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APPLICATION OF IAEA SAFEGUARDS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Report by the Director General

1. In resolution GC(XXXVII)/RES/627, the General Conference last year requested the Director General, on the basis of his report contained in document GOV/2682-GC(XXXVII)/1072,

"to continue consultations with the States of the Middle East to facilitate the early application of full-scope Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities in the region as relevant to the preparation of model agreements, as a necessary step towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone (NWFZ) in the region, referred to in resolution GC(XXXVI)/RES/601".

2. The resolution took note of the importance of the ongoing bilateral Middle East peace negotiations and the activities of the Multilateral Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security (ACRS) in promoting mutual confidence and security in the Middle East, including establishment of a NWFZ, and called upon the Director General, as requested by the participants,

"to render all necessary assistance to the working group in promoting that objective".

3. The Director General was further requested,

"to submit to the Board of Governors and to the General Conference at its thirty-eighth regular session a report on the implementation of this resolution ...".

4. Paragraph 18 of the Director General's 1993 report in document GOV/2682-GC(XXXVII)/1072 said that, to assist the Director General in implementing the mandate conferred upon him by resolution GC(XXXVI)/RES/601, it would be helpful if States which had not yet done so were to respond to the Director General's request for views on the material obligations that could be included in a Middle East NWFZ agreement and on specific verification requirements and modalities as described in the Director General's 1992 report to the General Conference in document GC(XXXVI)/1019. Those views were sought in the Director General's letters of November 1992 to the Governments of States in the Middle East. By the time of last year's General Conference, only 6 States in the Middle East had responded to the Director General's correspondence. Several of these responses were only of general nature and did not address substantively the specific issues raised. Despite the call upon States in the region, by resolution GC(XXXVII)/RES/627, to extend their fullest cooperation to the Director General in the fulfilment of the tasks entrusted to him, no additional views have yet been received in writing.

5. In this general connection however, and as foreshadowed by paragraph 19 of the report in document GOV/2682-GC(XXXVII)/1072, the Director General has continued his consultations with States of the Middle East, including further visits to the Middle East region. Since the report was issued the Director has visited the United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Lebanon and Iran.

6. During these visits, the Director General highlighted the importance of verification for a nuclear-weapon-free zone and again explained the different options and modalities available in that respect. The Director General also continued to emphasize the importance of nuclear transparency and active cooperation as important confidence-building measures in any nuclear-weapon-free zone. The Director General listened to the views of the relevant States on their concept of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and on the requirements and modalities for verifying compliance in any such zone.

7. All the States visited continued to emphasize the need for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and the importance of effective and credible verification of the obligations assumed by the parties to any such zone. The view was also expressed that, as a preliminary

step towards the conclusion of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region, all States concerned should accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

8. Paragraph 11 of Director General's 1993 report in GOV/2682-GC(XXXVII)/1072 explained that, with the objective of helping to familiarize regional experts with the type of issues and options relevant to verification which would have to be examined and decided upon in any negotiations on a Middle East NWFZ, the Secretariat had participated, as part of the United Nations delegation, in the third meeting of the Multilateral Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security held in Washington from 18-20 May 1993.

9. Since then, and in fulfilment of the mandate conferred upon the Director General by resolution GC(XXXVII)/RES/627, the Secretariat has participated, also as part of the United Nations delegation, in meetings of the Working Group held in Moscow from 3-4 November 1993 and in Doha from 2-5 May 1994.

10. 25 Regional and Extra-Regional delegations participated in the Moscow meeting which took place against the backdrop of important developments in the bilateral peace process, namely the signing of the Israeli-PLO Declaration of Principles and the Israel-Jordan Common Agenda. The Working Group inter alia reviewed and welcomed the constructive work which had been accomplished since its meeting in Washington in the area of practical activities designed ultimately to lead to the formulation of specific confidence building measures for the Middle East region. At its fourth Plenary Meeting in Moscow, motivated by breakthroughs in the bilateral track of the peace negotiations and the wish to build effectively on the achievements of the preceding intersessional period, the Working Group endorsed further and accelerated follow-up activities. These included, inter alia, specific activities related to verification.

11. Following from this, an Agency expert was invited to make one of three presentations on verification at a workshop held in Cairo from 31 January to 3 February 1994 within the framework of the "conceptual basket" of ACRS. The presentation, on "Detecting prohibited nuclear activities: IAEA experience", was given by the Assistant Director General for External Relations. The workshop provided a useful opportunity for an exchange of views between participants.

12. At its fifth Plenary meeting in Doha, the Working Group continued to consider verification issues and proposals for further work in this area. In the light of the mandate conferred upon the Director General by resolution GC(XXXVII)/RES/627 to render

assistance to the Working Group, a specific proposal for a practical activity, already being considered by the Secretariat as follow-up to the Workshop held in Vienna from 4-7 May 1993 on "the Modalities for the Application of Safeguards in a Future Nuclear-Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East", was put forward.

13. As now envisaged in the context of Multilateral Working Group activities, the proposal would involve a visit, by regional participants in the Multilateral Working Group's deliberations, to a nuclear power plant in Europe. The aims of such a visit would be to give representatives of Middle East States a practical demonstration of verification techniques and to acquaint them more fully with the ways in which regional verification structures and activities complement international verification efforts in Europe. The Secretariat considers that such a proposal could be a further example of the Agency's potential, within its mandate to render assistance to States of the Middle East, as requested.

14. The Director General intends to continue to pursue his consultations with States of the Middle East through visits to the region and in Vienna. It is to be hoped that through additional written input, through these consultations and through the Agency's participation in the Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security, views of the States concerned with regard to the material obligations to be assumed on a Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zone will crystalize to an extent that could enable the Director General to prepare the model verification agreements envisaged in resolutions GC(XXXVII)/RES/627 and GC(XXXVI)/RES/601.