

Closing Remarks by the President of the First Session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction

22 November 2019, New York

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates

Please allow me to deliver some remarks before closing the First Session of this Conference.

During the past months since I was entrusted with the responsibilities of President - designate to prepare for this historical Conference and during the Conference this week, I have approached my responsibilities in an open, transparent and inclusive manner. It has been a challenging task, but with your support, cooperation and friendship, I was able to do the task.

It is my conviction that there is a genuine political will by participating States from our region to pursue the achievement of the objective of establishing a WMD-free zone in our region the Middle East, which I have witnessed in the deliberations during this conference and during the consultations I undertook to prepare for this conference.

As we all know, the challenge is how to translate that shared vision and political will into concrete action and progress. I am very proud to say that we have together taken an important step forward in this process and each and every one of you have contributed to this significance progress. We are under no illusion that there will be a plain sailing on our way towards achieving our final objective, but we pledge to work together in our efforts to overcome the hurdles, to push our way forward with the support of the rest of the international community.

During this week, we have engaged in general and thematic debate and nearly one hundred statements were made on various aspects of implementing the mandate of the Conference. We heard the addresses by the UN Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly, expressing their strong support and best wishes for a successful Conference. We agreed on all organizational matters, except the rules of procedure, which we'll continue to consult with a view to reaching an agreement. And most importantly, we adopted a Political Declaration, which conveys a strong message to the wider international community on our reiterated commitment and determination to work relentlessly towards achieving our long-sought goal of establishing a Middle East zone free of

nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction to promote regional and international peace and security.

Before concluding the session, I would like to extend again, on behalf of the participating States, observer States and relevant international organizations participating in the First Session of the Conference, and on my own behalf, sincere gratitude to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for all his effort made in convening this Conference.

Our heartfelt thanks also go to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu the Secretariat Team of the Office for Disarmament Affairs for their tireless and considerate efforts to support and facilitate our work throughout the session.

I also thank the members of my team – who have supported me throughout this process.

Special thanks go to all the interpreters, translators, record-keepers, conference officers and sound engineers, who have worked diligently behind the scenes in support of the Conference's work.

Finally I would like to thank to participating States of this First Session of the Conference, to each and every one of you for your spirit of support and cooperation, without which, we could not have achieved the success of this Session of the Conference. I would also thank the observer States and international organization present at the First Session for their support and encouragement. I also thank the representatives of other relevant international organisations and civil societies for their presence and support.

I declare the First Session of this Conference closed.