



General Assembly

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Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction

First session

New York, 18–22 November 2019

Report of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the work of its first session

I. Introduction

1. In its decision 73/546, the General Assembly entrusted the Secretary-General with convening, no later than 2019 at Headquarters, a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. In the decision, the Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to convene annual sessions of the Conference, for a duration of one week, at Headquarters, until the Conference concluded the elaboration of a legally binding treaty establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

II. Organizational matters and proceedings of the Conference

A. Opening and duration of the Conference

2. The first session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction was held from 18 to 22 November 2019 at Headquarters. Twenty-three participating States from the region, four observer States and three relevant international organizations or entities participated in the session. The list of participants is contained in document [A/CONF.236/INF/3](#).

3. The Conference was opened on 18 November 2019 by the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu. The Conference elected by acclamation Jordan as President of the Conference and invited the Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations, Sima Sami I. Bahous, to preside over the Conference. The Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly for the seventy-fourth session, Tijjani Muhammad-Bande (Nigeria), made statements at the opening of the session. Other Member States,



relevant international organizations, United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations were invited to attend the opening meeting. Nineteen of the participating States made remarks at the opening meeting.

B. Agenda and programme of work

4. At its 2nd meeting, on 18 November, the Conference adopted the agenda for the first session, as contained in document [A/CONF.236/1](#), as follows:

1. Opening of the Conference.
2. Election of the President of the Conference.
3. Address by the President of the Conference.
4. Address by the Secretary-General.
5. Address by the President of the General Assembly.
6. Adoption of the agenda.
7. Adoption of the programme of work.
8. Adoption of the rules of procedure.
9. Credentials of representatives.
10. General debate.
11. Thematic debate.
12. Adoption of the report and political declaration.
13. Any other business.
14. Closure of the session.

5. At the same meeting, the Conference adopted the programme of work for the session ([A/CONF.236/5](#)). The Conference also agreed to structure the thematic debate on the basis of the indicative topics proposed in a concept note by the President.

C. Rules of procedure

6. At its 4th meeting, on 19 November, the Conference agreed to proceed on the basis of the following statement made by the President, pending a final agreement on the rules of procedure:

In order to prepare for the Conference being held pursuant to General Assembly decision 73/546, the presidency has conducted consultations with participating States on the preparations for the Conference, including its rules of procedure. I highly appreciate the spirit of cooperation and compromise demonstrated in the process.

While participating States agree to consider the draft rules of procedure of the Conference, and agree thereon by consensus, I declare that the participating States hereby agree that, pending the final agreement on the text of the rules of procedure of the Conference, consensus will be the only method of decision-making on procedural and substantive issues, except for rulings by the President on procedural motions related to points of order, and suspension or adjournment of meetings.

7. At its 10th meeting, on 22 November, the Conference agreed to continue its consideration of the draft rules of procedure during the intersessional period.

D. Attendance of relevant international organizations, United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations

8. At its 2nd meeting, the Conference decided to invite several relevant international organizations, United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations to attend public meetings of the first session as observers (see [A/CONF.236/DEC.1](#) and [A/CONF.236/DEC.2](#)).

E. Documentation

9. The documentation before the Conference is available on the website of the Conference (www.un.org/disarmament/topics/conference-on-a-mezf-of-nwadowomd).

III. Credentials

10. The credentials of representatives and the names of alternate representatives and advisers, to be issued either by the Head of State or Government or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, were submitted to the Secretary-General of the Conference, who, having examined the credentials received, noted that, as at 22 November 2019:

(a) Formal credentials in due form had been received for the representatives of the following three participating States: Algeria, Kuwait and Qatar;

(b) Provisional credentials for the representatives of the following 17 participating States had been communicated by means of a facsimile communication from the Head of State or Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs or by means of a note verbale or letter from the permanent mission in New York: Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, State of Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen;

(c) Credentials or other information concerning their representatives had not been received from the following three participating States: Comoros, Mauritania and Somalia.

11. On the proposal of the Secretary-General of the Conference, the Conference agreed to accept the credentials of all the States referred to in paragraph 10 (a) and (b) above, on the understanding that the originals of the credentials of the representatives of those States referred to in paragraph 10 (b), as well as for the representatives of those States referred to in paragraph 10 (c), where applicable, would be submitted as soon as possible.

IV. General debate

12. At its 3rd and 4th meetings, on 19 November, the Conference held its general debate. At its 3rd meeting, the Conference heard statements by representatives of Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Tunisia, Yemen, Lebanon, Algeria, Iraq, the Sudan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Syrian Arab Republic, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. At its 4th meeting, the Conference heard statements by the representatives of the State of Palestine, Morocco, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great

Britain and Northern Ireland, France, China and the Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit.

V. Thematic debate

13. At its 5th and 6th meetings, on 20 November, the Conference held a thematic debate. Representatives of participating States exchanged views on a range of related issues, including principles and objectives, general obligations regarding nuclear weapons, general obligations regarding other weapons of mass destruction, peaceful uses and international cooperation, institutional arrangements and other aspects. The Conference agreed that representatives of existing nuclear-weapon-free zones organizations should be invited to share good practices and lessons learned with respect to the implementation of treaties establishing such zones prior to the second session of the Conference.

VI. Political declaration

14. At its 9th meeting, on 22 November, the Conference adopted a political declaration, which is contained in the annex to the present report.

VII. Preparations for the second session

15. At its 10th meeting, on 22 November, the Conference adopted decisions on the preparations for its second session (see [A/CONF.236/DEC.3](#) and [A/CONF.236/DEC.4](#)).

16. At the same meeting, the Conference decided that its second session would be held from 16 to 20 November 2020 at Headquarters.

17. The Conference agreed that the President, in consultation with participating States, should undertake efforts to prepare for the second session.

Annex**Political declaration adopted at the first session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction**

We, the representatives of participating States at the first session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, having met at Headquarters from 18 to 22 November 2019, pursuant to General Assembly decision 73/546:

(a) Welcome all initiatives, resolutions, decisions and recommendations on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction;

(b) Believe that the establishment of a verifiable Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction would greatly enhance regional and international peace and security;

(c) Declare our intent and solemn commitment to pursue, in accordance with relevant international resolutions, and in an open and inclusive manner with all invited States, the elaboration of a legally binding treaty to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by consensus by the States of the region;

(d) Call upon all States of the Middle East and all other States to refrain from taking any measures that preclude the achievement of the objectives of the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction;

(e) Convinced that the realization of this long-standing goal would be facilitated by the participation of all States of the Middle East, extend an open-ended invitation to all States of the region to lend their support to the present declaration and to join the process;

(f) In that spirit, believe that the Conference, through the elaboration of a legally binding treaty establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, could contribute to building regional and international confidence therein;

(g) Commit to undertaking efforts to follow up on the declaration and on the outcomes of the Conference and to engaging in preparations for the second session of the Conference, commend the efforts of the Secretary-General in convening the first session of the Conference, and request his continued efforts and those of relevant international organizations and the strong support of the international community towards the success of the Conference in establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.
