

## **Remarks by the Delegation of Egypt**

**4<sup>th</sup> UN Conference on A Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass destruction, 13-17 November 2023**

### **Thematic Discussion: Verification**

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**Mr. President,**

- 1- Once again, we thank you, Excellency President, for the well thought approach in selecting the topics for this year's thematic discussion.**
- 2- We consider that the obligations and measures related to nuclear verification and the role of the IAEA is another key point in the aspired Treaty, and should find its due reflection under the principles, objectives and the general and core obligations.**
- 3- In the point of view of this delegation, the discussion around verification is two folds. The first is related to the safeguards to ensure that nuclear material is not diverted from peaceful uses. And we have touched upon this with a degree of detail during the morning session either the assurance of the inalienable right, the assurances for the exclusive peaceful nature of the activities under verification of the application of the comprehensive safeguards agreements as applied by IAEA, as well as the role of nuclear safety and security.**
- 4- The treaty should provide for the effective verification of compliance with the commitments made by the parties to the treaty, through the placement of all their nuclear facilities and activities under the IAEA full scope comprehensive safeguards, which are equivalent in scope and effect to the agreements required under article III pf the Non-Proliferation Treaty. All States need to cooperate with the IAEA in resolving any outstanding issues, if and where applicable.**
- 5- We continue to see that the verification architecture of the prospect Treaty should build on the existing nearly universal mechanisms as its center of gravity and point of departure.**

- 6- In this context, the Treaty should rely on the verification and implementation mechanisms and measures of the NPT and the IAEA's comprehensive safeguards agreements. Other proposals and recommendations regarding further verification measures, including possible regional arrangements, could be under consideration at the meetings of the States parties of the Treaty establishing the zone.**
- 7- The other side of the verification discussion is in relation to Nuclear Disarmament Verification: which is the process to verify the irreversible disposal or elimination of nuclear weapons, where serviced or retired. This process normally encompasses five steps: Removal of deployed nuclear war heads; Dismantlement and storage of warhead components; Conversion of nuclear material with classified characteristic; Placement of nuclear material under safeguards; verification of the correctness and completion against the set baseline.**
- 8- In other words, verification of the total elimination of nuclear weapons in the case of a party that has previously developed, produced, manufactured, or otherwise acquired or possessed nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We concur that in several occasions nuclear verification and nuclear disarmament verification can happen to be overlapping, interrelated and mutually reinforcing.**
- 9- Similar to verification of exclusive peaceful uses, the IAEA plays a key role in Nuclear Disarmament Verification. The IAEA has 30 years of experience in addressing nascent or renounced weaponization programs. The IAEA statute, under Article III.A.5 and III.B.1, provides a sufficient legal basis for NDV activities related to the application of safeguards to nuclear material and facilities. Many lessons learned can be explored in this regard in relation to IAEA's engagement with South Africa and 3 former Soviet Republics about nuclear disarmament verification.**
- 10- Most recently, the 1<sup>st</sup> Committee adopted resolution A/C.1/78/L.31 that endorsed the report by the Group of Governmental Experts on Nuclear**

**Verification. We consider this report, and other relevant UN literature, as a meaningful contribution to pursuing operational aspects related to verification of nuclear disarmament.**

**11- This is an area that can significantly benefit from regional dialogue, cooperation and confidence building in supporting the verification process. A handful of UN and external financial and technical partnerships are available to provide support, where and if needed.**

**12- To conclude, and as previously underlined by UNDC and other UN literature, verification measures are not an end in their selves, however they are a significant investment in trust, assurance and credibility of the applicable legal regime.**

**Thank you Mr. President.**