

**Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review
Conference of the Parties to the Treaty
on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons**

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**Realization of the goals and objectives of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East
within the framework of the strengthened NPT review process**

Report submitted by Syria

In 1968, Syria became one of the first States in the Middle East region to sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It took this step because it was convinced that the possession of these weapons of destruction by any State in the Middle East would pose a threat to the region and be viewed as a major cause for concern, not only by the peoples of the region, but by the entire world.

Syria also signed a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and has consistently complied with all its international obligations thereunder. Every year since it signed this international agreement in 1992, Syria has opened its nuclear facilities for annual international inspection, because it is convinced, as are all Arab States that are all Parties to the NPT, of the need to establish a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

It is this same conviction which motivated Syria to submit an initiative, in the first half of April 2003, to the United Nations Security Council, calling for the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East region. The initiative was supported by all Arab States. In it, Syria declared before the entire international community that it was willing to work alongside its Arab brothers and all States throughout the world to help turn the Middle East region into a zone free of all nuclear, chemical, and biological, weapons of mass destruction.

Syria has long been at the forefront of repeated calls, within the framework of the United Nations and the League of Arab States, for the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons. It has striven tirelessly and energetically for the realization of that goal. It also works intensively to secure the adoption, at the annual regular sessions of the IAEA General Conference, of the resolution on the application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East, which calls upon all parties directly concerned to consider seriously taking the practical and appropriate steps required for the implementation of the proposal to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The resolution furthermore invites the countries concerned to adhere to international non-proliferation regimes, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as a means of complementing participation in a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East (GC(46)/RES/16, annex).

However, "Israel" has not responded to these calls. It continues to insist on being the only country in the region to remain outside the international system, refusing to respond to any international calls issued by the United Nations, whether through the General Assembly or the Security Council. To this day, "Israel" is the only country in the region which still refuses to accede to the NPT, to sign a comprehensive safeguards agreement, or to open its nuclear facilities for IAEA inspection. Indeed, it disregards all international resolutions relating to this particular topic.

In 1986, Syria became the first country to request, in an explanatory memorandum dated 10 June 1986 (document GC(XXX)/778), that an item entitled "Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat" should be included on the agenda for the regular sessions of the IAEA General Conference. Its request was agreed to and the item remained on the agenda until 1992, when the President of the Conference issued a presidential statement proposing that it should be dropped in order to safeguard the peace process that was under way at the time. Since the cessation of the peace process, however, the General Conference has failed to adopt a resolution on the Israeli nuclear threat. It has been content with issuing a presidential statement that neither applies any pressure on "Israel", nor requires it to comply with any international demands. This is a matter of great concern to the region, because Israel's possession of nuclear weapons creates a huge imbalance of forces that threatens regional and international peace and security.

With regard to the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 NPT Review Conference, the 2000 NPT Review Conference succeeded in reaffirming that the resolution would remain in force until such time as its purposes and objectives had been achieved, and that it had been one of the main factors in the success of the 1995 conference. This is regarded as an important achievement of the Group of Arab States, which had participated actively in the proceedings at the time and had worked to present a clear and united position on the issue. Syria had also clearly expressed its views on this point at the time. It believes that the reasons for the adoption of the resolution remain just as valid today.

The purpose of the resolution was to secure the agreement of the majority of non-nuclear States parties to the adoption, without a vote, of a resolution providing for the indefinite extension of the NPT, on condition that the complaints of those same States, which could no longer be deferred, would be heard at a later stage. For this arrangement to work, the non-nuclear States relied on the good faith of the nuclear States in honouring their commitments. So far, those commitments have been utterly ignored. Moreover, any attempt to examine the

shortcomings of the Treaty with a view to remedying the failings of which States Parties complain has also been ignored. We should like to recall here that, at every meeting of the Preparatory Committee, the United States of America has shown its determination to break and go back on the deal. There is no justification for its conduct, other than the consecration of the principle of double standards that allows Israel to remain a non-Party to the NPT and to preserve its nuclear arsenal.

Syria believes that the mechanism relating to concerns about the prevailing situation in the region, which the Secretary-General of the United Nations has been asked to set up, in accordance with the terms of the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, should take account of the inflammatory situation prevailing in the region. Syria also reaffirms the need for this mechanism to bring international pressure to bear on Israel so that it accedes to the wishes of the international community, complies with United Nations resolutions and brings a halt both to its imperialist ambitions - exemplified by its continuing occupation of territory belonging to three Arab States, namely Syria, Lebanon and Palestine - and to the development of its nuclear arsenal. Syria should like, furthermore, to stress that this must be an international demand, not just an Arab or regional demand, since it represents a central element in ensuring the credibility and universality of the NPT and in giving effect to the principle of equity, which eschews the policy of double standards.

For as long as the Treaty has been in force, Syria and other Arab States have continued to demonstrate their good faith, relying on the good faith of the nuclear States too. However, the close ties between the United States of America and "Israel" have brought the region face to face with a situation in which international law is now being openly flouted. Thus, "Israel" has been helped, ever since its creation, to pursue its aggressive policies, culminating in its ongoing occupation of parts of Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian territory which jeopardizes the security and stability of the entire region.

Finally, Syria believes that, in order to ensure transparency, universality of the NPT must first be achieved. The international community should therefore bring pressure to bear on Israel, in a resolute, impartial and non-discriminatory manner, in order to induce it to comply with international obligations and resolutions and to accede to the NPT, as a key step towards the establishment in the Middle East region of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons. This is an issue which cannot be resolved by half measures. The call for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East region cannot be confined to the Arab and regional level alone, but must be echoed in meaningful international resolutions.
