

2012 Conference on the Establishment of a Zone  
Free of Nuclear Weapons and all other  
Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle  
East:  
the Way Forward

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## Introduction

- The topic of nuclear weapon free zones is of utmost importance given the transformative changes underway in the political landscape of the region.
- I intend to discuss three main issues: first, I will discuss the current situation as it is now, second, I will reflect some views on how we should establish a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East, and third, provide some concluding remarks.

## First: The Current Situation

- The “Arab Spring” has without a doubt changed existing fundamental dynamics and has had significant implications on the political and security settings in the Middle East.
- Public opinion is already playing a much more significant and prominent role in Arab societies and will have a fundamental role in the formulation of disarmament and security issues.
- The establishment of a zone can positively contribute to regional and international non-proliferation and disarmament efforts as well as improving the overall security environment in the Middle East.

## First: The Current Situation (cont)

- It would be beneficial then to reflect on the treaties of other regional nuclear weapon free zones such as the Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Pelindaba, and Bangkok Treaties. Despite the contextual differences between these zones and the Middle East, these treaties nevertheless can provide us with guidance when it comes to formulating the technical, institutional, and scientific dimensions related to a weapon free zone.
- The IAEA Forum on "Experience of Possible Relevance to the Creation of a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East" held in Vienna by the IAEA November of last year was useful in this regard. Several constructive proposals could be taken into consideration such as taking stock of the importance of declaratory policy, in particular, declarations of good intentions, and identifying specific and practical confidence building measures.

## Second: The Way Forward; the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East

- It is imperative following the constructive report of the facilitator at the first session of the Prepcom, that he and his team intensify consultations with participating states in order to finalize the agenda, modalities and rules of procedure of the conference. Furthermore, there should be an announcement of the dates of the conference, in order to enable appropriate preparation by participating States, finalize the Conference's structure, and prepare the necessary background documentation.
- The Conference should launch a sustained and serious process leading to the establishment of the Zone, and involving concrete steps and measures to be taken within specific time-frames, and linked to the successive sessions of the Preparatory Committee of the 2015 Review Process of the Treaty.

## Second: The Way Forward; the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East (cont)

- There is a need to enter directly into a phase of substantive and procedural preparation for the 2012 Conference. There is a need to form a mechanism for substantive and procedural preparation for the 2012 Conference and follow-up of progress.
- There should be preparation for how the issues of the agenda, modalities, rules of procedure, verification and compliance should be addressed. The conference should cover the different properties of the Zone such as geographical area, prohibitions, and entry into force.
- The free zone in the Middle East could contain the following technical provisions:

## Second: The Way Forward; the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East (cont)

- Dismantling and destroying existing or remaining nuclear weapons capabilities, facilities, and devices under international verification mechanisms.
- Renouncing nuclear weapons through refraining from conducting indigenous development and activities related to nuclear weapons.
- Prohibiting stationing of any nuclear explosive devices on the zone.
- Prohibiting nuclear explosive testing in the zone.
- Using nuclear materials and facilities for peaceful purposes only.
- Placing all nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards.
- Establishing the necessary relevant institutions and mechanisms/entities to uphold such a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and address the issue of verification to identify the role of the IAEA and other relevant organizations within such a zone.

## Second: The Way Forward; the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East (cont)

- As for the biological dimension, Egypt was among the leading nations to sign the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention on the 10th of April, 1972. The Convention remains a primary multilateral instrument that serves as the foundation for biological weapons disarmament.
- Egypt has persistently been in the lead in the call for a world free of all wmd's. There is a need to promote international cooperation, assistance, and exchange in the field of biological sciences and technology for peaceful purposes in accordance with Article X of the Convention.
- Given the rapid advances and developments in the field of biological science, it will be pertinent for the Conference to consider measures that could strengthen the effectiveness of the Convention.
- Recent advances in science and technology such as in the fields of synthetic biology, systems biology, delivery technology, nanotechnology, and neuroscience require measures to ensure that such scientific advances would not be misused.



## Second: The Way Forward; the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East (cont)

- The participation in the Middle East Conference should be inclusive. The conference should include Israel, Iran, and the members of the League of Arab States, as well as the nuclear weapon states and other relevant international organizations such as the IAEA, the OPCW, BTWC, CTBTO.
- The Conference and the follow on steps should be inclusive to allow a more genuine, candid, and necessary interaction about nuclear disarmament, dismantlement, nuclear roll-back, transparency, accountability, and verification.
- The 2010 Action Plan recognized the important role played by civil society in contributing to implementation of the 1995 Resolution and encourages all efforts in this regard.

### Third: Conclusion

- Key successes in abolishing nuclear weapon programs included South Africa's historic decision to dismantle its nuclear weapons and join the nonproliferation treaty; decisions by Brazil and Argentina to roll back their nuclear programs and create a bilateral verification agency; and the decisions by Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine to transfer nuclear weapons back to Russia after they seceded from the Soviet Union.
- Egypt has taken steps within the framework of the Arab League towards the implementation of the 1995 Resolution and the 2010 fourth Action Plan, including meetings of the Committee of Senior Officials from MFA's and the Secretariat to prepare for the participation of all Arab States in the Conference.
- The importance of Israel's accession to the NPT and the placement of all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards

### Third: Conclusion (cont)

- It is essential also for Iran and the IAEA to intensify their dialogue aiming at an urgent resolution of all outstanding substantive issues for the purpose of providing clarifications regarding the outstanding issues.
- It is imperative for all countries concerned to realize how dramatically the regional context has changed. This in turn, requires modifications in the behavior and approach of many.
- There is a special responsibility on the nuclear-weapon States, especially the Depositary States that co-sponsored the 1995 Resolution, to implement the Resolution. The implementation of the 2010 fourth Action Plan is a collective responsibility.



**Thank you**