



3 August 2022

Statement by H.E. Dr. Riyad Mansour, Minister and Permanent Representative of the State of Palestine to the United Nations before the Tenth Review Conference of the Parties of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Thank you Mr. President,

Allow me at the outset to congratulate you for presiding over the Tenth Review Conference of the Parties of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. We are confident that your able leadership will lead to focused deliberations and a positive outcome. Be assured, Mr. President of my delegation's full support.

The State of Palestine aligns itself with the statements made by Jordan on behalf of the Arab Group and Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. President,

We are living under a nuclear sword inching ever closer to our necks, threatening our mere existence, our planet, and life as we know it. We are, regardless of the fact we admit it or not, always minutes away from a potential disaster and an accident away from annihilation.

If humanity does not put an end to nuclear weapons — nuclear weapons may very well one day put an end to humanity.

This is why, Mr. President, this Review Conference should bring about genuine progress especially when it comes to nuclear disarmament. It should reinforce the dividing line between our capacity to build and our capacity to destroy. between life and extinction,

The Non-Proliferation Treaty is the enduring cornerstone of the disarmament regime. Its full implementation is both the measure and the vehicle for disarmament, non-proliferation, and peaceful uses — its three mutually reinforcing pillars, which should be pursued together, and with equal determination, in a time-bound manner.

Mr. President,

The indefinite extension of the Treaty was never meant and could never mean indefinite acceptance of the existence of nuclear weapons and indefinite delaying of full, complete, irreversible and verifiable nuclear disarmament.

The State of Palestine reiterates that nuclear weapons, their use and threat of use are, and have always been, illegal, as they violate, by their very essence, the fundamental principles of humanity and distinction.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear-Weapons was therefore long overdue as there can be no rationale justification for the privileged status granted, de facto, to nuclear weapons over other weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. President,

As there can be no justification for the exceptional status granted to nuclear weapons, there can be no justification for Israeli exceptionalism in our region, whereby it would be the only one entitled to hold nuclear weapons. Our region should be free of nuclear weapons, full stop. This dangerous precedent continues to loom over the future of our region.

The State of Palestine stresses that this Conference must further the implementation of the 1995 resolution on establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, which is an integral part of the package that led to the indefinite extension of the Treaty and whose objectives are yet to be realized.

For the past decades our concessions have been met by obstruction, our patience by intransigence, and fundamental commitments by disregard.

We thus welcome the successful convening of the two sessions of the Conference on the Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons, under the presidency of both Jordan and Kuwait respectively. We reiterate that the Conference is open to all invited Parties and operates by consensus. Those who decide to exclude themselves cannot blame others for their so-called exclusion.

We warn that the only alternative to the pursuit of effective nuclear disarmament in our region is a dangerous arms race and potential nuclear proliferation. We call on the co-sponsors of the 1995 resolution to uphold their obligations. This is indispensable for regional and international peace and security and for the credibility of their calls for nuclear non-proliferation in our region.

Mr. President,

The Treaty was a negotiated product of finely tuned compromises; an accepted balance of responsibilities and obligations for which all Parties could be held accountable and that could be measured, monitored, and strengthened to advance disarmament while promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

The only effective remedy against the threat nuclear weapons pose on all humanity is ridding the world of these weapons. The only effective remedy against nuclear proliferation is complete nuclear disarmament. What happened in Hiroshima and Nagasaki did unfortunately not stop the nuclear weapons race but rather accelerated it. May the memory of the victims and the suffering of the survivors finally guide us on a wiser path, away from such horrors, such disregard for life and law, for morality and humanity.

Thank you