



Statement of the Arab Republic of Egypt
to the Conference on Disarmament
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Delivered by

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Thank you, Mr. President,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on assuming your responsibility as president of the Conference on Disarmament at the beginning of this year's session, and to assure you of my delegation's full support.

I would also like to extend my words of appreciation to the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva and Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, and the Conference Secretariat, who continue to support the work of the Conference during such difficult times.

I would like to reaffirm Egypt's continued support for the conference's presidency in its constructive efforts seeking to adopt a comprehensive and balanced work program for the Conference on Disarmament, and to express my country's aspiration for the success of the 2022 session in restoring the effective role of the conference, and to play its role that has long been pivotal in negotiating international treaties and agreements in the field of disarmament.

Mr. President,

The beginning of the 2022 session of the Conference on Disarmament takes place in an extremely fragile, if not deteriorating global security environment, in which progress on disarmament in all its aspects is more urgent than ever. We are faced with heightened and renewed tensions among States, challenges to existing norms, and technological advancements that provide opportunities, challenges, and risks. Addressing them all through building on the existing architecture and the development of new disarmament measures should be the key focus of the 2022 session.

Egypt believes that the Conference on Disarmament is at the center of the disarmament machinery. It is the single multilateral disarmament body, with a distinct mandate of negotiating legally binding disarmament instruments. It should be reinvigorated and enabled to fulfill its role as envisaged by SSOD1. The prolonged stalemate at the CD should not persist and certainly should not restrain us from exerting our utmost efforts to achieve a substantive breakthrough this year.

Mr. President

Egypt's view on the top priorities of the work of the Conference remains unchanged and is in line with the core four agenda items of the Conference.

First: Nuclear disarmament remains the foremost priority that should be pursued in implementation of article VI of the NPT.

Second: We Believe that the conference should start negotiations on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable legally binding instrument banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The aspired instrument should fulfil both nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation objectives. This can never be properly done if fissile material stocks are excluded from its scope. An instrument that only bans future production is hardly the objective since it detracts and subdues the disarmament objective.

Third: We firmly believe that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only guarantee against their use or threat of use, pending the achievement of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, there persists an urgent need to conclude a universal, unconditional, irrevocable legally binding instrument for effectively assuring non-nuclear weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under all circumstances.

Fourth: Special attention should be accorded to the development and strengthening of the existing legal regime for promoting and maintaining outer space for peaceful activities and preserving its nature as a common heritage of humankind.

The essential role of outer space technologies in all human activities, and the extreme vulnerability of the outer space environment, make it necessary to act now to prevent outer space from turning into a domain for conflict and arms race. A legally-binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer-space is significant, especially taking into consideration the alarming trends on the possible weaponization of outer space and the development by several states of anti-satellite capabilities.

In this vein, it is important to recognize the most recent process that was established by the General Assembly resolution 75/36 on “reducing space threats through norms, rule and principles of responsible behavior”, Egypt voted in favor of this resolution on the understanding that it represents a step in the right direction towards the development of rules that could pave the way to the necessary legally binding instruments needed to address threats to space systems from a comprehensive point of view that addresses terrestrial and space-based threats to space systems.

It is also important to highlight that Egypt is a sponsor of three of the five resolutions dedicated to the question of Space security at the first committee of the UN General Assembly. Egypt also has been submitting for years, alternately with Sri Lanka, a resolution to the United Nations General Assembly on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer-Space. We view these resolutions and other important initiatives including PPWT, that was presented to the CD, as complementary rather than contradictory. We sincerely hope that the polarization of the issue of Space security comes to an end. We believe the CD is perfectly situated to play a harmonizing role in this respect.

Mr. President,

Egypt looks forward to the success of the 10th Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Egypt emphasizes that the success of the NPT is inextricably linked to its ability to adopt a balanced outcome document that reaffirms past commitments and provides for its implementation in a timely manner, especially with regards to the implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Weapons of Mass destruction: a cornerstone of the indefinite extension of the NPT.

On a brighter note, Egypt wishes to highlight the successful convening of the session of the UN Conference to establish a Middle East Zone Free of nuclear weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, held in New York last November.

The Conference consensually agreed on several milestones, including the adoption of the rules of procedure of the conference with an understanding that all decisions will be adopted by consensus. Moreover, the second session adopted a consensual report on its work. Furthermore, the conference agreed on establishing a working committee to continue deliberations on the establishment of the zone during the intersessional period. These major achievements represent an important step forward in the right direction.

The deliberations and the successful outcome of the Conference proves without any doubt that this process is an inclusive, non-discriminatory and a promising process that aims to address the relevant concerns of all States in the region. We therefore invite skeptics to reassess positions and factor in the merits as they have transpired.

This process asserts and reconfirms its ability to provide a reliable and genuine mechanism to operationalize and implement the 1995 resolution and the 2010 action plan. Egypt believes that this consensus-based process could significantly contribute to strengthening the international nuclear disarmament regime and accelerate reaching a nuclear-weapons-free-world.

Mr. President,

We are today one step closer on the long path towards the objective of ridding our region of all weapons of mass destruction and we expect the international community's support for this process.

Mr. President,

Egypt's position on the participation of non-member states has been consistent throughout the years, this position is founded on our firm belief that the Conference on Disarmament is a technical body that is mandated with multilateral disarmament negotiations, we believe that the participation of nonmember states contributes positively to the work of the Conference.

Egypt values your commitment to start substantive work at the conference. For its part, Egypt will strive throughout this year's session in its national capacity and as part of the P6+2 to work constructively with you and all members towards the achievement of the objectives of the Conference on Disarmament, which are neither impossible to attain nor hindered by any obstacles that cannot be overcome.

I thank you Mr. President.