



Permanent Mission of Israel to the UN
GENEVA

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Statement by

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Organizations

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Mr. President,

At the outset, please allow me to thank you for your kind words of welcoming me and as this is the first time I take the floor under your presidency, please allow me to congratulate you and express our sincere confidence in your able leadership to make this first session of the CD in 2021 a success. Let me assure you, Mr. President, of my delegation's full cooperation and support throughout your presidency.

Mr. President, dear colleagues,

2020 has been a year full of unexpected and unprecedented challenges due to the COVID19 crisis that affected the entire world including the multilateral world and our work in the CD. I would like to congratulate the previous P6 members for their constructive cooperation, efforts, flexibility and commitment that allowed meetings to take place, even during the height of a global pandemic.

While science has already produced the vaccine, the world is still racing to vaccinate, and multilateralism continues to be challenged by health restrictions. We look forward to cooperating with the incoming P6 in order to conduct our important work with patience and caution.

Israel values the CD and its function as the single multilateral negotiation forum for non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament. The CD remains a singular forum, which includes all of the states that should participate in such negotiations. In our view, this is what will ensure that the outcome will be meaningful and firmly based in reality.



One should seriously consider the implications and disadvantages stemming from the creation of independent processes outside the established disarmament architecture. These new disarmament measures might fail to give due regard to the security and stability context and might not engage all relevant participants.

In addition, a non-inclusive process might forge agreements more quickly, yet it runs the risk of depleted outcomes and a more divisive disarmament world.

Now is the time to reflect on the mechanisms we have previously established and verify that countries are fulfilling their obligations and complying with relevant mechanisms. We should also take the time to deepen our understanding of new technologies and the way they might affect our work. The CD was created with a view that member states have different individual security interests that should not be cast aside.

Mr. President

Unfortunately, we continue to witness a worrisome escalation in the realm of arms control and non-proliferation. In this regard, the Middle East is still struggling with chronic lack of compliance with arms control norms and principles. This culture of noncompliance and disregard for international obligations and norms is regrettably very common and dangerous in our region.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in itself does not provide a remedy for the unique security challenges of the region, let alone the repeated violations of the Treaty by some of its member states. Four out of the five cases of serious violations of the NPT took place in the Middle East since the entry into force of the Treaty.

Surface-to-surface missiles and rockets, their related technologies, know-how and production processes, have been proliferated and transferred to terrorist organizations, in complete disregard for United Nations Security Council resolutions, the sovereignty of the involved states and the stability of the region as a whole.

Over the years, the Islamic republic of Iran has been violating its nuclear obligations as numerous reported by the IAEA. Iran's clandestine undeclared nuclear activities remains a serious cause of concern. By now, its violations in regard to enrichment, stockpiling and R&D are so extensive that they have completely rendered Iran's obligations meaningless. In addition, Iranian arms, some of which are of strategic importance, are used by terrorists and armed militias and threaten all Middle East countries, including Israel. Iran also attempts to destabilize the region by using every possible tool at its disposal, including terrorism and the use of missile and rocket attacks against its neighbors, doing so from the territory of other countries in the region, namely Syria and Iraq. Iran's support for terrorist organizations, which includes supplying weapons, financial and political support, as well as military training, contradict numerous UNSC resolutions.

There is an urgent need to focus on the implementation, compliance and verification of the obligations of states. The international community cannot react with indifference when states foster a culture of non-compliance. There is no place for double standards.

Mr. President

The use of chemical weapons by states in the Middle East, against their own population and against neighboring countries, has occurred five times since the Second World War. These events were a clear violation of the Geneva Protocol of 1925, which set the norm prohibiting the use of chemical and biological weapons, a



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Protocol Israel has signed and ratified. Furthermore, two additional cases of member states from the Middle East violating the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) are still in question and need to be further investigated. In April 2020 we witnessed the first report issued by the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) of the OPCW. The report attributed responsibility for three different chemical attacks on civilians in the spring of 2017 to the Syrian government. The report calls on the Syrian government to cooperate with the OPCW and the international community in rectifying the gaps and discrepancies in its declaration on chemical weapons, and to take full responsibility and accountability for its actions in violation of its obligations under the CWC and on the destruction of its chemical weapon arsenal. It is vital that the international community remain vigilant in dealing with the challenge of Syria's non-compliance, in order to prevent further violations in the future.

In conclusion Mr. President,

We encourage countries to refrain from unjustified actions that are based on false comparisons and discourage any attempt to politicize our discussion at the CD.

Israel hopes that members of the CD will be able to bridge their differences for a productive way forward. My delegation will continue to contribute constructively and assess with an open mind any suggestions that will be presented.

The CD has served the international community well in the past and we are confident that it has much to contribute in the future. We must work together and try to find an appropriate balance between the desirable and the possible.

I thank you,