

First Committee  
75<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Statement by  
Mr. Ben Bourgel  
Minister Counsellor of Israel to the United Nations

General Debate on All Disarmament and  
International Security Agenda Items

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Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you on assuming the chairmanship, and let me assure you of my delegation's full cooperation.

Mr. Chairperson,

The 75<sup>th</sup> UN general assembly is convening in a time of global struggle with the COVID 19 virus. It is a threat that knows no borders. In this vein, we believe that multilateral deliberations should adjust to the situation, with patience and caution.

Mr. Chairperson,

We continue to witness a worrisome escalation in the realm of Arms Control. In this regard, the Middle East is still struggling with chronic lack of compliance with Arms Control norms and principles. This culture of noncompliance and disregard for international obligations and norms is unfortunately very common and dangerous in the region.

The use of chemical weapons by States in the Middle East, against their own population and against neighboring countries, occurred five times since the Second World War. These events were a clear violation of the Geneva Protocol of 1925. Furthermore, two additional cases of member states from the region violating the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) are still in question and need to be further investigated. Towards this end, the international community should support the important work of the Organization for the Prohibition of

Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and its bodies. In this regard, Israel has done its share, also by contributing to the OPCW Center for Chemistry and Technology.

The NPT in itself does not provide a remedy for the unique security challenges of the region, let alone the repeated violations of the Treaty by some of its member states. Four of the five cases of serious violations of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) took place in the Middle East since its entering into force.

Surface-to-surface missiles and rockets, their related technologies, know-how and production processes, have been proliferated and transferred to terrorist organizations.

There is an urgent need to focus on the implementation, compliance and verification of the obligations of states.

Mr. Chairperson,

For over a year now, Iran has been violating its nuclear obligations. By now, its violations in regard to enrichment, stockpiling and R&D are so extensive that they have completely hollowed the Iranian obligations of their essence. Iran has also violated its commitment to the IAEA safeguards under the Additional Protocol, by not responding in a timely manner to IAEA access requests and inquiries. The nuclear archive proved that Iran had a robust plan to develop nuclear warheads. Iran continues concealing these undeclared activities, including the location of sites, whereabouts of equipment and materials it has stockpiled in defiance of IAEA safeguards.

Iran has also bluntly violated its obligations under ANNEX B of Resolution 2231 from the outset and continued proliferating advanced and destabilizing weapons to numerous terrorist organizations under its influence. These facts were confirmed by the SG's report from June 2020, in which it was determined that the UAVs and cruise missiles used in the various attacks on Saudi Arabia, including the attack on Aramco's oil facilities, were of Iranian origin, and that extensive amount of arms aboard two vessels headed to Yemen originated from Iran. Iranian arms, some of which are of strategic importance, such as precision guided munitions, are used by terrorists and armed militias and threaten all Middle East countries, Israel among them.

Iran also attempts to destabilize the region by using every possible tool at its disposal, such as terrorism and the use of missile and rocket attacks against its neighbors, doing so from the territory of other countries in the region, namely Syria or Iraq. Iran's support for terrorist organizations, which includes supplying weapons, financial and political support, as well as military training, contradict numerous UNSC resolutions.

Since the entry into force of UNSCR 2231, Iran has tested dozens of ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads. Iran should be strongly condemned for launching several satellite launch vehicles, as they include components used in ICBMs.

In light of all of the above, the United States has acted boldly to prevent the removal of the Conventional Arms Embargo. The Security Council's failure to extend the embargo led the United States to conclude that it had no other choice but to exercise its

legal right and initiate the snap-back mechanism set out in Resolution 2231. Iran must be held accountable for its malign actions and must be restrained by the international community.

Mr. Chairperson,

Last April we witnessed the first report issued by the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) established by the OPCW in June 2018. The report attributed responsibility for three different chemical attacks on civilians in the spring of 2017 to the Syrian government which acceded to the CWC and avowed to forgo its entire chemical weapons program.

The IIT's report (EC-94/S/5, dated 8 April 2020), came after several reports and findings of the DAT, the FFM and the JIM, which the concerned international community established since the first time Syria used chemical weapons on its own citizens in 2012. The IIT's report clearly calls on the Syrian government to cooperate with the OPCW and the international community, in rectifying the gaps and discrepancies in its declaration on chemical weapons, and to take full responsibility and accountability for its actions in violation of its obligations under the CWC and on the destruction of its chemical weapon arsenal.

It is vital that the international community stays vigilant in dealing with this challenge of the non-compliance of Syria, in order to prevent the further erosion of the absolute norm against the use of chemical weapons and to reinstate it.

Mr. Chairperson,

Conventional weapons continue claiming the lives of hundreds of thousands of people around the world on an annual basis. It is clear that states need to fulfill their international obligations - not to proliferate conventional weapons - but rather fight proliferation and be effective in the management of their stockpiles.

Mr. Chairperson, I would like to use this opportunity to update that Israel has decided to extend the moratorium on all exports, sales or other transfers of all anti-personal landmines for an additional period of three years, until July 2023.

Mr. Chairperson,

On the matter of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, Israel wishes to emphasize its long-stated view that the Treaty, which Israel does not support, does not create, contribute to the development of, or indicate the existence of customary law related to the subject or the content of the Treaty.

On the issue of cybersecurity, Israel attaches great importance to efforts to strengthen international security and stability in cyberspace. Israel's global position in the digital domain is based on a robust domestic ecosystem that encourages real-time information sharing and the development of comprehensive methodologies. Furthermore, Israel supports educational programs and raises public awareness of cybersecurity. Israeli designed cybersecurity tools and

knowhow assist in keeping critical data and infrastructures safe around the world. The basic tenets of Israel's cyber ecosystem should therefore be promoted on the global level, in order to enhance global resilience, by means of practical cooperation and capacity-building programs.

Finally, Mr. Chairperson,

Initiatives of the Arab group, such as the conference on a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, goes against the guidelines and principles of the Nuclear Weapons Free Zones. Experience of other regions demonstrate that any framework of regional security can only be the outcome of a mutual political desire of all regional parties to engage with each other, taking into consideration the security concerns of each and every state and reflecting arrangements freely arrived at by all states concerned, as stipulated in the 1999 Disarmament Commission Report on Guidelines and Principles for the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone. Israel's position is well known and has been elaborated on in the past.

The full version will be posted on the website

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.