

Statement by
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Before the High-Level Segment
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Unofficial Translation

President of the Conference on Disarmament

Ladies and Gentlemen, Ambassadors and Representatives of the Member States of the Conference on Disarmament

Allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. I also wish to express my country's appreciation of the efforts of the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva and Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, which contribute to providing support for the work of the Conference. I would like to reiterate Egypt's unrelenting support to the presidency of the conference and its constructive efforts to adopt a comprehensive and balanced Program of Work for the Conference on Disarmament. I also wish to express my country's aspiration for the success of the 2021 session in restoring the effective role of the Conference.

Mr. president,

The status of stalemate from which the Conference on Disarmament has suffered for more than two decades, harms its credibility and its role as a platform for negotiation of international disarmament treaties and agreements. In this context, Egypt expresses its full support for holding the fourth special session on disarmament, SSOD4, at the earliest opportunity, to conduct a comprehensive review of the structure of the multilateral disarmament system.

Mr. president,

Despite repeated calls by Egypt and numerous members of the international community to call for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and to realize one of the chief pillars of the NPT, the concept of deterrence continues to prevail by the Nuclear Weapons States in complete disregard for what was stipulated in Article VI of the NPT after more than 50 years of its entry into force which reflects that those whom have been pushing for the indefinite extension of the treaty were aiming to legitimize the possession of their nuclear arsenals. Moreover, the failure of implementing article VI of the treaty is considered as a non-compliance of the provisions of the treaty.

Egypt continues to express its concern about the absence of a legally binding international treaty on Negative Security Assurances. Whereas, the argument advanced by some nuclear states, which is based on the fact that the security environment and the international political situation are not conducive to moving forward with the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, represents an inaccurate and unconvincing logic. On the contrary, moving forward towards nuclear disarmament in itself is a key element to creating a less dangerous security environment and a more stable international situation.

From this standpoint, Egypt calls on Nuclear States to shoulder their responsibilities at once, in order to fulfill their obligations to completely disarm their nuclear weapons, and to take steps forward to achieve this goal. Moreover, Egypt is affirming its support for the efforts seeking to start negotiations on an international treaty banning the production of

fissile materials, which shouldn't be limited to the future production of these materials but includes also their existing stock.

Egypt also pays special attention to developing and strengthening the existing legal system to enhance and preserve the outer space exclusively for peaceful activities, and to conserve its nature as a common heritage of mankind. For many years, Egypt, in rotation with Sri Lanka, continued to submit a resolution to the United Nations General Assembly to prevent an arms race in outer space. The negotiation of a binding legal instrument to prevent an arms race in outer space is of great importance, especially in light of the growing worrying trends about the possibility of weaponization of outer space and the development of anti-satellite capabilities by several countries.

Mr. president,

The Middle East region is considered as an area marred with instability both regionally and internationally, this is further exacerbated by the existence of a non-party state to the NPT. We recall the Outcomes of the NPT Review Conferences of 1995, 2000 and 2010 which call on Israel's - the only Middle Eastern country still outside the Treaty - to quickly accede to the Treaty and to place all its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive safeguards agreements system of the International Atomic Energy Agency, thereby contributing to the maintenance of peace and security and the maintenance of stability for all the peoples of the region.

Mr. president,

Egypt affirms its keenness to continue constructive and active participation in the Conference on Disarmament and looks forward to sharing more contributions during the various meetings of the disarmament agenda this year. In this context, Egypt refers in particular to the NPT Review Conference scheduled to be held in New York in August 2021. We look forward to a successful review conference and a comprehensive and balanced outcome dealing with the three pillars in an equal manner in addition to reaffirming the political commitment to establish a Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons in the Middle East and building on the outcome of the first round of the UN Conference on establishing a Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East. The UN Conference has proved that it can serve as a practical venue to freely arrive to a legally binding treaty to establish the zone in a consensual manner. Egypt calls upon all Member States of the region and all concerned parties to participate in the second round of the conference that is scheduled to be held in New York in November 2021.

Thank you, Mr. President.