

EGYPT



مصر

The Permanent Mission of Egypt
to the United Nations
New York

بعثة مصر الدائمة
لدى الأمم المتحدة
نيويورك

Statement

by

H.E. Maged Abdelaziz

**Permanent Representative
of
the Arab Republic of Egypt**

before the

First Committee

4 October, 2005

Check Against Delivery

Mr. Chairman,

The 60th session of the General assembly is taking place in an atmosphere that can at best be described as overcast, especially with regard to the issues of disarmament and international security. The current state of affairs augurs ill for the possibility of fulfillment of the commitments & obligations entered into by our states in different multilateral regimes. It opens a door for many states, if not all, to retract their commitments and foretells a very bleak future for posterity.

Since the Final document of the first General Assembly Special Session on Disarmament (SSOD-I) in 1978 established the priorities of the international community in the area of disarmament, with nuclear disarmament at the forefront followed by other weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons, little has been achieved within the international multilateral framework in the three areas. This is notwithstanding some progress at the bilateral level that remains unverifiable at the international level.

Despite the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995, which was part of a comprehensive package known to all of us, there was no tangible progress in dealing with nuclear disarmament, universality of the Treaty was not realized, states parties, particularly the nuclear weapon states, did not exert any meaningful effort to achieve this universality and despite the possession of non-parties of opaque nuclear capabilities and even nuclear weapons, we are actually witnessing increased cooperation between those states and the nuclear weapons states, contrary to its commitments in accordance with the Treaty, in various nuclear activities. This begs a logical question... Are we as nuclear weapon states and as non-nuclear weapon states committed to the faithful implementation of the treaty or not?

What makes it even more difficult to answer this question, especially for us, the non-nuclear weapons states parties to the Treaty, is that we witness desperate efforts on the part of the nuclear weapons states and their allies who benefit from their nuclear umbrella to expand the obligations on the non-nuclear weapons states contained in the Treaty, by restricting states right of withdrawal, by hampering acquisition by non-nuclear weapons states of nuclear materials and technology necessary for the development of their peaceful nuclear programs in exercise of an inalienable right enshrined in the treaty, by application of politicized and multiple standards in addressing suspected cases of non-compliance, by excluding the international multilateral frameworks that can best address these issues and by invoking the necessity of the universal application of the Model Additional Protocol at a time when universality has not been achieved for the NPT or for comprehensive safeguards. All this takes place without the requisite attention to the lessons of past experiences, especially the case of Iraq.

A further destructive tendency against the premises of the NPT is the lack of political-will on the part of the nuclear weapon states to implement the thirteen steps for nuclear disarmament in a multilateral framework including the establishment of a subsidiary body to address nuclear disarmament in the CD, the conclusion of an

internationally verifiable Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) and the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Regrettably, this takes place despite the fact that these thirteen steps, and other measures were endorsed by consensus, that included the nuclear weapon states, in the 2000 NPT Review Conference outcome.

Non-proliferation did not fare much better. Despite the desperate need for progress towards the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East, which lay at the heart of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East that constituted an essential element of the basis on which the NPT was extended indefinitely, as well as the relevant paragraphs of the 2000 NPT final Document, which will remain elusive unless Israel joins the NPT, we only witnessed regression and reneging on the implementation of the commitments regarding the Middle East. These commitments are not only based on the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East but upon others including Security Council Resolution 687 which stated that the elimination of WMD in Iraq is a step towards the establishment of a zone free from all such weapons in the Middle East. Are weapons of mass destruction prohibited for Iraq but justified for others? Have the states concerned fulfilled their Treaty obligations or their obligations under the relevant Security council resolutions in this respect? Did the Security Council implement this part of resolution 687 as it seriously endeavors to ensure the implementation of resolution 1540 through the fulfillment of the commitments of Member States under which?..

In view of all such considerations, we have witnessed the regrettable failure of the 2005 NPT review conference in reaching an agreement aimed at renewing the international commitment we undertook in 1995 and 2000 respectively. Additionally, we have witnessed yet another failure, due to clear differences, of a courageous undertaking to assess and characterize the international handling of disarmament issues in the context of the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly in commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations. However, we must not view these failures as a sign of a collapsing international disarmament regime, but rather as a clear warning message that the regime is on the verge of erosion if we, nuclear and non-nuclear weapon states, fail to take swift action to implement our commitments in a balanced, sincere and objective manner. Luckily, the absence of any substantive result of the 2005 NPT review conference preserved the international consensus reached in 1995, which has been fully reaffirmed in 2000, so as we remain able to build upon such consensus gradually and without change.

We are in dire need for a new vision to address disarmament issues in the multilateral framework, through which we must reaffirm our commitments to such framework and recommit our endeavors to preserve the credibility of the United Nations and our own credibility as Member States. We must reach agreement on the contours of such vision by consensus, or we run the risk of facing a total collapse of the NPT and all collective and international efforts on disarmament, specially if we are to persist on the current track of merely addressing nuclear disarmament through Security Council resolutions, which generally reflect the views of certain parties at the expense of others.

Mr. Chairman,

Conventional weapons assume increasing importance as it comes in our priorities after the weapons of mass destruction. In this context, Egypt attaches great importance to the direct implications of conventional weapons, particularly small arms and light weapons, on inter-state and intra-state armed conflicts, particularly in Africa. We recall our discussions during the Second Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects convened in July 2005, and find it essential to reaffirm the responsibility of all States to fully implement the United Nations Programme of Action at the national level, as well as the responsibility of the international community to provide the financial and technical support, particularly to developing countries, in order to enable those countries to fulfill the objectives of the Programme of Action.

In this context, Egypt welcomes and looks forward to the completion of the ongoing efforts aimed at enabling Member States to mark and trace, in a timely manner, illicit small arms and light weapons. To this end, Egypt contributed to the successful conclusion of the work of the Open-Ended Working Group. The said International instrument is before the General Assembly during this session and should become one of the necessary elements for the success of the upcoming conference in 2006 on the review of the Programme of Action.

Mr. Chairman,

International efforts in the area of disarmament can not succeed unless we address its full range of issues in the multilateral framework rather than in the bilateral framework or within the Security Council. Our efforts must also be addressed in accordance with the priorities we set and agreed during the SSOD-I ... We can not accept the arguments that "the transformation in the political and strategic landscape" requires a change in those priorities, nor can we accept the argument that the security situation and the international balance of power mandate a change in the way we envisage the issues pertaining to disarmament. This is certainly a recipe for failure in implementing what we have previously agreed.

On that basis, Egypt will always stand by any collective effort aimed at addressing disarmament issues in a multilateral framework, and will endeavor to strengthen the role of multilateral agreements in the area of disarmament with a view to realizing the peace and stability our world is aspiring for.

Thank You, Mr. Chairman.