



Statement

of the Republic of **Lebanon**

at the **third session**

of the conference on

“The Establishment of a **Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons**

and other **Weapons of Mass Destruction**”

New York, November 14, 2022

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***Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations
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Mrs. President,

At the outset we would like to congratulate you on assuming the presidency of this Conference, and to wish you success in your efforts to steer the work of the third session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of nuclear weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction.

We congratulate Kuwait on their successful presidency and welcome the adoption of the rules of procedure of the Conference and the Report of the Conference at its second session, and the establishment and launch of the work of the working committee.

We also thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations, represented by the Under-Secretary General of Disarmament Affairs, for her participation and for the statements delivered.

Mrs. President,

Nuclear Weapons free zones are key component of the disarmament agenda. Lebanon sees the establishment of such a zone in The Middle East as an urgent need for fostering security and stability in this important region of the world.

Lebanon has steadfastly supported all international efforts aimed at sparing the world the scourge and tragedies posed by nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, out of its firm conviction that such weapons harbor existential dangers to humankind and his civilizations.

Mrs. President,

Nuclear proliferation in the Middle East should be tackled with the urgency it deserves. The NPT Member States, especially nuclear weapons states, must encourage all the invited States of the region to participate in this conference in an open and inclusive manner to elaborate a legally binding instrument on the establishment of the zone on the basis of consensus.

The convening of the third session of this Conference constitutes an opportunity for participating States to continue to seek, in an open, inclusive and transparent manner, a common ground on the establishment of zone free of weapons of mass destruction. It is also important to use this platform, under the umbrella of the United Nations, to express concerns, propose solutions and discuss in good faith in order to achieve the desired end goal of establishing such a zone.

Several regions around the world succeeded in establishing zones free of nuclear weapons, the Middle East should not remain the exception. Rather it should be part of this progress, and this Conference puts it on the right path to achieve this outcome.

Mrs. President,

We meet today after convening the long-awaited NPT review conference, which inability to reach consensus on an outcome document, for the second consecutive time, was a big disappointment especially to non-nuclear State Parties. However, this was not the only shortcoming at the NPT Rev Con. We have witnessed an unwillingness of Nuclear Weapon States to make practical commitments under pillar one of the treaty.

Lebanon therefore calls for the full implementation of all previous commitments assumed by Nuclear Weapon States at the 1995, 2000, and 2010 NPT Review Conferences, to attain the total dismantling of their nuclear arsenals and leading to a world free of nuclear weapons.

Furthermore, the special responsibility of the nuclear weapon States, especially the obligations and commitments of the three depositary States of the Treaty that co-sponsored the 1995 resolution, should be upheld in order to implement it in its entirety. Such a commitment and step can put the region on the much-needed path of security and stability. We urge through UN fora countries in the region that did not participate, to reconsider their position by participating in the subsequent sessions of the conference, especially since this path has proven that it does not exclude any country and does not aim to isolate any of them or imposing restrictions and conditions on them, especially in light of the adoption of consensus as a decision-making mechanism within the provisions of the internal procedures system.

Mrs. President,

At a crucial time our world is witnessing, all countries are requested to spare no efforts to continue to promote the full and effective implementation of the NPT as well as its universalization. A progress is very much needed to further strengthen the NPT, which remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with Article VI of the NPT and an important element in the future development of nuclear energy applications for peaceful purposes.

The path towards establishing the zone is long, but all countries present today are showing commitment to realizing it. This is a testament of our commitment to uphold international law and to fulfill our obligation to the future generations and to lay the foundation for a stable region free of weapons of mass destruction and their threat to humanity.

I thank you Mrs. President.