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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 26 July 2016 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".
2. As requested therein, the letter is herewith circulated.

26 July 2016

Excellency,

In reference to document GC(60)/1/Add.1, dated 4 July 2016, I have the honour to convey the position of the State of Israel in the enclosed document.

I would be grateful if this document could be circulated to the attention of all IAEA Member States.

Accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Merav Zafary-Odiz



Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Israel

To the IAEA and the CTBTO PrepCom

H.E. Mr. Yukiya Amano

Director General

International Atomic Energy Agency



In reference to a request submitted by the Ambassador of Morocco on behalf of the Arab States that are members of the IAEA (document GC(60)/1/Add.1, dated 4 July 2016), to include in the agenda of the 60th General Conference (GC) an item entitled "Israeli nuclear capabilities," Israel wishes to state its position as follows:

Similar Arab-sponsored initiatives and draft resolutions were already introduced in the past, and rejected by a majority vote of the member states of the Agency in 2010, 2013, 2014 and 2015. It is therefore highly regrettable that the Arab States chose, once again, to impose upon the General Conference this agenda item. It manifests a contentious, biased and fundamentally flawed approach, which imposes on the General Conference a politicized discussion that is completely outside the scope of the IAEA's Statute and mandate, unrelated to the agenda of this body, and injurious to the Agency's credibility as a professional organization.

Israel welcomes the decision of the Arab League Foreign Ministers, of March 2016, to refrain, this year, from submitting a draft resolution under this agenda item. Israel views this decision as a positive step, and remains hopeful that it will mark the path forward for a future meaningful regional dialogue. Unfortunately, the Arab Groups' letter of July 4th, 2016 is a clear deviation from this path. Our neighbors' insistence on Israel's joining the NPT not only ignores the repeated pursuit of nuclear weapons by Middle Eastern members of the Treaty, in a clear violation of their obligation and commitments, but also masks their refusal to engage sincerely with Israel.

Israel values the non-proliferation regime, acknowledges its significance, and continues to implement a responsible policy and restraint in the nuclear domain. The most substantial threats to the non-proliferation regime and the NPT stem from Middle Eastern countries that pursued, or aspire for nuclear weapons under the guise of their NPT membership. Iraq, Libya, Iran, and Syria, supporters of this Arab sponsored anti-Israeli initiative, were found to be in flagrant violation of their international obligations and commitments in this regard.



For its part, and despite the deteriorating regional security environment, Israel was closely engaged in the efforts to advance substantive regional dialogue, in five rounds of multilateral consultations during the years 2013-2014 under the facilitation of Finnish Under-Secretary Jaakko Laajava. During these consultations, Israel elaborated its policy and approach on regional security and arms control. Israel reiterated its position 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, through a gradual process that begins with confidence building measures, and a direct dialogue between all states of the region based on the widely-accepted principle of consensus between the parties. This position was also elaborated in the Israeli national paper submitted during the 2015 NPT Review Conference to which Israel was an observer ("Towards a Regional Dialogue in the Middle East – An Israeli Perspective"). Moreover, Israel continues to participate in multilateral fora aimed at enhancing regional security, such as the Moscow High Level Workshop (May 2016), and the Wilton Park Dialogue (November 2015).

Tabling of a politically-motivated draft resolution entitled "Israeli nuclear capabilities" under the requested agenda item would divert attention from the dire situation in many parts of our region, and the true dangers posed by those Middle Eastern countries that are possessing or pursuing weapons of mass destruction and even make use of them against civilians, including their own. This attempt will neither assist in the building of confidence and trust, paramount to any useful direct regional consultations, nor hasten the outcome of such a process. It will only serve to politicize the IAEA and harm its credibility. Israel thus hopes that the Arab Group refrains from tabling flawed draft resolutions in the future as was decided this year.