoption of that resolution without a single practical step towards implementing it.

Security assurances

27. The Syrian Arab Republic considers that the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is the total elimination of nuclear weapons. It stresses that unilateral or multilateral security assurances given by nuclear States to non-nuclear States parties to the NPT do not respond to all the needs, concerns and requirements of non-nuclear States, because they are conditional and non-binding and have not been negotiated in an international forum. Therefore, the Syrian Arab Republic stresses the importance of implementing the decision on principles and objectives adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, in order to prioritize the commencement of serious negotiations on the conclusion of an unconditional, non-discriminatory, legally binding international instrument that addresses security assurances issues.

28. The Syrian Arab Republic considers it necessary for nuclear-weapon States to provide comprehensive negotiated security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT on terms to be defined by a future international instrument. Nuclear-weapon States should refrain, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, from the threat or use of force against non-nuclear States and should undertake to implement the relevant United Nations General Assembly resolutions. There is also a need to continue to strengthen cooperation between States and international organizations in order to prohibit, combat and eliminate terrorism in all its forms and manifestations wherever and by whomsoever it is committed.

29. The Syrian Arab Republic takes the view that, in the absence of such an international instrument on the provision of security assurances, all nuclear-weapon States parties and non-nuclear-weapon States parties must remain bound by Security Council resolution 984 (1995), adopted unanimously on 11 April 1995, in which the Council took note, for the first time, of security assurances made by nuclear-weapon States to non-nuclear-weapon States and clarified the measures to be taken to provide assistance to non-nuclear weapon States parties to the NPT should such States be the victim of an act of, or object of a threat of, aggression in which nuclear weapons are used.

Proposed practical steps towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation

30. The Syrian Arab Republic considers that in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the NPT and the goal of the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons, the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons at its second session should recommend the following:

(a) It is important for the international community to understand the deep concern of States in the Middle East about the dangers of Israel's nuclear capabilities, which have developed and expanded free from any form of international supervision, and the need for nuclear-weapon States to bear their responsibilities for promoting universal adherence to the NPT.

(b) The international community should give importance and priority to applying pressure on Israel to accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear State, without any reservations or conditions, and to place all its nuclear facilities under IAEA comprehensive safeguards as a major step along the road to establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

(c) A subsidiary body should be established in the framework of the Main Committee II to examine the question of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and to devise specific practical steps for implementation of the resolution on the Middle East issued at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and of the Final Document of the 2000 Conference, which in turn reaffirms the importance of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East.

(d) Nuclear-weapon States, pursuant to the NPT, must demonstrate genuine political will to take effective practical steps to eliminate and dispose of their nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices under strict international supervision.

(e) Nuclear-weapon States must refrain from imposing technical and commercial restrictions on non-nuclear-weapon States and must give them an opportunity to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in accordance with article 4 of the Treaty.

(f) The authority and role of IAEA in addressing nuclear proliferation issues should be supported. The principle of transparency in the activities of States and their cooperation with it

should be firmly established so that the Agency can carry out its obligations and discharge its tasks with respect to non-proliferation issues and progress towards establishing an effective nuclear disarmament programme.

(g) The Conference on Disarmament should be allowed to adopt an agenda that places nuclear disarmament at the top of its concerns.

(h) Adequate impetus should be given for the implementation of General Assembly resolutions on nuclear disarmament and the activation of United Nations disarmament mechanisms, including the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission.

(i) It is imperative to recognize the importance of article 3 of the Treaty and its relevance to the security and safety of nuclear programmes and verification of their peaceful nature. The international community must call on all States parties, in particular nuclear-weapon States, to refrain from exploiting these issues to impose limitations or restrictions on nuclear technology transfers to other States parties, especially those that have submitted to the IAEA safeguards system, on the pretext of doing so for the sake of the security and safety of these programmes.
