

**Statement by  
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of the Arab Republic of Egypt  
to the United Nations and other International Organizations  
in Vienna**

**47<sup>th</sup> General IAEA Conference**

Mr. President,

Allow me at the outset to congratulate you as well as the members of the bureau on their election. You have assumed the responsibility of President of the General Conference at a time when the global nuclear non-proliferation regime is being stressed to its limit, as are the resources of the IAEA. I wish you well in your endeavor and assure you of my delegation's full support.

I wish also to express Egypt's gratitude and firm support to the IAEA, its Director General, and the members of the Secretariat. Since its inception the IAEA has never been as heavily solicited as it has been in recent years. I wish to place on record Egypt's appreciation for the manner in which the Agency has risen to the task..

Mr. President,

Throughout more than a decade, the world has undergone a process of major change. A few years ago this process appeared to have come to a head with the emergence of what was termed the 'new world order'. Today it is clear that the dust stirred up by the end of the Cold War has yet to settle.

Some things, however, remain unchanged. Most notably, nuclear-weapon-States remain unwilling to abide by their obligations under Article VI of the NPT. Ironically, those who are the most vocal in calling for increasing human, technical and financial resources to be devoted to preventing and fighting the proliferation of nuclear weapons, are also those who prefer clinging indefinitely to their nuclear arsenals. Some are even considering giving nuclear weapons a new lease on life, thereby undermining the very essence of the NPT.

Mr. President,

Not so long ago the use of the phrase ‘non-proliferation’ was largely restricted to politicians, diplomats, academics and NGOs. Public opinion was only marginally concerned with such matters, and only few around the world felt that their personal safety and well-being were directly threatened by nuclear weapons. After all, were we not told that such weapons only served a deterrent purpose and were not really intended for use? And was not the thick shroud of secrecy that enveloped everything to do with the military use of the atom intended to ensure that public opinion not get too involved in matters that best not be left to public opinion?

Today, ‘proliferation’ has become a household term and a matter of considerable concern to large segments of public opinion. Nuclear weapons are no longer perceived solely as sophisticated bombs in the hands of responsible governments, but also as rusty canisters containing a few grams of deadly radioactive material in the hands of a terrorist. Public opinion is being maneuvered into believing that while a handful of enriched uranium smuggled out of a laboratory represents a significant threat to international peace and security, nuclear weapons represent the ultimate defense against this threat.

But while, it is arguable that nuclear weapons have sustained peace in the post world war order, they have done little in terms of preventing or resolving deadly conflicts that today plague many parts of the world. It is also indisputable that nuclear weapons did not deter the emergence of new nuclear-weapon States, and the they are of no use in the fight against terrorism.

In effect, nuclear weapons today have become more of a liability than an asset. Recognized nuclear-weapon States devote massive resources to maintaining thousands of weapons that we hope will never be used, while aspiring nuclear-weapon States deprive their people of badly needed resources in return for what is perceived as the ultimate military status symbol.

Mr. President,

In a region of tension such as the Middle East, nuclear weapons also cast their sinister shadow, further complicating and already complex situation. Have such weapons brought security to those who possess them? The truth is that genuine and lasting security can only result from a structure of peace based on justice and the respect of the fundamental rights of people to live in dignity and respect for national identities and aspirations.

Twelve years have passed since we all agreed in this forum on the urgent need for all States of the Middle East to accept the application of full-scope IAEA safeguards to all of their nuclear activities. Twelve years ago we knew, as we do today, what exactly was meant by this phrase. Yet, nothing has happened.

While Egypt has multiplied its efforts aimed at ridding the Middle East of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, Israel, and much of the rest of the world, have remained largely indifferent to the matter. While IAEA Member States speak willingly and at length about nuclear programmes in Iraq, North Korea and now Iran, few seem to attribute much interest to Israel's nuclear activities.

Notwithstanding this obvious discrepancy, the evident fact is that as long as double standards continue to govern the issue of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, and as long as the region continues to be plagued with festering political problems and unresolved security issues, more countries in the region might eventually seek means of mass destruction in a bid to redress the military imbalance and to protect their national security.

In order to avoid such a situation, we must all show a stronger sense of commitment to the cause of peace and security in the Middle East. We must recognize that, as in the past, military domination by one party over another will not resolve the region's problems. The Middle East is in need of a new security structure based on just and reciprocal commitments that meet the legitimate security concerns of all parties in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner and that provide equal security to all.

Egypt has in the past, and will continue in the future to work for peace and security in its region. It will continue to explore all avenues leading to a secure and stable Middle East, and foremost amongst them the

establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. But in the absence of an equally strong commitment to these objectives on the part of us all, these efforts run the risk of leading to naught.

Mr. President,

*In accordance with Article IV of the NPT, "Parties to the Treaty in a position to do so shall ... co-operate in contributing alone or together with other States or international organizations to the further development of the applications of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, especially in the territories of non-nuclear-weapon States Party to the Treaty..."*

But while the IAEA does carry out technical cooperation activities with Member States, and bilateral cooperation between States in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy does take place, the present situation falls far short of expectations. While blame for this situation must be shared by us all, one cannot deny that there has been a significant degree of reluctance to promote peaceful applications of nuclear energy lest the know-how thus acquired be used for non-peaceful purposes. Given the potential that peaceful applications of nuclear energy have in various walks of life, this situation should not be allowed to last.

Mr. President,

Since over 4 decades ago, Egypt has taken a keen interest in nuclear energy and its applications. If nuclear energy is used wisely, we firmly believe in its vast potential in the economic, scientific, and technological fields.

