

***2014 Moscow Nonproliferation Conference:
Nuclear Energy, Disarmament, and Nonproliferation***

Concurrent Session 1 on:

***“The Conference on the Establishment of Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and
Other Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East:
Developing the Agenda”***

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I. Introduction

- Let me begin by extending my thanks and deep appreciation for inviting me to speak in my personal and academic capacities. This presentation will address the following: first, the security dynamics in a politically changing region, and the available guidelines and technical provisions needed for a treaty-based Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass-Destruction in the Middle East.

II. Security Dynamics in a Politically-Changing Region

- The political transition in the region has undoubtedly changed fundamental dynamics in the Middle East, with significant implications for the political and security settings of the region. Public opinion increasingly plays a more prominent role in Arab societies and, in this respect, will have a fundamental role in the formulation of disarmament and security policies.
- Nuclear issues will receive considerable attention. Such dynamics may bring greater pressure to bear on progress on the subject of the zone and may serve as positive game-changers in broader disarmament and non-proliferation discussions.
- Given the current democratic changes and process, parliaments—particularly through their committees on foreign affairs, Arab affairs and national security—are expected to play a more prominent role in foreign policy issues.
- As recently witnessed, the flow of masses in the streets, along with their participation in the elections, is a sign of their desire for deeper engagement in the policymaking and security concerns in the Middle East.

III. Available Guidelines for a “Middle East Free Zone”

1- **The United Nations (UN) guidelines and principles for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free-zones** are another important reference for future zones that should be thoroughly utilized. Provisions include references to the following:

- A NWFZ will help strengthen the security of States parties to such zones and will serve as an important disarmament tool that contributes to the primary objective of strengthening regional peace and security and, by extension, international peace and security;
- The obligations of all the States parties to a zone treaty should be clearly defined and legally binding, and the States parties should fully abide by such agreements
- A NWFZ should not prevent the use of nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes and may promote, if provided for in the treaties establishing such zones, bilateral, regional and international cooperation for the peaceful use of nuclear energy in the zone in support of socio-economic, scientific, and technological development of the States parties;
- It can also be considered an important regional confidence-building measure that reaffirms the commitment of the States that belong to the zone to honor their legal obligations to other international nonproliferation and disarmament instruments to which they are parties;
- The nuclear-weapon-states (NWS) are to be consulted during the negotiations of each treaty, including the negotiation of relevant protocol(s) establishing a NWFZ, in order to facilitate the signature and ratification of the treaty;

2-The Pelindaba Treaty: we need to take stock of previous successes & experiences. The Pelindaba treaty is a recent example that contains the following provisions:

- The Treaty prohibits the research, development, manufacture, stockpiling, acquisition, testing, possession, control, or stationing of nuclear explosive devices in the territory of parties to the Treaty and the dumping of radioactive wastes in the African zone by Treaty parties;
- To allow for the verification of its nuclear non-proliferation undertaking, the Treaty requires parties to conclude comprehensive safeguards agreements with the IAEA equivalent to the agreements required in connection with NPT;
- The Treaty provides for verification and compliance mechanisms, including the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE), which serves as a compliance mechanism and encourages regional and sub-regional programs for cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology;
- The Treaty also prohibits any attacks against nuclear installations in the zone by Treaty parties and requires them to maintain the highest standards of physical protection of nuclear material, facilities and equipment, which are to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes;
- The establishment of AFCONE encourages African states to take responsibility for natural resources and, in particular, nuclear material, and protects against the dumping of toxic waste.

3- The IAEA Forum

The IAEA convened a forum on “Experience of Possible Relevance to the Creation of a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East,” in Vienna, in November 2011. Forum attendees presented several constructive proposals that should be taken into consideration, including suggestions to:

- Consider the lessons and context of other regions prior to the establishment of a NWFZs;
- Review existing, multilateral principles for establishing such zones, and review the relevant theory and practice of establishing the five existing NWFZs;
- Discuss the experience of the five NWFZs in setting up and implementing such zones;

IV. Technical Provisions for A Treaty-Based Zone

Along with the development of the Zone process, the following technical provisions are necessary to develop a treaty-based zone:

- Dismantling and destroying existing or remaining nuclear weapons capabilities, facilities, and devices under international verification mechanisms;
- Renouncing nuclear weapons through refraining from conducting indigenous development and activities related to nuclear weapons;
- Prohibiting the transit or stationing of any nuclear explosive devices in the zone;
- Using nuclear materials and facilities for peaceful purposes only;
- Placing all nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards;
- Establishing the necessary relevant institutions and mechanisms or entities to uphold a zone, free of nuclear and other WMDs;
- Addressing the issue of verification, including identifying the role of the IAEA and other relevant organizations such as the OPCW and CTBTO.

V. Concluding Remarks

- 1- Regional think tanks need to be better equipped to provide and stimulate considered thinking and analysis on the challenges and opportunities present in developing a regional zonal framework. A key role for this community would be to draw out the appropriate lessons from other established WMD-free zones, as well as nuclear frameworks such as Euratom and ABACC.

- 2- There is a need to address technical analysis of existing treaties – their terms of reference and definitions; cooperation mechanisms, compliance, enforcement and monitoring methods; and their mediation structures. Opportunities may exist to develop networks and platforms for the exchange of perspectives and ideas across the region.

3- More comprehensive and widespread training and education programs are needed, focusing specifically on scientific universities, ministries, business and relevant government agencies, will be required to bolster regional capacity to the necessary level to address zonal issues. Universities will need to be better equipped to offer degrees on specialized subjects.

4- Capacity Building

- Several layers of technical expertise will be required both to write and establish a technically watertight zonal treaty, and to run, manage, maintain and protect it once it is in place. This will require knowledge of verification, monitoring and inspection; an understanding of where joint ventures might be possible, and what technologies might be associated with them;
- More efforts should be exerted to capacity to establish, protect and maintain peaceful nuclear energy programs; and expertise in the safe and effective dismantlement of the weapons programs that currently exist. At present, such personnel and skills are largely absent through much of the Middle East region.

5- There are some important issues that should need to be technically addressed in the context of the zone; here are some of them:

- Which institutions will be entrusted with the responsibility of the zone?
- What would be the implications of non-compliance?
- How can security guarantees be given to reinforce the process of the zone's establishment?
- What role will the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as well as nuclear safety and security play in future zone discussions?

For further readings and publications, please check:

<http://www.gcsp.ch/About-Us-Qui-sommes-nous/Associate-Visiting-Fellows/Ambassador-Dr-Sameh-ABOUL-ENEIN>

Thank You