



MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF FINLAND

His Excellency

Dr Nabil Elaraby

Secretary-General of the League of Arab States

Helsinki, 29 August 2014

Excellency,

I am writing to you in my capacity as the facilitator for the Conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, to be held in Helsinki, as well as on behalf of the co-conveners of the Conference, i.e. the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States.

I would first like to extend our sincere gratitude for the excellent working relationship we have enjoyed with the Arab League and its Member States regarding this endeavor.

Much work has been done and some progress achieved, in particular during the informal gatherings in Switzerland.

The co-conveners remain committed to convening the Conference as soon as possible once an agreement regarding its arrangements has been reached.

In view of the progress made we are confident that the remaining key questions can be resolved soon and that the possibilities for convening the Conference in the very near future exist.

This requires continuing determined consultation between the states of the region, willingness to seek solutions acceptable to all and, first and foremost, the political will to pave the way for the Conference.

In order to facilitate a necessary agreement the co-conveners and I are prepared to arrange a further round of informal consultations on the 15 and 16 September. We would hope that this could focus on narrowing remaining differences regarding arrangements for a Conference. I remain at your disposal to elaborate on my understanding of the remaining issues to be solved.

The Arab Ministers' public support and encouragement to the ongoing efforts to make progress towards the Helsinki Conference is much appreciated. The historic opportunity to launch a process so important for peace, security and cooperation in the Middle East should not be lost.

We do not want to underestimate the challenges and difficulties ahead but assuming that the necessary steps forward can be made without delay, the co-conveners and I look forward to the convening of the Conference before the end of this year. This would also be a welcome development in view of the up-coming Review Conference of the NPT next spring.

I would kindly ask you to share this letter with the distinguished Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Arab League Member States



MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF FINLAND

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Sincerely,

Jaakko Laajava
Under-Secretary of State
Facilitator