Throughout these years, we have been cooperating closely with the IAEA to broaden the peaceful applications of nuclear energy in Egypt. We have done this through the development of our capabilities and resources and scientific and technical elements, with the aim of attaining sustainable development. In this regard, my country is working determinedly to support, expand, and modernize its nuclear infrastructure; we have recently installed our second 22 megawatt research reactor, and we have received assistance from IAEA-funded experts with the aim of raising its efficiency. We are also working towards the full utilization of the cyclotron set up in cooperation with the Russian Federation. The IAEA continues to provide support for the training of Egyptian technical

elements with the aim of optimizing the cyclotron's utilization and using it to produce radioactive isotopes for medical purposes.

We would like to avail ourselves of this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to the IAEA for its significant efforts to develop and increase the efficiency and scope of its technical cooperation program. We are in total agreement with IAEA principles that lead to supporting the concepts of partnership in development and in the implementation of the concept of self-reliance for increasing the sources of revenue for nuclear agencies, with emphasis on projects that provide direct revenue and that benefit an end user. In turn, Egypt directs cooperation programs with the IAEA towards those kinds of projects. We have placed and continue to place emphasis on the creation of laboratories to carry out radioactivity readings and to undertake hydrological surveys using radioactive isotopes. The scope of work of those laboratories is not limited to Egypt, but rather extends to Arab and African countries. We are also keen on cooperation in the field of the production of radioactive isotopes and high-quality low-cost technetium generators for the local markets. We are also continuing cooperation with the IAEA in the field of radioactive applications especially irradiating foodstuffs and medical instruments and in the production of medical hydrogen, in addition to the development of nuclear and environmental monitoring equipment and their indigenous production.

We are also concentrating on fields vital to socio-economic development such as increasing agricultural output, development of desert areas, improvement of economically and medically important crops, raising livestock and poultry production, the development of drought and salinity-resistant strains, and the elimination of pests using sterilization technology.

In addition, given our cognizance of the need for new resources of fresh water in many areas of Egypt far from the Nile Valley, we are keen on effective cooperation with the IAEA in projects that are related to development of water and ground water resources.

We also cannot forget the IAEA's prominent role in and effective contribution to the field of nuclear waste management, and in the applications and development of quality control and non-destructive evaluation methods for industrial applications.

While we welcome a new century, a century that uses modern technology as a basis for development, we praise the IAEA's efforts and the great

interest it shows in the field of the applications of information and communication technology. This interest is shown not only towards promoting performance and management, but also in training and distance learning. We trust that this will increase the Agency's standing and efficiency in the age of information and communication. We also greatly appreciate the Agency's efforts to develop the International Nuclear Information System (INIS) and the promotion of its role in the field of storing of nuclear-related information. In this regard, Egypt would be happy to host a symposium to discuss the importance of this system.

The technical cooperation program in Egypt also covers several new areas. One of those areas is the development of the inspection skills of the Egyptian oversight authority. Another is field detection of landmines using nuclear methods. This aims at the undertaking of research aimed at the production of mobile mine-detection units. The landmine problem in Egypt is, of course, adversely affecting development plans especially in the northern coastal area. In addition there is a new project that deals with controlling industrial processes using isotopes. This project aims at developing local capabilities in this field.

Mr. President,

Emanating from Egypt's belief in the importance of nuclear technology and springing from its belonging to the Arab World and Africa, Egypt has availed its nuclear facilities, laboratories, and its expertise to those countries in order to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In this regard, Egypt participates fully in the Arab Authority for Nuclear Energy's efforts in the field of training scientists and technicians in several fields including but not limited to: nuclear safety, desalination using nuclear energy, the development of water resources, the improvement of agricultural yields and pest control.

At the same time, and emanating from the same principle, Egypt has supported the AFRA. Ever since this agreement's entry into force, Egypt has provided continued support for its projects. Those projects contribute tangibly and effectively to the socio-economic development of the peoples of the continent and towards the alleviation of their suffering. This is accomplished through regional projects whose aims have evolved noticeably and according to the needs of the African countries. Initially these projects aimed at the creation of the necessary infrastructure and developing electronic maintenance workshops and radiotherapy facilities

and furnishing these centers with the necessary equipment and supplies. This was coupled with raising efficiency levels and laying the foundations of inter-African cooperation. The aim of these projects then evolved to concentrating on performance evaluation and creating a database of distinguished elements in the African continent and the creation of specialized teams and information exchange among African countries. The effort of the projects is currently aimed at achieving self-sufficiency and concentrating on revenue-oriented projects and the development of management, media, and marketing systems.

Technical cooperation is designed to promote economic and social development in developing countries. This goal will remain illusive, as long as some states do not honor fully their financial commitment to the Technical Cooperation Fund. In this regard, we would like to register our disappointment that the target for 2002 has not been met, since this may adversely affect the implementation rate of the already approved projects.

Egypt for its part, is regularly making voluntary contributions to the Technical Cooperation Fund, and hopes that all countries meet their financial commitments in this regard.

In conclusion, let me state that Egypt is looking towards the 2005 NPT Review Conference as an opportunity for States to re-affirm, in word and in deed, the continued importance of the NPT as the cornerstone of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. As such, it is necessary for States Parties to use this opportunity to renew their commitment to their mutual obligations under the treaty, and in particular as regards the achievement of nuclear disarmament and the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The review conference will also be required to reaffirm its commitment to the pursuit of nuclear non-proliferation in the world, and in particular as regards the region of the Middle East, and to evaluate the progress achieved towards implementing the Resolution on the Middle East.

Egypt would like to reaffirm its constant support to the pivotal role played by the IAEA, as an international forum to coordinate the cooperation in areas such as: the peaceful use of nuclear technologies, promoting nuclear safety, and providing the necessary assurances that

nuclear materials should only be used for peaceful purposes through its safeguards activities.