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Disarmament Commission

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Agenda item 4

Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons

Working paper submitted by the States members of the League of Arab States

1. Disarmament and international security issues can be sustainably addressed only through multilaterally agreed solutions, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. All Member States must therefore abide by their individual and shared commitments to foster multilateral cooperation.
2. Instead of bringing about regional and international peace and security, the possession, transfer, acquisition and development of nuclear weapons will increase instability. The total, complete and definitive elimination of nuclear weapons is the only way to prevent the threat of use or use of those weapons.
3. The Conference on Disarmament, the Disarmament Commission and the First Committee of the General Assembly play a key role in multilateral efforts to promote disarmament, in accordance with the mandate established at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in 1978 and at which it was affirmed that nuclear disarmament measures have the highest priority.
4. There are deep concerns over the continued stagnation of the United Nations disarmament machinery, in particular the Conference on Disarmament, which is the sole international forum for multilateral negotiations on disarmament. In this regard, practical steps should be taken to revitalize the disarmament machinery. To achieve this objective, States are urged to demonstrate flexibility and the necessary political will.
5. It is important to reaffirm that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Action should be taken to strengthen its implementation and ensure its universality.
6. In addition, it is relevant to recall the International Court of Justice advisory opinion of 8 July 1996, concerning the legality of the threat of use of nuclear weapons, in which the Court found that there exists an obligation to pursue, in good faith, and bring to conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament, in all its aspects and under strict and effective international control.



7. Efforts made towards voluntary reductions in the number of nuclear warheads are welcomed; however, they cannot be a substitute for nuclear disarmament efforts aimed at the total and complete elimination of those weapons. Therefore, the relevant legal obligations and commitments must be upheld.
8. It is important to highlight both General Assembly resolution [68/32](#) and its subsequent resolutions entitled “Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament”, as well as the declaration by the General Assembly of 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, and its decision to convene a United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament, to review the progress made in this regard.
9. The Conference on Disarmament, as the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, should be urged to adopt, in accordance with the request of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, a comprehensive and balanced programme of work that shall include the commencement of negotiations on legally binding instruments.
10. Universalizing the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and facilitating its entry into force are important. States that have yet to ratify the Treaty, in particular nuclear-weapon States and those that are non-parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and bear a fundamental responsibility in that regard, should be encouraged to do so.
11. The vitality of the international process with respect to the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, which was highlighted in the final outcome document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and crowned with the adoption of General Assembly resolutions [72/30](#), entitled “Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons”, and [71/47](#), entitled “Humanitarian pledge for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons”, should be underlined.
12. The Arab Group welcomes and supports the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons by the United Nations conference, on 7 July 2017, to negotiate a legally binding instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons and leading towards their total elimination. The Arab Group hopes that the entry into force of the Treaty, on 22 January 2021, will be essential in achieving the objective of the total elimination of nuclear weapons.
13. It is essential to reaffirm the inalienable right of States Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as provided for in the Treaty. Any attempt to restrict or limit this inalienable right, while privileging those who are non-parties to the Treaty, should be rejected.
14. While it is emphasized that the national policies implemented by States to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be respected, no steps or measures should be taken that could hamper or negatively affect international cooperation with those States relating to peaceful technologies, as long as the States remain committed to the safeguards agreements concluded with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It should be affirmed that the Agency is the authority with the sole responsibility for verifying the compliance of States with obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty and that the Agency has a statutory mandate in furthering safeguarded nuclear disarmament.
15. States should express their utmost support for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free-zones throughout the world, in particular in the Middle East. The establishment of the zones would strengthen efforts towards nuclear disarmament, enhance the security of the concerned States and bring us closer to our overarching

goal, namely the realization and preservation of regional and international peace and security.

16. The establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is a collective responsibility. The resolution on the Middle East that was adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, concerning the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, represents the principle and central pillar of the Treaty's indefinite extension package, which remains valid until its objectives are fulfilled.

17. It is notable to recall that, in this context and during the most recent Review Conference, held at the United Nations in New York in 2015, the Arab States made constructive efforts to reach a way forward on the Middle East, including by presenting new practical ideas, contained in the Arab working paper, which was adopted by the Non-Aligned Movement. Regrettably, such a positive approach did not achieve its objective owing to the consensus-blocking committed by three States, two of which were depositary States of the Treaty, which led to the complete obstruction of international will and the draft final document.

18. The Arab Group supports General Assembly decision 73/546, entitled "Convening a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction", and welcomes the successful convening of the first session of the Conference under the presidency of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the second session under the presidency of the State of Kuwait, and endorses its outcomes, including, inter alia, the adoption of the rules of procedure and establishing an informal working committee. The Arab Group urges all invited Parties to the Conference in the Middle East, without exception, to actively participate in the conference and conduct negotiations in good faith to bring to a conclusion a treaty establishing such a zone.

19. The failure of the 2015 Review Conference and the lack of agreement on any decision regarding the Middle East pose a strong challenge for all States and require States to redouble collective efforts in order to implement the resolution on the Middle East of 1995 and to achieve and maintain a world free of nuclear weapons. The constructive participation in and the success of the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to be held from 1 to 26 August 2022 in New York, depends on it. In this regard, the importance of the demands and practical proposals contained in the working paper submitted by the Non-Aligned Movement to the tenth Review Conference on the Middle East, as contained in document [NPT/CONF.2020/WP.41](#), and of their full endorsement and implementation, is urgently required.

20. IAEA shall halt the technical programmes provided to Israel. Cooperation with Israel in all nuclear fields should be suspended until it accedes to the Non-Proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon State and places all its nuclear facilities under the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards System. Those steps are a precondition necessary to promote the universality, credibility and effectiveness of the Treaty.