First Committee on Disarmament

Speech of Egypt: Right of Reply

October 7

EGYPT: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, maintaining what we hope will not continue to be a tradition of disregarding international consensus and isolating itself from international regimes and efforts to promote nuclear disarmament, nuclear nonproliferation and the realization of regional security in the Middle East, the delegation of Israel again demonstrated here today in their statement this morning their persistent attempts to challenge the existing global consensus on the unsustainability of the nuclear situation in the Middle East.

Israel referred to the two Middle East resolutions that my country presents and claimed that tabling the draft resolution entitled, "The Risk of Nuclear Proliferation in the Middle East" represents a declaration by its sponsoring states to alienate Israel. I wish to correct this, Mr. Chairman, by very clearly declaring that a simple look at that resolution would clearly clarify it is not a declaration but rather an invitation that has been on the table for many years and has continued to be ignored by Israel to our great regret.

However, we still invite Israel to take the actions the resolution supported by a vast majority of the representatives of the international community that Israel should take in order to promote the regional security, Israel itself has criticized in its statement this morning.

Israel found it surprising that Egypt calls Israel to join the NPT while it has not ratified the Pelindaba Treaty on a nuclear weapon free zone in Africa or the chemical weapons convention. I would just wish to invite the delegation of Israel to take a look at our statement read here by the Permanent Representative of Egypt, Tuesday morning. What I can very clearly quote something that can take away any surprise.

Let me quote, Mr. Chairman, from our statement circulated here. "Israel's persistence not to join the NPT as a nonnuclear weapon state remains a significant obstacle facing the accession of Egypt to the two conventions and to ratification of the CTBT. Despite Egypt's support for the objectives and principles of the three instruments (the instruments referred to here are the CWC, the BWC and the CTBT), since that would further widen the existing gap between the commitments of state's parties to the NPT which implement all their treaty obligations and the sole state outside the NPT in our region," which is obviously Israel.

Mr. Chairman, I also wish in this regard to make a brief comment on the repeated reference by Israel to the achievement of comprehensive regional peace as a condition to move forward on regional security issues. And we just want to question how can that be possible while policies persist conducted by Israel that actually do not help the peace process? And let me simply refer to ongoing settlement activities, for example, that still represent a very serious hurdle. We in the region are collectively trying to work with to address. How can we make then the peace process in this regard, the condition for further moving on regional security?

Regarding Israel's stipulation in clearest terms, which they made today, regarding the action steps adopted by consensus in May at the 2010 NPT Review Conference regarding the implementation of the 1995 Resolution in the Middle East. Indeed, the 2010 NPT Review Conference mandated by consensus the Secretary General of the United Nations to convene a conference in consultation with the NPT Repository States and states of the region in 2012 in order to address and move forward and start negotiation on a zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

The Conference represents an unprecedented opportunity not only to Arab states and Iran, but also to Israel. We invite Israel to again refrain from any misunderstanding that would allow Israel to miss this opportunity. We very clearly declare our full will of very strong cooperation with all involved parties to make sure that the Conference of 2010 -- the conference is held successfully and it is paving the way forward for transforming our regional security setting.

If this is the case and Israel decides to strongly engage in this regard, I think many of the concerns reflected in the Israeli statement would be addressed. I can just mention not only the accession of Egypt to the CWC as Israel -- and of course, Israel would assumingly also do so. And not only Israel's concern with its adherence to the MTCR because the resolution and the outcome on the Middle East in 2012 actually has a very comprehensive mandate -- a very balanced and comprehensive one. It also addresses not only nuclear, but also chemical, biological and means of delivery.

Israel would thus manage to address most of its concerns, all its concerns in one regional forum which we definitely would wish to see them do. If this is the case, Mr. Chairman, the delegation of Egypt will be glad to refrain from tabling along with its Arab colleagues, members of the League of Arab States the resolution on the Risk of Nuclear Proliferation in the Middle East.

Having said that, Mr. Chairman, we look forward that this explanation and again renewed invitation would not go unheeded by Israel. We look forward that this would perhaps encourage Israel to take the necessary actions in order to promote regional security based on security for all and rather than building a security regime that is based on undermining the security of others. The continuation of an Israel nuclear program is certainly, Mr. Chairman, going to sooner or later promote nuclear arms races in our region that will not serve neither the Israeli security nor our own security. We invite Israel to move forward along with us. We in Egypt have an incredible record with commitments we have undertaken. We have decided long ago to lead by example, to practice what we preach, and we invite to follow suit. It is certainly worthwhile. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.