

General Conference

GC(57)/18
Date: 29 July 2013

General Distribution
Original: English

Fifty-seventh regular session

Item 22 of the provisional agenda
(GC(57)/1, Add.1 and Add.2)

Communication received from the Resident Representative of Israel regarding the request to include in the agenda of the Conference an item entitled "Israeli Nuclear Capabilities"

1. The Director General has received a letter dated 15 July 2013 from the Resident Representative of Israel, relating to the request from the Arab States that are members of the Agency to include in the agenda of the Conference an item entitled "Israeli nuclear capabilities".

As requested therein, the letter is herewith circulated.



July 15th, 2013

Excellency,

I have the honor to convey Israel's position regarding the request of the Arab Group of States, contained in document GC(57)1/Add.1, dated 26 June 2013, for the inclusion of an item entitled "Israeli Nuclear Capabilities" on the Agenda of the 57th General Conference (GC).

At the outset, it is important to point out the record of this regrettable resolution, which was rejected by the IAEA 54th GC, and was not even submitted during the 55th and 56th General Conferences.

Putting aside the ill motivation of those who put forth this request, the 57th GC will face a pressing agenda, including nuclear safety and security, IAEA safeguards, technical cooperation, budgetary issues and more. On top of all these important issues, the growing threat posed by Iran's military nuclear program overshadows the GC. Iran is another Middle East party to the NPT, which has been found to be in flagrant

violation of its international obligations and commitments in the nuclear domain, similar to Iraq, Libya and Syria that have been associated in the past, or presently, with this act of deceit. The most significant threats to the non-proliferation regime are those posed by states from the Middle East that are pursuing nuclear weapons under the cover of their NPT membership. Evidently the NPT, which envisages, in its preamble, international relations free from the threat or the use of force against the political independence of any state, is far from being the remedy to the ills of the Middle East region.

Recent relevant developments in the region do not substantiate the claim that all Arab States are truthfully seeking the establishment of a Weapons of Mass Destruction free Middle East as they profess. Assurances that were supposedly provided to this effect have mostly proven untrustworthy and false, especially by certain non-democratic regimes. Suffice to witness the use of chemical agents by the Syrian regime against its civilians. It is the same Syria that formally notified the United Nations that it possesses no chemical weapons, and is still denying the existence of a covert plutonium-producing nuclear reactor at Dair al Zour, in face of clear evidence to this effect.

In view of such alarming practices and violations of international norms and regimes, it is evident that the above-mentioned Arab request is meant to divert attention from

somber Middle East realities. Worsening regional circumstances give credence to the long-standing position of the State of Israel that genuine regional arms control measures can only be advanced through a gradual process, which begins with confidence building measures, the reversal of negative regional trends, and the transformation of acute, open hostilities, simmering conflicts and a state of war to durable, amicable relations.

The creation of a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (NWFZ) in the Middle East is not simply a matter of some clever diplomatic formula. Only a series of steps that drastically reduce tensions can bring the parties to a serious direct negotiation. This conclusion is contained in the Report of the Secretary General of the UN on NWFZ in the Middle East, already back in October 1990 (A/45/435).

Full compliance by all regional states with their arms control and non-proliferation obligations is an indispensable element in creating the conditions to begin such a regional process. This has also been the proven experience in other regions, where the parties have acquired trust in each other.

Israel has always maintained that the nuclear issue, as well as all regional security issues, conventional and non-conventional alike, could only be realistically addressed within the regional

context. So far, the continuing regional turmoil and instability, and the poor track record of non-compliance among members of the region, have a combined critical impact on the ability to build trust and to embark on a process leading to regional security arrangements.

On its part, Israel has manifested its commitment to regional security dialogue on numerous occasions, such as its active participation in the IAEA Forum (November 2011) on experience of possible relevance to the creation of a NWFZ in the Middle East. More recently, Israel expressed its willingness to participate in multilateral consultations proposed last March by Ambassador Jaakko Laajava of Finland. The proposal met with a negative Arab response, due to their refusal to engage directly with the State of Israel. It is clear that the Arab Group of States prefers a course of bashing Israel and imposing on it, instead of directly engaging with it.

Israel believes that the above-mentioned Arab request, besides being clearly outside the scope of the IAEA statute and mandate and having no legal basis, is also against the interests of the Agency and its member states. It will certainly undermine any genuine attempt to promote confidence and security among member states of the Middle East region.

By rejecting the Arab request for inclusion of such an ill-motivated item on the Agenda of the GC, member states will send a clear message of their determination not to be detracted time and again from the real challenges faced by the Agency in the nuclear realm.

I request that this letter be circulated to all IAEA Member States.

Please accept, Sir, the assurance of my highest consideration.

Dr. Ehud Azoulay



Ambassador
Permanent Representative
to the IAEA & CTBTO

Mr. Yukiya Amano
Director General
IAEA