



STATEMENT

of the League of Arab States at the First Preparatory Committee for
the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on Non-
Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Delivered by Mr. Wael AI-Assad
Director of Multilateral Relations
League of Arab States

Check against delivery

Vienna: 30 April - 11 May 2007

Statement of the League of Arab States at the First Preparatory Committee for
the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on Non-Proliferation
of Nuclear Weapons

Vienna: 30 April- 11 May 2007

Mr. Chairman,

1. It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the League of Arab States (LAS), to join those who preceded me in congratulating you on your election as chairman of this preparatory Committee. We are fully confident that your vast expertise and wise steering of the proceedings of the committee will lead us all towards achieving the desired goals.

Mr. Chairman,

2. Since the end of the 2000 Review conference, challenges and obstacles have hindered progression of international Forums relevant to nuclear disarmament and arms control, to the extent that the efficiency and credibility of our institutions were seriously questioned. Developments at the international level during the last five years led many States to doubt the possibility for any real progress in these fields, and has shaken their confidence in the whole non-proliferation regime.
3. Review conferences, undoubtedly, bear the responsibility of providing clear outcomes and practical mechanisms that would restore confidence in the Treaty on the NonProliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), assure us that the efforts exerted in this field over the last three decades were not wasted, and that the main objectives of the Treaty were not diverted to serve the interest of some parties at the expense of others. This lack of confidence in the effectiveness of the NPT and Review Conference is the product of many factors that need to be addressed. Among these factors are:
First: the NPT was founded on the basis of the interdependency among its three main components, namely nonproliferation, disarmament, and cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the right of non-nuclear States to obtain and develop this technology for peaceful uses.
Therefore it was unavoidable that that any lack of progress in anyone of these areas would hamper progress in the others. This is why many States were concerned that attempts are made to achieve progress in the area of horizontal nonproliferation while no progress whatsoever in the area of disarmament to eliminate nuclear weapons in a verifiable and irreversible manner. Nuclear States still maintain huge arsenals of nuclear weapons, and some are developing new generations of it, some are declaring that the option of using these weapons remains part of their defense policies and security strategies, even against nonnuclear States. Though the 2000 Review Conference expressed concern over these policies, yet no real progress was achieved in the area of nuclear disarmament.

Secondly: this failure to achieve the universality of the treaty remains an insurmountable obstacle. The original inherent proposition is that joining the NPT, provides non-nuclear States with security guaranties that its neighboring States would also join the Treaty and would not abuse nuclear technology for armament purposes. This guarantee is missing in the Middle East as long as Israel refuses to join the NPT and refuses to place all its nuclear installations under IAEA safeguards while it maintains the so called ambiguity policy.

Although, all the Arab states, as a result of the adoption of the Middle East Resolution in the 1995 Review and Extension conference, have agreed to the indefinite extension of the Treaty and became, without exception, parties to the Treaty, yet Israel continues, under various pretexts, to refuse to join the NPT, in spite of the weak calls by the International Forums, particularly the Review Conferences, on Israel to join the Treaty.

4. This situation has compromised the security supposed to be provided by the Treaty, and has contributed to increasing tension in the Middle East. We do not believe that it is in the interest of the non-proliferation regime that some States, due to this situation, would feel alarmed and doubt the wisdom of their decision to accept the indefinite extension of the Treaty in 1995 or even being party to it. This feeling will spread as long as there are States not party to the Treaty that are being rewarded through technological cooperation by States that obtain advanced nuclear technology.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The 1995 Review and Extension Conference adopted the Middle East Resolution, and in 2000 Review Conference considered this Resolution as part of the review process until it was fully implemented. Therefore it is the responsibility of the three nuclear States that introduced the Resolution, to propose practical mechanism for implementing it.
6. The dangers of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East is undoubtedly a source of major concern to the Arab States, particularly in light of the lack of any progress towards implementing international resolutions relevant to transforming the Middle East into a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (NWFZ). The Council of the LAS at the Summit level, in its last Summit in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia last March, reviewed the implications of these issues. The Arab leaders and Head of States expressed extreme concern over these negative developments, especially the lack of positive response to the Arab initiatives of creating a NWFZ in the Middle East. The Arab Summit decided that the Arab policies regarding this issue requires comprehensive revision and pragmatic re-evaluation under the current adverse conditions and in light of the international silence over Israel's possession of nuclear weapons.
7. Since the mid seventies, the Arab States have adopted the initiative to make the Middle East a zone free of nuclear weapons. Although the initiative received moral support and was greatly welcomed in various international fora, without any progress in implementation. The main responsibility for implementation remains with the Review Conference.
8. The LAS adopted a clear stance on the issue of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East and how it should be handled. The LAS has stressed repeatedly that its member States

oppose the acquisition of these weapons by any State in the region without exception, and believe that the proper approach to this issue is to handle proliferation through a regional approach. The present approach of dealing with the problem on a state by state basis is selective and biased, and will only lead to the erosion of confidence in the possibility of applying one set of standards on all States of the Region.

Mr. Chairman,

9. Many States believe that the 2010 Review Conference, particularly after the failure of the 2005 Review Conference in adopting any positive outcomes, is at a crossroads. Either we manage to face up to the challenges and achieve the necessary balance, or we will end up with a non-proliferation regime that is invalid and void of any meaningful substance. The LAS is confident that the majority of the states party to the NPf are aware of the extend of the challenges ahead, and believe that multilateralism is the only possible way ahead to provide a credible collective security environment worldwide.

Mr. Chairman,

10. allow me to conclude by thanking the committee for providing this opportunity for regional organizations to speak on issues that gravely impact its work and affect regional and international security.

Thank you