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APPLICATION OF IAEA SAFEGUARDS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Report by the Director General to the Board of Governors and to the General Conference

Addendum

1. Add.1 to the Report by the Director General to the Board of Governors and to the General Conference with regard to the application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East (GOV/1999/51-GC(43)17, 17 August 1999) referred to four additional responses, from Syria, Morocco, Kuwait and Libya, to the Director General's letter of 10 May 1999 to Foreign Ministers of States of the Middle East.
2. A reply to the Director General's letter has now been received from His Royal Highness the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The text is reproduced herewith. An overall total of eight responses to the Director General's letter have now been received.

For reasons of economy, this document has been printed in a limited number.
Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies of documents to meetings.

Translated from Arabic

**TEXT OF A LETTER OF 15 SEPTEMBER 1999 FROM THE
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF SAUDI ARABIA ADDRESSED
TO THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC
ENERGY AGENCY**

I have pleasure in referring to your letter of 10 May 1999 concerning the agenda item entitled the "Application of IAEA Safeguards in the Middle East", which has been regularly included in the agenda of the annual, regular session of the Agency's General Conference. You also mentioned several matters related to the urgent need for all States in the Middle East to accept forthwith the application of full-scope Agency safeguards to all their nuclear activities as an important confidence-building measure among all States in the region and as a step towards enhancing peace and security in the context of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. In addition, you raised questions on this subject, and indicated that you wished to know our thoughts and views on this matter and on any practical steps which could be taken to foster a climate of confidence which might lead to the application of safeguards to all nuclear facilities in the region. In this connection, I have pleasure in making the following points:

- The idea of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East is not new; it is one of the principal demands of the States in the region and it is a matter which falls within the context of freeing the regions of the world from this lethal weapon. Statements by officials of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have always contained calls for the Middle East to be freed from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. I trust that you agree with me that this will not be achieved as long as the State of Israel remains, as the only State in the region, outside the framework of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and its nuclear installations remain outside the international control of the Agency, currently headed by you;
- Although Israel remains beyond the scope of the NPT at present, Israel's nuclear installations could be made subject to the Agency's control so that the Agency could verify them as it has been doing in the case of the other States in the region which have peaceful nuclear activities. Israel could take serious practical steps to put an end to this stalemate situation by declaring its acceptance of the application of full-scope safeguards without acceding to the NPT or associating itself with any other treaty or legal instrument, at least at the present stage;
- If the Agency created a new mechanism for dealing with Israel in this area, it would undoubtedly facilitate the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East;

- The question of the definition of the Middle East region and its geographical limitations is not a difficult one, although no United Nations document or General Assembly resolution contains any definition of the Middle East as a region, and it does not constitute an obstacle to the declaration of the region as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. It might be expedient to declare the region as a nuclear-weapon-free zone on the understanding that the States of the region would accede voluntarily to such an international agreement. This would then reveal the intentions of the States of the region regarding accession to such an agreement. I suggest that the Agency should put forward this proposal;
- The application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East without Israel's accession to the NPT means that Israel is not legally bound to open up its nuclear installations to enable the Agency to inspect and control its nuclear activities;
- As is well known, all States of the region, with the exception of Israel, are Parties to the NPT and consequently have a clear legal obligation to apply full-scope safeguards. Most of these States do not currently have any nuclear activities and have not had any in the past. In other words, they do not have any nuclear material to be made subject to full-scope safeguards. They will be able to possess nuclear material for their future nuclear programmes only if they conclude a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the Agency. Consequently, the application of full-scope safeguards to the States surrounding Israel is undisputed and in fact they already apply since these States are Parties to the NPT. As usually stated in the reports of the Agency's Director General, Israel minimizes the importance of considering the application of full-scope safeguards as a starting point by repeatedly asserting that priority should be given to establishing comprehensive peace and security in the region as a basic step, which would then be followed by limitation of nuclear weapons and the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East through the necessary verification measures;
- Israel believes that consideration of the implementation of successive General Conference resolutions entitled the "Application of IAEA Safeguards in the Middle East" should be deferred until a lasting peace settlement with neighbouring countries has been reached and, consequently, an agreement has been concluded to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, followed by consideration of safeguards questions and mutual verification measures as an integral part of this process;
- Israel's refusal to accept the application of full-scope safeguards to its nuclear programmes constitutes an obstacle to the implementation of successive General Conference resolutions. As you know, no formula to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East can be reached unless all the States concerned stand on common ground.

The above points, which I have touched upon briefly, may well reflect some of the Arab concerns and fears of the peoples of the region about the threat of nuclear weapons that has been hanging over them for a long time, while many regions of the world have

been able to declare themselves as nuclear-weapon-free zones. We desperately need such a measure in our region in view of the increased threat posed by this weapon and our inability even to initiate any practical steps to free the region of nuclear weapons given Israel's insistence on tackling this issue only on its own terms.

I hope that the above comments will contribute to your efforts to develop whatever concept you desire through your consultations with Member States of the Agency on the application of the IAEA safeguards in the Middle East.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest esteem.